CHAPTER II: BACKGROUND STUDIES AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Language (speech) constitutes an inherent and inseparable part of human behaviour. The development of a language into a defined system of expression and communication is probably human being’s greatest achievement. Human beings would not have scaled such heights without language.

A language exists in society, and both are mutually indispensable to each other. Language needs a social system, as its prime concern is communication. India is a vast country with a multilingual, multicultural and a multiethnic society. There are generally four prevalent language families, namely Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, Austro-Asiatic and Tibeto-Burman. There are twenty-one officially recognised languages in India (Census 2001). 1981 Census had listed 1652 languages as mother tongues in India, of which 33 languages are spoken by more than one tenth of a million populace.

Effect of migration on language:
Trends in rising unemployment are compounded by the existence of regional imbalances in development within the country, and have collectively accelerated the phenomenon of migration. All theories of migration concede that migration occurs when the region of origin lacks the opportunities which the destination promises. It is inherently a combination of pull and push factors. Variation in economic development across regions is the primary motive for migration to greener pastures.

According to ‘push and pull theory’, “Migration may occur as a search for opportunity to improve one’s lot in life. In this case, the destination exerts a pull on migrants. Migration can also occur as a flight from undesirable social and economic situation. These situations constitute expulsive push of the community. Migration generally takes place when the positive pull factors at the place of destination are outnumbered by negative push factors at the place of origin.” (Bagne’s 1969:7)

The migrant community forms the minority group in the area to which it migrates. “One element in the definition of a minority group is a shared physical, social or cultural characteristic that sets the group apart from the larger society. The majority group in any society may or may not constitute numerical majority. A majority group is termed ‘majority’ because it exerts influence and possesses or controls the bulk of power within a given society.” (Elliot, 1971:120).

Migration from an area where one language is spoken to an area where another language is spoken results in language contact situation. Odlin (1989) states, “Language contact situation arises whenever there is a meeting of speakers who do not all share the same language and who need to communicate. When communication needs of people go beyond what gestures and other paralinguistic signals can achieve, some use of second language becomes necessary”. Weinreich (1953) gives an example that in migrating to a new country the adult members of the community may come to use a new language in its dealing with governmental authorities, the children may use it in school and at the same time, the old language may live on at home and within informal gatherings of the group.

Language contact situation, where bilingualism prevails, the language learnt by migrants sometimes shows language mixing. The migrants may borrow lexical items from the dominant majority language into their language and become bilingual in the dominant majority language. Pattanayak points out that, “the dominant language speakers
are less bilingual than the minority language speakers whenever they are bilingual, they are more likely to be bilingual in another dominant language rather than in a minority language” (Pattanayak 1981:45).

The attitude of today’s migrants, from one state to another in India, stands differently when compared to the earlier migrants. Recent migrations have taken place under a different picture. The migrants, who are most often job seekers, shift as individuals or with families, not as whole communities and perhaps would go back, or would like to go back to the place they may have come from. They are aware of their linguistic rights under the Indian Constitution. It can be easily observed that the means of communication between the migrant families or individuals and their original linguistic community are available with an easy access through media, radio and TV programmes, magazines, newspapers et al. So, a link is somehow maintained in relation to the linguistic and social identities. Language loyalty is maintained even though some families settle down and take roots in a different linguistic milieu. The language loyalty transfer can be seen as negligible in recent migrants when compared to the populations that migrated a few centuries ago.

An estimated majority of the Kumauni speakers, according to the sample, has migrated from the districts of Nainital, Almora, Ranikhet, Pithoragarh as compared to Champawat and Udham Singh Nagar. One reason which can be attributed to this migration is the highest rate of literacy in Almora, Nainital and Ranikhet. Meanwhile, Pithoragarh and Champawat comparatively share lower literacy rate and Udham Singh Nagar constitutes a majority of population who is affiliated to business and agriculture.

Mother Tongue

Mother tongue is a distinguishing characteristic responsible for subjecting the minority groups to unequal and differential treatment in their place of migration. Mother tongue is a notion that we all appear to understand very well but take for granted. ‘Mother tongue’ is a very important aspect of the Constitution of India. Several important provisions within the Indian Constitution deal with the concept of language. The decisions regarding the medium of instruction and other official language policies depend on the
interpretation of this concept. It is quite often that mother tongue becomes more of a socio-political idea than a linguistic construct. Mother tongue becomes a convention for groups of people to unite and express their solidarity more as a political unit.

Mother tongue is a debatable concept. For the vast majority, mother tongue is the language of their parents; the language spoken at home and outside. “Mother tongue demands from its speakers more often than not, devotion, respect, emotional attachment, loyalty and a certain amount of pride” (Thirumalai, Chengappa 1986:26).

According to Pattanayak (1981) mother tongue is a language with which one is emotionally identified. It is the language through which the child reorganises and organises his experiences and environment around him. It is the language used to express one’s basic needs, ideas, thoughts, joys, sorrows and other feelings. This is the language which if one gives up, one may remain intellectually alive, but grow emotionally sterile. Mother tongue is both a sociolinguistic reality and a product of mythic consciousness of people. It provides social and emotional identity to an individual with a speech community. It can be functionally defined at four axis: cognition, emotion, identity and predictability (Pattanayak 1981:51-54).

Mother tongue is maintained by the migrant communities at their place of migration. Mohanlal (1986) quotes Gumperz (1964) regarding language maintenance, and observes that a minority language speaking community maintains their language mainly at the family level and as well as at the place where people gather together. He further states that throughout India and other parts of Asia, we find immigrant groups who maintain their linguistic identity for many centuries even in relatively small communities (Mohanlal 1986:11).

“An average Indian has a command over three languages, dialects which he uses throughout his lifetime, sometimes increasing the use of mother tongue as he advances in age” (Abbi 1986:1). Srivastava (1987) discusses Indian scene of societal bilingualism which provides, in general a case for peaceful co-existence of languages. The migrants
here do not usually lose their mother tongue. In traditional context of India, we find non-competing and non-conflicting type of grass-root bilingualism.

Verma (1985) suggests that for notions like ‘mother tongue’, ‘first language’ should be defined in functional terms. In his paper “My mother tongue is not my mother’s tongue”, he concludes by saying that the ‘mother tongue’ of the members of a speech community in a bilingual setting is the tongue which they use as an intra group link language and the primary tool of their culture and feelings. The other languages in contact play either ‘supplementary’ or, complementary, roles.

If the learning of the mother tongue is not reinforced in the child and he finds the majority language has more scope than his mother tongue, he naturally embraces the majority language, which results in language shift. Despite the fact that first generation of speakers maintain their mother tongue, the second generation with predominant use of majority language as second language, becomes bilingual while the third generation gives up mother tongue in favour of majority language.

Fishman (1991a: 94) believes that the family has a natural boundary that serves as a barricade against outside pressures. Its association with intimacy and privacy makes it peculiarly resistant to outside competition and substitution. Although the modern urban family has lost much of its socialization power, it is nevertheless, ‘the most common and inescapable basis of mother tongue transmission, bonding, use and stabilization’. Fishman (1997a) points out that the desire to maintain and transmit the beloved language is not anti-modern and represents a welcome alternative to complete globalization.

The language policy statement in any multilingual set up should be about ‘What constitutes a mother tongue for her citizens’? There has been no specific definition or description of the characteristics of what constitutes a mother tongue, that could be applied to a variety of Indian contexts. The 2001 Census defines mother tongue as the language in which the mother was talking to the person in his/her childhood. In case the mother of the child had died, the language being spoken in the household; in case of small children and the dumb (physically challenged), the language spoken by the mother
is the mother tongue. In case of a doubt, the language mainly used in the family is the mother tongue. Hence, the Census focuses more on the language of early childhood experience and calls it the mother tongue.

Fishman (1991a) points out the case of Yiddish, a Jewish language, spoken by some Jews in Europe, Israel, and North and South America, in spite having societally structured intergenerational ethno-linguistic continuity, yet the language has survived but not flourished. In the case of the Kumauni community the link with the younger generation in everyday life, normally constitutes an even basis for the sustenance of Kumauni language.

He points out the case of Basque, Frisian, and Irish communities, where prolonged and consistent failure to secure intergenerational mother tongue transmission tended to degenerate into intergenerational ‘heritage language admiration’ and the part time cultivation thereof at the level of a favorite hobby (Fishman, 1991a). He further asserts that “...the stage of daily, intergenerational, informal oral interaction...requires full appreciation and extra-careful attention. The core of this stage is the family (although, given demographic concentration, a community of families can be envisaged) (Fishman, 1991a: 94).

The Census has also taken into consideration the possibility that the members of the same family may have different mother tongues. For example, there are many families in which the husband may be of a different ethnic group than that of the wife, and both may have different and not identical, mother tongues. In that case the census has recorded the mother tongue of each individual in the family.

