CHAPTER VI: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In a multilingual and multicultural society like India, continuous movement of people over a long period has resulted in diffusion of linguistic features across language families. One of the significant features of Indian society is the existence of stable bilingual and multilingual communities.

The domain where usually the language is free from any pressure is home. Unless mother tongue is properly maintained, reinforced in children and transferred from one generation to another, there is a chance of adoption of dominant language of the host area as mother tongue. This in turn results in language shift. From the study it is clear that if there is a linguistic group which claims a minority status in other linguistically dominant language area, it always shows bilingual identity in the following conditions.

If there is no facility for using their language in the formal domains like work places, offices, schools, market place etc. If that group is numerically less significant in social, economic and political terms. If that group is geographically isolated to a large extent from their native land. If that group does not want to reveal their identity in the host area. All these factors are relevant to Kumauni population in Delhi. Apart from this, variables like age, education, income, migration, sex and different domains of language use also play an important role in various aspects of language use.

Language use in various domains shows that Kumauni is only used at home and with relatives, and in religious places. The majority language of the area, Hindi is used extensively in all domains other than home and in religious places. English is also used by some but its use is restricted to some domains. Generally, patterns of language use in domains other than home and religious places indicate structural incorporation of another language due to functional and situational needs.

Attitudes towards language have been verified through various questions. The analysis shows that Kumauni speakers in Delhi are very proud of their language. They are friendly towards Hindi language and care for their identity. It is the retention of mother tongue in the home domain and some of the language structure at all levels of grammar that signals the continuity of language and identity of its speech community. Finally, we can say that mother tongue cannot be maintained for a long period only by way of speaking it in the home domain. Mother tongue is maintained when the speakers use it for a wide variety of purposes. They should speak it, write it, work in
it, govern themselves in it, publish materials in it, use it in mass media and they should keep in touch with those who use the same language elsewhere. However, as far as Kumauni Language in Delhi is concerned, the domain of language use is restricted to home and the religious places. Mother tongue is maximally maintained in the home domain and maximum shift is taking place in workplace and peer group. The younger generation is becoming more bilingual day by day.

Both inter and intra-generation patterns of language use can be seen in Kumauni community in Delhi. First generation residents are the native speakers of the Kumauni language and speakers of Hindi as a second language, while second generation residents tend to be bilingual mostly in other two languages viz Hindi and English.

The disappearance of Kumauni is a common complaint among older members of the community. Despite this loss, however, full accommodation to Hindi language has not occurred in the home domain. Several studies show that children acquire the language of their peers, not their parents. Some of the respondents knew their language very well. When asked how comfortable they felt as a Kumauni speakers living in Delhi. One of the respondents said I feel like I fit in Delhi, he feels good, at ease. Almost all sentiments echo, both young and old simultaneously. Some speakers even mentioned that ethnic diversity is one of the things they like about living in Delhi and raising children there.

Detailed ethnographic sociolinguistic research is needed to uncover more precise information about the linguistic forces that are motivating the language of this speech community. Such research may also uncover new societal and linguistic variables that are correlated with language shift, loyalty and language maintenance. Different social forces are at work in different concentration of populations. The research work in Delhi has suggested that educational, societal, political factors merit closer observation in the Kumauni community.

The study has attempted to provide a description of the nature of shift that is undergoing among Kumauni speech community in Delhi. It is apparent that nearly complete language shift towards Hindi language is occurring across friends, religious place and work place domains. However, a partial shift from Kumauni language to Hindi language can be seen as far as the home domain, and neighbourhoods in ghettos are concerned. The assimilation into Hindi language is not yet complete. The results of the study showed relatively little shift from Kumauni language to Hindi
more among youth and adult respondents in the home domain. With regard to the Kumauni language shift it was found, age is the most significant variable, and home domain is the most viable societal domain. These results also suggest that young Kumauni women have assimilated partially to Hindi language in the home and friends' domain, while completely in the other domains. The consequence of the findings is that partial to complete language shift to Hindi may be the default pattern among Kumauni language speakers.

