

PART I

**GEOGRAPHIC VARIATION
IN GRAMMAR AND LEXIS**

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Restructuring of Grammar in the Emerging Varieties of Hindi Across India

अन्विता अब्बी

भारत में उभरती हिंदी भाषा की विविधताओं के व्याकरण का पुनर्गठन

Abstract Intensive language contact is the genesis of diffusion of forms phonetically, morphologically, syntactically, and semantically. Both internal innovation and external pressures help in restructuring existing grammar in such a way that the language of contact is widely acceptable and prestigious. The multilingual mosaic of the country feeds the structure of the contact language in multiple ways. We observe that languages grow in layers as the model language is constantly changed by extension, innovation, and grammaticalization processes as exemplified by the contact Hindi used in Hindi-belt and non-Hindi zones.

The author discusses two different kinds of contact Hindi, the one which is used in the so-called ‘Hindi belt’, such as Bihar and Jharkhand—including the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar, where Hindi is the official language,—and the other in non-Hindi zones of Arunachal Pradesh marked by the multiplicity of mutually non-intelligible indigenous languages and Meghalaya, home to Mon-Khmer group of Austroasiatic languages—the two significant Northeast states of India. The author has discussed the salient features of contact Hindi and compared the similarities and differences among them. The study helps us to identify those structures of Standard Hindi which are prone to change, innovate and lose in the contact situation. It has been shown that Hindi in its non-standard variety can be seen as the biggest factor for social cohesion and mobility across the nation. The emergence of contact-induced linguistic structures makes this lingua franca a powerful contact language in the linguistically heterogeneous milieu.

Keywords standardization, language innovation, language adaptation, language acceptance, social cohesion, varieties of Hindi.

सारांश गहन भाषा-संपर्क की वजह से भाषाओं में ध्वन्यात्मक, रूपात्मक, वाक्यात्मक और अर्थ संबंधी परिवर्तनों का जन्म और प्रसार होता है। आंतरिक नवाचार और बाहरी दबाव की मदद से मौजूदा व्याकरण में ऐसे बदलाव होते हैं जिनसे संपर्क भाषा को व्यापक स्वीकार्यता और प्रतिष्ठा मिलती है। देश की बहुरंगी बहुभाषिकता संपर्क भाषा की संरचना को कई तरीकों से प्रभावित करती है। हमने पाया है कि भाषाएँ परतों में विकसित होती हैं क्योंकि मॉडल भाषा विस्तारण, नवाचार और व्याकरणीकरण जैसी प्रक्रियाओं के कारण लगातार बदलती रहती है। इसका एक उदाहरण हम हिंदी क्षेत्र और गैर-हिंदीभाषी इलाकों में संपर्क भाषा के रूप में हिंदी के इस्तेमाल में देख सकते हैं।

लेखिका ने प्रस्तुत लेख में संपर्क भाषा के रूप में हिंदी की उन दो किस्मों पर चर्चा की है जिनमें से एक तथाकथित 'हिंदी पट्टी' जैसे बिहार और झारखंड में बोली जाती है। इसमें केंद्र शासित प्रदेश अंडमान और निकोबार भी शामिल है, जहाँ हिंदी को राजभाषा का दर्जा मिला हुआ है। दूसरी ओर पूर्वोत्तर भारत के गैर-हिंदीभाषी इलाके हैं जैसे अरुणाचल प्रदेश जहाँ पारस्परिक रूप से अबोधगम्य विभिन्न जनजातीय भाषाएँ बोली जाती हैं, और मेघालय राज्य जहाँ ऑस्ट्रिक परिवार के अंतर्गत आनेवाली मोन-ख्मेर भाषाएँ बोली जाती हैं। लेखिका ने संपर्क हिंदी की मुख्य विशेषताओं पर चर्चा की है और उनके बीच की समानताओं और असमानताओं पर प्रकाश डाला है। यह अध्ययन हमें मानक हिंदी की उन संरचनाओं की पहचान करने में मदद देता है जिनमें संपर्क की स्थिति में परिवर्तन, नवाचार और लुप्त होने की संभावना है। लेख इस बात को इंगित करता है कि कैसे हिंदी की इन अमानक किस्मों को पूरे देश में सामाजिक सामंजस्य और गतिशीलता के सबसे बड़े कारक के रूप में देखा जा सकता है। संपर्क-प्रेरित भाषाई संरचनाओं का उद्भव हिंदी जैसी संपर्क भाषा को एक विषम परिवेश में शक्तिशाली संपर्क भाषा के रूप में स्थापित करता है।

मुख्य शब्द – मानकीकरण, भाषा नवाचार, भाषा अनुकूलन, भाषा स्वीकार्यता, सामाजिक सामंजस्य, हिंदी की किस्में।

1 Introduction

Urban India in the post-independent era is connected by Hindi which serves as the only lingua franca among the uneducated and along with English for both educated and uneducated people. According to the Census 2011, Hindi is a cover term that includes 57 varieties termed as 'mother tongues'—Hindi one of them—listed under the 'Hindi language'. The total population speaking Hindi and its varieties are enumerated as 528,347,193.

These varieties have been recognized not as independent languages but as "dialects" socially, educationally, and politically in post-independent India (Abbi 2009). The reductionist attitude of the government gives us the impression that 43.63% of the Indian population speaks Hindi (Census 2011). However, the truth is that Hindi in its non-standard form has become the major lingua franca of the country used by more than 60% of the population (refer to bilingualism figure in the Appendix). Contrary to the still-dominant opinion, this is the language that is widely accepted by the communities all over India, including southern India (Abbi et al. 1998–2000). It is significant for us to understand how

various forms of contact Hindi have negotiated Hindi grammar to make it accessible and acceptable all over India.

The author discusses two different kinds of situations that exist in the country. The first situation arises where Hindi in the so-called ‘Hindi belt’ (includes nine states, the Union Territory of Delhi, and the geographically distanced from the main Hindi belt Union territory of Andaman and Nicobar) has restructured several grammar standardization norms, and thus emerged as a *language in contact*, imbibing some features of the closely related varieties. The second situation is represented by Northeast India marked very heavily by linguistic diversity and multiplicity of languages. Hindi in these states has emerged as a non-native variety, unfolding the processes of language acculturation, language adaptation, linguistic innovations, and above all and the most important of all, language acceptance (Sharma 2013; Abbi & Sharma 2014). In the Northeast, Hindi has a distinct structure from the standard variety, as this is the *language of contact*.

2 The status of Hindi across the country

As said earlier, according to the official census of 2011 Hindi is spoken by 528,347,193 speakers (cf. Appendix for details). If we add to this the official figure of those who reported Urdu as their mother tongue (the two languages not being very different at the spoken level), which is 50,772,631, the speakers of Hindi-Urdu will be considered as representing the highest percentage of the total population, i. e. $43.63\% + 4.19\% = 47.82\%$. There has been an increase of 4.34% in Hindi mother-tongue users since the 1991 Census enumeration, from 39.29% to 43.63% of the total population. The numerical strength of users of Hindi as a second language, or for inter-community communication across various states and union territories of India, can only be guessed, as no statistical study has been made on this.

The use of Hindi across states, and social and religious identities, has given rise to non-standard varieties of Hindi both in areas where Hindi is not the primary official language and in the states of the Hindi belt, where Standard Hindi (SH) is the official language: Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, the Union Territory of Delhi and the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar. Coupled with different registers, we have several varieties of non-Standard Hindi which are used in day-to-day life. The complex mosaic of the Hindi speech community is further enlarged by the emergence of cosmopolitan Hindi, which shows traits of convergence of several languages and dialects spoken in the cosmopolitan cities. This gives rise to many varieties of Hindi.

