Chapter – One

I. Sociolinguistic Variations in the Use of Language

General Background

Sociolinguistics is as the study of language in relation to society. It is a branch of linguistics which studies all aspects of the relationship between language and society. Sociolinguistics today are concerned with social variation and regional variation in language. Language, a voluntary vocal system of human communication, is the chief means for sharing thoughts and ideas. It is the main identity separating a human from the rest of the creatures. It maintains the culture and civilization and transfers it onto generations for learning and preservation. It is also a social institution; a part of human community, making possible unity and cohesion in a group. Language also serves for the immediate expression of one's personality.

As a means of communication, language varies in its form along the span of time as well as across geographic and political boundaries. There are several languages spoken in the world. Even within a language, varieties are common. The same language spoken by a speaker doesn't parallel equally to the language spoken by another speaker. Even the same speaker shows variety in his speech from one context to another. The very fluid nature of human language is, therefore, a creative prospect as well as challenging problem hovering to its speakers.

Each language is structured uniquely reflecting the speech habit patterns of its speaker. There are several languages spoken in the world, this there are several speech patterns in use. The patterning is realized in sounds, letters, world and sentences. A community sharing a common language possesses a distinctive way of communication through language. It is through the community that one becomes able

to socialize in the community. Language codes the culturally distinctive value patterns of a community and makes it easier for the speakers to realize them.

Languages differ in the way they reflect the world, i.e. the way they codify the experiences of their speakers. The interest, needs and concerns and preoccupations of the speakers are all reflected in the structure of the language they speak. A concept may be codified using a single term in a languages, where as the very concept may be expressed by taking resort to various terms in another language. The vocal sounds available in a language may not be present in another, so is the case of the grammatical structure. Similarly, expressions realized in another and vice-versa.

Similarity is, thus, a rare phenomenon. The degree of societal and cultural difference among communities is reflected in the degree of linguistic difference in their language.

Languages in Nepal

Nepal is linguistically diverse country. The varied cultural and ethnic groups have given rise to various languages in use. According to population census, 2011 there are 123 languages spoken in Nepal, with various dialects (C.B.S. Report, 2012). Most of these language belong to Indo-European family of language. Some languages belong to the Tibeto-Burman family and other few languages belong to language families other than these, existing only in their spoken medium by small groups of population. The multilingual scenario in Nepal has, thus created a profound complexity in language planning and language teaching. An outline of languages in Nepal is given below (C.B.S., 2011)

Population by Mother Tongue (Census 2011)

S.N.	Mother Tongue	Number	Geographical Region		
			Mountain	Hill	Terai
1.	Nepali	11826953	1102862	7229381	3494710
2.	Maithili	3092530	3254	85031	3004245
3.	Bhojpuri	1584958	442	42183	1542333
4.	Tharai	1529875	784	49962	1479129
5.	Tamang	1353311	193443	963695	196173
6.	Newar	846557	25745	728119	926963
7.	Magar	788530	10269	522306	255955
8.	Awadhi	501752	42	1103	500607
9.	Bantawa	132583	944	107204	24435
10.	Gurung	325622	18933	1250601	56088
11.	Limbu	343603	56142	184032	103429
12.	Bajjika	793416	9	1670	797637
13.	Urdu	691546	98	19597	671851
14.	Rajbansi	122214	43	956	121215
15.	Sherpa	114830	64715	45809	4306
16.	Hindi	77569	325	30311	468933
17.	Chamling	76800	1612	62694	12494
18.	Santhali	49858	21	361	49476
19.	Chepang	48476	2	26590	21884
20.	Danuwar	45821	3495	30222	12104
21.	Uraun/Urau	33651	2	292	33357

22.	Sunuwar	37898	3004	24410	10484
23.	Bangali	21061	151	4566	16344
24.	Rajsthani	25394	46	6351	18997
25.	Majhi	24422	788	14389	9245
26.	Thami	23151	18155	4368	628
27.	Kulung	33170	20219	7485	5466
28.	Dhimal	19300	5	583	18712
29.	Angika	18555	0	2	18553
30.	Yakkha	19558	7060	7870	4628
31.	Thulung	20659	10218	7864	2577
32.	Sangpang	18270	317	13665	4288
33.	Bhujel	21715	313	4885	16517
34.	Darai	11677	2	3888	7787
35.	Khaling	14467	10873	2548	1046
36.	Kumal	12222	63	8901	3258
37.	Thakali	5242	1755	2767	720
38.	Chhantyal	4283	15	3316	952
39.	Nepali Sign Language	4476	537	2296	1643
40.	Tibetan	4445	1067	3373	5
41.	Dumi	7638	136	5850	1552
42.	Jirel	4829	4299	484	46
43.	Wambule	13470	3	12710	757
44.	Puma	6686	50	6320	316

45.	Yholmo/yolmo	10176	4852	4700	624
46.	Nachhiring	10041	4440	4797	804
47.	Dura	2156	1	2122	33
48.	Meche	4375	2	59	4314
49.	Pahari	3458	397	2936	125
50.	Lepcha	7499	647	6541	311
51.	Bote	8766	1513	2993	4260
52.	Bahing	11658	2750	7564	1344
53.	Koi	1271	126	569	576
54.	Raji	3758	2	994	2762
55.	Hayu/Wayu	1520	2	1419	99
56.	Byasi	480	358	122	0
57.	Yamphu/Yamphe	9208	5065	2501	1642
58.	Ghale	8092	112	6936	1044
59.	Khariya	238	0	1	237
60.	Chhiling	2046	1	1952	93
61.	Lohorung	3716	2830	329	557
62.	Punjabi	808	1	266	541
63.	Chinese	242	100	109	33
64.	English	2032	41	1735	256
65.	Mewahang	4650	2496	1513	641
66.	Sanskrit	1669	47	1210	412
67.	Kaike	50	18	22	10
68.	Khamchi (Raute)	461	18	404	39

69.	Kisan	1178	0	3	1176
70.	Muslim	1075	0	34	1041
71.	Baram	155	3	116	36
72.	Tilung	1424	2	1290	132
73.	Jero/Jerung	1763	112	1580	71
74.	Dungmali	6260	0	5670	590
75.	Oriya	584	2	499	83
76.	Lingkhim	129	1	103	25
77.	Kusunda	28	5	19	4
78.	Sindhi	518	150	21	347
79.	Koche	2080	0	1935	145
80.	Hariyanwi	889	0	36	853
81.	Magahi	35614	1	54	35559
82.	Sam	401	8	351	42
83.	Kurmali	227	0	0	227
84.	Kagate	99	1	6	92
85.	Dzonkha	80	3	39	38
86.	Kuki	29	2	13	14
87.	Chhintang	3712	0	3701	11
88.	Mizo	32	0	26	6
89.	Nagmese	10	0	6	4
90.	Lhomi	808	5969	155	57
91.	Assamise	476	7	169	300
92.	Sadhani	122	3	48	71

93.	Rai	159 114	6850	86527	65737
94.	Taj Puria	18811	3	1568	18650
95.	Khas	1747	25	162	1560
96.	Athapahariya	5530	1	5465	64
97.	Gangai	3612	8	13	3591
98.	Achhami	172787	12	83940	58835
99.	Kham	27113	1078	18382	7653
100.	Malpanre	247	0	6	241
101.	Dhuleli	347	346	0	1
102.	Arabi	8	0	1	8
103.	Spanish	16	0	16	0
104.	Russian	17	0	17	0
105.	Doteli	787827	129092	328399	330336
106.	Delhare	599	97	396	106
107.	Farduwali	290	0	290	0
108.	Waling/Walung	1169	1084	42	43
109.	Surel	287	114	132	41
110.	Baitadeli	272524	78	245755	26691
111.	Bankariya	69	0	63	6
112.	Bajhangi	67581	45883	494	21204
113.	French	34	0	34	0
114.	Lhopa	3029	2924	105	0
115.	Dolpali	1667	1615	52	0
116.	Jumli	851	0	21	830

117.	Dailekhi	3102	0	9	3093
118.	Sonaha	579	0	0	579
119.	Dadeldhuri	488	2	0	486
120.	Bajureli	10704	3	213	10488
121.	Darchuleli	5928	429	177	5322
122.	Manange	392	0	392	0
123.	Gadhwali	38	3	19	16

Source:– C.B.S. 2011

Maithili language in the Nepalese Context

The people of Terai region of Nepal have generally more than two languages at their command. They understand Maithili Nepali Bhojpuri, Hindi and others. Maithili is one of prominent living languages spoken in India and Nepali the two south Asian countries. Maithili is Spokenin Sagamatha, Koshi, Janakpur and Narayani zones in Siraha, Saptari, Sunsari, Morang Dhanusha, Mathottari and Rauthahat districts. Maithili language is spoken mainly in north eastern part of the Indian state of Bihar and eastern part of Nepali's Terai region. There are also Maithili speaking minorities in adjoining Indian states like west Bengal, Maharashtra and the central Nepali Terai. The alternatives names of the Maithili language are Tirhutiya, Dehati, Apabharansa.

According to S. Jha (1958:5–6), there exists even regional dialects of Maithili. They are the standard, southern, eastern, chikachiki, western Jolhi and standard Maithili is spoken in the north of Darbhanga and Madubani districts of India. So far little attempts have been made to study the social dialects of the language. It may, however be suggested that Maithili exhibits social variations in its –pronunciation,

vocabulary and grammar in terms of the speakers' caste, sex, education, interpersonal relationship and other social factors.

The Maithili language is spoken by more than 30 million people as a first language and by many other as a second language in the north eastern part of the Indian state of Bihar and Eastern part of Nepalese Terai region. In Nepal, it is the language of approximately 12 percent (Approximately 3 million) of the total population and figures second in terms of the number of speakers-next only to Nepali, the language of the nation, spoken by a little over 50 percent of the population.

Maithili belongs to the eastern sub–group of the Indo Aryan within the Indo–Iranain branch of the European language family. It forms a subgroup with Bhojpuri and Danuwar Rajhan and is linguistically close to Assamese, Bangla and Oriya than to its more contiguous languages, namely Hindi and Nepali which belongs to central and western subgroup of Indo Aryan respectively.

> In this 'Socio linguistic Variations in the use of Maithili language in Siraha District; this research attempts to do survey how the Maithili speaking people are developing their mother-tongue in multilingual society. Mother tongue language development encompasses phonological and grammatical description, language standardization through orthographic development, dictionary complication literature production and the implementation of mother tongue literacy and educational programs. These tasks more likely to be successful if there is potential for long - term sustainability resulting from a sense of ownership and commitment for the language communities themselves. Such potentials may be measured by various socio–linguistic factors: Social conditions and use of a particular language.

Statement of Problem

Maithili, an independent and rich language in itself, still needs various types of studies, explorations, researches, conservation and development. The use of Maithili language is different among the speakers within their own community in terms of their caste, age, sex, education, information relation and other social factors. This study attempts to find out social information of Maithili speaking people of Siraha District and their language use, attitudes, vitality and bilingualism.

Review of Literature

Although the Government of Nepal (GoN) has not paid much attention to the Maithili language, there are some linguists who have studied it, including varieties of language.

Traugott, Elizabeth Clauss and Mary Louise Pratt's*Linguistics and Literature* gives a definition of variety of languages stating that the groups of people speaking the same language but belonging to different regions, socio–economic classes, ethnic communities and even people of different age. sex and level of education speak different varieties the same language.

Yadava has written so many articles and books regarding the Maithili language. For example, in his book *Reading in Maithili Language, Literature and Culture,* (1999) he discusses briefly about grammar, phonology, lexicography, historical/comparative linguistics and sociolinguistics/pragmatics. He also discusses various aspects of the Maithili language, literature and culture. Almost the similar things are also discussed in "Sayapatri" (2055 B.S.) edited by him.

