Chapter 1

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The issue of linguistic rights of ethnic minority communities in the world is of immense significance, as violation of such rights leads to conflicts among the linguistic groups in contact. A liberal language planning, which preserves the linguistic rights of ethnic minorities, is associated with stable multilingualism with linguistic diversities. The historical evidence shows that such language planning is able to resolve the ethnic conflicts on the issue of assertion of distinct linguistic identity by ethnic minorities. The right to use of mother tongue in important domains of language use, such as education, administration, mass media etc. is considered an important human right. However, in spite of provisions made by various acts to protect this right of the linguistic minorities, the linguistic diversity is gradually disappearing in many parts of the world. In many multilingual countries, the linguistic minorities are under process of assimilation with language shift into dominant language group. Language contact involves a complex series of social psychological processes, which has implication for group identity formation, language maintenance/shift, intergroup relationship and the nature of bilingualism or multilingualism.

In the multilingual context in India, some minority and tribal language groups had a history of long struggle for assertion of their linguistic rights and identity. For instance, Bodos in Assam had gone through a process of agitation and political negotiation for a period of nearly four decades to assert their distinct linguistic identity. The Bodos are highly concentrated in Kokrajhar district and few parts of Bongaigaon, Darang, Barpeta and Nalbari Districts of Assam. Assamese is the majority community in Assam and its language is widely used in education as well as official transactions at all levels in the state. Through collective assertion of their linguistic rights, Bodos have been able to reverse the process of assimilation into Assamese community in the state. Their movement started with a demand for Bodo medium schools for Bodo children. As a result of their widespread movement, a separate Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) was established in Bodo concentrated areas and Bodo language was introduced as a medium of instruction up to higher secondary level as well as an associate official language. Thus, the Bodo movement is an example of assertive maintenance. It is noticed that the struggle for education in
mother tongue has been a pivotal issue in many linguistic identity assertion movements in various parts of the world like the Bodo movement.

This study examines the nature and dynamics of ethnolinguistic identity of Bodos and intergroup relationship between Bodos and Assamese after the recent socio-political change in the Bodo-Assamese language contact situation in Assam. The study examines the perceived ethnolinguistic vitality, dynamics of intergroup relationship in different Bodo-Assamese contact situations, nature of social identity of Bodo students and pattern of language use among Bodo students. The Bodos are concentrated as majority in few areas of the state. The study investigates the role of different majority-minority contexts of Bodos in perception of own group and outgroup ethnolinguistic vitality, own group language/culture maintenance attitude and outgroup relationship attitude of the two contact groups (Bodos and Assamese) and social identity of Bodos. The study also examines the role of medium of instruction (Bodo medium or Assamese medium) in affecting the dynamics of intergroup relationship and social psychological processes in language contact. An attempt was made in the study to find out the relationship between ethnolinguistic vitality perception (both for own group and for outgroup), own group maintenance attitude, outgroup relationship attitude of the both contact groups and social identity of the Bodos. The study assessed the mutual perception and strategies of both contact groups to examine inter-ethnic group relationship and nature of multilingualism in the state.

1.1 Multilingualism Across the World: Problems of Linguistic Minorities

Bi- or multilingualism is a worldwide phenomenon. It is a result of language contact between two speech communities at the individual level as well as societal level. The bilingual or multilingual societies are characterised by presence of two or more languages with functional relation between each other at an individual or community/societal level (Fishman, 1972). There are many definitions of bilingualism/multilingualism reflecting the multifaceted nature of the phenomenon. In dominant monolingual societies, bilingualism is transitional in nature i.e. a strategy to shift from monolingualism in one language to monolingualism in another language. In context of linguistically plural societies, bilingualism is stable and functional in nature and usually developed as a strategy of maintaining the languages of each community in mutually non-conflicting relationship with functional allocation of each language to
different domains of language use (Mohanty, 1994). In other words, in stable and functional bilingualism, linguistic minority communities maintain their native languages/mother tongues in a non-conflicting way without any pressure of assimilation or shift into dominant language, while using simultaneously the dominant language for different functional purposes. In different societies, the language contact patterns vary as a result of host of socio-cultural forces operating on the interacting groups.

Outcome of language contact are quite different in diverse settings. The early note of Weinreich (1953) showed that when two languages are in contact, there are mutual interferences on the languages and languages do change as a result. But over a long period of contact, the dominant language takes over the non-dominant one, leading to language shift. When the non-dominant language happens to be used only in single contact situation, there is complete loss or death of the language. The distinction between language shift and language loss can be apparent as the language shift refers to changes in the language use, while language loss refers to changes in the language proficiency i.e. the members of the speech community lose the ability to use its native language. As the language shift proceeds, the lack of opportunity to use the native language causes erosion of language proficiency. While the group members lose its ability to use its native language, there is automatically a complete shift towards other means of expression. So both language shift and language loss can be studied as an interrelated process (Fase et al., 1992).

Early western studies showed that in asymmetrical power relationship between the contact languages i.e. unequal or hierarchical functional allocation of languages into different domains, language shift is the norm. However, some sociolinguistic studies in different multilingual contexts have shown that language maintenance also happens despite power asymmetry between contact languages. For example, some Indian linguists have argued that in India, language maintenance is the norm and language shift is a deviance (Pandit, 1977; Mohanty, 1994). In some cases, the contact situation leads to a kind of bilingualism in which the non-dominant minority speech community uses its native language for communication within own group and the dominant language is used for all other instances (Fishman, 1972). In such contact situations, although the languages are maintained, the functional allocation of languages remains unequal.
In a multilingual society, in which stable and functional bilingualism is not exercised or one language is functionally dominant, the minority languages gradually tend to disappear. The minority speech community almost unavoidably shifts towards the use of dominant language in most of its contact with dominant group (Kroon, 1990). In the present multilingual context all over the world, the issue of minority language maintenance/loss and assertion of rights and distinct identity of the linguistic minorities has occupied a significant place. The loss or death of the minority languages and diffusion of ethnic identity in a transitional multilingual context has become the central theme of social psychological study of language contacts. The use of mother tongue in all important public domains of language use; education, administration and mass media, is a basic human right of any linguistic community. Violation of linguistic rights of minorities, to different degrees, across the globe bears potentials for conflict. It is noticed that the assertion of language right and identities are often behind many ethnic uprising in various parts of the world.

Status of Minority Languages in the World

The linguistic diversity in the present multilingual world is gradually disappearing. There are approximately 6,500 to 10,000 spoken languages in the world (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). The number of sign languages is also quite large. But most of these languages are under the pressure of assimilation or shift. The world’s largest linguistic diversity is maintained in New Guinea island, which contains over 1,000 languages (about one-sixth of world’s total) with only 0.4% speakers of total population of the world (Nettle & Romaine, 2000). Researches reveal that such diversity is maintained because the speech communities are self-sufficient and the structure of the society is egalitarian - free from dominance dependence set-up. In other words, these speech communities have access to several languages, but there is no hierarchy in functional distribution of the languages. But the extent of multilingualism is also varied there. Each group knows the language of the neighboring group. While the number of language groups is large, only the bordering areas tend to be multilingual (Nettle & Romaine, 2000). At the current estimate, 90% of the world’s spoken languages are under threat of extinction. Only the languages with more than one million of speakers (200-250 languages) are estimated as ‘safe’. It is estimated that only 600 languages in the world are likely to survive by the end of this century (Krauss, 1992). The amount of death of aboriginal languages in Australia
supports this prediction. In Australia, out of 200-250 languages with some 600 dialects, at least 50 languages are now extinct, while another 100 face imminent death (Suter & Stearman, 1988). Crystal (1999) drew attention to the alarming rate at which languages are disappearing. According to him, of world’s estimated 6000 languages, 3000 would be lost in next 50 years (Crystal, 1999). The disappearance of languages seems to be extremely rapid in the areas of European colonization (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). California has about 50 indigenous languages out of which 20 have already died (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). In Canada, although use of different immigrant languages has been increasing, the native languages of aboriginal people are falling rapidly to the onslaught of English. The 43 native languages out of 53 were classified as being on the verge of extinction as shown in the House of Commons Standing Committee Report on Aboriginal Affairs, 1990 (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000).