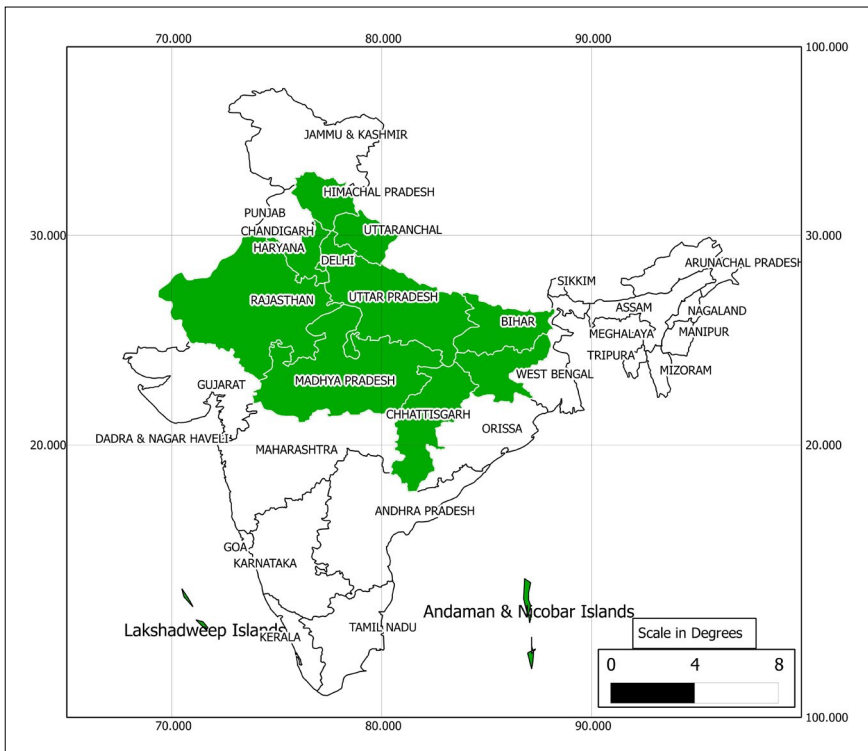


Fig. 1 Map of Hindi States (Abbi & Sharma 2014)

3 Varieties of Hindi

Although we have multiple Hindis that are operational across the country, we can roughly classify them into six varieties:

- Hindi spoken in the cosmopolitan cities
- Hindi spoken in the Hindi belt
- Hindi spoken in the non-Hindi zones
- Hindi spoken in the Northeast (is part of the non-Hindi zone)
- Hindi spoken in the Andamans which comes under the Hindi-belt but is constituted of a diverse population of India speaking various scheduled languages as mother tongues.
- Standard Hindi with several registers used by people in different professions such as teachers, writers, radio announcers, public speechmakers, politicians, and hawkers among others.

Each of these varieties is marked by a distinct grammatical structure and has emerged in different historical, political, and geographical circumstances. Extensive bi or multilingualism prevailing in each state contributes to shaping these varieties. In the Hindi belt states what are classed as varieties of Hindi (see the Appendix) are independent languages, several with a rich literary or folklore tradition, as, for instance, Magahi and Bhojpuri in Bihar, Braj and Awadhi in Uttar Pradesh, Marwari, and Mewati in Rajasthan, Kumaoni and Garhwali in Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarhi in Chhattisgarh, among others. Hindi in these regions has grown in contact with these numerous languages which are the home languages of the users of Hindi. It is worth mentioning that Hindi being the official language is taught as a compulsory subject in schools and thus, readers and listeners are exposed to the SH in schools as well as in government offices.

This situation of Hindi, being the official language or one of the official languages in the states of the Hindi belt, has given rise to Contact Hindi (CH) which has its genesis in these regional languages (57 of them) and the SH. Interestingly, when asked, speakers of tribal languages of the Hindi belt usually claim themselves to be Hindi speakers and very rarely divulge the names of their indigenous mother tongues. For instance, although tribals in Jharkhand speak non-Indo-Aryan languages such as Kharia and Ho (Austroasiatic) or Kurux and Malto (Dravidian), they have been observed to claim Hindi as their mother tongue (Abbi et al. 1998–2000; Abbi 2009). Between the competing real and claimed mother tongues arises the CH, which has traces of both. The grammatical structure of this Hindi is closer to the SH, as the speakers are exposed to this variety in schools and other official domains. Print and visual media also add to the emergence of a ‘near standard’ variety of the CH. It was observed in Jharkhand (Abbi 1997; Abbi 2009: 306) that members of the young generation are happy to forget their mother tongues and that their elders prefer to teach their children Hindi rather than their indigenous languages (Santali, a Munda language, is an exception).

The situation in the non-Hindi zone is different. The need to communicate to other non-Hindi speakers as well as to Hindi speakers outside and within the states is the motivating factor for the local population to learn and use Hindi; there is neither any serious attempt to speak a near-standard variety nor do the speakers have much exposure to the SH. The result is the emergence of a variety that is not close to the standard but has acceptability and possibly also prestige among the users. Hindi as the contact language has emerged in these states as a compulsive alternative to communicate to a larger population base. Moreover, Hindi is being seen as the instrument of social cohesion and the best reason for mitigating differences among locals and outsiders.

We have taken the area of the Northeast, especially Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya, for this discussion. Once known as the North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA), Arunachal Pradesh became a full-fledged state in 1987. It is the largest

among what are grouped as the seven North-eastern states or ‘the seven sisters’. Meghalaya became an autonomous region of Assam in 1970, and a separate state in 1972. The major languages spoken are Khasi, Garo, Jaintia and English.

Although government organisations such as the Central Hindi Directorate (CHD), National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and Kendriya Hindi Sansthan (KHS), and autonomous institutes such as the Vivekananda Kendra and Ramakrishna Mission have been very active in imparting knowledge of Hindi, it is the interaction with outsiders, traders, entrepreneurs, army personnel, medical professionals, and officials who have come to reside in the Northeast that has helped in forming the CH. Thus, social change and demographic restructuring in Northeast India in the mid-seventies led to the development of the CH. This reminds us of Thomason and Kaufman, who opine that “it is the sociolinguistic history of the speakers, and not the structure of their language, that is the primary determinant of the linguistic outcome of language contact” (Thomason & Kaufman 1988: 35). Aikhenvald & Dixon (2007: 47) argue against this and hold the view that:

“...[t]ypologically different linguistic structures tend to change in different ways. For each category, in order to answer the question of how diffusible it is we need to know its function, expression, and status within the language.”

The current research shows that contact-induced changes owe their existence to the interplay of the model language and the recipient language. There are some well-defined features of the model language which are more vulnerable to change and thus, these features change in any sociolinguistic situation. Then, there are typologically identifiable grammatical features of the recipient language which influence the contact language in a way that the resultant contact language assumes a distinct identity.

Linguistic structures of the Northeast Hindi have emerged in contact with typologically and genealogically distinct languages of the regions. We shall be discussing the structure of this Hindi after we discuss the structure of Hindi in the Hindi belt. As said earlier, this is the Hindi of contact. Before we begin our discussion, readers may be interested in knowing how we define the SH which is going to serve as the take-off point for the discussion.

We would like to join Yamuna Kachru in defining the concept of SH, the official language based on Western Hindi, as follows:

Hindi, the official language, is a standardized form of language that is also referred to as Modern Standard Hindi, to distinguish it from the colloquial and regional varieties of the language (Kachru 2006: 1).

It is the codified variety, primarily based on a vernacular known as Khari Boli (*kharī bolī*), which is used for official purposes and has several registers. We have taken its spoken form for the sake of comparison and point of departure for analysing Arunachal and Meghalaya Hindi.

Following is the discussion on restructured Hindi varieties in the Hindi belt, such as being used in the states of Jharkhand and Bihar as well as in the Union Territory of the Andaman and Nicobar. This is followed by the discussion on Hindi of non-Hindi zones, such as being used in the states of Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh in the Northeast.

4 Language in contact: Hindi in Hindi-belt, including the Andaman Islands

4.1 Contact Hindi of Bihar (CHB)

The constant process of industrialization and modernization of Bihar since the early 20th century accompanied by the introduction of educational institutions of European type and by modern communication apparatus, such as press and railways, encouraged immigration from Uttar Pradesh and other regions of Bihar into Patna, which in 1936 became the capital of the newly formed province. An amalgam of Awadhi, Chattisgarhi, Hindustani, Bhojpuri, Magahi and Maithili gave rise to a variety in the big cities of Patna and Jamshedpur. This version of the language went through the process of acculturation due to contact with Urdu first and then with SH in domains of education, governance and media. The outcome was a version of Hindi which is closer to SH but has identifiable grammatical features borrowed from contact languages.