Similarly in his another article "Maithili (2001)" which is included in *Facts About the world's language,* Yadava discusses briefly about gender, number, honorificity and case regarding Maithili language. He also discusses about its

location, family and dialects and the number of Maithili speakers. he has written about those other languages which are related with-Maithili language.

William, Labov in *The logical of Nonstandard English* gives a relatively recent definition of vernacular cultures stating that despite the language is geographically different yet the underlying meaning is the same whether the language of standard speaker or non standard speaker (678).

S. Jha's *The Formation of the Maithili Language (1958)* is the most exhaustive diachronic description of Maithili. In it, Jha has undertaken to trace the history of Maithili from the old Indo–Aryan (OIA) period and has laboured assiduously to assign Sanskrit etymologies to practically all forms of Maithili (for a contrary view, emphasizing the Santhali, i.e. Munda, influences on Maithili, see De Vresse, 1962.

Hudson's *Sociolinguistics* describes the impact of society on language. Most of the growth in sociolinguistics takes plane in the late 1960s and early 1970s; however it can be seen as a new discipline. This is not meant to imply that the study of language in relation to society is an invention of the 1960s on the contrary; there is long tradition in the study of relation between word-meaning and culture, both of which count as sociolinguistics by its definition.

A sociolinguistics survey of an ethnolinguist community is normally conducted by a government or research foundation. The language planners make decision about language choice on the national, but the effect of their decision on the local level is often uncertain. The local level, decision about language choice are made by wide variety of people - teachers, businessman, newspapers, editors and others (Blair, *Survey on a Shoestring, XIII)*. The present research is also concerned with local languages to make confirmed decisions about the language choice at the

local level, to defuse the pressure of language loyalties and to make a decision based on fact rather than opinion.

Objectives of the Research

Sociolinguistics is a branch of linguistics which studies not only the language but its social situation also, because social situation seriously implicates the language use. Historical, social, communal, religious and geographical elements affect the language in such a very that the same language is spoken variably in different geographical regions, communities, duration of time and religions. Such variability in a language is known as dialects of the same language.

Therefore the main objective of this study is to shed the light on use of the Maithili dialect, attitude of the native speakers towards Maithili language, their attitude towards other language and similarities and difference in lexical and syntactic structure in Maithili dialect. The following are the main objectives formulated for this research:

i.   To collect data on sociolinguistic information, dialects, language vitality, language use and linguistics.

ii. To find out the attitude, of the Maithili native speakers towards their own mother-tongue as well as the other language.

iii. To find out the socio linguistic variation in the use of Siraha Maithili sparkers as per the difference in time, situation, geographical boundaries and communities.

iv. To investigate which language Maithili speakers use in certain domain.

v.   To present some recommendations.

Research Methodology

The study is based on field research. The primary and secondary data can be collected from native speaker with the help of interviews with them. For secondary data the books, newspaper, magazines, thesis etc will be used for finding many domains. In order to prove this hypothesis the research incorporates the ideas of sociolinguistics

studies, focusing on how language is affected by the society or the social behaviour. Information and data can be collected by visiting the field in Lahan and the following methods will be used throughout the research.

i. Observation

ii. Interview

iii . Questionnaires

iv. Interaction from male and females as well as literate and illiterate. They would later be analyzed Statistically.

v. Citation is followed in APA style.

Justification

Review of the literature shows that some scholars have done some studies on Maithili language. The study of this nature certainly will help the new researchers, general readers and community as a whole. The purpose of this survey is to gather sociolinguistic information among Maithili language-speakers. Similarly, this present effort will also be helpful and useful to the future generation researchers and readers to preserve Maithili language.

Delimitation of the study

The survey will be marked by following limitation

i. The survey is based on eastern part of Nepal's Terai region, Lahan

ii. Limited number of speaker-will be chosen for interview and written questionnaires

iii. It will focus more on dialect, language vitality, language use, bilingualism.

iv. It will mainly focus on sociolinguistic approach.

Chapter – Two

II. Sociolinguistic Context of Maithili in Siraha District

A demographic profile is one of the tools of sociolinguistics. A sociolinguistic survey incorporates a demographic description to the ethno linguistic community being studied or surveyed. It is a description of a community which identifies the location and population. It also seeks to profile the distribution of various social characteristics (e.g. age, sex, educational level, degree of contact with other language speaker and other physical and societal factors.

Origin and History of Maithili Language

Nepal is a multilingual, multiethnic and multicultural nation where people speak varieties of languages and dialects according to its geographic-variation. The 2011 census establishes Nepal as a country of 125 ethnic groups-and 123 languages! such figures and formulations highlight the ethnic and linguistic diversities that contribute toward the cultural mosaic of Nepal. The Terai belt of Nepal is the home of several ethnic groups. The Maithili speaking people have spread from east Mechi to west Mahakali North Mountain to south terai and northern parts of India.

Like other indo–Aryan languages, Maithili is believed to have evolved from Vedic and classical Sanskrit though several intermediate stage of *Magadhi Prakrit,* Proto Maithili and *Apabhramshas.* It emerged as distinct modern Indo Aryan language between A.D. 1000 and 1200.

Maithili has had a long rich tradition of written literature in both India and Nepal. The earliest written record can be traced back as early *Vernaratnakara,* the oldest text in Maithili written by Jyotirisvara Kavisekharacharya in 14th century. The most famous Maithili writer is Vidyapati Thakur, popularly known as Mahakavi Vidyapati. Apart from being a great Sanskrit writer, he composed melodious poems in

Maithili, entitled *Vidyapati Padavali,* which mainly deal with the love between Radha and Krishna. It is this anthology of poems that has made him popular and immortal to the present day.

Maithili also flourished as eastern language in the Kathmandu valley during Malla period. Several literary works (especially dramas and songs) and inscriptions in Maithili are still preserved at the National Archives.

In the present context, there have been literary writing in all literary genres, especially poetry, plays, and fiction, from both Indian and Nepalese writers. Apart from literature, Maithili writers have also been contributing to other field like culture, history, journalism, linguistics, etc.

In addition to written, texts, Maithili has an enormous stock of oral literature in the forms folktales in both prose and songs etc. Out of them, the Salhes (story of a prehistoric King) are well–known specimen.

As the name implies, Maithili is properly spearing, the language of Maithili, the prehistoric ancient Kingdom, which was ruled by King Janak and was the Birthplace of Janaki or Sita (Lord Rani's Concubine). This region was also called Tirhut comprising both Darbhanga and Muzaffarpur districts of Bihar, India.

In present Nepal the studies of Mathili language and literature have been hampered by the lack of official recognition as a medium of instruction. In Nepal there has recently been made a constitutional provision for introducing all the mother tongues spoken in Nepal, including Maithili, as medium of insertion at the primary level of education. This is, no doubt a welcome step for their promotion, but in spite of speakers' zeal there has not been much heading in this regarding in the dearth of official initiatives and basic requirement line teaching/reading materials and trained manpower. Both PEN (poets, Essayists, Novelists) and *Sahitya Akademic have*

recognized Maithili as the 16 largest language of India, though ti has not yet been included in the eight schedule of the India, though it has not yet been included in the eight schedule of the India constriction despite the unceasing effort made by the Maithili-speaking community in India.

Previously, Maithili had own script called *Mithilakshar* or *Trihuta,* which originated from Brahmin (of the third century B.C. Asokan inscriptions) Visa the proto-Bengali script and is similar to the modern Bengli and Oriya writing systems. This script is now almost abandoned. For the sake of ease in learnability and printing land also perhaps under the influence of the Hindi Writing System they have been gradually replaced by the Devnagari script used in writhing Hindi, Nepali and some other languages of both Indo-Aryan and Tibeto-Burman stocks spoken in adjoining areas.

Undoubtedly, Maithili has a large speech community with a rich literary heritage. The history of Maithili literature is more than a millennium old. Vidyapati, a 14th century poet of Maithili, is a poet of all ages. He is acclaimed as the most celebrated literary figure not only in Matihili but also in Bengali, Hindi, Assamese, Oriya and Manipuri literatures. His love poems (songs) depicting the love of Radha-Krishna and devotional poems (songs) all contained in this Padavali are the soul of Mithila. His songs have survived in the throats of Maithili speaking women folk and are sung on every social and religious celebrations. Varna Ratnakar written by Thakur, Jyotrishwar in 1224 A.D., is the earliest prose in Maithili, which happens to the oldest prose work in any of the language of north-eastern India. The literary tradition of Maithili has continued till modern times. Dr. Hari Mohan Jha for his satirical Masterpiece *Kakak Tarang,* Baidyanath Mishra's "Yatri" for his poems and novels and Raj Kamal Chaudhary for his poems-and short stories are some of the

noted literary figures of Maithili in modern times. Although Maithili has its own script called Mithilakshar resembling that of Bengali, Oriya and Nepal Bhasa and being used only in specific contexts. Devangri script is most widely used for its popularity and for the ease in writing and in using computer and other techniques.

Linguistic studies on Maithili language have been pursued since 19th century. Hoernle (1880) was the first to study the grammatical forms of Maithili to distinguish it from Hindi. It was sir G.A., Grierson (1881, 1883, 1903), an Irish linguist and civil servant, who tirelessly researched on Maithili and presented a compressive grammar of Maithili . D. Jha (1946) was the first native grammarian to write a grammar of Maithili in Maithili medium based on the model of Sanskrit grammar, S. Jha (1958) presents an exhaustive, diachronic study of Maithili language in all its aspects- phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics. Davis (1973) and Williams (1973) have made a study of Maithili syntax, collecting data from the field work in the Terai of Nepal. Further, U.N Singh (1979) has attempted to present Maithili medium has tried to analyze the language with modern insights. R. Yadav's work (1984) makes a synchronic study of Maithili phonetics and phonology on acoustic line. His work is further purposed by S.K. Jha (2001) and by M. Mishra (1996). Another work by R. Yadav (1996) studies Maithili phonology, morphology and syntax. Y, Yadav (1998) has attempted to investigate the syntactic phenomena of Maithili and explore their bearings on Government–Binding theory proposed by N. Chomsky.

Lexicography or dictionary-making in Maithili can be traced back to *Varna Ratnakar.* After about seven centuries, is was resumed by the collaboration of Hornle and Griserson (1985, 1889), D. Jha's work (1950) is the first Maithili monolingual dictionary. J. Mishra's dictionary (1973) in two volumes is a major contribution

complied on the model of *Oxford English Dictionary*. G. Jha's Dictionary (1999) of Maithili with English equivalents is also a remarkable work. Glossary paryaybachi shabda kosh (1973) adopted consistent city Maithili language words with other thirteen languages of Nepal. In the area of sociolinguistics, S.K. Yadav (1989) has studied the use of some major languages of Nepal including Maithili in various domains and has suggested viable language policies to be adopted by the government of Nepal.

Maithili possesses a rich heritage of both literary writing and linguistics studies and has sufficient potential for its further growth and development. Coupled with this, it has a large number of speakers with a strong sense of language loyalty, which is essential of language maintenance. Maithili speech communities in both India and Nepal have been active in promoting the cause of their mother tongue. For example, several initiatives have been taken to include Maithili in the Eight schedule of Indian constitution with speakers of other indigenous languages, have recently launched a concerted effort to introduce languages as official languages at least at the level of local administration.

Geographical Location

The Maithili language is an Indo-European language spoken in the Terai districts of Nepal. The Maithili language is spoken mainly in the eastern part of Terai region and a few districts of north eastern part of India. There are also Maithili-speaking minorities in adjoining India state like west Bengal, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh and the Central Nepal Terai region.