There are several different ways by which the languages are maintained or lost. Haugen (1972) remarked that a language thrives to the extent that there is a functioning community speaking it, and passing it to the next generation. One cannot understand how languages are maintained and why they die without an ecological view of the society and the social forces which maintain or destroy the languages. When the pattern of language maintenance changes, there is an underlying social upheaval caused by environmental, political or economic issues (Nettle & Romaine, 2000). One way a language can disappear is that when the people who speak the language gradually decrease in number and cease to exist. The language loss by population loss has been extremely common in western countries. When the Europeans expanded into America, they unwittingly released a wave of epidemic disease that killed 50 to 90 percent of Native Americans. Countless languages were lost at that time. But there are many cases, where language loss takes place without the decrease in numerical strength of its speakers. In this case, language death occurs by a shift into a new language from the native language. There are two sub types of language shift. The first is where the shift is forced. Many times the minority languages are replaced by the dominant group’s language, either by enslaving, forcing them into a subordinate role or by seizing the land and resources in which the minority communities are based. The dominant language oriented education and economic policies of a country, where the minority languages get no functional use, kill the minority languages (Nettle & Romaine, 2000). The second type of language shift is a voluntary shift. In this case, the minority communities realize that they
would be better off by speaking a language other than their native one. Several researches find that the minority parents often kill their languages by not speaking them to their children and using the dominant language for instrumental benefits, as competence in the dominant language has become linguistic capital for economic and political power (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). Such shift tends to isolate the minority bilinguals from their mother tongue. Singh (1995) finds three main factors behind the language identity suicide (the term was used for voluntary language shift/loss by some researchers during 80s). First set of factors are political, social and demographic factors, such as small numbers of speakers, low frequency of visit to native place, occupational shift, level of education which leads to social and economic mobility, etc. Secondly, there are cultural factors, such as lack of mother tongue institutions, cultural practices performed in another language and ethnic identity defined by factors other than mother tongue, etc. Finally, the linguistic factors include unwritten variety of mother tongue, no literacy in mother tongue etc. In a transitional subtractive type multilingual society, the educational policies try to bring the minority children to the mainstream society by schooling in dominant language. Parents also facilitate this by educating their children in the dominant language other than mother tongue because of instrumental benefits. The required competence in the dominant language is largely produced in institutions of formal learning i.e. the schools.

The direct and main agents of linguistic genocide are mostly identified as formal education and mass media. Researches have pointed out that the formal educational institutions (schools) can alone kill the minority languages (Krauss, 1992; Fishman, 1998). The representatives of World Conference on Linguistic Rights, 1996, Barcelona pointed out that punishment of a child for speaking his/her native language in formal educational institution is the beginning of destruction of that language. In 1998, five Finnish speaking students in Sweden went on strikes because they were forbidden to use their mother tongue Finnish during the break hours in school. The dominant monolingual orientation in the developed countries is associated with several such processes which lead to loss of linguistic diversity (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000).
Education of Linguistic Minorities

In the field of education, the issue of using minority languages as medium of instruction assumes great significance. In most of the multilingual societies, the education through the dominant language is perceived as the main vehicle for linguistic minority children to obtain parity with those living within mainstream cultural and economic system. But at the same time, a substantial number of linguistic minority children under function in such educational system (Atkins, 1985; Fradd, 1985; Martin, 1999 Edward, 1998, Mikes, 1986 etc.). The extent to which languages are threatened or endangered, depends upon three main factors - number of speakers, whether or not children learn the language and the official state policies (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). The state policies create framework under which parents and children have to choose a language. If the minority children are not given opportunity to learn and be proficient in their mother tongue, the language will gradually disappear. So, formal education in which the mother tongue is not used as medium of instruction is considered as the main factor of language loss. Since the minority’s languages are not widely used in education, the languages get little opportunity to be developed. The educational language rights are therefore the most important linguistic human rights for maintenance of linguistic and cultural diversity (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000).

One of the main factors for educational success is choice of medium of education. The major focus of language education programs all over the world is on preparing the students of limited proficiency in the school language to cope with the school instruction. Various studies show that the students not having full command over the language or medium of schools, cannot be expected to progress in school work at the same rate as other children of their age. But for the minority children, bilingualism is a necessary choice. A language maintenance program is launched for linguistic minorities in western countries under which the linguistic minority children can voluntarily choose to be instructed in their mother tongue, in classes with minority children of own mother tongue group, where there is a provision to learn the dominant language as a second language through a bilingual teacher (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000).

Many theories support the logic behind the policy of mother tongue education for minorities. James Cummins (1979) by his excellent research work in this field came to conclusion that haste in placing students in the instructional programs, where English is the only language, may be detrimental to the mastery of English as well as
academic achievement. According to him, the language learning environment that promotes additive second language learning is built on the accepted principle that instruction in the second language following adequate development of mother tongue competence maximizes cognitive and linguistic development. The academic success of the learner is dependent upon the ability to use language in context-reduced situation through the school instruction in mother tongue of children. Cummins (1979) ‘linguistic interdependence theory’ suggests two types of linguistic proficiency - basic interpersonal communication skill (BICS) used in context embedded communication such as home communication and cognitive academic linguistic proficiency (CALP) that enables a child to deal with context reduced cognitively demanding text and to use language for cognition. According to him, a high level of interdependence exists between two languages through transfer of cognitive academic competence from mother tongue to the second language. So the instruction in a second language should not be given until the child achieves cognitive academic linguistic proficiency in his/her mother tongue. The proficiency in second language depends upon the skills in cognitive academic linguistic proficiency in the child’s mother tongue.

Though it is a fundamental human right of linguistic minorities to use mother tongue as medium of instruction, most of the minorities in the world do not have access to this basic right. A few European countries have maintenance program for some immigrant minorities. In many countries, the program is struggling to survive. Australia does not have any maintenance program for its indigenous children under its state financed educational policy (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). Some dual language immersion programs in USA provide the linguistic minority children with 50% of school instruction in their mother tongue, while simultaneously offering scope to the dominant monolingual children to learn non-English minority languages. The main benefit of such programs for linguistic minorities as alternative to maintenance program is that they can acquire sufficient proficiency in the dominant language which is essential for their survival in the mainstream society. Such immersion programs foster proper academic achievement of minority children through the school instruction in their mother tongue. It also increases the minority children's interaction with dominant language peers at school and ends the linguistic isolation, as the minority speakers are no longer segregated from the dominant language speakers. A bulk of researches raises some questions after reviewing success and failure of such
programs in education of linguistic minority children. Among the issues raised are the
quality of instruction in the minority language, the effect of the programs on
intergroup relation, and ultimately how they fit into the relationship between language
and power and may affect the society (Valdes, 1997). In terms of multicultural
perspectives, there are mainly three types of bilingual educational programs in
different parts of world (Mohanty & Perregaux, 1997). Firstly, the dominant language
oriented programmes in which main emphasis is laid on developing broader linguistic
skills in the major official languages in schools. The languages covered in these
programs are the languages of power groups or the dominant languages and the
linguistic competence with which the minority children come to schools is totally
ignored. The second type of bilingual educational program is minority language
oriented program. With due consideration to increasing economic and political
migration of minority immigrants to the western countries and school failure of
children of these minority immigrants, these programs focus on mother tongue
instruction to these children, as a step towards promoting education in minority
languages. The main objective of this type of program is to promote transitional
bilingual education to facilitate transition from mother tongue learning to the
dominant language learning in the schools (Baker, 1993). The third type of bilingual
education program is integration oriented which seek to use and develop the home
and school languages in a complementary way in education of linguistic minority
children (Mohanty & Perregaux, 1997).

Ethnic Identity of Linguistic Minorities in the World

Language is involved in the process of ethnic group identity formation. Taken to
its extreme, it is asserted that the loss of the minority language would entail a total
loss of ethnic identity and political separation is sought to protect the linguistic and
cultural diversity (O’Reilly, 2003). By speaking a particular language, one allows
oneself to be identified socially with a particular linguistic group. Usually, groups
occupying a power position in social structure apply their languages as one of the
criteria for upward mobility. Their languages are used in all significant public
domains. Such linguistic groups may be numerically minority, but called linguistically
dominant groups because they show all the characteristics of social and political
power superiority (Fishman, 1978). In such contact situations, dominant groups often
have decisive authority in the field of education, administration, politics and economy
and impose their languages in all these domains. The upward social mobility of minorities is, ergo, dependent upon the command over the dominant languages. Such power asymmetry often leads to assimilation process for minorities. In such case, the minorities are left with choice between assimilation or resistance and assertion of own linguistic rights. In recent years, many linguistic minority groups with their own history and culture started political resistance to such dominant language oriented language planning in various parts of the world (Dorian, 1979; Nelde, 1987).

Language is one of the important mobilizing factors in struggle for identity and national recognition of minority/indigenous people. It is central to cultural and ethnic identity of most groups. The right to naming one’s own world, having right to define how one sees oneself and rest of the world, is realized through language (Fishman, 1989). Control over maintenance of own language, maximizing its official use is a vital concern of the minorities who seek more cultural rights and struggle for power and resource of the countries (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). This struggle is based on the realities of unequal power relations. The relationship between language and group identity is not static. It varies as a function of power relation between the groups and their level of economic and social development (Sachdev & Bourhis, 1990). When people shift to another language and give up entirely their own language, it has always nearly been due to a local history of political suppression, social discrimination, or economic deprivation (Dorrian, 1999). Assertion of linguistic identity is the struggle against such suppressions and discriminations.