The undivided Bihar (before the formation of Jharkhand in 2000) saw a whole century of Hindi developing as the language of education, judiciary and administration. Hindi speaking intelligentsia and upper-caste Hindus of Bihar, independent of whether Hindi was their mother tongue or not, supported the Hindi movement since 1880, coupled with the British government support. After independence, Hindi became the State Official Language of Bihar and language of instruction in all state-owned and funded schools except minority schools like Convents, *Madrasa*, *Maktab* or schools owned by any linguistic minority group. This entails that speakers of Bihar and Jharkhand had enough exposure to SH in schools, unlike the other communities of the Northeast as we shall see later. Contact Hindi, more often than not, operates in a diglossic relation with SH. Speedy developmental programmes in urban areas motivate speakers to learn SH to use in formal settings. However, Hindi in an informal setting by educated speakers is loaded with the variety of the CHB and contact Hindi of Jharkhand (CHJ). We shall consider some of the defining features of the CHB and the CHJ in the following sections.

4.1.1 Salient features of Contact Hindi of Bihar

Some of the features which keep the CHB apart from the SH are presented below using examples from Hashami (2015). It is to be noted that most of the contact Hindi omit the difference between first singular and first plural and use *həm* ‘we’ which is used for both singular and plural but refers to singular first-person addressor. This is generally considered a polite form. It is also used to give honorificity to the addressee. In the following article, I have thus, interlinearized *həm* as both singular and plural forms.

1. Ergativity is missing:

- (1) *həm* *us* *ko* *mare*
 1SG.HON/PL 3SG.OBL ACC beat.AOR.SG.HON
 ‘I beat him/her.’

The use of the first-person plural form for politeness as well as showing honour to the addressee is a very old use in many standard varieties of Hindi-Urdu. It is commonly observed in the speech of Hindi speakers of Allahabad and Lucknow.

2. Grammatical gender is not marked. However, grammatical generalization of semantic gender is visible in some varieties. Consider (2) and (3) respectively.

- (2) *na fugar* *he* *kəmzori* *ho-t-a* *he*
 No sugar COP.PRS.SG weakness.F.SG be-IPFV-M.SG AUX.PRS.3SG
 ‘No, I have diabetes, I feel weakness.’

- (3) *caj mē didi* *kja* *ḡal-t-i* *he* *bātao na*
 tea LOC elder.sister what put-IPFV-F be.3HON tell TAG
 ‘What does the elder sister put in tea? Please tell.’

Thus, biologically determined feminine noun governs gender agreement but grammatically marked feminine nouns have default agreement of 3rd masculine singular.

3. Nouns with postpositional case markers do not get inflected for oblique case (as *ləṛka* unlike SH *ləṛke*), nor is the copula ever coded for plurality. Noun ‘sisters’ *bəhən* also does not take plural marking.

- (4) *ləṛka ka* *car bʰai* *or* *do* *bəhən he*
 boy GEN four brother and two sister COP.PRS.3SG
 ‘The boy has four brothers and two sisters.’

4. The formation of the plural is by compounding. Thus, *log* ‘people’ [+human] is attached to plural animate nouns. With inanimate nouns and [-human] plurality is not marked. However, *səb* ‘all’, *sara* ‘all’, *kul* ‘all’ are used to form plurals. The suffix /-ən/ is attached with both animate and inanimate nouns to form plurals in some varieties. The finite verb again fails to agree in gender and number.

(5) *səb ləɾka log kʰela*
 all boy people.PL play.AOR.M.SG
 ‘All the boys played.’

(6) *səb ləɾk-ən kʰela*
 all boys-PL play.AOR.M.SG
 ‘All boys played.’

5. Specifier suffixes /-wa/ and /-ja/ are attached to nouns. These have a functional role of definiteness although Grierson (1903) considered them redundant.

(7) *saiɾl-ja cen-wa se bandʰ dijje*
 cycle-SPEC chain-SPEC INST fasten give.IMP.HON
 ‘Fasten up the cycle with the chain.’

6. Numeral classifiers *go* and *ʔʰo* are placed between the numerical adjective and the noun and are interchangeable, i. e. both can be used either with animate or with inanimate nouns.

(8) *həmɾ-i beɟi ke car go beɟa aur du ʔʰo*
 1SG/PL.POSS-F daughter GEN.PL four CLF son and two CLF
beɟi he ɔɾ du ʔʰo gaɾi o he
 daughter COP.PRS.3SG and two CLF cars also COP.PRS.3SG
 ‘My daughter has four sons and two daughters as well as two cars.’

7. The suffix /-e/ is used as a locative marker in the same meaning as the SH postposition *mē* ‘in’. Thus, *gʰəɾ mē* ‘in the house’ of the SH is rendered as *gʰəɾe* in the CHB.

8. *-ke* is used as a genitive postposition along with *-ka* and *-ki*. In case it is *ke* it signifies the neutralization of gender agreement. It is noticed that in many regions of Bihar genitive is dropped altogether.

9. The first-person plural form *həm* of the SH is used for both singular and plural as we saw in the sentence (1) above. Since the verb takes plural ending, as in

(1) above, it shows the agreement with the plural subject but semantically this pronoun stands for the singular subject.

10. We noticed a very productive process of verbal derivation in the CHB. From several nouns and adjectives, verbs are derived with the help of suffixes *-a* and *-ja* or *-ija*. For instance, *bat* ‘talk’ is derived as *bətijana* ‘to talk’ or *gəɾəm* ‘hot’ > *gəɾmana* ‘to heat’ etc. It has been noticed that both these verbs are also incorporated now in many standard Hindi dictionaries.
11. The suffix *-je* is used as an exclusive emphasis marker (the equivalent of the SH *hi*), and *-o* is used as an inclusive emphasis marker (the equivalent of the SH *b^{hi}*). Consider:

(9) *həm to itna səsta mẽ dəɪ-je deŋge*
 1SG/PL EMPH this.much cheap in give-EMPH give.FUT.PL
 ‘I will give it (sell it) this cheap.’

12. The verb in the past tense in the speech of upper-class Muslims in Patna district is inflected with *-is* for 3rd singular non-honorific and *-in* for 3rd singular honorific. Consider:

(10) *u kəh-is tha ki car bəje ajega*
 3SG say-PST.3NHON be.PST.M.SG CONJ four o'clock come.FUT.3SG.M
 ‘He said that he would come at four o’clock.’

(11) *u-(log) k^hana k^ha lih-in*
 3-(PL) food eat take-PST.3HON
 ‘They have taken their food.’

Although a characteristic feature of the Muslims speech, one notices Hindus of elite class also using the honorific form in Patna district. Grierson also acknowledges this trait of Muslims and ascribes it to Awadhi influence (cf. Hashami 2015); he interprets *-in* as a marker of politeness. The youth of Patna no longer use these structures, as these are considered to be the speech of less-educated people.

13. Consonant clusters are strictly not allowed word-initially or finally in the contact variety.
14. The replacer phoneme, i. e. the sound that replaces the initial sound of the base word (Abbi 1991) in echo formations, is *u* unlike *v* in the SH. Thus, the SH *ro-vo* ‘crying etc’. corresponds to *ro-u* in the CHB.

4.2 Contact Hindi in Jharkhand (CHJ)

The state of Jharkhand was carved out of Southern Bihar in 2000. According to the census 2011, the population of Scheduled Tribes (ST) 8,645,042 constitutes 26.2 per cent of the total population of 32,988,134 of the state. The census lists 32 tribes in the state. The bilingual competence of tribes of Jharkhand is at a higher level at the scale of bilingual proficiency than its dominant majority communities (Abbi 1995; Abbi 1997), Hindi being the most prominent second or third language. The tribal population considers Hindi as the language of prestige and honour (Abbi et al. 1998–2000) and tries to reach the level of SH in spoken and written forms. The high bilingual proficiency has changed the grammar of the indigenous tribal languages as they have converged towards Hindi as well as other Indo-Aryan languages (Abbi 1995; Abbi 1997). When we talk of contact Hindi of Jharkhand (CHJ) we take into account the speech of both tribes and non-tribes.