Maithili like thought the sub–Himalayan Terai, a thin trip of tropical flast lands which form a geographical boundary between the various north Indian-planes

and the foothill of the Himalayan. They inhabit the land on both sides of the Indian–Nepal boarder.

In Nepal, Maithili can be found in every district in the Terai in varying degrees of concentration and several districts outside the Terai. The eastern Maithili language is spoken in Morang, Sunsari, Saptari, Siraha and Udyapur. The eastern Maithili language can be divided into two varieties. One variety of the Maithili languages is spoken in the districts which are betwee the Bagmati and the Saptakoshi rivers: another variety of the Maithili language s spoken in the eastern districts from the Sapta-Koshi river.
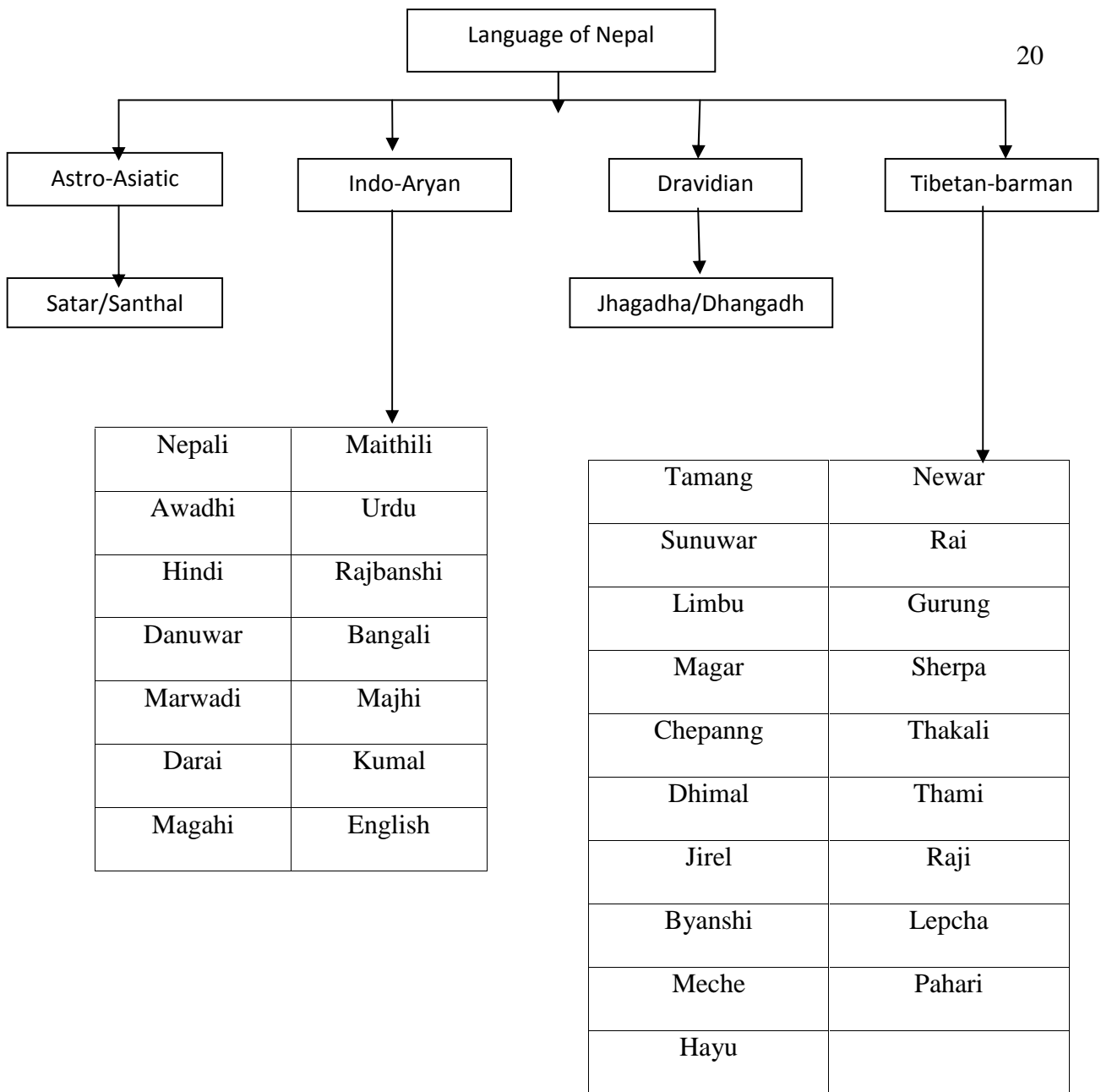
Siraha District lies in the eastern development region of Nepal. It is closely related to Bihar, India. Maithili is the dominant language throughout the district. There are also settlements of other speakers in several villages. But the Maithili language is the first most common language of this district.

Fig

Genetic Classification

Nepal, being one of the nations of south Asia, is home to four different language families: Austro–Asiatic, Indo–Dravidian, and Tibeto–Burman (D' Sourza 18). Within these families, at least sixty different ethnic communities or castes and a distribution of over seventy languages are spoken within the country's present political boundaries. Therefore, it is obvious that Nepal is a multilingual nation. It opens up challenging theoretical and methodological issue for linguistic and sociolinguistics research in Nepal. One of such possibilities in Nepal is the Maithili language, which is genetically affiliated to the Indo–Aryan. The categorized figure is given below.

Fig

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                        ┌─────────────────────┐
                        │  Language of Nepal   │
                        └─────────────────────┘
        ┌───────────────────┬───────────────────┬───────────────────┐
        ▼                   ▼                   ▼                   ▼
┌───────────────┐   ┌───────────────┐   ┌───────────────┐   ┌───────────────┐
│ Astro-Asiatic │   │  Indo-Aryan   │   │   Dravidian   │   │ Tibetan-barman│
└───────────────┘   └───────────────┘   └───────────────┘   └───────────────┘
        │                   │                   │                   │
        ▼                   │                   ▼                   │
┌───────────────┐           │           ┌─────────────────┐         │
│ Satar/Santhal │           │           │ Jhagadha/Dhangadh│        │
└───────────────┘           │           └─────────────────┘         │
                            ▼                                        ▼
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Nepali	Maithili
Awadhi	Urdu
Hindi	Rajbanshi
Danuwar	Bangali
Marwadi	Majhi
Darai	Kumal
Magahi	English

Tamang	Newar
Sunuwar	Rai
Limbu	Gurung
Magar	Sherpa
Chepanng	Thakali
Dhimal	Thami
Jirel	Raji
Byanshi	Lepcha
Meche	Pahari
Hayu	

Sourse : Chundamini Bandhu, Pragya 79 , Kathmandu: Royal Nepal Academic,2050

The Maithili language is a language of Maithili communities. There are large number of native speakers of Maithili in several districts of Nepal. Although the language belongs to the Indo–Aryan family. It is a family heavily influenced by Nepali language.

Population of Maithils in Siraha District

According to CBS report, the total population of Nepal is 2, 64, 94, 504 and Maithili speaker is 11.7% of the total population of Nepal.

In this district, most of the people are Maithili speaker. The total number of Maithili Speakers in Siraha District is 569880 of this population 285664 are male and 284216 are female. Maithili speakers can be found in every district in Nepal's Terai as well as in some other districts of Nepal. In almost all district there has been an increase in the number of Maithili speakers as compared to precious report. According to CBS Report 2001, given table refers total number of population and their mother tongue in this district.

MOTHER TOUNGUE BY DISTRICT

Mother tongue	Total	Male	Female
Nepali	36127	18120	18007
Maithili	501888	255116	246772
Bhojpuri	226	127	99
Tharu (Dagaura/Rana)	129	73	56
Tamang	4758	2399	2359
Newar	1511	755	756
Magar	4065	2794	2671
Awadhi	8	5	3
Bantawa	120	74	46
Gurung	11	7	4
Limbu	27	13	14
Urdu	3069	1570	1499
Sherpa	27	16	11

Hindi	944	501	443
Rajbanshi	4	2	2
Kumal	44	11	33
Danuwar	352	164	188
Jhangar/Dhangar	489	250	239
Sunuwar	120	59	61
Bangla	146	63	83
Marwari (Rajstani)	594	314	280
Manjhi	121	70	51
Thami	3	0	3
Dhimals	16	8	8
Thulung	2	0	2
Bhujel/Khawas	3	2	1
Ghale	55	38	17
Oriya	1	0	1
Rajl	6	0	6
Punjabi	4	2	2
Chinese	2	0	2
English	6	4	2
Sanskrit	1	1	0
Magahi	2	1	1
Unknown language	4999	3105	1894

C.B.S., 2001

Nepal's Sociolinguistic Context

The sociolinguistics setting in Nepal is a highly intricate one, with geographical, linguistic, political and development factors compounding to influence the language of its diverse people. Nepal is multilingual, multiethnic and multicultural country. Although it is very small in the map of the world but there are many castes and they speak different languages and one hundred and twenty five caste/ethnic groups exists in Nepal (CBS Report, 2011).

Geographical Factors in Language Shift

Nepal is a fascinating country in the world. It is sandwiched between Tibet and India. It is highly, culturally and linguistically impacted by the people of south and north. Nepal's territory is very strange. In the Terai it has got flat land where there is the majority of Indo–Aryan people. In the hilly area there are many low lands, subtropical jungles, dunes, and valleys where different people live following different kinds of cultures and languages. Here some communities are living quite isolated from each other. There are still some nomadic people like Kusunda and Raute specially. They are still wandering in the jungles of west Nepal. In the mountain area the north, the life is very difficult. The people of north are struggling to survive with their seat, where the contact between the communities is very difficult. Te people of north are struggling to survive with their sweat, where the contact between the communities is very difficult so there is cultural and linguistic diversity. As harsh geographical elements of landside, rapid rivers, chiasmic valleys and formidable mountains separated groups of related migrants and their descendants from one another, language and culture and culture have eventually become more diverse, with more dialects consequently being created.

However, despite the fact that there are still some extremely remote places where the communities are quite isolated from main stream of society, frequent and extensive contact among many group have increased in the recent history of Nepal. This has been the case both inter and intra – ethnically. As people with different mother–tongues and dialects inter–mingle, their speech varieties are influenced by other varieties that hear and learn. This has often resulted in a profusion of loan words and sound changes creeping into certain languages, and in some cases, the danger of extinction in others. Thus linguistic uniqueness created by geographical barriers is ironically eroding through inevitable modern advances.

Nepal is divided into three altitudinal zones. For political purposes Nepal is divided into 75 districts and average 50 VDCs in each districts. Nepal's ethnic and linguistic mosaic is as diverse as its landscape. In every village, there is few variance of the language. Although, Nepal is the national language, it is spoken throughout the country; it is the mother tongue of only about the half of population. At least 60 to 70 other minority languages are spoken by roughly the other 50% of indigenous people in present day speak Nepali.

The diverse, minority languages spoken in Nepal tend to be geographically defined, although the actual ethnic mix within various areas lend to be constant flux. Communities of speakers of each languages, or clusters of languages belonging to the same language sub–group are traditionally known to be spread, to be specific areas of the phonologically, morphologically or structurally the languages have slightly or many difference.

The traditional homelands of a language group way spread across many villages *(Tols)* in various VDCs in different neighboring districts. Some of the village may have pure concentrations of speakers of the same languages, while other villages

may have ethnically mixed populations who speak different languages, each language is influenced with other.

Each traditional language areas in Nepal may also have dialectical differences, which range from minor ones that do not affect comprehension of major ones that impede understanding between speakers of the dialects. Linguistics tend to define mutually intelligible ones as dialects of the same languages, their definitions may not necessarily correspond to the definitions of language policy makers or mother language speakers of those varieties in questions. Therefore, for the development purpose of languages, it is important, not only to understand the genetic relationships of speech varieties, but also to discern how the local people themselves perceive the dialects and language boundaries of their own speech varieties.