Meanwhile, the language rights activists consider mother tongue as the language used in the literature of a community. Sociology defines mother tongue as the language one learnt first and which established one’s first lasting communication relationship. Linguistics in terms of competence defines mother tongue as the language one knows best. Sociolinguists define it as the language one uses most. Socio-psychological view suggests the manner in which an individual identifies himself with a language, is his mother tongue i.e. internal identification, while the manner in which he is identified by other people is his mother tongue (external identification). Meanwhile the world view
according to the popular conceptions is that the language one counts in, thinks in, dreams in, writes a diary in, writes poetry in, is termed as the mother tongue.

The Indian judicial system too has debated and given a ruling on what should be considered as mother tongue. In the recent (2000) petition the Madras High Court adjudicated that “mother-tongue of a child should only be understood for the purpose of these cases as the language which the child is most familiar with, mother-tongue need not be the mother's tongue or father's tongue. Generally, the parents are the proper persons who can assess and say as to which is the language, that child is most familiar with.” Since India is a multilingual state, the notion of second mother tongue too is introduced by the judiciary.

One of the respondents who said that Kumauni was her mother tongue and that it was important for her to make sure that her children understood her completely in the language, showed concern that adequate and full understanding of the mother tongue within the family was essential for the language maintenance within and outside the home domain. She said, she could speak in Hindi with the children in order to improve her Hindi but would not do it, since it was very important that the children understand her in every word and its meaning.

Language Loyalty, Shift and Maintenance

Language loyalty is the retention of a language by its speakers, who are usually in a minority at a place where another language is dominant, while shift is an ongoing or a sudden move from the use of one language to another, as the native language yields to the pressures of other language or languages and the speakers seem to have made a preference in favour of the dominant language. Language maintenance on the other hand is a situation where there is a sustained use, protection and support for a language or the traditional form of a language or, as is often seen, one language clings to its own despite the pressures of other language/s. Fasold (1989) looks at language shift and maintenance as the shared long term result of language preference i.e. the speakers of a community altogether choose a new language where an old one was previously used or choose to continue using a language they had used traditionally (language maintenance).
completely in favour of another or has collectively chosen a new language in lieu of a previous one (Fasold, 1984). It may also be defined as the change from the habitual use of one language to that of another.

Multilingual society has different speech communities that are forced to live together in the state of constant competition and conflict in learning the language of others. The immigrant communities maintain their language for generation despite their minority status. They speak their mother tongue at home and at places where they meet the speakers of their language. This language maintenance goes on until the majority language of the area exerts pressure on the immigrant language. There are several factors whose presence is almost invariably favourable to language maintenance. Kloss (1966) defines six factors: religious and social isolation, time of immigration, whether language enclaves are involved, the migrants belong to a religious sect that operates its own schools, prior experience in language maintenance before migration, earlier use of language as an official language (Kloss 1966 in Bayer 1986).

The Kumauni language speaking community in Delhi has migrated from Uttarakhand and their migration to Delhi has been basically in search of greener pastures. Hence for longer duration of periods their language was under the influence and pressure of Hindi language. Language ghettos are generally less visible compared to a few exceptions as in Mehrauli and Srinivaspuri, where a comparatively large community of Kumauni language speakers is noticed. The migrants generally belong to same religious sect and do not lack harmony among them. Although the Kumauni community is seen to splurge but there are no specific language groups or related associations. Before migration they had been primarily in Uttarakhand where Kumauni language is spoken. The speakers already have had a prior experience of maintaining Kumauni language not only in their home domain but also in other domains in Uttarakhand. The language situation in Delhi to some extent has provided them with a competitive environment for their language loyalty, maintenance and not necessarily a total shift in relation to different domains of language use.

According to Weinreich (1953), the matter of language shift is entirely extra structural, since it can be taken for granted that the respective structures of two languages
in contact never determine which language is to yield its functions to others because there are no strictly linguistic motivations in language shifts.

Language shift and maintenance are terms that refer to the choice made by a society as to which language will be used for certain functions. This choice may lead to the death of other languages in its totality, leaving no speakers of the language or the death of a language in a specific community only. If this shift does not occur or it occurs in certain domains of a society then some degree of language maintenance occurs.

There are several conditions identified that will promote language shift. These conditions include societal bilingualism, migration, modernization, urbanization, industrialisation and uniform educational opportunities, schools and governments use of the language and the prestige level of the languages in contact.

A majority of the Kumauni language speakers who have migrated from Uttarakhand and other places have had a normal prior experience of using Hindi as an official language and Kumauni as being the domain specific language at home. With the distance of Kumaun from Delhi negligible in terms of bus and train journeys and other faster means of transport, the Kumauni speakers visit their relatives in Kumaun at least once a year either for holidays, weddings, festivals or worship. Meanwhile, the frequent visits made to their relatives and friends in Delhi, who are also Kumauni speakers, does not entirely help in reinforcing language maintenance.

“Societal Bilingualism is now viewed as a stable and widespread phenomenon in its own right. Modern sociolinguistic research on bilingualism seeks to determine which members of a bi (or multi) lingual society employ which variety (from among a whole repertoire available in the bilingual community) and in which functional context (Fishman, 1968).

Societal bilingualism must exist at some point for language shift to occur. Bilingualism can ultimately lead to language shift in a society and is often marked by intergenerational switching of the languages (Fasold, 1984; Fishman 1991). This switching and possible shifting is often discernible in sources such as census data.

Migration is another factor associated with language shift. As often observed, a large number of speakers of the other language may migrate to a society. At times, these
speakers may outnumber the native population and create an environment favourable for the language shift (Fasold, 1984).

Fishman points out an interesting case “Americans of immigrant origin must give up their contacts with the countries from which they emigrated. Such contacts have far too frequently and automatically been viewed as indicative of Un–American sentiments,” (Fishman, 1966). Hence the final trend will be towards total shift.

Fasold (1984) mentions that though societal bilingualism and the number of speakers of another language are factors that influence language shift, they are often mere results of other existing conditions. One of the conditions is industrialisation and urbanization. Industrialisation may bring with it the need for another language speaking population, which is more in terms with the technological environment that it generates.

The association of the language with modern developments may assist the shift towards that language. The society in which it occurs may then find that only through the learning of this language can it advance. And it will be through this additional language that people will have an upward social mobility through the resources that industrialisation brings. (Fasold 1984, Fishman 1977).

The main antecedent of language maintenance and shift is a multilingual society. Some linguistic groups in language contact situations practically lose the use of their indigenous / local language, while others manage to maintain their local language, either as monolingual speakers or, usually as bilinguals. Some of the queries that strike our mind are: Why do some groups lose their language while others hold on to theirs? Is it a unidirectional process? What are the factors responsible for inspiring or negating such a process? Thus, there are several factors concerning language shift and maintenance and the problem cannot be studied separately as the factors are intricately interrelated and blended. Hence this process can only be dealt with by seeing it as a part of the ‘whole’. According to Coulmas (1997) this ‘total’ or ‘whole’ constitutes an entire spectrum of structural linguistics, socio-linguistics, sociology, psychology, social psychology and demography.

While discussing Yiddish in the United States, Weinreich (1953), raised some fundamental issues about the relationship between language shift and language change in contact situation. Do language shift and language interference happen simultaneously.
Can language interference result in language shift? Does code mixing or code switching eventually lead to language shift? When the bilingual speech community uses sentences in such a way that one is unable to make a distinction as to which language they come from, does that signify a continuous shift?

Bloomfield (1933) brings us to one of the earliest discussion relating to language shift and maintenance. He pinpoints the phenomenon where certain immigrants in the United States give up their native language in favour of a foreign one, thus initiating a shift of language. He also stresses on bilingualism, which for him involves ‘native like control of two languages’. What Bloomfield did not emphasise upon was the related aspect of contact situation, wherein the group under language shift pressures, with conscious initiated efforts takes part in language maintenance activities, which may result in a functional separation of the two languages i.e. the adopted, and the indigenous language.

Fishman (1972) claims that the basic requirement of language maintenance and language shift is a contact situation. The contact situation may give rise to either multilingualism or language shift. Sometimes a shift may also occur due to the long duration of bilingualism.

Language shift in most of the cases is observed from the minority towards the majority language, but Appel and Muysken (1987) define shift as a neutral concept, which may even be towards a minority language as well. According to them, after a period of shift towards the majority language, a tendency to move back, i.e. reversal of the process may occur. During the case of shift, a language gets reduced in its function i.e. the domains it is practiced in, become lesser and lesser and over a period of time the speakers become less proficient in it and this shows language loss and culminate in language death, unless a stronger effort is made to maintain the language.