Many factors are responsible for the emergence of Hindi as a contact language of Jharkhand. Among them are: (1) immigration of disparate linguistic groups from the neighbouring states in search of employment in the fast-developing Jharkhand as the industrialized state, especially in Jamshedpur, Dhanbad and Sindri; (2) immigration for higher education in Ranchi and Jamshedpur, as these two cities house schools and colleges considered among the best in the state by the locals; (3) spread of Christianity among varied tribes speaking different and distinct languages motivating religious congregation to take place in one common and easily accepted language such as Hindi and publishing religious material in SH; (4) inter-community marriages between tribes and non-tribes as well as between different non-tribal communities; (5) Hindi is the state's official language used in education, for judicial and administrative purposes. The most important factor which has been responsible for the acceptance of Hindi as the dominant contact language is the notion of dignity and honour attached to the language, especially among the tribes (Abbi et al. 1998–2000).

4.2.1 Salient features of Contact Hindi of Jharkhand (CHJ)

The CHJ shares most of the features with the CHB. Features like no grammatical gender, plural formation by compounding with *log*, default agreement with third masculine singular, absence of oblique case marking on nouns are some of these features. For detail refer to Hashami (2015: 304). We discuss below some of the significant shared and non-shared features of the CHJ.

1. Semantic gender is not recognized grammatically, and thus all nouns are treated as masculine.

- (12) *mer-a* *bēhen jāhā rēh-ta* *he*
 1SG.POSS-M.SG sister here live-IPFV.M.SG AUX.PRS.3SG
 ‘My sister lives here.’

2. The plural is formed by attaching *log* ‘people’ to animate nouns. Some speakers frequently use *jan* ‘person’, ‘people’ to pluralize human nouns. This feature is typical of the CHJ.
3. Oblique case form of 1st and 2nd person possessive pronouns is commonly used with postpositions *ko*, *se*, *tāk*, *pār*, i. e. forming *mere=ko* ‘to me’, *tere=ko* ‘to you’ instead of the SH *mujhe* and *tujhe*, or *mere=se* ‘from/by me’, *mere=pār* ‘on me’, *tere=tāk* ‘up to you (spatial sense)’ instead of SH *mujh=se*, *mujh=pār*; *tujh=tāk* respectively. These constructions are very common in cosmopolitan Hindi as spoken in Delhi and Mumbai also. However, it is noticed that the Jharkhandis also use constructions not different from SH, like *hām=ko*, *tum=ko* and *us=ko* ‘to us/you/him (or her)’ respectively, and the plural forms *hām log ko*, *tum log ko*, *ap log ko*, and *vo log ko* etc.
4. Unlike the CHB or the SH, modal *sāk* ‘can’, ‘be able to’ is used as an independent verb in the CHJ. This is a very common feature in most of the contact Hindis of the country and around the world, including the Andamanese Hindi, Fiji Hindi (Siegel 1988), Kolkata Hindi, Arunachalese Hindi and Meghalaya Hindi (see below).

- (13) *jitna sākega* *dām* *lāga-ke* *dek^h le*,
 as.much be.able.FUT.3SG.M strength apply-CVB see take.IMP
tum mere *se sāk* *hi* *nāhi payega*
 you 1SG.POSS.OBL from be.able EMPH no get.FUT.3SG.M
 Literal: As much (your) ability (is) strength apply, you from me won’t
 be able to sustain.
 ‘Put as much strength as you wish, you won’t be able to outplay me.’

5. When modal verbs *sāk*- ‘can’, ‘be able to’, *mañ*-‘to demand’ or *cah*- ‘want’ are used as the second constituent of a complex verb, the main verb takes the infinitive form ending in *-e*. For instance, *jane sākta* ‘can go’; *k^hane mañta* ‘wants to eat’ and *bolne cahta* ‘wants to speak’ etc.
6. The numeral classifier from regional languages *gotta* or *go*, which means ‘one’, is used profusely with nouns to mean both ‘one’ and ‘whole’. For instance, *gotta biskuṭ* ‘one biscuit’. It can also mean ‘one whole unbroken’, as in *car t^ho gotta mirca* ‘four CL whole chillies’. The numeral classifier *t^ho* is

borrowed from the local languages such as Sadari and *gotta* is a borrowing from the Munda languages spoken in the area.

- (14) (*həm*) *gotta-gotta saman le aje*
 (1SG/PL) one-one things take come.AOR.SG/PL
 ‘(I) brought each and everything.’

7. We don’t find the presence of *-in* for honorability in the past tense of the verb in Muslim speech, unlike in the CHB, because the Awadhi influence is absent in Jharkhand.

Features 4, 5, 6, and 7 are the features of the CHJ distinguishing it from the CHB. The two varieties also differ in lexicon marginally. For instance, ‘cloth’ is *luga* in the CHJ but *kəpɾa* in the CHB (*kəpɾe* in the SH); the word for ‘female labourer’ in the SH is *məzdurni*, but in the CHJ it is *reja* and in the CHB it is *məzdur ɔɾət* ‘working woman’; the word for ‘hen’ in the SH and the CHB is *murgi* but in the CHJ it is *caŋgni* (borrowed from Kurux). Many lexical items used in the CHJ are borrowed from Bangla and Oriya—the languages that are spoken across the border.

4.3 Contact Hindi of the Andamans (CHA)

The Andaman Islands are comprised of a cluster of approximately 550 islands, rocks and rocky outcrop running from north to south and located southeast of the Indian subcontinent in the Bay of Bengal. They are separated from the Malay Peninsula by the Andaman Sea, an extension of the Bay of Bengal, and are part of the Union Territory of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands belonging to India. Geographically, the Andaman Islands are closer to Myanmar and Indonesia than to mainland India. However, contact between the Andamanese and the populations of the neighbouring countries has not been established to date. The capital city of the Andaman Islands is Port Blair, situated in the south of the Islands at a distance of 1255 km from Kolkata and 1190 km from Chennai.

Although the first settlement in the Andaman Islands took place in September 1789 by Lieutenant (later Captain) Archibald Blair, the high death rate among the settlers discouraged any activity in the Islands for the next sixty-two years. Six decades later the first war of independence forced the British rulers of India in 1857 to reconsider the Andaman Islands for the establishment of a penal settlement to deal effectively with those who revolted against their paramount power. It was on 22nd January 1858 that Union Jack was hoisted by Capt. H. Man, the Executive Engineer, was deputed to take formal possession of the islands. The Andamans

were eventually known as the ‘Black Water Islands’ because of the dreaded Black Water Fever or malaria that was rampant there. However, these sets of islands have become popular as tourist destinations both for Indians and foreigners currently, especially after the tsunami in 2004.

The history of the CHA is associated with the establishment of the penal colony in 1868 by the British rulers to keep the freedom fighters in captive. When British generals came to the Islands they brought along Indian officials who spoke Hindi and its major varieties. After independence in 1947 the government brought people from Bihar (now Jharkhand) and other areas for undertaking development programs in the Island. After the independence of Bangladesh in 1971, the Indian government encouraged and motivated Bengali refugees to settle down in the Islands. It also motivated members of other communities residing in the south of India and those employed by the Central government to migrate to the islands. It is not surprising to find several hamlets of Malayali, Tamil, Telugu, and Kannada speakers in Port Blair. To attract Indians from the mainland the government distributed free land in the islands—both in Great Andaman and Little Andaman, with the result that today the Andaman Islands are considered ‘mini India’ with approximately 20 Indian languages spoken as mother tongues. Hindi is revered as the link language among the local population. One can find people from every state in the Andamans who speak their native language at home but use Hindi as soon as they step out of their homes. A constant stream of visitors to the island has increased the worth of the knowledge of Hindi. It will not be an exaggeration to put it in writing that there is not a single person in the Andaman Islands (barring members of the Jarawa community in the Great Andaman and Onge community in Little Andaman) who does not speak Hindi. Hindi is not only the state’s official language; it is used in almost all domains outside the home. Great Andamanese tribes and migrants from the Hindi belt use the contact Hindi as the home language too. This is also true of the tribes brought from Bihar (before the formation of Jharkhand). They are known as ‘Ranchi’ and live in the northern part of the Great Andaman Islands. The data discussed here is the outcome of my fieldwork in the Islands in 2001 and 2005–2009.