The analysis permits further explanation of community efforts in building up the loyalty and maintenance framework through the accommodative view of integrating and differentiating youth and adult practices in containing the shift to a majority language. The linguistic aspects of this complex socio-psychological process undoubtedly cross the limits of language preference and can be tracked down to code-mixing and code-switching patterns in the speech of youth and adults. The research as well as the community observes two distinct languages, one (Hindi) clearly while the other (English) elusively contending for spread and were seen intertwined in youth-adult communication in miscellaneous ways and different magnitude.

The corroboration of the results of the case study of Kumauni respondents of Delhi against the data obtained under study resulted in reinforcing a silhouette of Kumauni as a culture specific language. The research discusses the role of community and family as a unit and socio-political factors influencing language loyalty, shift and maintenance. In addition, the research also demands a scrutiny of the socio-economic factors responsible for conditioning respondent's verbal repertoire vis-à-vis mother tongue as it undergoes language shift. Eventually, it discusses myriad complex interactions between language policies at the national and community level and demands a cohesive framework to curtail language attrition.

Gender, age, education, income, occupation, settlement pattern, correspond to independent variables while use of Hindi language, language loyalty, language maintenance, attitudes and views towards Kumauni, Hindi and other languages signify dependent variables in this research work. The area or range of this sociolinguistic study has been confined to the Kumauni language speakers, who have migrated over a period of time to the national capital, Delhi.

First chapter delineates the aims and objectives of the present research, and renders statement/justification/limitation of the research work and examines different
theories, models of analysis, process and different factors influencing language shift, loyalty and maintenance and the manner in which the Kumauni community identify itself with Kumauni language.

Second chapter deals with the review of literature related to sociolinguistic studies and other related studies vis-à-vis language shift, loyalty and maintenance, the area i.e. Delhi selected for the research work, its socio-historical and socio-cultural context and the prevailing language situation in the region.

Third chapter describes in detail the different sets of procedures/techniques followed especially for the empirical part of the study. This chapter also explains whether the shift is taking place or not, if yes, partially or completely; and the concerns and the interests of the respondents regarding their mother tongue. It also gives an account of various approaches employed to explain the phenomenon of language shift in a multilingual setting.

Fourth chapter deals with the issue of linguistic variables to observe the orientation of assimilation, if it is there in Kumauni language speakers with respect to Hindi and English language. The analysis of significant data has been done in this chapter with the help of the ideas and theories/models discussed in chapter 1, 2 and 3, to observe and interpret the outcomes. Various procedures were followed in the analysis of the functions represented by the data.

Fifth chapter provides an overall analysis of the data vis-à-vis the linguistic profile, language shift, loyalty, maintenance issues, and the attitudes and views of the respondents. The chapter attempts to focus on the shortcomings as well as the strength in maintaining the mother tongue by migrant population in a multilingual, multicultural setting.

Sixth and the last chapter summarises the whole research work, the processes involved, as well as the outcome of it, the concerns and apprehensions of Kumauni language speakers regarding their mother tongue in context of its present situation. The chapter infers how the research results of this study fit into current sociolinguistic setting, and what are the implications for further research.

The purpose of this research work was to explore and understand the sociolinguistic behaviour related to language shift, language loyalty and language maintenance exhibited by the migrated Kumauni language speakers settled in the Delhi region. The influence of primarily Hindi or other language on the Kumauni language speakers and their identity and patterns of language use in Delhi. In order to
delve into the issue data was elicited from a set of 263 Kumauni language respondents with different age, gender, education, income, occupational background with their dwellings spread across nine districts of Delhi. The data was elicited to examine and understand the issue of language shift, loyalty towards respondent's mother tongue the maintenance patterns exhibited, if any, and also the socio-psychological predisposition in language preference/priority, the changing patterns of language use, and linguistic assimilation.