N C Dorian deliberates the shift of Scottish Gaelic dialect speakers in East Sutherland and German dialect speakers in Berks County, Pennsylvania towards English. She suggests – elucidating resistance to shift requires more consideration than language shift, an inconsistent speaker of the local currency dialect has persisted in making some use of that dialect despite his awareness of its demographically and socially weakening position and despite his unsatisfactory control of its structure (Dorian 1980:92)
Fishman (1972) states that very few studies and slight progress in systematizing knowledge of the social processes that facilitate or inhibit language maintenance language shift has been made. He reiterates the need for more studies that analyze language as an essential component of and not as merely a means of mass communication of the same. He also expresses the need for studies of the spread of English in relation to language maintenance and language shift (Fishman, 1977).

As far as the linguistic situation in Delhi is concerned, it is observed that the Hindi language is the lingua franca and, English, in spite of having the associate official language status, is seen as the outsider language, whereas the Kumauni language is practiced only among the Kumauni speakers. The contact of mainly the Hindi language and the English with Kumauni language is primarily through the migration factor, education and mass media. This contact situation has in fact led to bilingualism in manifest, as well as hidden or passive forms and has also resulted in a major extent of code mixing and code switching situations. A good number of population in Delhi practices Kumauni language as its mother tongue and although there are almost no native speakers in the English language, the impact of this language is noticeable in different domains of life.

Language maintenance studies were initiated by Professor P B Pandit with two main works. First one was on the Saurashtri speaking community settled in Tamilnadu while the second was on the introspective language responses of Punjabi female speakers of a Delhi University college.

This work can be considered a continuation of the series of studies conducted in Delhi starting with Pandit. In his Saurashtri study Pandit (1972) observed that the significant features of multilingualism in India are the existence of stable bilingual or multilingual communities. People in large metropolitan centres or district towns try to maintain their language identity for years in spite of their minority status. They speak their mother tongue in the domestic settings and domains where they come in contact with others of their group, while they speak the majority language in other contexts.

Behind the stable bilingualism or multilingualism in the urban centres Pandit tried to find out the reasons as to why this stability existed, and his observation was: "Why are bilingual situations stable? When a German, Spanish or Polish speaker migrates to
America, he gives up his language after second or third generation. Similarly immigrants in other countries in Europe give up their languages after a few generations and accept the majority language. In the linguistic scenario in India a language speaker, whether Kannada or Punjabi, maintains his speech, no matter where and for how long he settles down among other language speakers, he does not give up his language. The underlying acceptability of any Indian in any Indian cultural setting is indicative of cultural identity and homogeneity at a deeper level; it permits retention of identity of markers – whether it is language or religion, food habits or dressing habits. Continuous language contact in such multilingual communities results in a set of rules shared by diverse languages, at the same time retaining identity markers."

In spite of language and other differences the multilingual communities are stable in India because the people in general are accepted due to the cultural homogeneity.

The significant feature of Pandit’s (1972) study was the way he dealt with the problem from both linguistic and the language functions in the society. He conducted a linguistic study of the Saurashtri society and tried to translate it into the broader sociolinguistic situation prevalent in India and tried to hypothesise and arrive at an overview of Indian multilingual situations and also simultaneously distinguished similar kind of situations elsewhere in the world. He also tried to discuss the grammar of a bilingual speaker, and how social distance is communicated through the linguistic expression and other matters thereto. In this study also we would like to take into view his observation vis-à-vis the speakers of Kumauni language, and the make-up of the urban situation in the capital.

Mukherji’s (1996) study in the area of language maintenance and language shift reveals that wherever languages employed by migrant and host societies do not compete with each other for the same functions, maintenance is a fair probability. Conversely, where competition and conflict exist between the two, a shift in language use becomes evident. The case is evident among Kumauni speakers in Delhi as their mother tongue is domain specific and does not compete aggressively in a particular domain and as a result maintenance to some extent can be perceived.

Fishman (1972a) suggests that the use of mother tongue in minority groups should be more frequent in domains associated with intimacy and less frequent in domains
associated with status. Yet, the results do not show a clear "social compartmentalisation" of the language functions. The effect is better explained by a range, with one extremity being represented by the intimacy-based home domain and the other end represented by the media specific domain. In this domain, the dominance of the majority group becomes not only prevalent but ubiquitous since the mass media elusively permeates other domains to a large extent, especially the home domain through television network, newspapers, magazines and radio. The status-based mass media as a domain becomes an efficient vehicle of influence, repute and values for the majority group.

Bordieu (1991) notices that the cultural symbolic capital of the majority group is greatly enriched by a powerful presence of media technology. Media to a larger extent penetrates the innermost private home domain leading to a conflict and dilution of values meted out at home. With the weak ethno-linguistic strength of a community the intimacy curve of home domain would be threatened by status values and would probably take a downward sling.

Pandit (1978) conducted a second study based on a questionnaire which differed significantly from the first study on Saurashtri community. In this study he did not involve the linguistic structure at all; he studies purely language related self evaluative reports of women students of Delhi, who almost came from the upper middle class or middle class families, with significantly high level of education, and whose earning members were either in civil or military services and business or professions such as medicine or engineering. His study summarised his findings to be that "among a number of stable bilingual situations in India, there are some situations where speakers of a majority literary language give up their language. The results indicate that during the last few decades, with changing identity of social groups in the north India, the role of Punjabi language has changed, and Punjabi Hindus of Delhi are giving up this language; second generation Punjabi Hindus are shifting to Hindi, at the same time not so secure with their Hindi, they are further shifting to English."

This possible shift, code mixing and switching is often apparent in respondents who have recently migrated from Kumaun to Delhi. As often observed with temporary occupations, a large number of speakers of the other language may migrate to a new place of habitation, for good jobs do scale up their social mobility. Sometimes migrant
speakers may outnumber the native population of the area, and create an environment favorable for language shift (Fasold, 1984). Although societal bilingualism and the number of speakers of another language are factors that influence language shift, they are often mere results of other existing conditions. For instance, one of the conditions is industrialisation (Fasold, 1984; Fishman, 1977, 1991).

Industrialisation and/or modernisation quite often creates the need for additional language or another language-speaking population which is more adapted to the technological environment that the process generates. The association of a language with modern transportation and communication may also lead to a shift towards the majority language. Resultantly the society in which it occurs, may find that it is only through the learning and usage of an additional language that the populace may have access to social mobility through the resources that industrialisation provides. The resources may include an access to better job opportunities, specialized knowledge required for progress and in general, the higher status and liberties associated with the language.

"In those settings in which either the myth or reality of social mobility is widespread, bilingualism is repeatedly skewed in favor of the more powerful being acquired and used much more frequently than that of the lesser power." (Fishman 1977: 115). While societal bilingualism is a must for language shift, it may be the onslaught of industrialisation and consequent denial of access to resources by those who do not speak a given language that may serve as an impetus to language shift. Fishman specifically notices the amount of American investments in an area as a factor to be considered when examining the spread of English (1977).

Yet another factor promoting language shift and discussed extensively by sociolinguists is the language used in schools and by the government. In order for language shift to occur, the spreading language must allow access to power and resources, and this is achieved primarily through the educational process. It is education that will allow people access to better positions, specialized knowledge and control over human and material resources.

"For language spread, schools have long been the major formal (organised) mechanisms involved..."(Fishman, 1977:116). The school policies may also include the promotion of the cultural characteristics related to a particular language and laying less
stress upon cultural aspects of the natives, including the exclusion of the vernacular in some cases on school premises (Fishman, 1991). The language used in other government agencies is also of some importance because institutional (governmental) support to a language can be essential in its spread or maintenance (Fasold, 1984; Fishman, 1991). "The language that governments use for legislative debate and the language in which laws are written and government documents are issued are also means that can be used to promote a selected language or language variety" (Fasold, 1984: 253).

The language that the government chooses for schools and for communication with its denizens appears to promote language shift if there is no support for the maintenance of the mother tongue. Urbanisation and prestige are two other factors that have been identified as influential in language spread and shift. With industrialisation, there is often a shift away from rural life and migration towards the urban areas.

These urban areas are often the focal points of spread of a language (Fishman, 1977, Fasold 1984), probably because they are also the focal points of economic growth in industrialised societies. Nevertheless, it is in these urban areas that people may also come in contact with the major part of the well educated literate sector of the society that will encourage or bring about organised resistance to the spread of the new language and the prestige associated with it (Fishman, 1972).

A negative socio-psychological evaluation of the language may occur, as the mother tongue loses prestige and is used less frequently in different societal domains and functions, resulting in a kind of social subordination, which may further lead to the native speakers of a language to shift to another prestigious language.

The organized efforts to preserve and defend ones cultural distinctiveness, manifest in the language associated with the community, constitutes its distinctiveness and is considered as a factor that can impede the shift and promote the spread or maintenance of a language. The spread of the cultural characteristics, past traditions and the recognition of the values is normally observed in the lower sections of the society. However, the characteristics sociolinguistic features or the discreteness of the community may not be totally acceptable, but an effort in this direction to convince the speakers that these characteristics are the differentiating cultural features and are necessary in maintaining a distinct identity, helps in the spread and maintenance of mother tongue.
This can be easily done by choosing beliefs and traditions from the past and emphasizing the authenticity and dignity of the same (Fishman 1977). The lower sections of the society are normally seen as the source of these traditions and consequently the source of cultural identity, and have the knowledge and strength to manipulate these, and are able to notice the differences because of their contact with other potential sources. It is this section of the society that may be threatened, if access to human and material resources is limited due to new governmental or socioeconomic changes.