The relationship between separate political identity, nation building and language revival is evident from large number of reviews of intergroup conflicts around the world including Israel, Belgium, etc. (Sachdev & Bourhis, 1990). In Israel, the Hebrew language revival was directly related to the establishment of the State of Israel, which was considered to be a dead language just half a century ago in Palestine. The relationship between language and nationalism is very close. The objective need for cultural homogeneity of modern nation-state concept creates a common linguistic medium, standardized mainly by state sponsored educational program (Anderson, 1991). When the nation and the state are conflated or a state is amalgamated to a nation, the language and culture of majority of the nation become civic culture of the state in a traditional nation-state framework (May, 2001). The minority ethnic languages and their speakers are of lower status than the state language and its speakers, which bears a potential threat to state (O’Reilly, 2003).
Language can emerge to play an important symbolic role when the political, socio-economic conditions are favorable to a revitalized nationalism, or it can act as a reminder to the members of an ethnic group of their membership and play a causal role in nationalistic feeling as well (Edwards, 1977). The survival or decline of minority languages depends upon how the linguistic homeland gets integrated into a nation. The national conflicts are precipitated when the nation-states ignore the demands for greater cultural and linguistic autonomy of minorities (May, 2001).

Conflict over language has become part of all kinds of political struggle in the world. Language has been used as a strong tool for fomenting division and conflict of Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian and Montenegrin identities and states (Schmid, 2001). In Northern Ireland, the political development in mid 90s brought official recognition to Irish language. Due to a nationalist political struggle, there has been improvement in funding of Irish medium school and cultural activities. The demand for promoting the Irish language was an important means of assertion of Irish identity and political change (O’Reilly, 2003).

Tomic (1992) shows that how Macedonian minorities in Australia improved their group status through language maintenance strategy. The linguistic revitalization is being used as an instrument for improving the status of the Macedonian minority group. Paulston (1986) suggests that ethnic movements affect the rate of shift to a much slower extent and span many more generations.

Some scholars argue that demand for language rights is an initial reflection of a separatist movement in search of more political and economic power. The case of Quebec is frequently cited as an example of it. The French speakers in Quebec have long felt their survival as a distinct group was threatened by the demographic and economic omnipresence of Anglophones. Their movement originated with the issue of enabling French Quebecers to participate fully in the advanced industrialized society of North America. The French Quebecers were aware of threat to French language by coexistence of English as English was a language of business and upward social mobility. As a result, successive Quebec government intervened the issue through language planning action by passing the Charter of French Language (bill 101) The bill recognized the use of French language in all domains including the language of schooling. The bill initiated negative response from the English speaking population and majority of them emigrated from Quebec to Anglophone provinces of Canada. After the bill178 to protect bilingualism (simultaneous use of English) in all
the domains - from commercial domain to education, the linguistic insecurities among the French Quebecers became more intense and aware of their minority status within the wider North American setting. This induced strong preparation for Quebec independence movement. Thus, the rise of linguistic identity and conflict for separatism invites international interest due to status of both English and French as international languages of business transaction. The linguistic conflict has been directly coupled with francophone demands for greater economic and political power within their province (Sachdev and Bourhis, 1990; Bourhis, 1994).

The importance of political struggle in establishing languages is revealed in Scandinavian history. What Scandinavians call Norden- the North, consists of five sovereign nations, three are central (Denmark, Sweden, and Norway) and two are marginal (Iceland and Finland). Between them, they have six official languages of German origin and none of these is a minority language today. The speakers of these languages were exposed to increasing pressure of English as a channel to the outside world. Consequently, movements for linguistic autonomy arose in these countries, partly under the influence of established pattern of national linguistic sovereignty and partly through the ideology of national identity as taught by the German romantics. By the end of 19th century, the famous Swedish academy and ministries of education of the respective nations, under advice from committees of linguistic and pedagogical specialists took active measures of maintenance and revival of their languages. Thus, by the end of 19th century, the Scandinavians established national language norms in which the general policy of all the school system was to unify their people by compulsory teaching of their standard languages and denial of English and German language dominance in education and administrations (Scandinavian Review, March 1978, special issue on minorities, New York).

In Belgium, there was a conflict over the linguistic rights of minority Flemish speakers that turned into divisions at political levels. The French people played authoritative role throughout Belgium and the dominance of French language was prevalent in all domains, political, economic and educational domains till the Second World War. The Flemish elites rebelled against the French dominance and demanded for enactment of new laws to give equal status to Flemish with French in education and administration. To the Flemish community, dominant use of French language in their concentrated areas was perceived as threat to their cultural and linguistic integrity and sprung up with assertion of their linguistic rights and separate identity
(Bourhis et al, 1979). In Britain, the Welsh speakers started a similar movement for separate Welsh political identity with the issue of Welsh language revival. They started their revolt against dominance of English by demands for establishment of Welsh medium schools and use of Welsh language in electronic media in Welsh concentrated areas (Bowie, 1993).

Review of language movement and ethnic conflicts throughout the world shows that disclamation of cultural, linguistic, economic and political rights of minorities are the cause of such conflicts in the modern world. The minority language rights are essential for maintenance and extension of democracy, its stability and integration in the society (May, 2001; O'Reilly, 2003). Denial of such rights leads to loss of diversity and, in some cases, intergroup tensions, conflicts and movement for linguistic and cultural revitalization. The Indian scenario is not much different despite some special features of its multilingualism.

1.2 Multilingualism in India

India is a diverse multilingual country, with around 1652 mother tongues, and a large number of dialects which have been classified 300 to 400 major languages. Out of these languages, 22 languages are constitutionally recognized official languages (Constitution of India, article 343 to 351, VIII Schedule, after the 100th constitutional amendment, December 2003) along with English (the associate official language), 104 languages are used for radio broadcasting as well as adult literacy programs and 87 for print media (Mohanty, 2006). These languages belong to four major language families i.e. Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, Tibeto-Burman and Austro-Asiatic. The verbal repertoire of most of the speech communities in India consists of more than one language/dialect. There is not a single state where one language is exclusively used in all domains (Pandharipande, 1992). Widespread multilingualism in India is evident in all aspects of Indian society. More than 50% of districts in India have at least 20% of the total population (26% according to Chaklader 1981) belonging to linguistic minorities. The language categories of India are mother tongues, minority languages, tribal languages, regional languages, scheduled languages, official languages and the national language. Each category except the national language is plural in number and varies, depending upon the political dimension - negotiations and decisions (Annamalai, 2001). The 1961 census of India had grouped 1652 mother tongues into 200 languages. There are over 500 tribal
communities who speak more than 150 languages. At present, each state in India fully exercises linguistic autonomy where the official language of the state (usually the language spoken by the majority community and other dominant groups) is used along with two associate languages, either Hindi (as declared as a national language) or English for administrative transactions (Pandharipande, 1992). Table 1.1 shows the total population and percentage of speakers of schedule languages in India, 1991 census. In the table, revision in total number and percentage of Hindi speakers is given since earlier Maithili was grouped under Hindi. There are bulk of mother tongues grouped under these languages and ninety-two other minority languages with population of more than 10,000 speakers each, are not included in the VIII Schedule or second language (Census 1991).

Several languages spoken by over one million people were not included in the VIII Schedule of the Constitution. The implicit criteria for including certain languages under the VIII Schedule are as, i) literary traditions and script of their own, ii) spoken by a sizeable number of people in a particular region, iii) political concessions (Sindhi Nepali Manipuri etc), iv) being a classical language of culture and heritage and also a resource language in modernizing the major literary languages (Sanskrit) (Krishnamurti, 1995).

The functional and complementary relation between languages at the individual and community levels is characteristics of Indian multilingualism. In the western countries, the use of dominant language of the region in significant domains of social life is the norm. The minority’s languages are mostly restricted to domestic use. In India, the functional distribution of languages in different domains of daily life activities helps languages to coexist in a non-conflicting relationship. The political dimension of language functions in India is reflected in categorizing the language into mother tongue, minority language, tribal language (spoken by indigenous people of the country), regional language, official language, scheduled language, national language etc. The membership in each category and its resultant functional position are determined not only by the demographic position of the speakers, but also by various political and historical factors (Annamalai, 2001). The language categories are not mutually exclusive. A scheduled language may not be an official language or a non-scheduled tribal or minority language may be newly included into the VIII Schedule of Indian Constitution as, Bodo (0.144% of total population), Maithili (0.92%), Santhali (0.62%) and Dogri (0.01%) have recently been included under VIII
Table 1.1 Scheduled Languages of India:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scheduled Languages</th>
<th>Total no. Of speakers</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hindi</td>
<td>329,505,517</td>
<td>38.93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bengali</td>
<td>69,595,738</td>
<td>8.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telugu</td>
<td>66,017,615</td>
<td>7.87%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marathi</td>
<td>62,481,681</td>
<td>7.45%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tamil</td>
<td>53,006,368</td>
<td>6.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urdu</td>
<td>43,406,932</td>
<td>5.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarati</td>
<td>40,673,814</td>
<td>4.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kannada</td>
<td>32,753,676</td>
<td>3.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malayalam</td>
<td>30,377,176</td>
<td>3.62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oriya</td>
<td>28,061,313</td>
<td>3.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjabi</td>
<td>23,378,744</td>
<td>2.79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assamese</td>
<td>13,079,696</td>
<td>1.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sindhi</td>
<td>2,122,848</td>
<td>0.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepali</td>
<td>2,076,645</td>
<td>0.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Konkani</td>
<td>1,760,607</td>
<td>0.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipuri</td>
<td>1,270,216</td>
<td>0.15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kashmiri</td>
<td>56,693</td>
<td>0.01%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sanskrit</td>
<td>49,736</td>
<td>0.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maithili</td>
<td>7,766,597</td>
<td>0.92%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bodo</td>
<td>1,221,881</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dogri</td>
<td>89,681</td>
<td>0.01%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Santhali</td>
<td>5,216,325</td>
<td>0.62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Census of India, 1991)