Two interesting observations, although not very unexpected, came to light. Firstly, there were several varieties of Hindi, each marked by the influence of the local mother tongue of the speaker concerned and, secondly, Hindi used by the Great Andamanese tribes, on the contrary, did not have much influence on their indigenous language/s except in sound system. The latter is a clear indication that they had lost their competence in their respective mother tongues long ago. Since there are so many varieties of Hindi in Andamans, each marked by its speakers’ mother tongue (Telugu Hindi, Malayali Hindi, Bengali Hindi, Punjabi Hindi, Tamil Hindi etc.), we shall divide them into two major groups, i. e. Hindi used by the Great Andamanese tribes and Hindi used by others, the settlers.

4.3.1 Contact Hindi of Great Andamanese (CHGA)

As of today,¹ the population base of this tribe is rather small, as there are 74 people in the Great Andamanese community, mainly children below the age of 12. However, only four of the adult population have some competency in their native language. All converse with each other in Andamanese Hindi. Since Hindi is the state's official language, those children who go to school are exposed to SH but others are deprived of this facility. Great Andamanese Hindi is marked by few lexical items drawn from the indigenous languages but the structure of grammar is based on Hindi which the tribes hear from the locals and different migrants to the Island. For instance, *refe karo* 'have your meal' where *kər-* 'to do' is from Hindi and *refe* 'food' is a word from Jeru, the Great Andamanese language, or code-mixed Great Andamanese language with Hindi syntax. The exposure to the SH is minimal or absent, as education in a formal atmosphere was unheard of till very late. When we collected the data, most of the Andamanese children were at home. Some did go to primary school. What I give in the following pages is a sample of adult speech. It is to be noted that Great Andamanese do not use ə and substitute it in all Hindi words containing ə with a. Thus, the opposition of the SH between ə and a is neutralized in the speech of most of the Great Andamanese speakers. Exceptions are the children who go to schools in Port Blair and learn Hindi in a classroom situation. Consider:

The indigenous words in the examples are in bold.

- (15) *tele nahi kija boje me*
Attend not did marriage LOC
'did not go the marriage'
- (16) *refe kija andar me*
Food did inside in
'Had food inside (the house).'
- (17) *kjun aka-meme kuc^h nahi bol-a*
Why her-mother something not speak-AOR.M.SG.
'Why didn't her mother speak [to her]?'

1 The population figure is supplied by the Andaman Adi Janjati Vikas Samiti (AAJVS), Port Blair, Andaman and Nicobar and the competence level in the Great Andamanese language is assessed by the author who had been in constant touch with the tribe for the last 18 years.

Hindi spoken by the Great Andamanese is very close to the Bengali Hindi (such as *sək-* ‘to be able to’ used as an independent verb and the use of the verb *maŋ-* with infinitives as in *jane maŋta* ‘wants to go’), perhaps because of their exposure to the Bengali language of Indian officials (baboo) who came to the island after the 1960s. As said earlier, a prominent omission in the Great Andamanese Hindi is that of mid vowel ə (symbolized in Devanagari as अ), words like Hindi *bənao* as *banao* ‘make-IMP’, and of retroflex ʄ, which is rendered as alveolar r (examples 18 and 19 below). The other interesting feature which is shared across the island is the formation of verbal attributive phrase having the passive meaning with the specifier *wala* (19). Consider:

(18) *sa:f banao*
 clear make.IMP
 ‘Make it clear.’

(19) *bara sab de dija: wala kʰajega*
 Big sahib give give.PFV SPEC eat.FUT.3SG.M
 ‘I will eat the one which was given to me by the big boss.’

Another very common feature of the Andamanese Hindi is to use several types of replacer sound for echo formations. Thus, vowel alternation as in *kʰa-kʰu* ‘eat etc.’ or dropping of the initial consonant with vowel alternation as in *pani-uni* ‘water etc.’ and replacing initial consonant with /v-/ as in *kam-vam* ‘work etc.’ are used in free variation.

An interesting aspect is also that speakers use the future tense in narration as against the SH past or present imperfect. See a sample of narration given below. The speaker, Nao Jr. aged 55 years is narrating how they light a fire. The future tense may be used to portray repeatedly occurring situations as imagined in the future as well as for the present. In Russian, it can be the same. The following transcript is in the Devanagari script so that it can be compared with the one in the IPA that follows it immediately.

(Narration in Andamanese Hindi)

पहले एक बंबू को पूरा लम्बा से छील देगा,
 पूरा अच्छा से मोटा करके उसमे जरा से एक छेद बना देगा,
 फिर पतला सा और बम्बू बना देगा ।
 बना के नीचे को और बेंत का जो सड़ा किस्म का सूखा वाला, अच्छा वाला उसको नीचे
 जमा कर देगा फिर, उसको पूरा जोर से रगड़ेगा ।

(Narration IPA)

*pehle ek bambu ko pura lamba se chil dega,
pura accha se moṭa karke usme jara se ek ched bana dega,
phir patla sa or bambu bana dega.
bana ke nice ko bent ka jo saḍa kism ka sukha wala, accha wala usko nice
jama kar dega phir, usko pura jor se ragrega.*

English Translation

First [I] will peel a bamboo lengthwise,
then flatten it well and then make a hole in it.
Then [I] will make another thin bamboo.
Having done [I] will collect the cane, rotten type dried one, good one
and put it in a heap.
Then, [I] will rub it vehemently.

4.3.2 Hindi used by the Andamanese settlers (CHAS)

As said earlier, Andaman is considered a ‘mini India’ as it is a multi-religious, multi-ethnic, and multilingual region. People from mainland India had been coming to the Islands to buy land and make the region their homes. Some were sent by the Government of India to run administrative offices and they made this Island their home. A large chunk of the population is Bangladeshi refugees and people from the South of India who were encouraged to migrate to become self-sufficient. A very recent phenomenon is that now the Andamans are considered one of the prized tourist places, especially after the tsunami in December 2004. One sees a variety of families from all over India visiting the place. All this influx has affected the contact Hindi used for inter-ethnic communication. The official languages are Hindi and English. The literacy rate is very high, as all children go to school and those employed by the government are exposed to the SH. To make a distinction between Hindi used by the Great Andamanese (CHGA) and that of the local population called “settlers” we will term the latter as the CHAS (Contact Hindi of Andamanese settlers) in the following discussion. Readers will find many similarities between the CHAS and the other contact Hindis we witnessed earlier.

Lack of agreement between adjective and noun (23), absence of ergativity as in *tom roṭi kʰaja* ‘you ate a chapati’, default agreement of 1st and 3rd person masculine singular (20, 21, 23) obliterating the difference of pronominal agreement (20), absence of progressive aspect (20, 24), absence of oblique marking on nouns with postpositions (22), use of the verb ‘to say’ as a quotative or complementizer (20, 25) are the typical features of this Hindi. Interestingly, this use seems to be present in most of the settlers who came from the south of India as it is a feature of the Dakkhini

Hindi (see Vashini Sharma’s article in this volume), use of modal *sək* as an independent verb as in *məcc^hi marna cahta hē pər həm nəhi səkega* ‘[I] want to catch fish but I will not be able to’ (as in Jharkhand variety) are the salient features of the CHAS. A very common phenomenon of the CHAS is the use of construction with a conjunctive participle in place of the perfective participle in the SH (21). This is a characteristic marker of those who migrated from the South of India. Most often than not, the present imperfect tense is used for the future (22). The striking feature of both the CHGA and the CHAS is the lack of representation of ‘I’ as *mē*. Instead, first-person plural *həm* invariably marks the Andamanese Hindi. Consider:

(20) *heli nəhi jata tarasa bol-ke həm idər kam kərta*
 helicopter NEG go.PRS.M.SG Teressa say-CVB 1SG here work do.PRS.M.SG
 ‘Since no helicopter is going to Teressa Island I will be working here.’

(21) *həm jəha a-ke əbi ə^hra sal ho gija*
 1SG here come-CVB now eighteen years be go.AOR.M.SG
 ‘It has been eighteen years since I came to this place.’