**Language and Identity**

Language and identity are related reciprocally, i.e. language usage influences the formation of identity, and identity in turn also influences language attitudes and language usage. Language and identity interweave and overlap in the human experience, being all but identical. Both language and identity have individual and social dimensions, a private, internal and a public, observable facet, the two facets constantly modifying one another during the course of human development. Language does not simply act as a means of communication but ethnicity, racism, nationalism, community identity and the desire and sentiments of a community may be closely related with the language, thus making it a very complex and convoluted system that involves magnitude, which appears to be far distant from it at first sight.

Both language and identity constantly change and yet are highly stable. Psychologically identity dates back to John Locke (1690) who termed it as ‘the sameness of a rational being’. For Erikson (1968) identity formation has two temporal aspects: a developmental stage in the life of the person and the historical period. The same may be said of a language, which like personality cannot exist except in a social context and is modified thereby and eventually changes, even beyond recognition, or may even die.

Identity and language have cognitive and emotional dimensions. “Language is more than an instrument; among other things, it is also an expression of personality and a sign of identity” (Haugen 1971:288). Whorf (1956) opines that language creates or dominates identity and also shapes and moulds it. Gumperz (1982a:7) holds the view that ‘Social identity and ethnicity are in large part established and maintained through
language’. Language is the “focal centre of our acts of identity” (Le-Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985: 248). Always socially marked, language is “the means by which individuals both identify with others. As a vehicle for a community’s origins, values and aspirations, language becomes as cherished as the ‘precious freight’ of ethnicity which it carries” (Fishman, 1977: 25).

Erikson (1993: 86) points out the case of Indo-Trinidadian states which no longer speak an Indian language but retain the Indian culture. Bayer (1990:101) suggests that in multilingual societies there is a hierarchy of identities. Each group stresses primary attachment to one identity and at the same time stresses differing degrees of attachment for other identities. For example, if one splits the Tamil language and culture into its innumerable variants of language and cultural features, based on social categories such as caste, religion and region, what surfaces is that the single entity of Tamil language and culture is hierarchically structured.

Mukherjee (1980) corroborates in her study that migrant Punjabi Hindus and Bengali communities behave differently in Delhi. Young Bengalis reject completely the idea of total shift and thereby maintain their exclusive identity i.e. they either retain their identity or accommodate partly with the host society, whereas, young Punjabi Hindus feel that their speech communities should completely assimilate with the host society. There was not a single Punjabi, old or young, who felt the necessity of retaining his distinct Punjabi identity. The studies in Delhi city by Rangila (1986) reveal that these communities show a variable degree of maintenance of exclusive identity or the complete assimilation into the host society. According to Srivastava (1987) as well, these studies show a regularity of maintenance of exclusive identity and complete assimilation into the host society. Bengalis in Delhi represent one level of maintenance of exclusive identity, while Punjabi Hindus exhibit the other aspect of complete assimilation into the host society.

In societies where other cultural factors, which act as binding forces, loosen, language tends to become the dominant trait of identity. Pattanayak (1978) points out the conditions under which language becomes a cultural token for the minorities in the Indian context. He points out that, “The minority is constantly under the threat of assimilation.
When under the compulsions of economy, the family structure is loosened, the social organization faces disintegration, the handicrafts and other finer cultural traits of distinctness face extinction, language remains a majority identity marker if not the only one and acts as the only window to the cultural past of a people."

The census in India provides an example of imposed loss of identity, as its data is based on a decision that languages spoken by less than 10,000 people should not be listed and mother tongue should be merged under major languages (Bayer 1990: 108).

The Punjabi speaking Muslims in Pakistan, who at the time of partition shifted to Urdu, have now begun to revive the use of Punjabi. The distinction being made is between the Punjabi speaking Muslims and the Pashto-speaking or Sindhi speaking Muslims. Language is being used as an expression of identity. On the other hand, the Punjabi Hindus of Delhi are prepared to give up Punjabi in order not be identified with the Punjabi Sikhs (Pandit 1978).

Pandit (1977:31) indicates, “Identities are revealed in many ways, one’s social class is indicated by the dress and demeanour, one’s religious identity is revealed by one’s home and the sacred marks and by many other visual clues. Speech does not merely replicate this information, it serves the function of bringing speakers together despite these difference, by allowing adjustments in the social space; it creates opportunities for negotiating identities; the malleability and flexibility of speech makes it an ideal instrument for the performance of this communicative task.”

While comparing language and identity we compare different levels of the structure of culture and language respectively – ethnic identity is more a form of social behaviour while language behaviour represents variable use of knowledge. The language we acquire has an underlying intrinsic structure derived from our mental capacity but realized differently in various languages. We use or perform languages in particular speech community where there exists a shared set of rules for what makes our performance appropriate. We know these rules and when we speak, we try to live up to them; if we have them wrong our culture lets us know it and we make appropriate
adjustments. This is the aspect of language that changes under influences from other cultures.

The behavioural-cultural type of language change does not affect the structure of a particular language. The part of language that changes in relation to ethnic identity is only its actual use aspect. If a person stops speaking Russian that person may still act like a Russian with regard to food, dress, music and so forth and will still believe that Russian is the language of his or her group. The person who no longer speaks Russian may also have retained the higher-level performance aspect of it but may have lost touch with the shared rules of appropriate use in a Russian speaking community.

Therefore, a person may lose one's langue by having substituted another form of linguistic knowledge, whereas ethnic identity may not be lost or transformed. Particular ethnic identity is just one type of cultural behaviour which makes use of general features of cultural knowledge, while linguistic performance is the way we make use of one type of linguistic knowledge. If we lose our ability to behave in a speech community one can still perform linguistically. If we lose our ethnic use of language we can still perform ethnically. Linguistic performance is a manifestation of linguistic knowledge, while ethnic identity is, in contrast, a manifestation of cultural behaviour and ethnic identity is comparatively resistant to change.

Delhi: Historical Perspective

History of Delhi has been the history of struggle for power, starting from the times of the Mahabharatha for the city of Indraprastha, to the present day for a majority in the Parliament. From conqueror to politicians Delhi is the symbol of authority. Every power thirsty group did its best to have a grasp of Delhi and make its mark in the history of India. Delhi has traditionally been the seat of administrative power in India. Its control has passed from one ruler/dynasty to another, beginning with the Mauryas, Pallavas, Guptas of Central India and then to the Turks and Afghans during the 13th to 15th centuries, and finally to the Mughals in the 16th century. In the latter half of the 18th century and early 19th century, the British rule was established in Delhi. In 1911, Delhi
became the centre of all activities after the capital was shifted from Kolkata. It was made a Union Territory in 1956. (Economic Survey of Delhi, 2003-04)

The 69th Constitutional amendment is a milestone in Delhi’s history as it got a Legislative Assembly with the enactment of the National Capital Territory Act, 1991. Today it is considered a state under the Indian Federation. Delhi has been a witness to many a rise and fall of kingdoms. It presents a contrast of the old ruined city of the Imperial Mughals to the ‘Grandeur of India’ during the same period. Delhi is the combination of the old and the modern, existing simultaneously presenting a picture of India’s history of tyranny and freedom. It depicts a picture of Indian culture and its traditions. The metropolis has a demographic structure comprising of different ethnic groups with their varied arts and crafts, cuisines, languages, festivals and lifestyles. Delhi has been a centre of many a historic events. It was the centre of the Great Uprising of 1857. All the activities during the freedom struggle were directed towards Delhi. The tricolour was hoisted for the first time in Delhi. Today it is the capital of modern India.

The Area and the People
Delhi is surrounded on three sides, i.e., in north, west and south by Haryana and to the east, across the river Yamuna by Uttar Pradesh. The major part of Delhi lies on the western part of river Yamuna while only some villages and urban area of northeast and eastern district lie on the eastern side of the river. Its greatest length is about 51.90 kilometre and the greatest breadth is 48.48 kilometre. Delhi’s altitude ranges between 213 and 305 meter above mean sea level. It covers 1,483 sq km area (in which 558.32 sq km area is rural and 924.68 sq km is urban area). The total population of Delhi is 1,38,50,507 persons with 76,07,234 males and 62,43,273 females. (Census 2001)

Geographically, Delhi can be divided into three parts: the Yamuna Flood and Piedmont plain, the Ridge and the Plain. The most significant topographic feature of Delhi is the ridge, a culminating spur of the ancient Aravali hills of Rajasthan, which have perhaps been the oldest mountain ranges in the world.