Note: Figures are based on mother tongue returns in 1991 census (which did not cover the state of Jammu and Kashmir). Hence, the figure for Kashmiri language is based on earlier Census. The total number and percentage of Hindi language speakers is revised since Maithili was grouped under Hindi in 1991 census.
Schedule (after 1991 census). A minority language may become an official language of the state while retaining its minority position for example, Urdu in spite of being a minority language has got the status of second official language in U.P. On the other hand, the scheduled languages such as Kashmiri, Dogri, and Nepali etc. are not yet recognized as official language of the respective states. A minority language may get majority status due to political changes accompanied by demographic changes, such as, when a state is created as a new administrative and political unit within the country. For example, the Mizo language retained its label of being a tribal language irrespective of the change in function when it was separated from Assam, in fact a regional language may not be an official language of a state despite having a majority status e.g. ‘Kashmiri’ in Kashmir (Annamalai, 2001).

Constitutional Provision to Safeguard the Minority Languages in India

The Constitution of India guarantees fundamental rights of minority communities to preserve their distinct languages, scripts and culture under Article 29 and religious and linguistic minorities also have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their own, under the provision of Article 30. The states have the duty to provide education in the mother tongue to the children of linguistic minorities at least at the primary stage [Article 350 (A)], equal treatment before law (Article 14) and non-discrimination (Article15). It is stipulated in Article 29 that any Indian citizen cannot be denied admission into any educational institution governed by the state on the ground of language (Basu, 1988). Under Article 120, any member of parliament can use his/her mother tongue on the floor of parliament, but if the member uses any one of the scheduled languages, simultaneous translation facility is provided. For the Union Public Service Commission, every candidate has the right to choose any one of the scheduled languages as modern Indian language paper. Article 345 states that ‘one or more languages in use in the state’ can be declared as languages used for all or any of the official purposes of the state. The President of India has the right to direct the state for a language to be given official status, if such demand comes from the speakers of that language who form a substantial proportion of that state (Article 347). Article 346 “provides that the official language of the Union (Hindi or English) shall be the official language for communication between the Union and a state or between the states inter se”. Article 350 provides for “every
person to submit a representation for the redress of any grievance to any authority of the union or a state in any of the languages used in the union or the state, as the case may be” (Krisnamurti, 1995). Thus, with the preservation of minority languages, the Constitution of India seeks to strengthen the functional multilingualism in India (Annamalai, 1995a).

Changing Scenario of Multilingualism in India:

The sociolinguistic research on multilingualism in India is naturally concentrated on the language maintenance or functional distribution or communication pattern. But the studies show that the multilingual scene in India has been gradually changing. The minority languages, tribal languages or the languages of weaker/smaller sections have been in conflict with the majority language of the region under a variety of socio-political conditions. The changes are often related to the change in the role of language in social mobility (Hasnain, 1997; Khubchandani, 1997a). Now many minority languages seek protection from unfavorable domination of the majority/regional or state languages. The ideology of assimilation seems to be at the back of such language planning in India (Gupta & Abbi, 1995). The makers of our Constitution sought to maintain functional multilingualism by selecting a list of major or dominant Indian languages that will take over gradually the main public domain of language use, such as education and administration. This language policy has inculcated a linguistic deprivation among the minority linguistic communities whose languages are branded as ‘minor’ or merely as ‘dialects’ and being in path of complete shift or language death (Gupta & Abbi, 1995). There are many ethnic groups in India which either have completely given up their native languages or currently in the process of a mother tongue switch over (Srivastava, 1989). Several tribes such as the Bhil, Bhumiji, Gond, Ho, Kortha, Lodha, Mandari, Mahili, Karux etc. have been under the pressure of linguistic extinction. Annamalai (1990) had observed on the census data that half of the tribal population in India has lost their mother tongue. The assimilative trend seems to be leading the language shift towards dominant language of the state (Aggarwal & Gupta, 1998). Kurukh speakers in Bihar, Orissa, M.P., West Bengal (Ekka, 1979); the Okkaliga-Kannadas in Madurai, Tamil Nadu (Ignatius, 1987); the Lahandas settled in various parts of North India (Thakur Dass, 1987) etc. are examples communities with such language shift. Identifying the conditions in which the minority mother tongues are maintained and in what
conditions and settings these are shifted or lost has become an important issue of sociolinguistic researches in India.

The functional domain of the minority languages/tribal languages has been restricted only to homes and ingroup communication. The languages of these minority communities had been maintained over several centuries due to their isolation from the mainstream population. But their gradual interaction with the dominant/majority language group requires the knowledge of the majority language in their region. The education policy of the state to promote education among these communities though the medium of the dominant regional/state language to bring them into the mainstream society accelerated the speed of learning the majority language among these communities. Gradually, the minority linguistic communities have started accepting the majority languages as a tool for upward social mobility in the society and the shift towards the dominant language has become rapid. Studies by Biligiri (1969); Karunakaran (1983); Khubchandani (1983) etc. have pointed out that due to lack of script, paucity of teaching materials, small number of speakers and ‘functional retardation’, the tribal languages are rapidly swept away by majority dominant languages (Pandharipande, 1992).

During last decade, researches on multilingualism in India have mainly focused on the trends of minority groups’ assertion of their distinct linguistic identity. In reaction to the increasing dominance of majority language communities, the minority linguistic communities have started to organize themselves and assert their rights and identity. The history of language movements of both tribal and non-tribal linguistic groups in India has revealed a link between language and ethnic identity (Abbi, 1997). These movements for separate political identity (e.g. Jharkhand, Gorkhaland etc.) prompted researches to re-examine the concept of homogeneity through one language as sole criterion of organizing a political unit (Abbi, 1997). The assertion of language rights such as demands for the use of different mother tongues in education and administration and the movement for the inclusion of non-scheduled languages in the VIII Schedule of the Constitution are some of the manifestations of the assertive trends for ethnic identity on language dimension. The language movements and agitations of various kinds may be interpreted as the minority and marginalized people’s resistance to the dominations of the powerful majority languages or a resistance to acceptance of inferior ethnolinguistic status (Aggarwal & Gupta, 1998). The successive Census reports of 1961 to 1991 reveal the tendency of minority
speakers asserting own language identity by shift towards mother tongue from the other dominant languages. For example, from a total of 17 persons in the 1911 census, the number of Sadri speakers in Bihar increased to 365,772 in 1961 census. In 1991 census, the number shot up to 1,569,066. The same trend can also be noticed among other linguistic minorities like Bodos in Assam in 1991 census shot up to 1,221,881 from 28,619 in 1981 census and the number of declarers of Santhali mother tongue speakers changed from 4,332,511 in 1981 to 5,216,325 in 1991 census.

The degree of language shift towards major regional language among minority tribal communities in India varies in different states. There is a strong tendency among the tribes of northeast region of India to maintain distinct identity based on their indigenous languages. In the northeast region, the tribal language speakers are a 'powerful' minority and have now become quite conscious of their ancestral dominance in the region few generations back. Recently, with the relatively autonomous political set-up, many of these tribal languages in the region have been used in main public domains and consequently, the pressure of language shift in the region has become lesser (Khubchandani, 1992). The percentage of population claiming their distinct mother tongue is quite high in the region (83-89 percent). In the central belt states (Orissa, M.P., Maharashtra), the force of retaining the indigenous language is rather subdued. The non-tribal mother tongue identity in this region is claimed by only 45 to 75 percent. In most of the southern states (A.P., Tamil Nadu, Kerala), the ancestral language identity gets merged with the dominant language. In Sikkim, Bihar and West Bengal, there is a coexistence of tribal and non-tribal languages and identity. The non-tribal mother tongue identity is claimed between 24 to 40 percent. The majority of the population has retained their ancestral languages (Khubchandani, 1997).