Sociolinguistic Context of Sirha District

According to the CBS report 2001, the majority of the people of this district are Maithili speaking people. Although, they are more in population, all of them have not got their own mother tongue. Some of them speak Nepali language as their mother tongue. The major language of this district is Maithili. May indigenous castes are sheltered around the district. Although many indigenous castes are scattered around the district, because of many reasons, they are forgetting their native language. According to CBS report 2001, given table reflects the total population by caste/ethnicity in this district.

Caste/Ethnicity by District

Caste	Total	Male	Female
Chhetri	9802	5036	4766
Brahman-Hill	25460	13478	11982
Magar	7881	4048	3833
Tharu	139087	69987	69100
Tamang	8699	4366	4333
Newar	2177	1204	797
Muslim	66996	34201	32795
Kami	533	275	258
Yadav	212785	107521	105264
Rai	742	370	372
Gurung	48	28	20
Damai/Dholi	106	57	49
Limbu	67	37	30
Thakuri	48	26	22
Sarki	301	160	141
Teli	851	465	386
Chamar/Harijan/Ram	22678	12240	10438
Koiri	3115	1633	1442
Kurmi	1017	524	493
Sanyasi	1771	947	824
Dhanuk	8580	4960	3620
Musahar	15744	8131	7613

Dusadh/Paswan	1638	854	784
Sherpa	250	120	130
Sonar	635	332	303
Kewat	1570	875	695
Brahaman-Tarai	7030	3530	3500
Baniya	521	272	249
Gharti/Buhjel	994	501	493
Mallah	844	435	409
Kalwar	617	318	299
Kumal	171	93	78
Hajam/Thakur	1274	659	615
Kanu	138	74	64
Rajbansi	21	12	11
Sunuwar	187	95	92
Sundi	3005	1586	1419
Lohar	408	220	188
Tatma	2264	1160	1104
Khatwe	1434	745	689
Dhobi	356	188	177
Majhi	1258	70	55
Nuniya	550	288	262
Kumhar	627	331	296
Danuwar	3104	1470	1634
Chepang (Praja)	3	2	1

Haluwai	929	487	442
Khadgi	302	161	141
Kayastha	678	375	303
Badhai	353	201	152
Marwadi	1449	783	666
Santhal/Sattar	5	3	2
Jhangar/Dhagar	102	52	50
Bantar	39	21	18
Barae	675	481	194
Gangai	3	2	1
Rajbhar	6	4	2
Thami	2	1	1
Dhimal	9	5	4
Bhote	35	20	156
Bing/Binda	91	47	44
Bhediyar/Gaderi	340	190	150
Nurang	22	12	10
Yakkha	8	5	3
Darai	4	3	1
Tajpuriya	9	3	4
Thakali	1	1	0
Chidimar	9	3	6
Mali	153	81	72
Bangali	13	7	6

Chhantel	1	0	1
Dom	914	483	431
Kamar	5	3	2
Bote	2	0	2
Gaine	5	3	2
Jirel	1	0	1
Adibasi/Janajati	17	8	9
Dura	2	2	0
Churatue	23	9	14
Badi	16	6	10
Meche	13	10	3
Lepacha	6	4	2
Halkhor	130	75	55
Punjabi/Sikh	3	6	7
Kisan	2	1	2
Raji	2	1	1
Byangsi	2	2	0
Hayu	4	4	0
Koche	11	6	5
Dhunia	12	8	4
Walung	2	1	0
Jaine	2	1	1
Munda	18	10	8
Raute	16	269	6

Unidentified Dalit	576	3280	247
Unidentified castes	6604	290878	3324
Total	569880	290878	279002

Source: C.B.S. 2011

Social Condition

Geographically, Terai is the plain area of Nepal. In the past, it was covered with jungle, so the land of the Terai is very fertil. Some part is still covered with jungle. Big rivers like the Bagmati Koshi and Kamala and several small rivers flow through the plains of Terai. There are also canal faculties for irrigation, and the majority of people secure their livelihood from agriculture. They grow grains, vegetables and fruits. Herds of goats, cattle and buffaloes are kept for meat and milk.

The Maithil speaking people have been agricultural people from ancient times. Agriculture and animal husbandry are the main occupations because geographically the most Maithili communities live in the Terai which is plain and more fertile land.

Education

Most of the Maithili remained agriculture people either because of economic or racial affinities, or because of lack of educational facilities in Nepal. Now, there are improvements in education. The Government of Nepal has provided primary schools in every village. In Sirha District, still there is limited number of high schools. More high schools are necessary to be established for the students of Sirha district so that they could get a proper education. There are few number of campuses in this district so that they could get a proper education. There are few number of campuses in this district. Because of the lack of proper education, social and economic barrio, most of the people especially girls still remain illiterate.

Political and Religious Factors

Nepal is a secular country and there are people of different religions. There are major political and religious boundaries dividing the people infernally. India is very close to the Terai region of Nepal and is related in many ways. Most of the people are also of Indian Origin and they have blood relations with Indian people. They be found working, living and enjoying friendly relations with them. So animally, most of them are bilingual or multilingual.

Language and Gender

In a language we see male and female use the language differently. A man uses a language very informally, with less restrictions (not caring much about honorific and non–honorific features of the language) where as a woman has to use the language very formally, taking all the restrictions into consideration (i.e. taking care of place, situation and honorific and non–honorific, features of language).

There are some words which male sue very freely without any hesitation but for female, these words are taboo. It is certainly more acceptable in a society for men to swear and use taboo words, than is for women. Mostly however, differences in English are phonological in addition to taboo which can not be used as a complete explanation.

There is no sex difference as such in Maithili language except the fact that women's language is considered more refined and cultured than that of men. Men swear a lot and use very rough language when they are talking together they can use abusive language as well without any hesitation.

Forms of Address and Politeness

Forms of address referees to the pronominal system of a language. In other words the pronouns which we use to address when we speak to a person or persons. The different pronouns of address who are related differently to the speaks for example, a pronoun which is used by a junior to his senior may not be used by the senior to his junior. Such pronouns used as forms of address are classified as honorific, non–honorific and neutral.

Chapter–Three

Language Use, Attitudes and Vitality

Language use

Language use according to all demographic factors

Table 3.1 displays the percentage of reported language use among all subjects.

(M = Maithili, N = Nepali and M and N = Maithili and Nepali).

Table 3.1 Language use among all Subjects

Domain	Questions	Language			
	What Language do you use	M	N	M&N	Others
Home	With your parents?	95	2	2	1
	With your brothers and sister?	80	10	8	2
	With your children?	70	15	12	3
	In your home?	80	13	5	2
Friendship	With your village friends?	50	40	8	2
Market	In the	60	30	6	4

	market?				
Government	With government officials?	4	90	4	2
	While worshiping?	70	20	2	8
Religion	While discussing religion with friends?	60	30	6	5
Feeling	While discussing your deepest feeling?	50	32	14	4

Source: Field Survey 2013.

In this report all percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number for this reason, the total percentages are between 99 and 100 percent.

Looking at the total sample there are four situations in which 75 percents or more of the respondents answered that they use only Maithili; with parents, with brothers and sisters, in the home and while worshiping respondents also reported using Maithili at a relatively high rate when speaking with children (70%) speaking with village friends (50%) and disusing religion (60%).

In government officials, they use Nepali Vernacular. The reasons is that most of the government officials are Nepali speakers. in markets also if the people and shopkeepers are Maithili speaking people they switch the code and if they meet other speakers they speak Nepali language. However, the overall results for the home domain show that there is increase of Nepali use with each successive younger generation being spoken to.

The above mentioned percentage should be looked at in combination with the percentage of people who reported using both Maithili and Nepali in certain settings. The majority (40%) of the respondents said that they use both Nepali and Maithili in the market. Other situations in which a large percentage of respondents reported these both Nepali and Maithili while discussing religion with friends. The respondents frequently reported that in these settings, they would use Maithili with Maithili speaking people and Nepali with other.

In Lahan most of the elderly people speak Maithili language as their mother tongue. They mix 10–13% Nepali words in their communication. Adults mix 20–25% Nepali in their community. Children mix and use 50% Nepali words and Nepali language in their communication.

From the above data, in recent future if this process is running, coming new generations will speak only 30–40%, Maithili words and language in their communication. Even the new generations, they are mixing Nepali relationship words in their communication, for example buba, mama, mummy, daddy, sister, uncle etc. when they were asked, what the matter was to decrease this ratio from generation to generation and they answered that it was the influence of friend, school, market and even environment of home. Most of the school – going children communicate in Nepali in daytime and only in the morning and evening they get little chance to speak

with their parents in their mother tongue. All of them had one answer that "It was the lack of primary education in mother tongue" others replied that the sources of communication the ratio and T.V. also do not play Maithili songs and programs frequently in their mother tongue so that people are forgetting the language. If the T.V. broadcast the children program in Maithili language they would be interested to learn it.

Among them, the important answer was contact with Nepali speaking people. It can be observed that Maithili is used most often in the domains of the home, friendship and religions. Nepali or a mixture of Nepali and Maithili is used in domains such as government or the market where there are frequently interactions with people who speak Maithili language.

Language use According to Age

Given table displays language use among older respondents (35 years of age and above) and younger respondents (34 years of age and below).

Table 3.2 Language use According to Age

Domain	Question	Age	Language			
	What language do you use		M	N	M and N	Other
Home	With your parents?	Older	92%	6%	1%	7%
		Younger	78%	17%	2%	3%
	With your brothers and sisters?	Older	60%	18%	15%	7%

		Younger	70%	20%	5%	5%
	With your children?	Older	80%	10%	6%	4%
		Younger	65%	15%	15%	5%
	In your home?	Older	85%	10%	3%	2%
		Younger	70%	15%	5%	5%
Friendship	With your village friends?	Older	60%	8%	32%	
		Younger	30%	20%	40%	10%
Market	In the market?	Older	20%	10%	66%	4%
		Younger	5%	15%	75%	5%
Government	With government officials?	Older	5%	75%	18%	2%
		Younger		99%	1%	
Religion	While worshiping?	Older	60%	20%	10%	10%
	While discussing religion with friends?	Younger	20%	17%	5%	5%

Table 3.2 shows that in nearly every domain, higher percentage of older people than younger people use Maithili language. Similarly, a higher percentage of younger people than older people than older people reported the use of Nepali. It can also be seen that in nearly every domain, the use of both Nepali and Maithili was reported by higher percentage of younger people than older people. These figures could be possible indicators of language shift among the younger generation. However, there is also rather large–percentage of younger-people who are using Maithili or a combination of Maithili and Nepali in many domains, which may be more indicative of stable bilingualism situation in which two languages are consistently used in specific domain with little or no overlap. The occurrence of stable bilingualism is supported by the comments that many respondents made referring to the use of Nepali with Nepali speakers and Maithili with Maithili speakers.

Calculating above table we can say that, there is the high influence of non-Maithili languages. The old people, who are uneducated and have not moved to any place, do not mix Nepali words in the language. But the young people who spend their time out of the house, they mix many code sin their language frequently. They switch the code if they feel difficult to speak their language. Maxing the code ratio is higher in Lahan . Lahan is the one and they do contact with many people so that they mix Nepali code in their language. Most of the children of educated people can't speak in their mother tongue i.e. Maithili language fluently. Most of the children are highly mixing Nepali and English terms. For example for kinship words they are using mummy, daddy, aunti, uncle etc. in Lhan only the old people speak fluently in their mother tongue. But many young people and children speak in most of the domain. There is high language shift in new generation and young people. The main reason of the language shift is the negligence of their mother tongue and influence of

the non–Maithili speaking-society. Although few young-people make attempts to preserve the mother tongue and culture but it is too late.