Delhi is divided into nine districts: North-West with an area of 440 sq km, North with an area of 59 sq km, Northeast with an area of 60 sq km, East with an area of 64 sq km, New Delhi with an area of 35 sq km, Central with an area of 25 sq km, West with an
area of 129 sq km, Southwest with an area of 421 sq km and South with an area of 250 sq km. The climate of Delhi is subtropical, which is greatly influenced by its inland location and continental air, prevailing over most part of the year. The forest cover of Delhi has gradually been increasing as in 1980-81 it was 0.76 percent to the total area of the state, which grew to 1.75 percent in 1994-95 and recently it has increased to 5.93 percent in 2000-2001. The state is fairly rich in its fauna. The lakes around Delhi attract many migratory birds in winter.

Delhi is not only the largest commercial centre in northern India, but also the largest centre of small industries and is well connected by road, rail and air communication with all parts of India. Being a cosmopolitan city, all major festivals of India are celebrated here. Moreover, some tourism festivals have become regular annual events of Delhi. Delhi Tourism and Transportation Development Corporation organises Roshanara festival, Shalimar festival, Qutab festival, Winter Carnival, Garden tourism and Mango festival every year. The Corporation has also introduced adventure tourism activities in Delhi and has also developed Delhi Haat, where coffee and food items of different states are available at one place.

Sociolinguistic Situation in Delhi

For centuries Hindustani continued to be the most dominant language of Delhi. This was, even before it was made the capital of British in 1912. Linguistically Delhi is a polylingual state. The main mother tongues in the state are Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu. Hindi is part of the linguistic repertoire of a majority of the populace in Delhi as compared to the international language of communication English, which is spoken by a small part of the population. Each state recognizes one state language for official purposes, and this position is, indeed, contrary to the multilingual nature of the states. Most of the states have accepted more than one language for official purposes to meet the aspirations of their linguistic minorities. The official language of the state of Delhi is Hindi, which according to the 1991 Census report has 7.7 million speakers in the entire state, constituting 82 per cent of the population. The associate official language of the state is English. Punjabi being second in majority is spoken by 0.75 million people.
constituting 7.9 per cent of the population and Urdu is spoken by 0.51 million people comprising 5.4 per cent of the population. (Census 1991)

The use of other minority languages is usually restricted to a particular domain or range within the state. However, there are safeguards provided to the linguistic minorities by the Constitution of India. A Commission for the Linguistic Minorities has also been constituted under the provisions of the Constitution. The Constitution makes provisions for the use of the minority languages at the district level, Municipalities and Tehsils. Hindi, Punjabi, Urdu, and English are not only taught as subjects in schools but are also used as a medium of instruction in some of them.

There is equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the state. The leaders of the linguistic minorities all over the country have often argued that the imposition of any language qualification in the dominant language as a pre-requisite for public employment is unlawful and illegal. The language policies in the states of India certainly protect the rights of the linguistic minorities. However, it appears important for the minorities to learn the dominant language of their state for their social and career benefits. Kumauni language is viewed as a minority language with a sizeable population in the state. Many minority communities tend to narrow their choice of languages at the school level to English, Hindi, Sanskrit, or some other foreign language and seem to be concerned more about the instrumental values that a language may have beyond the cultural aspect of the community, in which they live. Due to the change in attitude noticed among the people who speak the dominant language of the state as their mother tongue, the texture of Indian multilingualism is changing at a faster pace.

A predominant lack of genuine desire to learn other Indian languages can be noticed in the populace. The laws and constitutional safeguards for the linguistic minorities are effective in protecting their rights, and in maintaining their linguistic identities but the communities themselves have to make an endeavour in developing a better understanding of the overall needs of their community.
Kumauni language is originally spoken in the state of Uttarakhand. This state was carved out of the northern part of Uttar Pradesh, on 9th November 2000. Surrounded by Himachal Pradesh to the West, Uttar Pradesh to the South, Nepal to the east and China to the North, lying in the Central Zone of the Himalayas, the state is spread over an area of 53,483 sq. kms. The total population of the state is 8.48 million, which works out to approximately 0.83 percent of the population of India.

Geographically this state, also renowned earlier as the UP Hills is regarded as a distinction in southeast Asia and is known for its high location, natural resources, and gift of water, hydropower, and fertile soils to northern India. The high altitude mountains covered with perpetual snow have gifted Indians with perennial sources of water flowing through the famous five river systems of Ganga and Kali (Tewari, 2001).

**Settlement pattern in Uttarakhand**

Administratively, the entire state of Uttarakhand has been divided into two divisions of Kumaun and Garhwal, which have in all, 13 districts. Most of the habitats in Uttarakhand are sparsely populated and widely scattered. The location choice of villages is guided by such factors as accessibility to road, nearness to market, availability of fertile land and supply of water. Obviously, because of these attractions, larger size settlements are mostly concentrated in the lower reaches of terai and foothills of Nainital, Dehradun, Haridwar and Udham Singh Nagar. (Census, 1981)

**Demographic structure**

The density of population in the state excluding Haridwar is extremely low i.e. 116 persons per sq. km of area as against 473 persons in UP. Density of population is highest (332 persons) in Dehradun followed by Nainital (227 persons) and the lowest (30 persons) in Uttarkashi. The literacy rate in Uttarakhand, according to 2001 Provisional Census is 72.28 per cent, which is much higher than UP’s average of 45.60 per cent. In case of males, the literacy rate is found to be significantly higher (84.01 per cent). Similarly in case of females, the literacy rate is much higher i.e. 60.26 per cent. (Tewari, 2001).
Migration of people, especially able-bodied unemployed people sharing significantly in the total labour force, has been a regular feature. In fact, the low income resulting from low productivity and lack of job opportunities, are the two major factors necessitating large-scale migration of people from the hills to the plains in search of gainful employment for livelihood and betterment of their families. In the past there appears to have been no study, which could indicate any reliable estimate regarding the rate of migration. However, a survey conducted by the Pantnagar University during 1983 pointed out that about 55 per cent of the total households covered under the survey had migrants. (Tewari, B. 2001).

In spite of numerous odds, agriculture remains the main stay of the population. Infrastructure is a basic need to ensure efficient resource utilisation, increase in opportunities for people to participate in developmental activities and improve marketability. As a social Infrastructure, educational institutions have to play a significant role in improving the quality of human resources. The number of schools per lakh of population was more than the state of Uttar Pradesh during 1994-95 (Mujoo, 2001). Nainital with 79.60 literate rate leads among all districts in the state followed by Dehradun (78.96 per cent). Uttarkashi has the least proportion of literates in the state (66.58 per cent). As regards female literacy, Dehradun district is at the top (71.22 per cent), followed by Nainital (70.98). There are only two districts where female literacy is below 50 per cent, viz. Uttarkashi (47.78) and Tehri Garhwal (49.36).

The population pressure in Uttarakhand has increased during the past decade. The highest density of population has been observed in Haridwar district (612) followed by Dehradun and Udham Singh Nagar. Nainital is placed fourth in the overall population size of the districts. (Census, 1981, 1991, 2001).

Kumaun: Historical perspective

The history of Kumaun is a resume of the main dynasties that ruled over Kumaun and the movements that affected it. Historical patterns in Kumaun are not very distinct from the history of the rest of Northern India because neither the hills nor the high Himalayas have ever been a barrier to cross-cultural movements. The origin of the people in the area is shrouded in ambiguity, but recently discovered artefacts now seem to point to the fact
that the original inhabitants were Kols of the Munda ethnic group. The present day Shilkars are their descendants. A Mongoloid group, the Kirats, were the ancestors of the tribes known as the Shaukas Baurajis, Tharus and Boksas now collectively labelled as Bhotias (Ramesh, 2001). Atkinson and several other historians after him maintain that the Khasas were an early wave of Aryan migrants who settled down in these hills. Though the Khasas are supposed to have played a significant role in later Kumauni history, there is no evidence of any existing group at present that calls itself Khasa.

It is said that in the middle ages Kumaun played host to migrants from Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Bengal, Kanyakumari and Kurukshetra, all of whom managed to integrate totally in to the local culture. It is generally acknowledged that two main dynasties ruled over Kumaun until the British entered the region. These were the Katyuris (eighth to twelfth-century AD) and the Chands who replaced them as the dominant dynasty and are supposed to have ruled from the twelfth to eighteenth century AD.

Som Chand was the first of the Chand kings. When Som Chand became the king and established himself in Champawat, he was a princeling. However, in twenty-one years of his rule, he enlarged his kingdom and the whole of Kali Kumaun (a part of district Champawat) came under his rule. The Khasa rule is supposed to have lasted for two hundred years after the Chands lost to them (Ramesh, 2001).

In the early part of the eleventh century, or 1065 AD, Chand resumed control over Champawat. Gyana Chand became the king, and ruled for 45 years from 1374-1419 AD. Chand maintained excellent relations with the Mogul emperor. During this period of Kumauni history, the Chands were not the only dynasty ruling the area. The Katyuris and the Manboti also had substantial holdings, and wars among them were very frequent.