The recent resurrection of linguistic identity among many linguistic minority communities, specially the tribal communities, is gradually developing into a pan-tribal movement (Khubchandani, 1992). The growing sense of insecurity and distrust of aliens etc. are some of the significant aspects of the tribal movement, which finds expression through separate identity assertion agitations such as Bodoland, Jharkhand etc. The parameters of linguistic homogeneity and absolute majority, as introduced by State Reorganization Commission in 1956, were later conceded in granting seven separate statehood to tribes of North eastern states like Mizoram to Mizos, to Garos combined with Khasis Maghalaya etc. The struggle for the present Bodoland,
Gorkhaland etc. has called for a re-examination of the concept of linguistic homogeneity as the sole criterion of organizing a political unit. The Jharkhand region comprises 22 districts (major parts of Bihar and some parts of West Bengal and M.P.), covering nearly 11 million tribal populations. A distinct identity has emerged among them around the lingua franca Nagpuria by carving out a regional consensus over their Austric/Dravidian mother tongue identities. The reorganization of states by State Reorganization Commission (1956) was primarily based on the principle of linguistic homogeneity, but could not work beyond a point because of the formidable complexity of Indian languages and their regional distributions. In 1960, Maharashtra was bifurcated into two states because of two distinct linguistic communities – Marathi and Gujarati. Same bifurcation happened in Punjab in 1966. Punjab was divided in two parts – Punjabi Suba and Haryana due to conflict between Sikh who identified themselves as Punjabi speakers and the Hindus identified as Hindi speakers (Khubchandani, 1992; Dua, 1986; Dua, 1981). Different linguistic groups in India have shown a very diverse set of social and political responses to language contact.

The Social Psychological Processes in Language Contact in India

In order to explore the social psychological process in language contact mechanism in India, researches have examined the nature of bilingualism in different language contact contexts. Pandharipande (1992) did a close examination of social psychological factors behind the shift of minority languages and revealed a correlation between the attitude of the speech community towards the languages and culture and the degree of shift. The greater the degree of assimilation of the speech community with the dominant culture, the greater the degree of transitional bilingualism, and higher the degree of shift of minority languages to the majority/dominant languages. There are correlations among social psychological factors e.g. attitudes regarding identity adopted by minority communities, bilingualism and the degree of language shift. The attitude of some tribal communities e.g. Santhali in Bengal and Bihar is towards maintaining a linguistic and cultural coexistence with the dominant majority group which leads to development of stable multilingualism, whereas some other minority communities such as Bhils of central India developed assimilation attitude and views it as a strong tool for their upward social mobility. The third group of tribal community e.g. the tribes of Kerala prefers to be isolated from the dominant group and maintains its own linguistic identity.
Some researches note that bilingualism in India is an adoptive strategy, leading to a stable pattern of functional bilingualism. Such bilingualism has been characterised as a first incremental step in the direction of societal multilingualism (Mohanty, 1994; 2000). This stable form of non-conflicting bilingualism is evident in the conditions where languages have been relatively free from a clear-cut dominance-dependence, high-low status dichotomies. The use of languages in different domains of communication tends to reduce conflicts between the languages in contact. The sociolinguistic survey in Orissa among the kond tribal and non-tribal villagers show that bilingualism in tribal and non-tribal contact promotes better social integration with positive social identity, whereas, the contexts in which there has been a pressure for complete linguistic shift to the majority language leads to social disintegration (Mohanty, 1994). The study among the bilingual kui-Oriya and monolingual Oriya Kond tribes in Phulbani district of Orissa shows that there is a difference between the attitudes towards language contact among bilinguals and monolinguals. The Kui-Oriya bilingual Konds showed better integrative orientations in comparison to the monolingual Konds. At the same time, the non-tribal oriya bilinguals also displayed a better integrative attitude towards the Konds as compared to their monolingual non-tribal counterparts. So the language contact situation is characterized by positive ingroup identity along with positive attitude towards outgroup language maintenance. The bilingualism in such contact situation seems to be stable and leads to social integration.

Many sociolinguistic studies in India have examined the issue of the convergence among linguistic minority groups living in the midst of majority groups. Convergence as a linguistic process is transference or diffusion of linguistic features of one language i.e. mother tongue (L1) into another (L2). It is not necessary that convergence is unidirectional in or only one language is affected by transference or diffusion. The studies among Konkani in Kornataka, Saurashtri in Tamil Nadu have revealed that when the languages differ in status in terms of population or power, or both, the convergence is unidirectional towards the language of higher status. On the other hand, some other studies in southern India revealed that such convergence is bidirectional particularly when there is no difference in status (Annamalai, 1995b). Convergence takes place when there is stable bilingualism. It is a process of reducing linguistic distance between two languages of the bilinguals. (i.e. homogenizing two grammars). When one of the languages is dominant, the dominated language
converges towards the dominant. In Tamil Nadu, the languages such as Saurashtri, Marathi, Telgu and Kannada spoken by the minority communities converged towards Tamil language. In the Kupwar village in Maharashtra-Karnataka border, Marathi the language of commerce, schooling and administration in the area, has converged in certain respects towards Kannada; the language of majority landowners, and conversely, Kannada has converged towards Marathi in certain respects (Gumperz & Wilson, 1971).

The researches on the complex multilingual situation in India have revealed a confrontation among the dominant majorities and linguistic minorities despite the functional distribution of the languages into different domains of use. The present multilingual situation has gradually aggravated the feeling of linguistic deprivation of linguistic minorities and also encouraged them to assert strong loyalty for maintenance of their language and culture. It is therefore essential to study the complex language problems of linguistic minorities in India at socio-cultural and political level.

1.3 Social Psychological Analysis of Language Contact

There is invariably a strong relationship between language and social identity. In language contact situations, such identity and maintenance/shift of languages are subjected to a host of social psychological and sociolinguistic processes. There are different theoretical approaches to analyze the conditions under which distinct social identity of minority linguistic groups is maintained and the patterns of intergroup relations in such conditions. Some of the major approaches are briefly discussed.

Ethnolinguistic Identity Theory:

Giles, Bourhis and Taylor (1977) explored the factors affecting the relationship between language and social identity and proposed a theoretical model of ethnolinguistic vitality and ethnic identity of ethnic minority communities. The theory emphasizes the role of language in formation of social identity and ethnic group relationships. Giles et al. (1977) applied the theory of social identity and intergroup relation, developed by Tajfel (1974) to ethnolinguistic identity of subordinate or minority group members in intergroup contexts. According to Tajfel’s theory, social comparisons are made on some valued dimensions, which are important to establish
favorable comparison with the outgroup for achieving positive social identity. It is suggested in the theory that individuals have a desire to belong to the group, which gives them satisfaction and pride through membership. The members of a subordinate group whose social identity is inadequate may be aware of the cognitive alternatives to the existing status relationship between the groups and motivated to change the intergroup situation in an attempt to attain a positive social identity. According to Giles, ethnic group identity is important for individuals as they attempt to make themselves favorably distinct on valued dimensions, such as language. This process of achieving a satisfactory and secure social identity can enhance their self-esteem.

The main factor affecting ethnolinguistic identity is ethnolinguistic vitality, which refers to the socio-structural characteristics of an ethnolinguistic group that “makes a group likely to behave as collective and distinctive entity in intergroup situations” (Giles, Bourhis & Taylor, 1977). The vitality is gathered from three sets of factors, which are as follows:

1) Status: The status variables are those, which pertain to a configuration of prestige variables of the linguistic group in an intergroup context. The more status a linguistic group is recognized to have, more vitality it can be said to posses as a collective entity. Under the status variables, economic status (degree of control a linguistic group exercises over the economic life of its nation), social status (degree of esteem attributed to the group by the outgroup), socio historical status of the group as a collective entity, language status - within/Outside (the degree to which its language is recognised) are counted.

2) Demography: The demographic variables are related to the sheer numbers of group members and their distribution throughout the territory i.e. distributions and concentration of population/speakers. The ethnolinguistic groups whose demographic trends are favourable are more likely to survive as distinctive and collective entity.

3) Institutional Support: It refers to the use of the language in formal and informal settings. The vitality of a linguistic group seems to be related to the degree to which its language is used in various institutions of government, education system, religion and business etc.

(A taxonomy of structural variables affecting ethnolinguistic vitality is shown in figure 1.1)
Figure 1.1 Taxonomy of Structural Variables of Ethnolinguistic Vitality

Besides the objective indices of vitality, Giles et al. (1977) also suggested that individual’s or community’s belief in or perception of ethnolinguistic vitality will also affect the nature of intergroup relationship in a language contact situation. According to Giles et al. (1977), the perceived vitality and the objective vitality provide the base of ethnolinguistic identity. The social comparison process starts on these ‘vitality factors’. In such comparison process, the ethnolinguistic group might search for a positively valued distinctiveness from the outgroup. If the perceived vitality (subjective ethnolinguistic vitality, Bourhis et al. 1981) in comparison to the outgroup is low, the linguistic group members develop negative ingroup identity and try to assimilate to the outgroup. There is usually an isomorphic relationship between the indices of objective vitality and subjective vitality judgments. Bourhis, Giles, and Rosenthal (1981) argue that using such a framework, speech communities can be roughly classified as possessing low, medium or high vitality and demonstrate its application in identifying and comparing the types of ethnolinguistic group in different cross-cultural contexts.