(22) *sab ka g^hər mē həm ata*
 officer GEN house LOC 1SG come.PRS.M.SG
 ‘I will come to the house of the officer.’

(23) *u wala kitab mē həm sara əkfər pəhcanta*
 DEM.SG SPEC book LOC 1SG all letters recognize.PRS.M.SG
 ‘[I] recognize all the letters in that book.’

(24) *əre mama tum kja sun-ta həm kja kəh-ta*
 Oh uncle 2SG what hear-PRS.M.SG 1SG what say-PRS.M.SG
 ‘Uncle, what are you hearing and what I am saying.’

(25) *wo həm ko bola kər-ke həm aja*
 3SG 1SG DAT say do-CVB 1SG come.AOR.M.SG
 ‘[Because] he asked me to come so I came.’

(26) *məqəm ap jati*
 Madam 2SG/PL.HON go.PRS.F
 ‘Madam, will you go?’

(27) *kja səbzi dena ap ko*
 What vegetable give 2HON DAT
 ‘Which vegetable shall I give you?’

The SH verb *cah*-‘to want’ is replaced in the same meaning by the word for ‘to demand’ in many contact Hindis of the non-Hindi belt, as in Kolkata Hindi or Bombay Hindi. The following example is very much like that.

- (28) *həm ko job kərna nəhi maᅇta*
 1SG ACC job do NEG demand.PRS.M.SG
 ‘I don’t want to do any job.’

Another interesting fact is that Hindi numerals for numbers over twenty are retained only by those whose home language is Hindi or its varieties. Others use numerals in an additive fashion. Consider:

- (29) *is=ka əssi-panc de do*
 3SG.OBL=GEN eighty-five give give.IMP
 ‘Give eighty-five for it.’

4.4 Similarity of the CHA with the CHB and the CHJ

The similarity between these varieties is obvious. To summarize the discussion so far, we can list the following grammatical features of the CHB, the CHJ and the CHA which appear to be shared:

1. Absence of the grammatical gender;
2. Use of the word *log* ‘people’ as a plural marker attached to nouns;
3. Absence of oblique case marking on nouns before taking any postposition;
4. The use of modal *sək* as an independent verb;
5. Partial similarity:
 - 5a) Gender agreement with human nouns is seen in the CHAS (26), as in the CHB;
 - 5b) This variety does not mark pronominal subject agreement in number, as all sentences have finite verb marked by the singular.

Let us move now to the states which do not fall in the ‘Hindi-belt’—the states where Hindi is not the first official language. We shall consider Hindi used in the Northeast of India.

5 Hindi as the Contact Language of the Northeast

In some states of the ethnically and linguistically heterogeneous Northeast, Hindi is not merely a lingua franca but fulfils all the requirements of a major language of the community. It enjoys prestige and power, as many consider Hindi, besides English, a ladder to promotion and development in society. As one of the two official languages of the whole Indian union, Hindi is a language of priorities and is conceived as being “modern”. In the following pages, I would like to discuss the structure of this highly acceptable language of wider communication in the linguistic situation of the Northeast. The results are based on the fieldwork conducted in Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya (Sharma 2011–2012, 2013 under my guidance), two states of Northeast India. I have also drawn the results for these states from the research conducted by Abbi, Gupta and Gargesh (1998–2000) at the pan-India level.

As said earlier in the Introduction, the emergence of contact Hindi in the Northeast regions is need-based and exists in an environment that is marked by varying different languages drawn from the Tibeto-Burman and Mon-Khmer language families. Moreover, the constant inflow of visitors from the rest of India, mainly speakers of Bangla and varieties of Hindi—as listed in the Appendix—throws open a situation of language ecology where the SH is not a model. The need to communicate with the immigrants as well as those Hindi speakers who are employed in various government services gives rise to a variety of Hindi which is far away from the standard version. Interestingly, this variety enjoys acceptability and possibly also prestige among the users.

It would be interesting to see how Hindi in contact with genetically related Indo-Aryan languages—the so-called varieties of Hindi that we discussed earlier in the paper—and the Hindi which is spoken in an alien environment restructure the grammar of Hindi. Where do the two Hindis differ or where they are similar will be interesting to observe. Let us begin with Arunachal Pradesh, the Northeast state which touches international borders with China, Myanmar and Bhutan.

5.1 Contact Hindi used in Arunachal Pradesh (CHAP)

Arunachal Pradesh became a union territory in 1972 and a state in 1987. It is the largest among the seven North-Eastern states referred to as “the seven sisters”. This state is home to twenty-six tribes, each speaking a different language. The state is marked by mutually non-intelligible heterogeneous languages. The tribes are spread across 3,649 villages, most of which are in remote valleys and hilltops along the international borders with China, Myanmar and Bhutan. All tribes speak

mutually unintelligible distinct languages. A surge of officials from all over India came to the state communicating with locals in spoken Hindi—not necessarily of the SH variety in the post-1987 era.

The geographical inaccessibility had given rise to a lack of mutual interaction and thus, distinct languages. Fortunately, with the introduction of roads, education, and telecommunication in the last twenty-five years there has been a change in the region. People have become mobile and are willing to communicate with other tribes. English was introduced as the official language of the territory, while the Hindi variety described here serves as one of the common languages of communication along with Assamese, the language of the neighbouring state. Indigenous languages represented in Arunachal Pradesh belong to the Tibeto-Burman, Tai-Khamti and the Indo-Aryan language families. The CHAP has emerged in such a plurilingual and genetically diverse language ecology.

Examples have been drawn from the areas such as Pasighat, Naharlugun (Modi 2005), Zero as well as from Itanagar, the capital city of Arunachal Pradesh (Sharma 2013). All these areas are also home to non-indigenous languages of migrants and old-time settlers, such as Assamese, Bangla and Hindi. It was observed that Hindi is freely used by students and teachers in the schools in these regions. In general, Hindi as the contact language is used all over the state and considered to be prestigious as reported by 67% of members of the community (Modi 2005). People often aired the view that they would be happy to see Hindi as one of the official languages of the state. Hindi has served as the biggest equalizer in society and helped in mitigating differences in society (Abbi & Sharma 2014). Hindi is used between different tribes of Arunachal Pradesh, between non-tribes and tribes of Arunachal Pradesh and between the non-tribal population of Arunachal Pradesh. The domains of use are increasing every day from educational institutes to government offices, from market to social and religious functions, and from media to telecommunication. The exposure to SH has been minimal so far, as the introduction to Hindi in schools is not a very old phenomenon. The other interlocutors who speak Hindi are migrants with the base of Bangla, Assamese and some variety of Hindi from the Hindi-belt. Hence, Arunachalese are exposed to varieties of Hindi to draw their resources in lexicon and structure. Thus, CHAP has emerged after restructuring the base/source languages along with some inputs from their indigenous languages.

The most significant social factor that plays a role in mitigating differences among disparate tribes is the religious congregation that normally consists of three or four different linguistic groups, but uses the common link language Hindi, i. e. the CHAP (Modi 2005: 35). It seems that the use and wider acceptance of the CHAP have increased inter-tribe marriages in the state. As a lingua franca, it carries the maximum functional load among disparate and distinct tribal communities. Burling (2007: 223) also reports the spread of Hindi as a lingua franca in

Arunachal Pradesh. For the uneducated, this is the only language available for inter-group communication since the rapid demise of Nefamese. For the educated, this is the only language besides English that ensures upward movement in society. The structure of the CHAP is far removed from the SH, yet it is respected and accepted by all. Some of the salient features of this Hindi that are illustrated below are those which are shared across many contact Hindis including that of Meghalaya Hindi.

5.2 Contact Hindi Used in Meghalaya (CHM)

Meghalaya became an autonomous region of Assam in 1970, and a separate state in 1972. Consisting of the Khasi, Jaintia and Garo Hills, it occupies the geographical area of the Meghalaya Plateau or Shillong Plateau (Bhatt & Bhargava 2006: 15). The major languages spoken are Khasi (a language of the Austroasiatic language family), Garo (a Tibeto-Burman language), Jaintia (an Austroasiatic language) and English—Khasi and Garo being the principal languages and English the official language. The capital of Meghalaya, which has seven districts, is Shillong; the major part of the fieldwork for this research was undertaken there.