Language use according to Educational level

Other language use patterns can be seen by comparing the uneducated with the educated people of the sample. In this report, educated means the person completed class eight or higher education, uneducated means not studied at all or not completed class eight.

Table 3.3 Language use according to educational level

Domain	Questions	Education	Language			
	What language do you use?		M	N	M&N	Others
Home	With Your Parents?	Uneducated	95	5	–	–
		Educated	12	25	3	-
	With your brother and sister?	Uneducated	85		2	3
		Educated	68	28	2	2
	With your children	Uneducated	75	20	3	2
		Educated	50	40	2	8
	In your home?	Uneducated	80	15	5	–
		Educated	50	30	5	15
Friendship	With your village friend?	Uneducated	75	5	20	–

		Educated	40	50	6	4
Market	In the market?	Uneducated	20	72		5
		Educated	4	88	2	5
Government	With government official?	Uneducated	10	80	8	2
		Educated	–	97	–	3
Religion	While worshipping?	Uneducated	60	20	10	10
	While discussing religion with friends?	Educated	20	70	5	10

In all the domains, a higher percentage to the sample of the uneducated than the educated reported speaking Maithili. In addition, in nearly every domain a higher percentage of the educated people than uneducated people also reported they use Nepali. A higher percentage of educated people than uneducated people also use both Nepali and Maithili in many domains.

Responses to the question "Which languages do you use with your children"? yielded the highest contrast between educated and uneducated responded of the educated respondents. 50 percent Maithili speaking people responded they wanted to make their children learn in a Nepali as well as English medium school. Uneducated respondents also were in confusion. although, they also like to teach their children in

Nepali and English mediums. Naturally, 75 percent uneducated people responded to teach their children in Maithili medium.

In Maithili speaking societies, there are not any schools in their mother tongue. Most of the teachers in the societies are non–Maithili. In the beginning year, children face many problems to understand what the text says and what the teachers say. Most of the Maithili children learn Nepali language before going to school. Later gradually and gradually they start to speak in Nepali in every domain. It is the case in every Maithili society of this district.

Although, the educated people should be awarded to preserve their language but they themselves are mixing Nepali language in their language, when the surveyor went to Lahan many respondents said that even the most educated people are mixing Nepali in their language than uneducated people.

Language Use among Maithili Children

In order to gather information regarding patterns of language use among children, respondents were asked the question, "What language do children in your village speak with other children while they play"? Given table displays response to this questions among the various demographic groups.

Table No. 3.4 Language use among Maithili speaking Children

Demographic Category	M	N	M&N	Others
All	25%	30%	45%	–
Female	22%	25%	50%	3%
Male	28%	5%	57%	
Uneducated	20%	28%	52%	
Educated	10%	40%	45%	5%
Older	20%	24%	54%	2%

Among all the demographic categories between 10 and 30 percent of the people in each category that children use Maithili when they play together. At a slightly higher percentage 20 to 40 percent of the people in each demographic groups said that children use Nepali when they play together. The highest percentage of people in each group (45 to 57%) reported that children use both Nepali and Maithili when they play. From this table, it can be seen that people in the sample perceive that children primarily use a combination of both Maithili and Nepali. In addition, higher percentage of respondents believe that children use only Nepali more than they use only Maithili, when playing together, it should be noted that there are other people groups living within the Maithili villages and therefore children frequently play with children from other non–Maithili language groups, which may be one reasons why Nepali use is reported relatively often.

Language Attitudes

Language use refers to what languages are used among speakers of a language, while language attitudes refer to the values and ideals that people hold towards certain languages. Given table 4.2 summarizes responses to questions that investigate attitude towards language use among Maithili people.

Table 3.5 Language use Attitudes

Demographic Category	M	N	M&N	Others
What language should children in your village speak first?	94%	6%	–	–
What a	96%	–	4%	–

Maithili other use to speak to her young child?				
What language do husband wife speak to each other in?	95%	–	3%	2%
In what language do you perfect speak	82%	4%	5%	9%

As can be seen from table 3.4, the most of the respondents believe Maithili should be used in each of the situation specified. In addition, 82 percent of respondents said that they prefer to speak in Maithili. the most common reasons for this were that their ancestors (or parents) are Maithili speaking people and that it is their own language" This is very important for language preservation because their language is a part of their cultural identity.

Except given questions table, other some questions were also asked in order to investigate language use attitudes, the first questions was, "How would it be if a Maithili speaker married someone who did not speak Maithili"? Of the response 20 percent could be categorized as positive responses such as 'good' or 'easy' although many other 80 percent respondents said that it would not bother them. The majority of the people stated that it would be difficult or bad, many respondents also commented that Nepali is needed to learn because of many reasons".

Subjects were also asked about their feelings concerning the continuation of the Maithili language through the following questions. "When the children of your village grow up and have children, do you think, those children might speak the Maithili language? How do you feel about this?" the majority of field subject, 70 percent believed that Maithili would continue to be spoken by the next generation. A much smaller number felt that Maithili would either not continue to be spoken or that future people would speak in half of whom expressed such kind of bad expression about the less use of language in new generation; 20% percent of the respondents aid that is did not feel sure that Maithili will continue to be spoken by future generation. They were pessimistic about the use of Maithili language in new generation.

Many Maithili people informally expressed their love for their language and culture in the course of interviews and informal conversation during this survey, positive attitudes towards the Maithili language were expressed by many of those that said they nearly always speak Maithili where as many of those said that they have not actually used their own language, where there is different kinds of testacy.

Among subjects from all demographic groupings, positive language attitudes are similarly high. In fact, a slightly higher percentage of the younger and the educated subject (than the older or uneducated) expressed that they love Maithili language more than any other language they speak and they gave force to preserve their language to identity their caste and culture.

Maithili Vs Nepali

The 45 participants were asked questions tat aimed to elicit their attitude towards the Maithili language, a summary of the results, which contrast more versus less positive attitudes towards Maithili language, culture and identity as shown in given table.

Table 3.6 Maithili Vs Nepali

Questions Aimed to Elicit attitudes towards Maithili		More positive attitudes towards Maithili language/culture identity	Neutral/Uneducated	Less position attitudes towards Maithili language culture identity
1. Among the languages that you speak, which one do you love the most?	Response % of 45 number	Maithili 92%	Maithili/Nepali 5%	Nepali Hindi other 3%
2. What language do you think your children should learn first?	Response %	Maithili 51%	Maithili Nepali 22%	Nepali 27%
3. How would you feel if your daughter were to marry non–Maithili speaker?		Sad/upset tattles 75%	Mixed feelings/okay/no difference/ok, if a Maithili don't know 17%	Happy 8%
4. Would you like it if your	Response%	Yes 87%	Mixed feeling/okay/isn't	No 4%

son/daughter were to marry some one who spoke only Maithili?			any responsibility 9%	
5. If a young Maithili person spoke only Nepali at home, would you be happy or unhappy about it?	Response %	Unhappy 60%	Mixes feeling/okay/don't know 25%	Happy 15%
6. Are the young Maithili people proud of their language?	Response%	Yes 86%	Don't know/some are, some aren't 13%	No 1%
7. Do you want your children to earned follows Maithili Customs/traditions?	Response%	Yes 75%	Don't know 23%	No 2%

A questions that was aimed at directly gauging language attitude was, "Among the languages that you speak, which one you love the most?" In response: 92% named Maithili language alone as their most beloved language, where as only 5% named Nepali alone as their most beloved language.

Table 3.2.1 and 3.2.2 show the distribution of response according to age and education.

Table 3.7 Maithili Vs Nepali

Response of Most beloved language by age group	Maithili	Maithili/Nepali	Nepali
13–34 years	80%	10%	10%
35–54	75%	15%	10%
55–and above	90%	6%	4%

As in table 3.2.2 in the language use section, the responses acceding to age indicate just a few shift towards Nepali with each younger group. However, the fact the youngest group has 80% of participants who named Maithili language above in contrast with other 10% who named Nepali as their most beloved language, suggests a highly positive attitude towards Maithili language across the generations.

For formal and informal education when asked what language their children should learn first, 51% Maithili people responded that they would learn Maithili language if they get chance, but there is not any formal or informal school, which are teaching in Maithili language. Two reasons were asked for learning the mother tongue: pragmatic and ideological. For pragmatic reason, they replied that it would be easy to learn Maithili language if the would get chance and they replied that when learn in their mother tongue, it would be easy to learn the ways of life. For ideological reasons, they replied that it would give recognition to their cultural identity and they would be more encouraged to preserve their culture, tradition, ritual if they learn their language.

25% Maithili people responded that they would learn Nepali language because it would be hard to learn in Maithili language which is always decreasing and they are living in multilingual society. In the beginning level if they only learn Maithili, later it

would be difficult for then to learn Nepali and English languages which have got a lot of scopes. Only few percentage replied that it wouldn't matter to learning of any languages.

When asked about how they would feel if their children were to marry someone who did not speak Maithili, 80% indicated that they would be sad or upset about it. Only 14% felt mixed feeling about it and 6% said that it made no difference to them.

The most important question and responses were got in the domains that whether they believed Maithili would continue to spoken by the children of the current village children when they grow up. Their responses are displayed in given table.

Perception of whether Maithili would be spoken by children of the current village children		% of 45	No
General 'Yes'	Confident Yes	35%	14
	May be Yes/Some will	22%	10
	Yes (if we do some thing about it)	10%	4
General 'No'	Confident no	12%	6
	May be not	10%	6
	Not (if we don't preserve it)	7%	4
Don't know		1%	1

Among the 35% who seemed confident that the villagechildren's children will speak Maithili, only 66% expressed positive feelings about this. The final questions in this section are not directly related to language, but seek to assess the participants' attitudes towards their Maithili identity, and their perception of their cultural heritage's vitality.

When asked whether they want their children to learn and/follow Maithili customs and traditions, an overwhelming 95% responded in the positive. When asked whether the children are learning and following Maithili customs and traditions, nowadays 85% replied in the positive and other remarked percentage children negative.

Literacy Attitudes

Several questions were asked that specifically investigated interest in and motivation for mother–tongue literacy among Maithili people. This topic could stand on its own, but can also be seen as art–aspect of language attitude. In addition to studying attitudes towards spoken Maithili, attitudes towards written Maithili, were also studied. When people were asked whether or not it is important to know how to read and write in Maithili, most said "yes, it is important" (90%). Possibly the more informative questions was the "why?" that was asked when subject around "Yes" to the previous question. Given table show how the subjects perceived that riding and wiring in Maithili could benefit their community.

Table 3.8 "Why is it important to know how to read and write Maithili?"

Answer	% of respondents
Language preservation	30
Own mother tongue/cash	26
Education	18
Language development	12
Cultural preservation	10
For children	3
Other	1

This table shows that among the respondents, the most frequently reported reason for the importance of knowing how to read and write in Maithili is to preserve the Maithili language (30%). All the respondents responded that they need the school in mother tongue for the preservation of culture. They responded that if they did not have their own language, they wouldn't save their culture. The second most reported answer was for the Maithili language and culture (26%). 18% of the respondents answered that it is important to read and write Maithili for education purpose. At slight lower percentage were language development (12%) cultural preservation (10%) and for the children's sake (3%). Several subjects mentioned that their motivation was out of love for their language and culture. Most of the field subjects indicated that knowing how to read and write Maithili is important to them. Each of them asked to give reasons why. Many of these people mentioned language preservation as a primary reasons. Others said that learning to read and write Maithili is important to them because it is their own language. But few of them responded that being literature in Maithili is not important to them.