Acculturation Model of Intergroup Relations

In several of his writings, Berry (1990, 2003) has presented a model of intergroup relations dealing with the psychological process of acculturation. The model has been shown to be relevant for understanding the outcomes of language contact (Mohanty, 1994).

The model analyses the strategies and outcomes of intergroup contact. First of all, Berry distinguishes between acculturation and psychological acculturation. Acculturation refers to changes in the original culture of the group while psychological acculturation is the changes in behaviour of the group members at individual level. The psychological changes are referred to variously as ‘behavioural shifts’ by Berry (1980), ‘culture learning’ by Brislin, Landis and Brandt (1983) and ‘social skills’ acquisition by Furnham and Bochner (1986). During the process of acculturation, societies become culturally plural, i.e., people of different cultural backgrounds live together and form a multicultural society. In many cases they form cultural groups, which are unequal in power (numerical, economic or political). The term cultural group is used in this model to refer to existing and participating groups during acculturation process. The power asymmetry between the groups is indicated
by use of terms ‘dominant’ and ‘non-dominant’ groups. Berry (1990) defines four elements of inter- culture interactions:

i) Contact between the interacting cultural groups in a continuous manner.
ii) Dynamics or process of contact,
iii) Changes in the cultural and psychological phenomena as a result of such contact.
iv) The relatively stable outcome of such contact.

The strategies of acculturation are related to mainly two major issues:

i) Cultural identity maintenance – to what extent the maintenance of distinct cultural identity is strived for.
ii) Contact and participation – to what extent the individuals should become involved in other cultural groups or remain primarily among themselves (Berry 1990).

These two issues are approached on an attitudinal dimension represented by positive-negative (‘yes’ or ‘no’) responses to these issues. There are four probable outcomes identified as a result of different acculturation strategies:

Integration - when the members of both acculturating groups seek to maintain their own cultural identity along with a positive (attitude) relationship with the other group.
Assimilation – when the members of one group do not wish to maintain their distinct identity and seek positive relationship with other group.
Separation/Segregation – when the members of a non-dominant group or minority group value holding on to their original cultural identity and at the same time show negative attitude for interacting with the other groups, separation is the outcome of contact. When this mode of acculturation strategy is encouraged by the dominant group, the outcome is segregation.
Marginalization – When there is little interest for maintaining own group cultural identity as well as having relation with others. When the loss of cultural identity and isolation from the dominant culture is imposed by the dominant group situation, the marginalization process can be described as ‘deculturation’ or ‘ethnocide’ (Berry, 1990).

(The four outcomes of different acculturation strategies are shown in figure 1.2)

Attitudes indicating any of these four alternatives and the actual behaviours exhibiting them together constitute individuals’ acculturation strategies. Individuals’ preferences for one acculturation strategy over others vary, depending upon three other issues. First, although there may be actual social forces for one particular strategy, there can be variations according to the context. In private spheres, more
Figure 1.2 Four Varieties of Acculturation Outcomes in Culture Contact Situations

cultural maintenance and less intergroup relationship may be sought than that in public spheres. In explicit multicultural societies, individual's personal preference is more for integration than in assimilationist societies. Second, during the course of development, individuals explore various strategies; eventually adopt one that is more useful and satisfying than others. Third, an individual's or group's preferred acculturation strategy may not be permitted by the dominant group. For example in explicitly assimilationist society, the adoption of integration strategy may be constrained because of a national ideology that promotes a single culture and identity in the nation state.

Within the framework of this model, the sociolinguistic outcomes of intergroup language contact situation can be studied. When the members of the linguistic groups in contact involve in integrative relationship, a stable form of bilingualism is developed with language maintenance consequence. In such case, the languages of both groups coexist in a mutually complementary way with functional allocation of languages into different domains of social life. In assimilation process of language contact situation, the resultant bilingualism is transitional in nature with language shift consequence. In case of separation type outcome, the minority linguistic group shows a strong feeling of linguistic nationalism and tends towards fostering a distinct linguistic identity. The segregation type of outcome is reflected in isolations of minority languages from different domains of language use.

Model of Ethnic Relations

Schermerhorn (1970) proposed a model of ethnic relations in which he analysed the conditions under which the minority ethnic groups are integrated/assimilated to or segregated from the dominant mainstream society. This model of ethnic relation is based on the consideration of the nature of contact situation, the attitudinal reactions of minority or the subordinate and the majority or the supperordinate groups. According to Schermerhorn (1970), the nature of integration of minorities into mainstream can be explained in terms of three sets of variables. These are:

i) The nature of interaction - The conditions under which the contact between two groups has been brought about, such as migration colonization etc.
ii) The degree of enclosure - The degree to which the subordinate or minority groups are separated from different social institutions.

iii) The degree of control - The extent to which the dominant groups have control over the minority group’s access to scarce resources.

The model takes into account both attitudinal reaction of minority and majority groups towards each other. The trends of interaction based on these three factors may be of two types:

Centripetal (Cp) trend - The interacting groups accept common values and lifestyles and are motivated to have increased efforts and participation in achieving mutual goal.

Centrifugal type (Cf) - the interacting groups seek to maintain own language, religion and culture etc as separate from those of the other group.

The Cp trend on the part of both groups leads to assimilation outcome. In language contact situation, the outcome is language shift. The minority group voluntarily gives up its own language in favour of the majority language by going through a process of transitional bilingualism. The Cf trend on both part leads to cultural pluralism with language maintenance. In such orientation, the minority linguistic group tends to maintain their linguistic distinctiveness by preserving its language. This is also supported by the dominant group, which favours the preservation of distinct identity of minority groups. So such congruent Cf leads to stable bi- or multilingualism with language maintenance. In case of Cp trend by the minority group and Cf the majority group, the contact outcome is segregation which may lead to language shift specially when the language of the subordinate group lacks a great tradition. Finally, Cp trend by the majority group and Cf by the minority group leads to forced assimilation.

Clement’s Model of Second Language Proficiency:

Clement (1980) developed a model of communicative competence in a second language. The model gives a social psychological analysis of language contact outcome since it takes into account ethnicity and contact between the individual and second language community. The model posits two levels of social motivational processes - primary and secondary – that influence communicative competence in a second language. The primary motivational process is defined by the antagonistic interplay of the individual’s affective predisposition towards the outgroup culture
(integrativeness) and the fear of losing own group language and culture, while using and learning outgroup language or the second language (fear of assimilation). Labrie and Clement (1986) hypothesized that these two dispositions interact subtractively i.e. 'integrativeness' minus 'fear of assimilation'. This net primary motivational tendency leads to secondary motivation for developing contact with outgroup or the second language group and developing communicative competence in the second language. The degree of secondary motivation depends upon the quality and frequency of contact between the individual and the second language group. Clement (1984) attempted to integrate the concept of perceived ethnolinguistic vitality into the model. It was hypothesized that the perceived ethnolinguistic vitality of the second language influences integrative tendencies in a positive and monotonic manner. The relationship between the perceived ethnolinguistic vitality and the fear of assimilation is conceptualized as being more complex. When the first language group is perceived to be dominant, fear of assimilation is not experienced. The fear of assimilation increases as the second language group crosses over the equality threshold and becomes dominant. The fear of assimilation decreases when the second language group becomes so potent that the individuals actually wish to become assimilated. Clement's model takes into account a host of social conditions in language contact. But it is directed at explaining development of second language proficiency in contact situations.

Hutnic (1991) has discussed several sociological and psychological perspectives in respect of ethnic minority identity. She points out that the early conceptualisation of ethnic minority identity were primarily assimilationist in orientation. However, in multi-ethnic societies, it was realized that distinctiveness of ethnic identity tends to persist over generations despite a dominant social policy of assimilation. This gives a soft assimilation perspective, which suggests ethnicity can eventually disappear into a melting pot of a new cultural identity. The idea of melting pot as a theory of inter-ethnic relationship has also raised the question in view of the fact that the core of ethnic identity is often found to be highly resistant to change under assimilationist or melting pot pressures. This has given rise to emergence of pluralistic view of ethnicity, which acknowledges non-conflicting coexistence of multiple ethnic identities within a society.
According to Hutnic (1991), there are two different (even unrelated) aspects of ethnic minority identity—self-categorization strategy and style of cultural adaptation. Based on these components, she has proposed a quadric-polar model for the study of ethnic minority identity. According to this model, based on ethnic minority identification and the majority group identification, different styles of cultural adaptation may be identified. This model is similar to the cross-cultural model proposed by Berry (2003).

**Identity and Social Movement Participation**

Social movement participation is complex form of social behaviour as it involves participation in collective action to solve a problem by people with common purposes. According to a prominent social psychological definition (Toch, 1965), a social movement represents a collective effort by large number people to solve a problem, which they perceive as common in them. Some recent social identity theories provide answers to the questions of when and how people join social movements or form them. It should be understood as efforts by large number of people, who are defined by themselves and by others as a group, to solve collectively a problem that they feel they have in common and which is perceived to arise in an intergroup contact context (Simon, 2004).