Meghalaya has people from various parts of the country and neighbouring countries, and specifically, Shillong is like a cosmopolitan city in character. The non-indigenous population is present in the form of administrative officers, teachers, traders, vendors and migrants from various regions. As they occupy public spaces where interaction with the people of Meghalaya is unavoidable, the need for a link language has developed, leading to the evolution of the local CHM. Unlike the CHAP, the CHM is not used among indigenous peoples, but with people who have come from outside the state; the heterogeneity of languages that we witnessed in the case of Arunachal Pradesh is missing here. Khasi is the dominant language, and thus learning Khasi and, for educated people, also English is imperative.

Meghalaya Hindi draws its inputs, especially in its lexicon, from Bengali, Assamese, Nepali, Bhojpuri, Maithili, Marwari, English and, of course, Hindi. There is a formal and informal register. The former is used in classrooms and government offices, whereas the latter is being used by people in general in public places, with friends, and in audio and visual media such as radio and television. There are traders, daily wage labourers, cab drivers, hawkers, shopkeepers, etc. from various parts of India, such as the states of the Northeast, West Bengal, Assam, Bihar, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, etc., and from neighbouring countries, viz. Bangladesh and Nepal, who have only one link language among themselves—and that is a non-standard version of Hindi. Another domain of the informal register is inter-regional marriages, in which spouses may be from

anywhere in the country. This is a recent phenomenon as it has increased since the turn of the century. These migrants take no time in learning Meghalaya Hindi. However, the possibility of better competence in Hindi in the migrants' community is not ruled out. Since inter-regional marriages are a recent phenomenon, we have not been able to research the language of the children born in such marriages.

The combination of the informal and the formal registers gives rise to the structure of Meghalaya Hindi, which is locally referred to as 'Bazaar Hindi'. This term has become very popular in Shillong and across Meghalaya. Since Hindi was formally introduced in schools and colleges only after the formation of the state in 1972, the population has been exposed to SH only relatively recently. For details refer to Sharma (2013) and Abbi & Sharma (2014).

Rather than discussing the individual structures of the CHAP and the CHM, I will first discuss the shared features of these two varieties and then move on to highlighting the features which are not shared between the two.

5.3 Common salient features of Arunachalese Hindi and Meghalaya Hindi

Although the base languages in Arunachalese Hindi and Meghalaya Hindi are different, viz. Tibeto-Burman in the former and Austroasiatic in the latter, there are some common features in the contact Hindis attracting our attention towards the shared mechanism of contact-induced changes. Some features adopted by both varieties prove that certain linguistic features are more vulnerable to absorption than others. Similarly, there are features of Hindi that are found to be redundant for the information structure, e.g. agreement pattern or oblique marking on nouns. The two factors, namely (a) vulnerability of absorption or adoption, and (b) redundancy of information structure, both in combination give rise to shared and common features of the Northeast contact Hindi. The contact Hindi used in Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya shares the following features which are adopted and then reanalysed in similar ways, although there is no large-scale contact between the people of the two states. Readers will be surprised to find that these features are also shared partly by the Hindis discussed earlier.

For details, readers may refer to Sharma (2014). I will give only some of the salient features here for discussion.

1. Formation of plural

To avoid the complexities of portmanteau plural inflection of the SH, which reflects gender, number and person of the arguments, the CHAP, like several

varieties of the so-called ‘Bazaar Hindi’, adopts the simple strategy of suffixing the noun *lok* (corresponding to the Hindi lexeme *log* ‘people’ but phonologically following Bengali and Assamese *lok*) to all types of nouns, whether animate or inanimate, and pronouns, e. g. *lar'ka lok* ‘boys’, *ma lok* ‘mothers’, *kitab lok* ‘books’, *juta lok* ‘shoes’, *ap lok* ‘you all’, *in lok* ‘them’, etc. Contrary to the SH, the plural argument does not govern plural marking on the verb. This brings us to the phenomenon of agreement. Consider:

(30) *gac-lok mār gəja*
 tree-people die GO.AOR.M.SG
 ‘All the trees died.’

(31) *əpna ma-lok ko bulao*
 REFL.M mother-people ACC call
 ‘Call your mothers.’

2. Lack of Agreement

The finite verb in Standard Hindi agrees with the subject or object noun of the sentence in gender and number, which is missing from the CHAP and the CHM.

(32) *mədəm klas me aja*
 Madam class LOC came.3M.SG
 ‘Madam entered the class.’ (CHAP)

(33) *lārki-lok lāmba ho rāha hē*
 girl-people tall.M.SG be PROG.M AUX.PRS.3SG
 ‘Girls are growing tall.’ (CHAP)

As can be seen, the verb neither agrees with the singular noun ‘madam’ in (32) nor with the feminine plural ‘girls’ in (33).

3. Use of attributive particle *-wala* for modification

We saw the use of this particle earlier in the CHB as a specifier. The CH in the two states makes use of this strategy productively and extends its use to replace the perfective participle of the SH *hu-a/-e/-i* ‘been’ by *wala* constructions to modify nouns. Thus the SH *māra hua kotta* ‘the dead dog/the dog which has died’ is rendered as *māra wala kotta*, consider:

(34) *sutta sutta kat-a-wala bad me frai karega*
 small small cut-PFV-ATTR later in fry do.FUT.3SG.M
 ‘[You] will fry [the ones] cut into small pieces later.’ (CHM)

The genitive phrases of the SH are also replaced by constructions with *-wala* giving the passive meaning to the verb, e.g. *caj pine-wala dokan*, lit. ‘tea drinking shop’, i.e. ‘the shop [where] tea is being drunk’ in the CHM corresponding to *caj ki dokan* ‘tea shop’ in the SH. The verb here is used in the oblique form of the infinitive.

- (35) *sukan-e-wala kapra*
 Dry.INF_(Vtr)-OBL-ATTR cloth
 ‘dried clothes.’ (CHAP)

There are cases where this particle is used for deriving abstract nouns in the CHAP, as in *uska hase-wala* ‘his laughing’ instead of the SH *uski hāsi* ‘his/her laughter’ and *uska hat lik^hne-wala* ‘[by] his/her hand written’ instead of the SH *uske hath ki lik^hi hui*.

By extending its semantic domain across various grammatical forms the attributive particle is also used in place of perfective participial *hua* in SH modifying the following noun, with the difference that, unlike in the SH, the CHM *-wala* can be placed after a finite verb form in past, present and future tense to build a participial form modifying a nominal category. Hence, it has an attributive function here. Consider examples from the Meghalaya Hindi:

- (36) *kāl a-ja-wala kotta*
 yesterday come-PFV.M.SG-ATTR-M dog.M
 ‘The dog that came yesterday’
- (37) *k^hata-wala bācca*
 eat.IPFV.M.SG-ATTR.M child.M
 ‘The child who is eating’ Or ‘The eating child’
- (38) *kāl ajege-wali citthi*
 Tomorrow come.FUT.3SG.F-ATTR.F.SG letter.F
 ‘The letter that will arrive tomorrow.’

The attributor particle *-wala* can be attached to any grammatical category and function as a nominalizer or a relativizer. Consider a few examples from CHM:

- (39) *dui-wala mār gəja te səkta*
 two-NOM die went.SG.M then be.able.PRS.M.SG
 ‘If the second one dies then they can do it [get married].’

- (40) *isa-wala kam hām ni kija nā*
 this-ATTR work 1SG/PL NEG DO.AOR.M.SG TAG
 ‘I have not done this kind of work, OK?’ (Sharma 2013)

In (39) the ordinal of the SH is replaced by the cardinal plus *-wala* strategy and in (40) two observations can be made. One, the *-wala* is redundant here and two, the phonetic shape of the SH *esa* is changed to *isa-*.