King Vikram Chand ruled from 1433-1437 AD. After him came another Chand king, until in 1744, the Rohilla Nawab of Rampur, defeated Kalyan Chand’s army and he took shelter in Garhwal. An understanding was reached and the Rohillas left Almora when they were paid a sum of three lakh rupees on behalf of Kalyan Chand. In 1779, the king of Garhwal attacked Kumaun, and, as a result, a Garhwali ascended the throne of Almora. In 1790, the Gorkha Army entered Kumaun and took possession of Almora.

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The Gorkhas conquered Garhwal in 1803. They evolved a highly personalized system of administering justice, which contributed to the sufferings of the populace that they governed. In November 1814, the British army attacked the Nepalese army on several fronts in Garhwal. On 27 April 1815, after heavy fighting, the province of Kumaun was evacuated by Bam Sah, the governor of Kumaun and was attached to the British provinces (Ramesh, 2001).

In 1839, what was originally called Kumaun, but which included Garhwal too, was divided into the two provinces of Kumaun and Garhwal. The terai was formed as a new district in 1842, and in 1892, there was yet another reorganisation. The new districts thus formed were Almora, Nainital, and British Garhwal. The railroad was extended to Kathgodam in 1884, and Raninagar was linked to Moradabad in 1907. In 1915, transportation began from Kathgodam to Nainital, and in 1920, from Kathgodam to Almora.

The Indian Independence movement did not create the same kind of turmoil in Kumaun as it did in the plains. The revolt of 1857 did not touch the hills, as Sir Henry Ramsay was the Commissioner of Kumaun at that time. However, by the beginning of the twentieth century, the national movement began to percolate into the mountains. Newspapers like Almora Akhbar and Shakti began to criticise the British.

In 1917, GB Pant, at that time secretary of the Kumaun Association, led a wider delegation which led to the formation of Kumaun Forest Committee in 1930. The Kumaun Parishad was formed in 1916. Its aim was to house social, political and cultural awareness among the people. The initial thrust was against certain British customs, which the local people had begun to hate. GB Pant launched an agitation under the aegis of the Parishad against the Rowlatt Act (Ramesh, 2001).

On 12th and 13th of January 1921, a movement was launched at Bageshwar by Badri Dutt Pande, Har Govind Pant and Chranji Lal against certain British customs. The Quit India movement stirred the rural masses of Kumaun. The two movements became part of the movement for independence in the Kumaun.

After India’s independence in 1947, Kumaun and Garhwal were officially merged with the state of Uttar Pradesh, but in several respects their individuality was preserved. For instance, their systems of revenue and police administration are distinctive and
different from that prevailing in the plains. However, since opportunities for employment are minimal in hill areas, there was considerable discontent and this fuelled the demand for a separate hill state (Pandey 1997, Ramesh 2001).

Geographical Background
The Kumaun Himalayas extend over 320 km, from river Sutlej in the west to the Kali river in the east. Nanda Devi is the highest peak in these ranges. The Himalayas are often divided into three broad regions – the western Himalayas consisting of Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh, the central Himalayas consisting of Kumaun and Garhwal divisions, and the eastern Himalayas comprising the states of Sikkim, Manipur Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram and the hill areas of Assam and West Bengal.

The Kumaun division till recently comprised of the three districts: Almora, Nainital and Pithoragarh. The new Champawat district has been carved out of these three districts. The Himalyan plates lie to the North, and the foothills of Terai and Bhawar lie to the south. The height above sea level ranges from 180 metres or more along the foothills to magnificent 7000 metres in the snow clad peaks in the north. The entire region is one of great contrast and varying landscapes. The steepness of the slopes as well as the sharpness of the contours is the most striking features of the northern parts. Even more striking is the variety and diversity of the forest vegetation and climate in the mountainous terrain, and the comparative uniformity of the terai plains.

The geography and economy are more closely related in the hill areas than in the plains. There is a close and high degrees of mutual dependence between the environment, resources, population, and development. This four-dimensional relationship is even more important in the hill areas. To meet the requirements of the increasing population pressure, technology is harnessed by man in utilizing the natural resources of land, water etc. Economic development, which can be broadly described as the process of improvement in income and the standard of living of the population, has paced up after the formation of the new state. The main income, which sustains a majority of the rural areas of Kumaun, is partly from tourism and substantially from the
‘money order economy’ that is supported by the Kumauni populace working out of the state.

The migration from hills to the plains is an ongoing exercise. There are persons who have migrated with their entire families to the plains, but in large numbers are also of those who have left their families in the hills. Kumaun houses some of the most scenically beautiful places in the world. The scenic beauty and climate are the main characteristics of the hill areas that attract domestic as well as foreign tourists. The hills present a different type of attraction in different seasons for tourists of different age groups and social backgrounds. There are opportunities for trekking for the younger tourists while the older tourists can take in the mountain views and enjoy the clean mountain air.

Nainital is the jewel among tourist places in Uttarakhand. The district has been attracting tourists for its sheer beauty and serene environs of the lakes. Brisk climate of hill stations of the district is quite in contrast with the enervating heat and humdrum landscape of gangetic plains. The district is a retreat for all seasons throughout the year; it is a refuge from the scorching heat of the summers, enchantment in the autumn, a sport paradise in the winters and an angler’s delight in the spring.

Mass media in Kumaun
Kumaunis could not participate in the 1857 war for independence, as communication was not possible. Feeling the need to resolve the social, economic, and cultural problems, a debating club was established under the auspices of Chand dynasty king, Bhim Singh in 1870. Later, the State Governor Sir William Cuer suggested that in order to build a rapport between the administration and the public, a newspaper should be brought about. Under the editorship of famous educationist B.B. Pant, ‘Almora Akhbar’, the first newspaper was started in 1871.

The inference from the above historical background is that the ancient tribes in Kumaun were the 'Kols' and 'Kirat', which were followed by Khasa tribes, Aryans Katyuri and Chand kings especially), gorkhas, and finally succeeded by the British. Therefore the Kumauni language dialect has developed as a mixture of above languages/tongues (Ruwali, 1994).
General discussion on language

Uttarakhand is a multilingual state, home to several mother tongues: Kumauni, Garhwali, Hindi, Punjabi, Sindhi and Urdu. Kumauni and Garhwali have prominence in Kumaun and Garhwal divisions, respectively. Kumauni, which is the mother tongue of a major part of the population in Kumaun is not used as an official language or medium of instruction in schools. Hindi, which is the lingua franca and is generally preferred by the middle aged and young ones, wins the positive attitude, especially among the educated. The Kumaun province is dominated by Indo-Aryan, Tibeto- Burman and Munda language-families. According to 1981 Census the population of Kumaun was 2.383 million which has gone up to 3.564 million. The population of Garhwal division is 4.919 million. (Census 2001)

The exact number of Kumauni speakers may be difficult to ascertain owing to the fact that majority of Kumaunis are scattered all over the country. The notably intricate history of Kumaun had a strong impact on its language. The variety of rulers who governed the region left an indelible mark on the Kumauni language. English came with the arrival of the British. The history of Kumaun had an impact on the language preferences of the people in terms of day to day interaction and other formal activities. Though Moguls never dominated Kumaun, it can be seen in 'Jehangirnama' and 'Shahnama' that kings of Chand dynasty were on good terms with Mogul rulers in Delhi.

In the midst of 18th century, Kumaun came in touch with Ruhels, as a result of which a number of Persian, Arabic and Turkish words made imprints on Kumauni language. Educationists estimate these words to be in the figure of about 1500. The British arrived in Kumaun in 1815. The language of the court was Persian written in devanagri script and the language used by the judges in decision making was English. Consequently, Kumauni incorporated English, French and Portuguese words along with Arabic and Persian words in its lexicography.

Hindi

Hindi, the official language of the Union of India, is the mother tongue of an estimated 300 million people. Hindi is one of the world’s five leading languages in terms of politics, population and cultural tradition. Hindi can be said as the name of a group of
dialects or a particular standard speech developed out of one of the dialects of the group. It can be divided into five groups according to geographical location from west to east and north to south: Pahari Hindi - Garhwali, Kumaoni; Western Hindi - Haryanavi, Khariboli; Rajasthan Hindi - Marwari, Mewati; Eastern Hindi - Awadhi, Bagheli; Bihari Hindi - Maithili, Magahi and others. Hindi comprises of 49 language varieties. (Census 1991)

Historical linguistics views that the dialects of these five groups stem from very similar earlier forms of speech, rather than from a single parent. The local dialects: Awadhi, Braj, Maithili have been considered important in terms of the history of Hindi literature. Standard Hindi, which is written in devanagari script has emerged out of Western Hindi dialect i.e. Khari boli, spoken in the Meerut region. In addition to its use in the official correspondence at the Centre, Hindi is also used in nine other states viz. Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chattisgarh and Uttarakhand - and Delhi.