The social psychological perspectives suggest that an articulation of different levels of analysis is required to understand this complex social phenomenon. The macro-level analyses focus on the social structural antecedents of social movements. This level of analyses identifies the social structural cleavages involving asymmetry in status or power of the contact groups. Further, the micro-level analyses identify the psychological experiences of the group members in such social structural cleavages. The social structure needs to be transformed into psychological experiences; feelings of discontent, motives, actions, further transformed into a collective action or social movement for bringing change in the social structure. In order to understand these macro-micro and micro-macro levels transformation (i.e. how the social structure gets into individuals and how individuals eventually act on social structure), a meso level of analysis is required. This level is the main domain of social psychology. It focuses on the immediate context of interaction. It is argued that collective identity formation is a mediating process that connects social structure (macro-level) and
psychological experiences (micro-level) and further transforms these into collective action to initiate macro-level social change. The collective identity is strengthened by awareness of common fate, problem and collective strength by the individuals. The collective identity finally facilitates the social movement participation (Simon, 2004).

To sum up the discussion so far, it is seen that ethnolinguistic vitality model suggests that strengthening of objective and subjective vitality will lead to formation of positive ingroup identity based on indigenous language and culture of the group. The model also predicts that the strength of the vitality factors and positive ingroup identity are likely to lead to linguistic and cultural maintenance of minority groups. Thus, when the indicators of ethnolinguistic vitality show a positive upward trend, the members of the minority group are increasingly more likely to have a favorable attitude towards maintenance of their linguistic and cultural distinctiveness. In terms of Berry's model (1990, 2003), this can be seen as a positive response valuing maintenance of cultural and linguistic identity of one's own group. In terms of Schermerhorn's model (1970), such an outcome can be characterized as Cf (centrifugal) trend on the part of the subordinate group. A close look at the models of Berry and Schermerhorn shows that with positive trend towards maintenance of linguistic and cultural distinctiveness, the possible outcome of intergroup relationship in a contact situation would be moving away from assimilation in the direction of either integration or separation/segregation depending upon the reciprocal reaction of the subordinate group or the extent to which the minority group seeks to maintain a positive relationship with the majority group in contact. Thus, the dynamics of the ethnolinguistic vitality help to predict language maintenance/shift outcome as well as the nature of intergroup relations.

Researches on the evaluation of ethnolinguistic identity take into account the language usage in terms of the speakers' attitudes, motives, perception and group solidarity. Giles and Johnson (1981) proposed a number of factors influencing the salience of ethnolinguistic group membership including; a) perceived ethnolinguistic vitality, b) perceived group boundaries, and c) multiple group membership. Motivation for a positive social identity has been shown to be clearly involved in process of language divergence (accentuating linguistic difference between ingroup and outgroup) and maintenance. Researches showed a positive relationship between perceived ingroup vitality and self-reported language maintenance attitudes of ethnic
communities in variety of public and private settings (Bourhis, 1983; Bourhis & Sachdev, 1984). Giles, Rosenthal and Young (1985) studied how ethnic groups cognitively represent some of the societal forces impinging upon them through their vitality perception. By utilizing the concept of vitality and its measurement instrument (the SVQ), the researchers analysed the own group and outgroup socio-structural positions perceived by minority Greeks and majority Anglo-Australian. The study provides strong empirical support for the social psychological reality of the concept of ‘perceived vitality’. It has shown that in objective reality the majority group exercises more power and institutional support for its language. The study shows an indication of the previous argument put by various studies (Clement, 1980; Giles & Byrne, 1982) that perceiving own group minority position with minimum level of vitality vis-à-vis dominant outgroup leads to development of negative own group ethnic identity and also leads to assimilation of the group into the dominant outgroup, thereby, inhibits proficiency in distinctive language or dialect of the minority group. The study by Labrie and Clement (1986) also verified the importance of vitality as a determinant of second language proficiency.

The study by Sachdev et al., (1988) on vitality perception and integration effects among Chinese Canadian communities suggested that the relationship between perceived vitality and language maintenance is, in all likelihood, mediated by factors such as ethnnolinguistic identity, intergroup discrimination and drawing power of the dominant group’s language and culture. In the study, the first generation Chinese Canadian and Canadian born subjects of Chinese origin were given the subjective vitality questionnaire and a sociolinguistic questionnaire concerning self-reported usage and evaluations of Cantonese and English in different domains. The perceived vitality reflected the objective estimates of high EC (English) and low vitality of Cantonese on demographic and institutional support and status factors. Self-reports and evaluation of language use reflected the dominance of English language in public setting, but Canadian born Chinese agreed less than first generation Chinese Canadian about Cantonese usage in home and the Church. Overall, vitality perceptions of succeeding generations of Cantonese speakers were among the most significant determining factors of language usage and group identification and were useful in understanding language proficiency information. Cantonese was used and evaluated most favorably by bilingual first generation Chinese Canadians who strongly
identified themselves as Hong Kong Chinese and spoke Chinese along with English fluently.

McNamara (1988) explored language maintenance and shift in Israeli immigrants in Australia. The study investigates the Israelis perception of the new intergroup setting in which as immigrants they find themselves on the social categories salient within it. It explored how the transformation of social identity in altered social context is accompanied by language shift. Being migrant in Australia, Israelis share low status and power. Unlike other ethnolinguistic groups in Australia, the Israelis have little exposure in their Hebrew language, like they have very few educational institutions, and other religious and social institutions in their own language and their perceived ethnolinguistic vitality was low. The Australian Jews are almost assimilated into the Australian mainstream norms and become English speaking Jews. As a result, there is a rapid shift to English from Hebrew language of immigrant Israelis.

Social identity and language maintenance is context dependent (Lewis, 1996; Michael Chi-keung Kam, 2001; Hogg, 1996). Clement and Noels (1992) suggested that when an individual is given a choice, he/she would prefer to identify with the group of greatest ethnolinguistic vitality and likely to provide positive social identity. Studies by Camilleri (1990) reveal that the social status and educational use of minority contact language in multicultural settings are important determinants of linguistic identity strategies. Lewis (1996) examined the language maintenance strategies of seven K’iche speaking communities by analysing socio-economic, demographic and political data within the framework of ethnolinguistic identity theory (Giles & Johnson, 1981; Giles et al., 1991). The communities had different combinations of ethnolinguistic identity factors and the differences in language maintenance levels could be related to the differences in demographic, institutional supports, status and subjective vitality factors. The communities were found to be at different levels of language maintenance in spite of an existence of intact diglossic relationship between Spanish and K’iche language. Michael Chi-keung Kam (2001) found that ethnic Chinese students in Sydney and Hong Kong had different relative ethnolinguistic vitality under different language contact contexts. The ethnic Chinese students in Sydney were expected to have higher frequency and quality of contacts with English speaking people, and they had higher communicative competence in using English. Whereas, students in Hong Kong used English only in school settings.
Besides, the acquisition of English was the survival need for ethnic Chinese in Australia. So, in Australian context, the outgroup language maintenance and achievement was related to low ingroup ethnolinguistic vitality as well as high integrative and instrumental motivation of the Chinese students. Findings of Sachdev et al. (1998) suggest that ethnolinguistic identification of teachers play a significant role in their evaluation of speech style of linguistic minorities in UK in which Indian sub-continental accent was perceived to be less intelligible speech style of ethnic minority group.

The learning of the dominant language, when there is a frequent exposure to it, is often a transitional step towards assimilation. Landry and Allard (1992) verified this in the study with Anglophone and Francophone majority and Francophone minority students from native language schooling in Canada. They concluded that complete additive (or functional) bilingualism involved — a) a high level of proficiency in both communicative and cognitive academic aspects of both the languages, b) maintenance of a strong ethnolinguistic identity and positive beliefs towards one’s own language and culture, while holding positive attitudes towards the outgroup’s language and culture and c) the opportunity to use one’s own language in all important domains, not in less valued social domains of activity. In its reverse context, the bilingualism tends to be transitional or subtractive with linguistic and cultural assimilation. Bilingualism tended to be subtractive for all minority Francophone groups, as they had less ethnolinguistic vitality i.e. low perceived vitality as well as objective vitality. The individual network of linguistic contacts (INLC) in both native and the outgroup language was correlated with beliefs in ethnolinguistic vitality, ethnolinguistic identity, self-reported use of both the languages and cognitive academic linguistic proficiency and oral communicative competence in the native as well as outgroup language.