The research results inferred that there is a partial shift in some domains while complete shift in other domains towards Hindi language notwithstanding the gradual attrition in the use of mother-tongue in all the domains. The maintenance of mother tongue i.e. Kumauni language can be seen in the home domain with the passage of time. Another factor observed is the frequent/occasional visit to home in Uttaranchal, responsible for the maintenance of the Kumauni language. Meanwhile, a gradual partial/complete shift can be observed in the domains excluding home domain where use of Hindi and English language has become normal practice. The multilingual and multicultural setting that India's capital Delhi offers, the migrant community languages are prone to attrition to some extent in different domains against the majority official language of the state Hindi and associate official language English, considered the language of upward social mobility, which is also the language of the developed nations.

Hindi language is noticed as the language of wider communication and national integration, English has developed as a prestige language. The research results confirmed that across gender, and among all age groups there was an apparent preference for Hindi and English language. Although mother tongue is held in high esteem as far as the strong cultural foundations are concerned, English was given the priority in terms of employment and job seeking while Hindi was accorded a status after English Language in hierarchy.

Language use and preference seemed to vary according to sociopsychological variables across different domains. Attributed to societal pressure and priorities, the young respondents demonstrated an affinity towards the use of English and Hindi. The patterns of language use illustrated mother tongue Kumauni being favoured in home domain along with Hindi language. The young educated respondents across gender seem to use more of Hindi and English language. The research work reveals that the attitude of Kumauni language speakers towards Hindi is encouraging.
With the culmination of this research work it is clear the majority languages in Delhi are Hindi, English, Punjabi and others. The Kumauni language comes at a later stage. The existence of Dravidian languages Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam etc., Northeastern languages Manipuri, Naga etc., Indo-Aryan languages like Kumauni, Hindi, Assamese etc., and Indo-Germanic language English makes Delhi a composite linguistic region, marking multilingualism, and a further linguistic enquiry.

Kumauni language speakers maintain loyalty to their mother tongue and recognise it as the marker of their identity. The study concludes that Hindi language is generally used in domains such as friends, neighbourhood, religious place, market place, government offices, and media. Meanwhile, English also seems to occupy different domains except the home domain of the Kumauni community. Looking into the patterns of language use the competence level in Hindi is more compared to Kumauni language.

The research work shows that linguistic identity of Kumauni community cannot be offset by multilingual setting that is Delhi. The respondents believe that language and culture are closely related, but the usage of Hindi in various domains does not pose a threat to their identity/culture. The Kumauni language speaker’s identity basically comprises of the linguistic profile, their customs and rituals, which together constitute the cultural identity of the community. Hindi being the lingua franca is used second to Kumauni language in most of the domains and is accepted by the Kumauni language community.

The respondents overwhelmingly use Hindi which shadows the use of the mother tongue Kumauni in most domains. It seems that the respondents think of Hindi language as the language of national integration.

The research work emphasises Fishman’s point that domains are powerful tools for analysing language preference and language shift. The research results clearly point out that Kumauni language use in home domain is related to mother-tongue maintenance. The research also suggests the relative consequences of a language usage pattern in intergenerational shift which varies across domains. The use of more than one language at home also ascertains shift may occur in a subtle manner from parent’s mother tongue to the use of a different language with their progeny. However, there is a possibility that the children may use both their mother tongue Kumauni and Hindi to address their kids, in turn reversing the process of shift in a particular domain.
Areas of Future Research

More research is still needed on Kumauni speech community settled in Delhi. Many more details were to be incorporated into the present study, which could not be done due to time constraints. Among the limitations of this particular study, is the fact that only the sociolinguistic variables were examined. It is, therefore, expected that Kumauni language still plays an important role in the day to day lives of this community and may be better reflected in some aspects of the phonology. Further research taking into consideration linguistic variables that are similar in Kumauni and Hindi may shed light on the details of the process of language shift, loyalty, and maintenance.

Another important issue for future research concern perception and attitudes. Do these speakers perceive the Kumauni language shift accurately, since they are surrounded by it, despite the fact that they do not fully show it. And, finally, what are the attitudes of others towards the speech of these speakers? Are they perceived as a part of the local populace? Is their ethnicity identifiable by others, based on their pronunciation? If so, what are the phonetic cues that generate such a perception? These are only some of the areas that demand further attention. Research on language shift, in general, and ethnic Kumauni community, in particular, is still in its formative years in various perspectives.