All the subject in Lahan expressed that they would like to read books written in Maithili. Most of them said that their motivation is due to the materials being in their own language other reasons were that, "it would be good to have more written in our mother tongue" to understand more in our language" and because our ancient stories are in Maithili." Most of the Maithili speaking people of the district were also interested in reading about other topics such as stories, the Maithili language itself, Maithili culture and traditions, songs, poems, folk tales and legends. They responded that if they got the pieces of literature in their culture, tradition and language, they would get more other information about their culture, tradition and language. All of them were worried about the learning of their culture and language. In one answer, they said that Maithili was not only their language, but it was also their ethnical identity.

Language Vitality

This chapter focuses on the issue of language vitality among the Maithili speaking people of the district specially Siraha. It addresses questions related to whether Maithili language is vitally alive and whether it is likely to be spoken and understood in future generation. Language vitality studies are mainly concerned with pattern of language used among speakers of a language and the attitudes the speakers have towards their own variety of the language and the varieties in the different districts from their own, as well as attitudes towards the national language. A minority language is more likely to co–exist successful with a more dominant, national one, if it is widely used, and if the mother tongue speakers have positive attitudes towards their own language.

The main focus of language use studies is the "Uses of Domains". It refers to the social contexts in which the speakers use a language, in most cases choosing to

use of the language the he perceives to be the most appropriate or natural for a particular to be the context. The studies of language use patterns in certain domain can reveal the current state and strength of language.

From the studies, it reveals the result that Maithili language is used extensively among the participants.

The Maithili language is very much alive as use. However, the majority of those from among this most educated group claimed to use Maithili language in the intimate domains of the home and village which shows that it is still dominant among Maithili society. Furthermore the majority of them claimed that Maithili is their most efficient language, and the used it is situations where a language choice is possible. Te majority of participants regardless of age and education have highly positive feelings towards their language and are eager for their children to learn the Maithili language. But half of them believe that the children of their current children will continue to speak their mother tongue.

The majority of participant would like their children to have the books and to learn to read and write in Maithili specially for their culture, religion and identity of history.

In order to investigate the vitality of the Maithili language, respondents were asked several questions. The question focused on current pattern use, attitudes towards current language use and perception of future language use. It is used extensively among 50 participants interviewed. The vast majority use Maithili far more often than official language in most domains especially in the home, far more often than Nepali in most domains especially in the home with village friends and while expressing their deepest feelings. Maithili is used in all the three age groups interview, there is just a very slight general trend of decrease in Maithili usage and

increase in Nepali usage for each subsequent younger group. There is also a very slight decrease in Maithili usage and increase in Nepali usage among the 35 participants with 10 or more years of formal education, especially in the domains of communication with village leaders, and the expression of deepest feeling. However, the fact that the majority of those from among this most educated groups claimed to use Maithili in the intimate domains of the home and village, significant that Maithili is still their dominant language of use. Furthermore, the majority of them claimed that majority is their most efficient language and used it in situation where a language choice is possible.

The majority of participants, regardless of age and education also has highly positive feelings towards their language and are eager for their children to learn the Maithili language. More ever, most of them believe that the children of their current children will also continue to speak their mother tongue.

In this survey, most of the participants feel that Maithili literacy is important to them and are willing to attend Maithili literacy classes which they believe should be made available. Many of them were more interested in reading Maithili books that are about themselves, about their religion, history and culture, rather than practical subjects like agriculture and health. Actually, the majority of participants would like reading for their identity affirmation of themselves.

For surveying the language vitality many questions were asked. Out of them, the first questions was, "what language do children in your village learn first"? Of all the respondents, 80 percent said that children learn Maithili first while 15 percent said that they learn Nepali first only 5 percent of the respondents said that children learn both "Nepali and Maithili first.

There are one potential indicators of language shift; where young people speak their mother tongue differently than older people. Such as code mixing, code switching, mixing it with another language or using it in diminishing number of domains. To find it, one question was asked "Do the children, young and old people in your village speak Maithili the same way?" Of the respondents 75% said that the young and old people speak Maithili the same way and 25% said that they speak it differently. Then another question was asked, "What is the difference about the way they speak"? The most common answer was "young people mix Nepali and sometimes English words" "Old people speak correctly" and children don't speak Maithili as well".

One question was asked regarding respondents perception of Maithili language use in the future. Given figure display the responses to the questions, 'when the children of your village grow up and have their own children, what language you think they will speak?

**Figure 3.1 What Language do you think you children will speak**
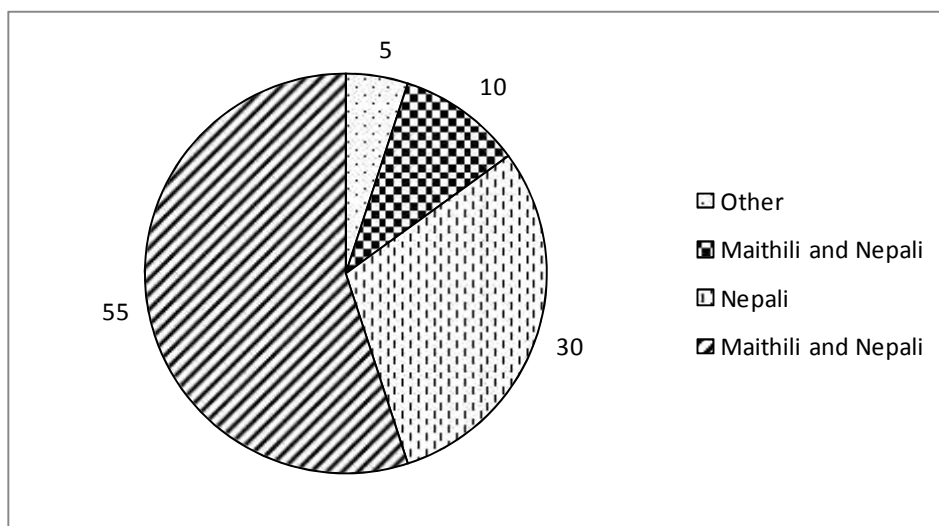
This figure shows that many of the respondents (55%) said the Maithili is the language that their children's children will speak 30% said that they will speak Nepali

and 10% said that they will speak both Maithili and Nepali and 5% said they will speak other language like Hindi, English. According to the data, the perception of a majority of the respondents was that Maithili will continue to be spoken at lest the next two generations. However, it can also be seen that there are trends towards the use of Nepali among the younger people and children, it is not certain that in will continue or not. Although young people have got positive attitudes towards their language but their next generation will followed it strongly or not.

Language Used for all Demographic Groups Combined

Figure 4.3.1 displays the language that the participants reported using in various domains.

Figure: 3.2 Language use by domains (n=130)
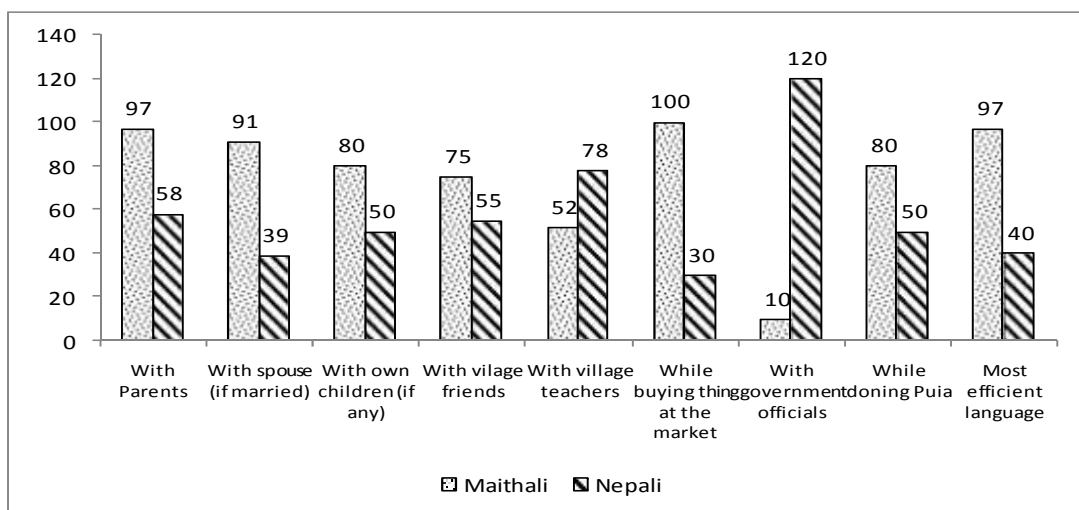
Overall, the result of the above diagram shows that the more Maithili speaking people use their mother tongue in every domain rather than Nepali.

For the intimate or familiar domains 60%–75% of them said that they used Maithili language with older speaks and younger family members in the home with village friends they use about 50% Maithili language and 50% Nepali language because half of their friends are Maithili speaking people and half of them are non–

Maithili speaking people. With Maithili speaking friends, they speak in Maithili and with non-Maithili speaking friends they speak in Nepali.

There are many village teachers who are non-Maithili speaking people both 60% people speak in Nepali language with their village teachers and 40% speak in Maithili language. At the market 60% people speak in Maithili language and 40% people speak in Nepali language. About 95% of the people speak Nepali language in government office only 5% people speak other language. Most of the people 75% people think that the Maithili language is the most efficient language and only 25% of other languages are efficient languages.

Language use according to Age

Figure 3.3 Display the Participants Language Use According to Age.
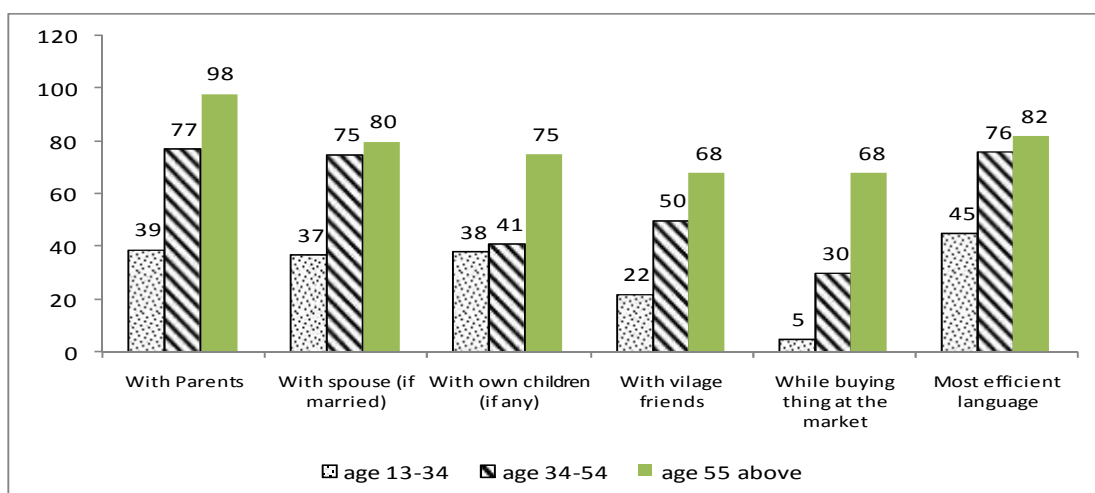
This figure depicts the responses of participants from the following 3 age groups: age 13–34 years, aged 35–54 years and aged 55 years above old. This figure depicts the increasing of Maithili language use according to the increase of the age groups.

In this district, the Maithili speaking people have got their own song. While doing puja, they sing Maithili hymns especially the old people. They alsouse Maithili

words while doing puja. Younger generation us very few Maithili words while worshipping.