There are about 337 million Hindi speakers, constituting 40% of the total population of India. Of the approximate 807 million population, 70 million Indians regard Hindi as a second or third language i.e. 8.7% of the population. Hindi has also emerged as a lingua franca in metropolitan and urban settings in India. (Bayer 2001:44)

Pahari Language
Kumauni and Garhwali languages come under the group of Central Pahari languages. The word pahari means 'of or belonging to the mountains', and is specially applied to the group of languages spoken in the sub-Himalayan tract extending from the Bhadrawah, north of the Punjab, to the eastern parts of Nepal (Grierson, 1916).

The Pahari languages fall into three main groups. In the extreme east, there is Khas Kura or Eastern Pahari, commonly called Naipali, the Aryan language spoken in Nepal. Next, in Kumaun and Garhwal, we have the Central Pahari languages. Finally, in the west are the Western Pahari languages spoken in Jaunsar-bhabar, the Simla Hill states, Kulu, Mandi and Suket and Western Kashmir (Grierson, 1916).

The number of Central Pahari speakers in British India were 1,107,612, according to 1891 Census. Although Pahari has little connection with Punjabi, Eastern and Western
Hindi, and Bihari spoken immediately to its south, it shows manifold traces of intimate relationship with the languages of Rajputana. The mass of the Aryan speaking population of the Himalayan tract in which Pahari is spoken belongs to the Khasa caste.

There is a legend regarding a woman called ‘Khasa’, of which the most accessible version will be found in the Vishnu Puran. The famous Kasyapa, to whom Kashmir is attributed its origin, had many wives, of whom Krodhavasa was the ancestress of the cannibal Pisitasis or Pisachas and Khasa of the Yaksha’s and Rakhasas. These Yakshas were also cannibals and so were the Rakhasas. In Buddhist literature, Yakshas correspond to the Pisachas of Hindu legend. There are a series of legends connecting the name Khasa with cannibalism.

Many references to the Khasas occur in the Puranas. The most accessible ones are in Vishnu and Markandeya Puranas. The Markandeya Purana mentions the Khasas as a mountain tribe. According to the laws of Manu, looking at Khasas from the Brahmanical point of view, Khasas were the offsprings of outcast Kshatriyas. Bharata's Natya Sastra and the Brihat Samhita of Varahamihira ask for one's attention. The former in the chapter on dialect says that, "the Bahiliki language is the native tongue of Northerners and Khasas. Varahamihira associates Khasas several times with the people of Kulu and Kashmiris. In his famous chapter on geography he mentions them twice as being from Eastern India and from the northeast (Grierson, 1916).

Bhattotpala, in his commentary on Brihatsamhita, quotes Parasara as saying the same thing. At present Khakhas of the Jhelum valley and some of the Kanets of hill country between Kangra and Garhwal are the descendants of Khasas.

Grierson further describes that towards the east in Garhwal and Kumaun, the bulk of the population is called Khasia, and these people are universally taken to be Khasas by descent. The principal dialect of Kumauni is known as Khasparjiya, or the speech of Khasas. Gujars entered India together with Hunas in the 6th century AD. They founded the Rajput tribes. They have a distinct language of their own called Gujari, connected with Mewati dialect of Rajasthani.

To sum up, we can say that regarding the Aryan speaking population of the Pahari tract, earliest immigrants were the Khasas, a race probably hailing from Central Asia and speaking an Aryan language. They were followed by Gujars, who invaded India about
the sixth century AD and occupied the same tract—Sapadalaksha. Of these the bulk followed pastoral pursuits and merged with Khasas. Others were identified as Brahman's with Kshatriyas. They invaded eastern Rajputana, and western Rajputana from Sindh, and founded, as Rajputs, the great Rajput states of Rajputana.

Pahari languages, are much more closely related to Rajasthani. This must be due to the Gujar influence. As the Sapadalaksha Gujars came into eastern Rajputana, their language developed into modern Rajasthani. They had settled here among the people, speaking an Indo-Aryan language of the inner group akin to western Hindi. They adopted this language, retaining at the same time many forms of their own speech. The result was Rajasthani, a mixed language in which the influence of the inner group of Indo-Aryan languages weakens as we go westwards. In the north east of Rajputana, in Alwar and Mewat, the influence of the inner group increases.

None the Gujars of the Swat speak mixed Mewati Rajasthani, and not the language of the Sapadalaksha. Gujars, more enterprising than their followers, went on further into the mountains beyond the subnormal tract and are now represented as Gujars of Swat, in Kashmir.

Central Pahari

Central Pahari is the language of the western portion of the ancient Sapadalaksha, viz. of the lower Himalaya between Nepal and Punjab. Grierson quotes Atkinson's second volume *Himalayan Districts*, which describes the ethnic element of the population of this region. "The great mass of the population in Kumaun and Garhwal profess a belief little differing from the orthodox Hinduism of the plains. The existing inhabitants belong to the Khasa or Khastiya race, and speak a dialect of Hindi. There are several facts connected with Khasa's history that whatever their origin may have been, the Khasas have for centuries been under the influence of Brahmanical priesthood" (Grierson, 2001).

The people of Tibeto Burman group inhabit the higher parts of the Himalayas in Kumaun and Garhwal, while Khasas inhabit the lower valleys. Their tongue had the same origins as that of the Aryan languages - Lahnda, Kashmiri, Shina and Khowar. The Gorkhas of Nepal, were themselves Rajputs who claim to have come originally from Udaipur.
Kumauni Language

Kumauni is an Indian language spoken in Almora, Nainital, Pithoragarh, Bageshwar, Champawat and Udham Singh Nagar districts of the state of Uttarakhand, which is at about 1,500 to 2,500 meters from the sea level. It is also spoken in Assam, Bihar, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Nagaland. Central Kumauni language is spoken in Almora and northern Nainital, Northeastern Kumauni is spoken in Pithoragarh, Southeastern Kumauni is spoken in Southeastern Nainital and Western Kumauni is spoken in the west of Almora and Nainital. This language is also spoken in Nepal. The estimated population of Kumauni language speakers in India is 2,360,000 (Ethnologue report, SIL, 1998).

Kumauni language is classified under Indo-European, Indo-Iranian, Indo-Aryan and Northern zone of Central Pahari languages. The language is also known by other alternative names of Kamaoni, Kumaoni, Kumau, Kumawani, Kumgoni, Kumman and Kunayaoni. Kumauni language has a variety of dialects subgrouped under Central Kumauni, Northeastern Kumauni, Southeastern Kumauni and Western Kumauni. The different dialects or subgroups that have been reported are: Askoti, Bhabari of Rampur, Chaugarkhiya, Danpuriya, Gangola, Johari, Khasparjiya, Kumaiya Pachhai, Pashchimi, Phaldakotiya, Kumaoni, Rau-Chaubhai, Sirali, Soriyali. Kumauni language is closely related to Garhwali and Nepali languages.

Kumauni is generally used in the home domain among all ages. The southeast dialect of Kumauni is reported to be 'sweet' while the Central dialect of Kumauni is the most accepted and termed as the standard. The state has Hindi language as the language of education and progress while English is valued as the gateway to success and upward social mobility. Hindi is generally used in towns and markets by most men, the few women who have been to school and school-aged children. The literacy rate in second language i.e. Hindi, is 58% (73% men, 41% women) (Census, 2001). The motivation for the use of Kumauni is not very appreciable. The language is written in Devanagari script and is used in poetry, magazines, radio and television programs. The majority populace of the region comprises of Hindus. Kumauni is also spoken in Mahakali zone and Kanchanpur district of Nepal.
People of Uttarakhand are generally called either Kumauni or Garhwali depending on their place of origin in either the Kumaun or the Garhwal region. Colloquially they are also referred to as Pahari meaning “hill people”. Another category is that of Gujjars, cattle herders who live in the south-western Terai region. Many Punjabis, who migrated to India after partition, along with migrants from the adjoining plains, make up the majority of the Terai population. Nepalis, Bengalis, and Tibetans of Eastern Tibet region (Khampa) have also settled in the state.

Kumaoni and Garhwali dialects of Central Pahari are spoken in Kumaon and Garhwal region while Jaunsari and Bhotiya dialects are spoken by tribal communities in the west and north respectively. The urban population however converses mostly in Hindi. A majority of peoples in the state are Rajput. Hindus form the majority of the population at 85.0%, Muslims form 12.0%, Sikhs 2.5% and Christians, Buddhists, Jains and others about 0.5%.

Central Pahari includes two closely connected languages—Kumauni spoken in Kumaun and Garhwali spoken in Garhwal. Kumauni is the Indo Aryan language spoken in the sub-Himalayan tract known as Kumaun, including the whole of Almora district and the northern part of the Nainital district. In the south east of the Almora district, there is a peak which is over 7,000 feet high and is named Kanadeo, the old name of which was Kurmachala (Kurma means tortoise). The name 'Kumaun' is said to be connected with this word 'Kurmachala'. "Kumauni" is an adjective formed from the word "Kumaun". (Grierson, 1919).