The cross-cultural model of acculturation developed by John Berry and Sam (1997) was empirically supported by large number of cross-cultural researches. It has been revealed within the framework of the model that stable or functional/additive bilingualism and language maintenance can be understood as a reflection of integrative relationship between the linguistic groups in contact (Mohanty & Perregaux, 1997; Del Pilar and Udasco, 2004). Triandis (1985) suggested the applicability of the model in understanding the relationship between different linguistic communities in Malaysia and Singapore.
A large number of studies have been done on the acculturation strategies of immigrants, indigenous communities and different ethno-cultural groups to the mainstream culture of their respective contexts. The studies focused on the acculturation strategies of immigrants inevitably concluded that integration happens to be the most preferred mode of acculturation of immigrants in various parts of the world (Berry et al., 1989; Krishnan and Berry, 1992; Sam, 1995). In a series of studies in Canada, Berry et al. (1989) found that among the first generation Hungarian-Canadian, separation was the second most preferred acculturation strategy, while assimilation mode was preferred among the second generation. Among the Korean, Portuguese immigrants etc. integration or a desire to maintain a substantial part of their cultural heritage and identity in the society of settlement was very much preferred. Sam (1995) revealed that among Third World immigrants in Norway, about 20 percent adolescents’ acculturation strategies (whether assimilation, integration or separation) could be accounted by their perception of their parents’ attitudes to cultural acculturation. Two studies among Asian (particularly Pakistanis and Indians) revealed that they adjust psychologically very well in spite of poor integration to the British society (Aslam et al., 1978; Cochrane et al., 1977).

A considerable amount of acculturation research has focused on acculturation strategies of indigenous people all over the world. These researches have shown that a good deal of impact of acculturation on indigenous people is found in Asia, Africa and Oceania. However, an increasing trend among the indigenous people all over the world is seen in terms of survival of own culture or resistance to assimilation into the dominant culture. It is noted that during acculturation, indigenous peoples are often subjected to policies of segregation and assimilation. The increasing attempt of dominant groups to alter beliefs, values and behaviours of indigenous people has resulted in forced assimilation. The most common results of such intergroup contact are the marginalisation, deculturation, loss of language, identity and survival skills of large number of indigenous people. Through segregation, they are kept away from the participation in the mainstream society (Berry, and Sam, 1997; Sinha et al., 1992).

Under melting pot policies, ethnic groups in many plural societies are likely to follow acculturation strategy of separation rather than integration or assimilation. A study by Berry et al. (1989) on a sample of French-Canadian living outside Quebec showed that separation strategy was more likely than integration, assimilation and
marginalization. Separation attitude was higher among those who identified themselves as French rather than French Canadian. In a similar study, Clement et al. (1993) found that French Canadian living outside Quebec generally preferred integration where, French linguistic identity was associated with a preference for either integration or separation and English linguistic identity was associated with a preference for assimilation. Separation strategy was preferred mainly because of intergroup conflict and acculturative stress. The study of dynamics of intergroup relations in multilingual societies is of immense significance in language planning. It is also significant to analyse the nature of ethnolinguistic identity and process of language maintenance and shift. Studies by Azurmendi and Espi (1994) reveal that intergroup tension, linguistic divergence and rejection of outgroup language can change nature of ethnolinguistic identity and development of multicultural identity with positive changes in ethnolinguistic vitality.

There is a clear link between identity choices and acculturation strategies, which is evident from the social movements/nationalist movements in various parts of the world to avoid forced assimilation, and to pursue a separation mode of acculturation (Berry et al., 1989; Rogler et al., 1991). These studies reveal that those with a heritage cultural identity prefer separation strategy, those with a nationalist identity follow assimilation strategy and those having a bicultural/bilingual identity prefer integration strategy depending upon the reciprocal interaction of the dominant group.

One empirical study by Phinney et al. (1994) assessed the American identity in relation to ethnic ideals and practices among the adolescents of different ethnic background like African, Hispanics, Asian and ‘Whites’, born and raised in US. The result showed that the ‘whites’ were high on American identity and low on ethnic factors and regarded as assimilated. The Africans were high on ethnic factors and low on American identity and called as separation oriented. The Hispanics were found as bicultural and integrated as they had both positive attitudes towards American identity as well as own ethnic maintenance. The Asians were divided between integration and separation oriented. With respected to self-esteem, all the three groups showed a positive correlation between ethnic identity and self-esteem. However, the whites showed positive correlation between self-esteem, ethnic identity and the American identity. The study showed that positive sense of oneself is linked with own ethnic identity.
Thus, the researches on the issue of ethnolinguistic identity and intergroup relationship attempted to answer the questions pertaining to ethnic conflicts, language maintenance and language shift pattern in multicultural societies of the world under empirical investigations of various theoretical models/perspectives.

The discussion in this chapter reveals that the issue of minority language maintenance, loss, shift in a multilingual society is very complex as it is characterized by complex relationship between the languages and the linguistic groups. In some multilingual societies of the world, the linguistic minorities are under process of assimilation with language shift into dominant language group. The minority languages in many multilingual societies are pushed into the domains of lesser significance, which influences the language shift and loss of minority languages and their marginalisation. However, in many multilingual countries, such language contact situations lead to assertion of linguistic rights and distinct identity by ethnic minorities. On the other hand, in the stable multilingual societies, the minority languages are maintained without power asymmetry between the languages and their speakers. The outcome of any language contact situation, language shift or maintenance or collective strategies for revitalisation of language etc. can be understood through different social psychological perspectives.

The studies on ethnolinguistic identity clearly show that ethnolinguistic identities constitute the core of minority groups' self-concept and self-esteem. Such identities are relatively more resistant to assimilation pressures under the melting pot state policies. Often, threats to social identity and experiences of discrimination lead to varied individual and intergroup strategies. While in many language contact situations, individual strategies of assimilation into dominant language group and its language are followed, there are several and currently increasing number of instances in which collective identity lead to resistance, assertion of linguistic and ethnic identity and revitalisation of languages under pressure of shift. Whether or not a minority group in contact resorts to assimilation/marginalisation or maintenance strategies and whether perception of power asymmetry leads to collective resistance can be examined within the theoretical framework of ethnolinguistic vitality model (Giles, Bourhis & Taylor, 1977) and the acculturation strategies of Berry (1990). It seems group and individual strategies are predicated upon perception of own group outgroup vitality, which in turn, also related to acculturation - valuing maintenance of own group culture and language and desire for outgroup relationship. Thus, there is a
complex multidimensional relationship between vitality perception, social identity and acculturation strategies. The nature of this relationship must be understood to explain why languages are maintained or lost or revitalised. However, studies also show that the processes of language shift or maintenance are subjected to complex contextual conditions. As a result, findings are not unequivocal. Given the significance of the issues associated with preserving linguistic diversity in the world, it is necessary to examine the social psychological processes in language contact in different multilingual society. The present study seeks to meet this need for further research in a different multilingual context.

1.4 The Present Study

The present study is an attempt to investigate the social psychological processes in language contact and dynamics of intergroup relationship and linguistic revitalisation of Bodo tribes in Assam. The recent socio-political developments by an organized Bodo movement (expressed in strong Bodo sub-nationalism through the separation movement) can be said to have an added vitality to Bodo language and culture. Particularly, use of Bodo language as medium of instruction and recognition of it as associate official language in the Bodo inhabited areas can be expected to augment maintenance forces of Bodo language and culture. Whether this will lead to cultural pluralism with linguistic diversity and integration in the society or a separation/segregation outcome remains an important question. It seems a lot depends on the reactions of the majority Assamese group towards the growing strength of Bodo language and culture and their attitudes towards a positive relationship with the Bodos and also the extent to which Bodos desire to have a positive relationship with Assamese. As an ethnolinguistic group, Bodos are scattered over different parts of Assam. In few areas, such as Kokrajhar district, Bodos are in a majority status and their language is functionally more active, as it is well established as a language of education and administration. In Bodo non-dominant areas, where they are minority in comparison to Assamese, the group vitality of Bodos may be lower as compared to the Bodo majority areas. Thus, the nature of ethnolinguistic identity and inter-ethnic group relationship may vary across different social contexts in Assam depending upon the relative majority-minority status of Bodos. A comparative analysis of the nature of identity, the dynamics of ethnolinguistic vitality and intergroup relations can help us
to understand the social psychological processes in language and culture contact situation in Assam. This study is a step towards developing such an understanding.

The study explores ethnolinguistic identity among the Bodo students and the pattern of intergroup relationship (between Bodos and Assamese community in the state) in the multilingual context of Assam. The study examines the relationship between, a) the dimensions of ethnolinguistic vitality and the nature of social identity of Bodos, b) the perceived ethnolinguistic vitality of both the Bodos and the Assamese group and its relationship with the pattern of inter group relationship between the Bodos and Assamese in Bodo-majority and Bodo-minority contexts, c) the pattern of language maintenance by Bodos in different social contexts. In the background of ethnic conflict, which leads to a separatist movement, the study examines the pattern of bilingualism and language maintenance of both Bodo and Assamese groups having majority and minority status in different social contexts in Assam and its relationship with Bodo-Assamese inter-ethnic group relationship using prevalent social psychological theoretical perspectives.