The above indicates the rapid rate of shifting of Maithili language to Nepali language. According to age factor it indicates that in the next two or three generations, it will disappear from the district. Now, it is in very critical position. If we try to preserve it in time, we must get few improvements otherwise it will be only in the history books.

Language use according to formal education

Educated Maithili speaking people are more loyal and flexible on their language and culture rather than uneducated people. Educated Maithili speaking people are mixing many codes in their language in every domain. In this district there are not any schools which give the formal education in the residents' other tongue. Uneducated people are traditional and little bit cooperative. They are still domestic in their culture and language. They feel that languages the main heritage of their caste. The uneducated people think, that their language is more efficient language than other language. They become angry with the people who twist the phonological and grammatical structure of the language.

Perception of Bilingualism and Multilingualism

Bilingualism refers to the ability of an individual or an entire speech community to handle communication in a languageother than the mother tongue. In Siraha district, most of the Maithili speaking people are bilingual and multilingual, specially who speak Maithili language as their mother tongue. The participants were asked questions like "what language do they speak"? A question flowed that asked participants when they began to learn each language they are able to speak. A summary of responses to these questions given in figure 3.4.

Figure 3.4 Summary of responses to question about what languages people speak and when they learned them.

Questions key:

Language spoken = "other than you mother tongue, what language do you speak"?

Average age learned = "At what age did you being to learn each?

Table 3.9

Questions	Response		
	Maithili	Nepali	Other
Language speak	95%	4%	1%
Average age learned	3	7	–

Participants responses in figure 3-4 indicate that nearly all Maithili speakers in Siraha district can speak Maithili as 91% participants responded in this way. The second most common language that Maithili speakers are reportedly able to speak is Nepali.

A questions posed to the participants was "Is there anyone in your village who does not speak Nepali"? All of them replied that nobody is monolingual. Most of the Maithili speaking people in the district speak Nepali. It is significant that among the participants who perceived that everyone in their village spoke Nepali, there were some who needed to have the questionnaire administered in Maithili, because their Nepali proficiency was inadequate for this purpose. There were also a few who qualified their language by saying that although most Maithili speakers speak Nepali, there were many who spoke only or little of it or who could not 'speak it clearly'; mostly the people of old generations.

The final questions posed to the participants were "can a small Maithili speaking child understand everything his Nepali speaking teacher says when he/she first goes to school.

Can a Small Maithili Child Understand everything His Nepali-speaking Teacher says when he/she first goes to school?

Can a small child understand...?	%	No.
No	20	50
Yes/general yes/yes, because they have learned it before hand.	50	15
Not completely/a little/with difficulty	35	8
Some may, some may not	7	3
Don't know	1	1
5 years and older understand	-	-

Above figure reveals that only 8% said that generally a Maithili speaking child could not understand his teacher when he first went to school. According to some participants, the length of time required by the child to require enough Nepali understands the teacher ranged from about 6 months to one year. Some replied that intelligent ones could catch in a month, where as slower ones take two or more than two months.

The language use and attitudes findings imply that the Maithili language has high vitality, and that mother-tongue development is desirable and feasible. The Maithili language in this district seems in transition. So the participants' overall positive attitude towards their own mother-tongue and mother-tongue education suggests that there is potential for sustainable community based language development efforts.

Code Switching

Switching the code is very commons among Maithili speaking people of the district when two Maithili speaking people visit among speaker; they started to talk in their language. When they feel difficult to talk in their language with themselves they start to talk in Nepali.

Language Maintenance and Shift

Maithili speaking people throughout Siraha district take pride in their identity as Maithili and their history, culture and language. However this language is not being used and well maintained in many communities. They are speaking their language only in their community so it is very difficult to maintain their language. The school children have also to use only Nepali and English in their classroom. As people are educated they are borrowing Nepali and English words in their language and increasing their language. Even though, the Maithili speaking people take pride in their language and they appreciate it's purring. Where they live in other dominant speech community, there is a tendency among Maithili speaking people to shift to the use of existing dominant language.

In Siraha District, the Maithili speaking people only use their language as a family language. Educated Maithili people are adopting some of the "Nepali and English words into their own language. Despite this fact, it has been examined that Maithili speaking people in Sirhaha district are very interested in connoting in the future.

Most women, old men and uneducated men who have not any contact with others or outsiders, generally have less language shift or charge than educated men and school children. Maithili spacing people are facing a great problem in maintaining their own language. The Maithili language has the disadvantage of remaining a

language with only oral tradition and no write text books and Newspapers. They take pride in their language and appropriate its purring and they like to preserve the language for the preservation of their culture, tradition and history.

Standardization

Maithili is spoken by a wide variety of castes, both high and low. There exist two types of Maithili language standard Maithili and non standard Maithili. Brahmin–Kayastha speech is considered to be standard Maithili and non-Brahmin speech is considered to be non-standard Maithili. In Sirha district there are both speakers i.e. standard Maithili and non-standard Maithili. The participants were asked question that "which variety of your language do you consider suitable for use in education?" About 85% of respondents replied that standard Maithili is suitable for use in education as there is politeness and honororficity in standard Maithili language.

Word List

A standard list of 196 vocabulary items was collected from speakers of Siraha district. It is compared to determine the extent to which the Vocabulary of each pair of speech form is similar. Once world lists were elicited from a set of native speaker and then checked with a second set of the speakers the word lists were compared to find out to what extent the two languages (Standard Maithili and Non-standard Maithili) were similar in lexical items. No attempts were made to identify genuine cognates based on a network of sound correspondences. Rather, two items we judged to be phonetically similar, at least half of the segments compared were the same and of the remaining segments at least half were rather similar.

World List

The world list presented here shows the words used by standard and non standard user of Maithili language in Siraha district. The list here is classified according to the category of words.

S.N.	English	Standard Maithili	Non-standard Maithili
1.	Arm	Baainh	Baanhi
2.	Blood	Lahu/Khoon	Lahu
3.	Body	Deh	Deh
4.	Bone	Haddi	Haad
5.	Ear	Kaan	Kaan
6.	Elbow	Kehuni	Kahuni
7.	Face	Munh	Munh
8.	Finger	Aangur	Anguri
9.	Fingernail	Nauh	Noh
10.	Hair	Kesh	Kesh
11.	Hand	Haath	Haath
12.	Head	Math/Kapaar	Mathaa/mudi
13.	Knee	Thehun	Thenhun
14.	Leg	Paer	Gor
15.	Mouth	Munh	Munh
16.	Neck	Gardainh	Ghench
17.	Nose	Naak	Naak
18.	Palm	Tarhatthi	Tarhatthi

19.	Skin	Chamra	Chhala
20.	Teeth	Daant	Daant
21.	Tongue	Jew	Jeeh
22.	Urine	Pesaab	Laghi
23.	Faeces	Guh	Guh
		Name of Things	
24.	Village	Gaun	Gaam
25.	House	Ghar	Ghar
26.	Roof	Chair	Chhanhi
27.	Door	Kebaar	Kebaari
28.	Firewood	Jaarain	Jarna
29.	Market	Bazaar	Haat
30.	Broom	Baadhain	Barhani
31.	Bed-1	Palang	Palangri
32.	Bed-2	Occhaen	Bichoona
33.	Quilt	Sirak	Sirak
34.	Hammer	Hathauri	Hathauri
35.	Knife	Chakku	Chhuri
36.	Axe	Tengaari	Tengaari
37.	Rope	Jaur/Jauri	Rassa/Rassi
38.	Needle	Sui	Suiya
39.	Cloth	Bastr	Nua
40.	Lantern	Laltem	Lalten
41.	Sun	Surj	Suruj

42.	Moon	Chaand	Chaand
43.	Sky	Aakaas	Aakaas
44.	Thread	Doraa	Dhaga
45.	Rain	Barkhaa	Barsaa
46.	Water	Pain	Paani
47.	River	Nadi	Nadi
48.	Cloud	Megh	Mengh
49.	Lightening	Bijli	Bijuli
50.	Rainhow	Indradhanus	Painsoka
51.	Star	Taara	Taara
52.	Stone	Patthar	Patthal
53.	Path	Baat	Paenra
54.	Sand	Baaul	Baalu
55.	Wind	Basaat	Bihaair
56.	Somke	Dhunwaa	Dhunwaa
57.	Ash	Chhaur	Raakh
58.	Soil	Maait	Maati
59.	Dust	Dhul	Gardi
60.	Fire	Aaig	Aagi
61.	Gold	Son	Sonaa
62.	Tree	Gaachh	Gaachhi
63.	Leaf	Paat	Patta
64.	Root	Soir	Jair
65.	Thorn	Kaant	Kaant

66.	Flower	Phul	Phul
67.	Fruit	Phal	Phal
68.	Guava	Lataam	Lataam
69.	Papaya	Arnemaa	Arnebaa
70.	Gourd	Sajmain	Sajman
71.	Potato	Aalu	Aalu
72.	Rice	Chaaur	Chaaur
73.	Jackfruit	Katahar	Katahar
74.	Chilli	Mirchaai	Mirchaa
75.	Garlic	Lahsun	Lahsun
76.	Oinon	Piyaj	Piyaj
77.	Tomato	Tamatar	Tamaatar
78.	Turmeric	Haraid	Hardi
79.	Cumin	Jeer	Jeera
80.	Coriander	Dhani	Dhaniaa
81.	Cabbage	bandakobi	Patkobi
82.	Oil	Tel	Tel
83.	Salt	Nun	Nun
84.	Groundnut	chiniabadaam	Badaami
85.	Meat	Maaus	Maas
86.	Fish	Maachh	Machhri
87.	Egg	Andaa	Andaa
88.	Cow	Gay	Gaai
89.	Buffalo	Mahis	Bhainsi

90.	Milk	Dudh	Dudh
91.	Sweets	Madhur	Mithaai
92.	Bull	Saanrh	Sanrhia
93.	tail	Naangair	Nangari
94.	Dog	Kukur	Kutta
95.	Cat	Bilaair	Billaai
96.	Snake	Saanp	Saanp
97.	Leech	Jonk	Jonk
98.	Spider	Makaraa	Makaraa
99.	Mosquito	machchhar	Machchhar
100.	Ant	Chutti	Chutti
101.	Name	Naam	Naam
102.	Man	Aadmi	Aadmi
103.	Woman	Janaani	Jani
104.	Human being	Manukh	Aadmi
	Relations		
105.	Father	Baap	Baap
106.	Daddy (in address)	Baabuji	Baabu
107.	Mother	Mataair	Mataari
108.	Mother (in address form)	Maay	Maay
109.	Sister	Bahin	Bahin
110.	Brother	Bhai/bhaiya	bhaiya/bhaai
111.	Son	nankirbaa	Beta

112.	Daughter	Nankirbi	Beti
113.	Lad (boy)	Chhaura	Chaura
114.	Lass (girl)	Chhauri	Chhauri
115.	Father-in-law	Sasur	Sasur
116.	Mother-in-law	Saaus	Saas
117.	Husband	syaan/gharbala/bar	Syaan/gharbalaa
118.	Wife	bauh/gharbaali/kaniyaa	bauh/gharbaali
119.	Kids	dhiyaaputaa	lairkafairka
120.	in-laws'house	Saasur	Sasuraari
		Time adverbial	
121.	Day	Din	Din
122.	Night	Raait	Ratia
123.	Morning	bhor/paraat/bhinsar	Angutti
124.	Afternoon	Beriyaa	Berhat
125.	Evening	Saanjh	Saanjh
126.	Today	Aai	Aai
127.	Tomorrow	Kaailh	Bihaan
128.	Week	Haptaa	Haptaa
129.	Month	Maas	mahinaa
130.	Yesterday	Kaailh	Kaailh
131.	Year	Saal	Baris
		Adjectives	
132.	Old	Puraan	Puraan
133.	New	Nab	Nayaa