Grierson states, “There are certain well defined peculiarities in Kumauni language. The most important of these is the frequent occurrence of epenthesis or the change of vowel owing to the influence of another vowel in the succeeding syllable.” Therefore, in Kumauni the word chelo, a son, becomes chyala in the plural, the ch getting changed to chya on the account of a following in the syllable /la/. Another marked peculiarity of Kumauni is the tendency to de-aspiration, as in the word pa,r for pa,rh, read.

Ruwali (1994) states that 'In the Bhabar area of district Nainital few number of families speak Kumauni and rest of the population speaks Hindi and other languages. From the linguistic point of view, areas covered up by Bhotia tribes in Pithoragarh and
the Bhabar area of southern Nainital district cannot be included in Kumauni language area.'

**Tibeto-Burman or Sino-Tibetan influence**

Kumauni on its northern borders meets with languages belonging to Tibeto-Burman or Sino-Tibetan languages. Besides, it remained, for some time, under the domain of Tibet as well. As such, many words belonging to these dialects have naturally crept into it. Some of these may be illustrated as under:


**Dravidian influence**

Kumaun region was once occupied by people speaking languages of Dravidian families as may be attested from the following linguistic remnants. But in most of the cases it appears that these words already assimilated from old Indo-Aryan influences and have developed from there through various Middle Indo-Aryan dialects or directly from Old Indo-Aryan e.g. *kurj* ‘house’ Sanskrit Kuti, Malayalam Kuri, Tamil-kure, Kui-kur.” (Sharma, 1985).

T. Barrow in his book *Sanskrit Language* has given a fairly long list of such words. Some of these, which are attested in Kumauni, are as follows: *Kālo=kāla* ‘black’; *kutalo=kutila* ‘crooked’ < Tamil. *Kuta* ‘curved, ‘bent’; Kannara, Telugu *guddali* ‘hoe’; *kut<kutta* –‘to pound’, *kund<kunda* ‘a hole in the ground, pit < Tamil. *Kuntu* ‘pool’; *cupano* ‘to chew, to suck’ < *cumba-* ‘to kiss’ cf. Tamil *Cumpu*, ‘to suck’.

Sharma (1985) states that there are also a few words of Dravidian origin. They seem to have come to Kumauni through Prakrit languages: *Urd* ‘blackgram’ Prakrit. *Uida*, Tamil. *Ulundu*, Kannada, *Uddu*, *karano* ‘to sharpen an instrument’, Prakrit. *Karam* ‘sharp’ Dravidian. *Kara*. Some scholars have found a correlation between Kumauni ‘bad’ Tamil *ketta*. 

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Criterion of dialect

The term 'dialect' refers to the variations in pronunciation, grammar, or vocabulary. Though many criteria have been used for determining the status of a dialect within a speech community, yet most of the linguists tend to concentrate on the criterion of intelligibility, i.e. dialects are those forms of speech variety of a language that differ from one another, but are mutually intelligible without special training. At the point of mutual intelligibility the dialects of Kumauni can be viewed from two dimensions, i.e. lying next to one another and spoken at each end of the language are the former situation, there is hardly any problem of mutual intelligibility at any level. The linguistic expression, but in the latter case, there may be some difficulty at one or another.

Another criterion that needs to be taken into account for dialectal differentiation is the frequency or the particular use of various items, i.e. the same word, though intelligible, may have less frequency in one area and more in another, or in one dialect it may have a general use, whereas in another, it may be reserved for a particular or restricted use.

Dialectal variations

The dialectal variations within a language are always a matter of common knowledge and acceptance, though their accurate and systematic descriptions are meant for linguists. Such differences arising from various historical and geographical reasons are a universal feature of linguistic development and are attested at all the levels-phonetic, phonemic, morphemic, syntactic and semantic—of the structure of a language. Dialectal variations in Kumauni, may largely be assigned to geographical factors, which had made inter-communication difficult among different valleys of the region in the past. Consequently, each valley (along with many other social and ethnic factors) developed its own peculiarities exhibited, at different levels of the dialect spoken in that area.

Kumauni dialects

Sharma (1985) points out different dialects of Kumauni and areas where it is spoken, with minor sub-regional variations, designated by Grierson (1916) and others:
Khasparjia – It is spoken in the centre of the Almora District, including the city, comprising Pargana Baramandal and the adjoining parts of the Pargana Danpur. It forms the base of the standard Kumauni.

Danpuriya - It is spoken in the northern part of the Pargana Danpur and in the southern part of the Pargana Johar.

Phaldakoti – The area of this dialect is the Paragana Phaldakot of Almora District and the adjoining part of Nainital District.

Pachai - It is spoken in the southwest of Almora, adjoining the area of district Garhwal and immediately to the west of Phaldakoti and Khasparja.

Gangoi/Gangoli - It is spoken throughout the Pargana Gangol and in parts of the Pargana Danpur, viz. Dug Patti, and parts of the Pargana Baramandal, viz. Kamsyar Patti.

Kumaiya - Its area is the Pargana Kali-Kumaun and the adjoining area of Champawat and Lohaghat.

Chaugarkhiya - It is spoken in the Pargana Chaugarkha, situated in the north-west of the Pargana Kali-Kumaun. It is nearer to Khasparjia structurally.

Rau Chaubhainsiya – Its area is the southwest hilly part of the district Nainital.

Soryali - It is the main dialect of eastern Kumauni.

Sirali - It is spoken in the Pargana of Sira in Pithoragarh District.

Ashkoti - The area of this dialect is the Pargana Askot.

Chakhatiya - It is spoken in the western part of the Pargana Chhakhata of the Nainital District.

Johari - It is spoken in the southern part of the Pargana Johar.

Darmiya - It is spoken in the Pargana of Darma.

Bhabari - Some people have given a separate name to the speech of the people living in the plains of the Nainital district.

Nevertheless, by any standard it cannot be given a separate name. Because of the fact that the settlers of these areas originally belong to various parts of Kumaun, they speak the dialect of the area from which they have come. As such, in the absence of any homogeneity in their form, these cannot be designated as a separate dialect. Some other names such as Ramgarhiya, Bhimtali, Nainitali, Almori etc. are recorded in the census reports.
Regional uniqueness

The notable peculiarities found in the speech of the various regions, which prompted Grierson (1916) and others to give the above classification of Kumauni is given as follows:

*Khasparjiya*- In fact, Khasparjiya is the basis of the standard or the written form of Kumauni. The notable differences in the present day speech of the Khasparjiya dialect are:

1. The loss of final /o/ and /a/ and reduction of other vowels;
2. Maintenance of /l/ in all positions;
3. Development of Old Indo-Aryan /n/ into /n/ and formative /n/ into /n/.

Re-Grouping of Kumauni Dialects:

An indication of broader groups of Kumauni dialects is found in Grierson’s analysis as well. He suggested the grouping as under:

*Western dialects* - dialects of Almora; Khasparjiya, Phaldakoti and Pachai.

*Central and southern dialects* – Kumauni of Nainital, Chaugarkhia, Gangoli, Danpuriya and Kumaiya.

Literary contributions in Kumauni

Kumaun is proud of having produced a number of intellectuals, some of them are: Pandit. Ganga Dutt Upreti, and Dr. Hem Chandra Joshi (linguists); Pandit. G.B. Pant (statesman), Pandit. B.D. Pandey (journalist-historian); Shri Shailesh Matiani (novelist, storywriter) etc. Kumaun has a rich heritage of various sagas of heroes, demi-gods, romantic tales of lovers and ritualistic songs sung during all ceremonial occasions. Studies, in the past, have been made on the folkloristic and other aspects of Kumauni language. *All India Radio*, Lucknow and Almora, broadcasts programs in Kumauni and Garhwali, especially for the ‘listeners’ service for this region. Also, specific weekly programs in Kumauni and Garhwali are telecast by the doordarshan kendra.

Pioneer works on Kumauni and related studies

Even before the Linguistics Survey of India was prepared, Kumauni had been drawing attention of scholars towards its peculiarities. It was in the year 1900AD that Pandit
Ganga Dutt Haroti wrote a book on Kumauni under the title 'Hill Dialects of the Kumaun 00).

Publications which need mention here are:

*Si Grammar* by M.L. Apte and D.P. Patatanayak, Duke University, 57.

*Addhyayana* (with special reference to dialects of Pithoragarh) by D, 1976.


ay be evident from the above list that most of these works are with the descriptive analysis of this language. Except H.S. Joshi and else has touched the historical aspect of this language.

ledge about Kumauni may be said to be confined to, in the of various features of this language, both synchronically and

ng with its diachronic aspects are those of H.S. Joshi and of K.D.