134.	Good	Nik	Nirman
135.	Bad	kharaab/nai nik	Kharaab/na niman
136.	Wet	Bhijal	Bhijal
137.	Dry	Sukhal	Sukhal
138.	Long	Naam	lamba/lammaa
139.	Short	Chhot	Chhot
140.	Hot	tappat/dhipal	tappat/dhipal
141.	Cold	Thaarh	Thandha
142.	Right	Dahin	Dainnya
143.	Left	Baam	Baayaan
144.	Near	Lag	Lag
145.	Far	Dur	Dur
146.	Big	badka/namhar	Bad/badka/lamhar
147.	Elder/Older	Jeth	Bad
148.	Younger	Chhot	Choot
149.	Soft	Naram	Laram
150.	Hard	Kadaa	Bajjar
151.	Above	Upar	Upar
152.	Below	Nichaa	Nichaa
153.	Weak	Kamjor	Kamjor
154.	Strong	baruwaar	baukar
155.	White	Ujjar	Ujjar
156.	Black	Kaari	Karia
157.	Red	Lal	Lal

158.	One	ek/ekta	ek/ego
159.	Two	du/duta	Du/dugo
160.	Three	tin/tinta	Tin/tingo
161.	Four	Chair	Chair
162.	Five	Paanch	Paanch
163.	Six	Chha	Chhao
164.	Seven	Saat	Saat
165.	Eight	Aath	Aath
166.	Nine	Nau	Nau
167.	Ten	Das	Das
168.	Eleven	Egaarah	Egaarah
169.	Twelve	Baarah	Baarah
		Wh-words (Clause-markers)	
170.	Who (que.)	Ke	Kon
171.	Who (clause)	Je	Jon
172.	What (ques.)	Ki	Kathi
173.	What (clause)	Je	Jathi
174.	Which (ques.)	Kun	Kon
175.	Which (clause)	Jun	Jon
176.	Where (ques.)	Kata	Kahaan
177.	Where (clause)	Jata	Jahaan
178.	When (ques.)	Kakhan/kahiaa	Kakhni/kahiaa
179.	When (clause)	Jakhaa	Jakhni

180.	How many/much	Katek	Ketna
181.	What thing	Kun chij	Kon chiij
182.	This	I	I
183.	That	O	U
184.	Same	wyah/ohne	Wohne
185.	Different	Bhina	Bhinn
186.	Whole	Puraa	Puraa
187.	All	Sabhta	Sabh
		Pronominal System	
188.	I	Ham	Ham
189.	We	Hamsabh	hamsabh
190.	You (Sing)	Tun	Tun
191.	You (Plural)	Tunsabh	Tonsabh
192.	You (honor)	Ahaan	Ahaan
193.	You (non-honor)	tun	Ton
194.	Addressing (honor.) (hey, hello, etc.)	Yau (masc.) Yai (fem.)	ho he
195.	Addressing (non-honor)	rai(masc.) gai (fem.)	re ge
		General	
196.	You are hungry	aaha bhukhal chhi tun bhukhal chen ton bhukhal chhah	aahan bhukhal chhi ton bukhal chee ton bhukhal chaa

Word List Result

Residents of different regions are typically distinguished by the words they use. These words also help to distinguish their socio ethnic status. And, such information can only be available through word list information. Word lists of ethnic or other variations are compared to find out to what extent the dialects or languages are linguistically similar.

Comparison of words list between standard Maithili and Non-standard Maithili shows that there is nearly seventy percent similarity between the two variations of the language.

Chapter Four

Research Methods

Nature and Source of Data

The data collected for the present survey were both oral and written in nature, the data were collected from the Maithili speaking communities of the mid eastern part of Nepal, which is closely related to Maithili for which purpose Siraha Districts was selected.

The data were collected in Lahan from adults whose mother tongue was Maithili. The size of data was fifty including households and individuals. The data came from people of different professions, ages, educational level and sexes. The data which were collected consited of language use and language attitude, educational level, pattern of level, bilingualism, socio-economic factors of the community.

Method of Data Collection

Methodologies used in this sociolinguistic survey are described in this section. Two methodologies were employed to examine the extent of Maithili language. They are world lists and questionnaires.

Word List

A word list of 210 words was collected from Maithili speakers of Siraha District. The world lists were collected from adult speakers who were long term residents of the area. The word list which was elicited were a collection to the most general words, not specific. In some cases a clarification of a word is made in Parenthesis where the sense of a word was not clear. In the case of variants and synonyms, it was discussed and a decision was made which form to include in the word list. To some extent help from the related literature was also taken.

The word lists which were elicited consisted of different parts of speech-noun, pronoun, adjective, verb and preposition. In the case of verbs, two forms were elicited. One of these was the third person masculine form of the simple past tense (e.g he ate), and the second form was the second person singular non-honorific imperative (e.g You go) in the case of pronouns, the first person, second person, and the third-person were elicited. For the first person plural inclusive pronoun, a sentence was used (Blair, 27-29).

Sociolinguistic Questionnaires:

The next method which was employed in this survey was a sociolinguistic questionnaire; the questionnaire was prepared in such a way that it could cover different aspects of language use and attitudes, patterns of context, travel and language opinions. It was both written and oral in nature. Question were asked in Maithili. The sociolinguistic questionnaire is included in the appendix.

Data Presentation

This section presents data which were collected from the survey. These data are related to language use and language use and language attitudes, language vitality, word lists and so on.

Chapter-Five

Conclusion

Summary

Maithili is the dominant language of the people of Siraha District. About 85% of the people speak Maithili language here. In village area, almost all the people speak Maithili language whereas in town areas the survey found that the new generation was mixing the Maithili language with Nepali language and other. They are mixing the languages because of contact with many people. But old generation have got strong feelings about their native language. Most of the Maithili children speak their native language.

Language use, Attitude and Vitality

The reported use of Maithili among all subjects in high in the domains of religion, friends and home, in the domains of market, mixture of Maithili and Nepali is used. If here are Maithili friends and shopkeepers they speak Maithili and if they meet other non- Maithili people they speak in Nepali. On the survey more use of Nepali or mixture of Maithili and Nepali can be seen among the younger people in the sample. In addition, the educated people reported higher use of Nepali than uneducated people in the most domains. A majority of people said that when children play together, they use a combination of Maithili and Nepali. It is very common in all parts of Maithili speaking communicates.

Most of the people in Lahan reported that they speak Maithili. Some people stated that there are young people who don't speak Maithili properly or don't speak at all. The highest percentage of people reported that older and younger people speak Maithili differently that is the young people mix Maithili with Nepali.

On the overall survey, the majority of respondents thought that children should learn Maithili first and then Nepali or any other language. Most people said that Maithili should be spoken by parents to their children and parents also should speak among them, otherwise this language won't flourish. For the question about literacy, they stated that Maithili literacy still would be important for language and culture preservation and fro their children's education. They gave the concern for Maithili literature, culture, religion and folk tale and legend about Maithili society people.

The majority of respondents were pessimistic about the future of their language. They stated that their chi8ldren and grand children won't speak Maithili properly or they will forget it and their culture and langauge will be finished. Therefore, in Siraha district, Maithili speaking people have got vital challenge for the preservation of their language and culture which is in great transition.

Interest in Literacy

The questionnaire findings indicate a reported high motivation to attend mother-tongue literacy classes rather than the Nepali literacy classes. Their reason was threat after getting literacy classes in their mother tongue, they will get the testacy of their language. They will know the value of their mother tongue. They gave the another reason about the literacy class that they will know how to read and write in Maithili language and they gave the greater emphasis on the language and culture preservation.

Conclusion

On the basis of the present survey, we come to the conclusion that Maithili is an independent language. The goal of this study of sociolinguistic variations has been to find out the answers to the questions viz. what is the structure of the language use, language vitality and the attitudes of the Maithili speakers towards their own

languages? These questions uncover the reality regarding the status of Maithili languages. to pursue the answer to the above questions, this sociolinguistic study was done by utilizing different techniques word list collection of the related languages, administering of the sociolinguistic questionnaires and making primary observation. One great achievement of this survey is a collection of words numbering almost 200. it is the list of words that focuses on the similarity and dissimilarity between the different speech varieties. Comparison of words list between standard Maithili and Non standard Maithili shows that there is 70 percent similarity between the two languages. So these two varieties are quite similar.

Recommendation

The type and extent of language development program to recommend for any language community is dependent upon many factors. These included dialect boundaries, attitudes towards various languages and language programs, vitality of the language in question and level of bilingualism among the community.

Among all of these factors, a few in particular stand out. For example, the Maithili speaking community in Lahan appears to be fairly bilingual. Furthermore, Maithili speaking parents and community leaders seem to understand the importance of education, which is exemplified by the high rate of Maithili children who attend school for at least ten years. This indicates that Maithili in Lahan could be succeeded by using Maithili language in future generations.

An opposing factor however, is that Maithili people continue to speak Maithili widely in their homes and communities. They have positive attitudes about their mother tongue. Most of the Maithili communities have expressed a desire for the development and preservation of their mother-tongue.

Based on these factors which have shown themselves to be prominent in this survey, we would recommend that literacy classes should be started to help Maithili children to learn to read and write in their mother tongue. They should be taught in Maithili script.

In order to develop and preserve language, there should be widely production and distribution of Maithili mother tongue material among Maithili speaking communities. The works of art should be about Maithili history, stories, language, culture, songs and poems.

The new government and constitution assembly should give the main priority for., the development of all nation languages and dialects. On the language policy of the new-government and constitution, there is an urgent need to make a linguistic survey in our country. For the special development and its good information, it is essential to do a survey in Siraha district.

At last, i want to call all of the Maithili speaking people to come ahead for preservation, promotion and use of their language in their daily life.

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Appendix

Questionnaire For Sociolinguistic Variation Survey

(Please answer the following questions there by writing or ticking as the case may be)

BACKGROUND INFORMATON

Name and Surname Age.................. Sex: Male/Female

....

Marital Status: .... Religion: .... Occupation: ....

Educational Background:

Illiterate/Literate

General

1.   Do you mix other lagnagues with your language ? If yes, what languages?

2.   What other languages are spoken in this district (Siraha)?

3.   Do all the people in your village speak language in the same way do ?

4.   What other languages do you speak ?

5.   Where do you speak them?

6.   With whom do you speak?

7.   How well can you speak them ? (all things, simple, things, understand only.)

Language Use

1.   In what language do you speak in your family?

i.   With yours brothers/sister?

ii   With your spouse?

iii.   With your children?

2.   What language do you speak in your locality?

i.   With your friends?

ii.   With your leaders?

iii.   While buying things in market ?

iv.   While singing songs?

v.   While praying/dong puja?

vi.   While discussing religion with friends?

vii.   While expressing your deepest feelings?

viii.   What language do your children use whole playing together?

Language Attitudes

1.   What language should your children speak first ? Why?

2.   Among the languages that you speak, which one do you love the most?

3.   How do you feel when you hear Mithili young people speaking other **Languages.**

4.   When the children of your village grow of and have their own children. Do you think they should speak the Maithili language?

Language Variation

1.   Are there the places where only Maithili language is spoken?

2.   Is the name the same or different in the other places where Maithili is spoken?

3.   Are the people proud of their mother language?

4.   When the children of Siraha district grow up and have their own children. Do you think those children. Do you think those children will speak Maithili language?

5.   Do you want your children to learn and follow Maithili customs and traditions?

6.   Do you want your children to learn and follow Maithili customs and traditions?

6.   Do you know of anything written in Maithili?

7.   Have you ever heard a radio programmer in your MT?

8.   Suppose someone started a class for learning how to read and write Maithili, would you yourself want to attend?