4. Use of modal *sək-* ‘can’, ‘to be able’ as the main verb

This feature occurs in both the CHAP and the CHM and in many other non-Standard Hindi varieties used across the country as seen earlier. It is the use of the modal *sək-* ‘to be able’ or ‘can’ as a main verb to indicate the ability or inability to do the action. Consider the following sentence as well as the (39) given above:

- (41) *traibəl-lok bahār jana pāsən nai kārta jitna*
 tribal-people outside go like not do.PRS.M.SG as.much
səkta səkega
 can.PRS.M.SG. can.FUT.3SG.M
 ‘Tribal people do not prefer to go out. They do as much as they can.’
 (CHAP)

5. Adjectives and nouns can occupy the predicate slot

An adjective or a noun without any verbal constituent can take the predicate slot. This construction, reminiscent of the zero copula in the nominal sentence of Bengali and Assamese, implies that any sentence has the capability of ending in a modifier or nominal category. Consider:

- (42) *hām sutta mā bimar jasti*
 1SG/PL small mother sick much
 ‘My/our small mother (younger, i. e. step-mother) is very sick.’
 (CHM)

- (43) *it^hu bara tukri*
 Here big basket
 ‘Here is the big basket.’ (CHM)

- (44) *age admi-lok k^hātra hensām*
 Earlier men-people dangerously handsome
 ‘Earlier people were dangerously (=extremely) handsome.’ (CHAP)

6. Absence of oblique marking

All the oblique markings of nouns or pronouns preceding any postpositions in SH are absent in the contact Hindis of the Northeast, a feature we saw also in other CH. Hence, we have structures as given below with uninflected subject and object forms in the CHAP (Abbi & Sharma 2014):

- (45) *kutta ko dek-ke rona suru kəra*
 dog ACC see-CVB cry begin do.AOR.M.SG.
 ‘Seeing the dog [she/he/they] started crying.’

SH: *kutte ko*
 dog.OBL PP

- (46) *bacca-lok vaste*
 child-people for
 ‘for the children’

SH: *baccō ke vāste*
 children.OBL-BEN

- (47) *əp-əpna def me mərna he*
 REFL-REFL.DIR country LOC die COP
 ‘One has to die in one’s own country.’

SH: *əpne def mē*
 own.OBL country in

Since the CHM does not use postpositions in the normal speech, the question of inflecting nouns in oblique forms—the necessary condition for oblique marking in SH—does not arise.

7. Lexicon: some peculiarities

The lexicon is built on the sources available to the speakers from various kinds of interlocutors. As to be expected, some Hindi words are—apart from being adjusted to the phonological pattern of the borrowing language—semantically extended and are provided with new meanings. Thus, the verb *chīl-* in the SH means ‘peel’, but in the CHAP the word *k^hol* is used which includes the meaning of ‘peel’ as well as ‘open’ and ‘scrape’. Similarly, the SH verb *bet^h-* ‘sit’ is also used for extended meanings of ‘live’, ‘be alive’ and ‘be married to’ both in the CHAP and the CHM. Consider a few examples given below. There is a phonetic change in the word as it is pronounced as *bet* ~ *bet*.

- (48) *tum kis=ke sat bet-ta*
 2SG whom=GEN with sit-PRS.M.SG
 ‘Whom are you married to?’ (CHAP)

- (49) *it^hu hām sat beta*
 3SG 1SG/PL together live.PRS.M.SG
 ‘He is staying/living with me.’ (CHM)

Contact Hindis of the two regions have been observed to fill in the gaps of the SH in their respective ways. For instance, Hindi does not have a generic term for ‘cousin’. This gap is filled in the CHAP by the word *nəkli* ‘spurious’, ‘artificial’ prefixed to the kinship term as in *nəkli b^hai/behen* ‘cousin brother/sister’. The word *nəkli* is also used in the CHM for cousins. The extension of the meaning of the existing lexicon can be seen in the use of the cardinal numeral ‘two’ by the speakers of Hindi in Meghalaya. The CHM takes recourse in cardinal number *dui* ‘two’ to specify some relations, as in *dui ma* ‘step mother’, literally, ‘the second mother’.

This is a strategy to incorporate wider semantic fields within a lexeme. For detail see Abbi & Sharma (2014).

8. The grammaticalization of the verb to ‘say’

It has been observed that both the CHAP and the CHM use the verb ‘to say’ either as a complementizer or as a causal linker. Consider:

- (50) *tānda nāi e bol-ke ja-ke a gja*
 cold NEG cop say-CVB go-CVB come go.AOR.M.SG
 ‘Because it was not cold, she returned.’ (CHAP) (Sharma 2013)

- (51) *jada din re-ta ja me kam*
 many days live-PRS.M.SG here LOC work
kārta bol-ke
 do.PRS.M.SG say-CVB
 ‘I live here for many days because I work here.’ (CHM)

As is clear, in the sentence (50) the verb ‘say’ operates as a linker of the two clauses in the sentence establishing the reasoning of the action concerned. The final occurrence of *bol-ke* in the same role in the CHM (51) is not fixed and can change its position from the sentence final to sentence middle position. A similar observation is made by Vashini Sharma (this volume) for Hyderabad Hindi-Urdu and Dakhini.

9. Morphological derivation of transitive forms

Both the contact languages have dropped the causative derivational suffix *-va* of the SH. The derivational suffix *-a* or *-æ* serves all the purpose without taking into account the vowel alternation in the base morpheme or any idiosyncratic feature like insertion of *-l-* in the word *khi-l-ana* ‘to feed’ in the SH. Thus, the CHAP and the CHM form transitive which merges with causative as given below.

$p^h\partial t-$ (vitr) ‘burst, be torn’ > $p^h\partial ta-$ (vitr) ‘tear, burst’; $m\partial r-$ ‘die’ > $m\partial ra-$ ‘kill’
 (CHAP)
 k^ha- ‘eat’ > k^hae- ‘feed’; $m\partial r$ ‘die’- > $m\partial r\partial e-$ ‘kill’ (CHM)

The reason for such similarities could be the possibility of the shared model of Hindi exposed to the two communities as discussed earlier. The migrants and the outsiders that come to the region are mainly from Bengal, Assam and in the case of Meghalaya also from Bihar who bring along their versions of communicative Hindi. In addition to these external reasons, there are certain internal reasons pertaining to the grammatical structure of Hindi and its vulnerability to being modified or deleted to render it easy to grasp and use. It is not surprising that many of the shared features discussed above are also shared by many varieties of contact Hindi across the country proving beyond doubt that Hindi grammar has certain well-identified and widely attested features that can be predicted to change in a definite direction.

Despite such similarities, the two Hindis of the Northeast regions differ in the following ways owing to their differences in the duration of contact, the nature of the contact, sociolinguistic factors, and above all the difference in the major attitude towards learning Hindi.

5.4 The differences between the CHAP and CHM

Hindi used in Arunachal Pradesh has become the home language in many families due to intermarriages between different ethnic groups and thus is commonly used between siblings, friends and also parents. In the last twenty-five years, Arunachal has seen this Hindi emerging as the major lingua franca being used for wider communication. The result is that the CHAP is better structured than the Hindi of Meghalaya. Sharma (2013: 57) cites that unlike the CHM the variety in Arunachal marks the oblique form in third person pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, relative pronouns, indefinite and relative pronouns. Increased contact with the lexifier language, i.e. Hindi, has prompted the influx of the oblique marking although incomplete as yet. Contrary to the case of the CHAP, the CHM has borrowed

demonstrative pronouns *ithu*, *uthu* from Maithili which are reanalysed as bare pronouns, demonstrative and relative pronouns—all by the same lexeme, thus resulting in a single system of pronouns.

The CHM is devoid of grammatical function words most of the time. Consider the specific features in (52): the absence of genitive marking with pronoun *tum*, absence of ergative marking *ne* on subject *kutta* and of accusative marking =*ko* on object pronoun *həm*, thus leaving all the arguments in their bare forms and giving rise to a number of possible conflicting meanings, a really humorous one (‘I bit your dog’) among them. This is not witnessed in the CHAP.

- (52) *tum kotta həm kata*
 2SG-Ø dog-Ø 1SG/PL-Ø bite.AOR.M.SG
 ‘Your dog has bitten me.’

The biggest difference between the two Northeast Hindis is that the CHAP, although spoken by the speakers of the agglutinative languages of the Tibeto-Burman family, has adopted the inflectional morphology of the SH in tense, aspect and mood markings without any agreement in gender, number and person. A sentence like the following from the Arunachal Hindi is unexpected in Meghalaya Hindi.

- (53) *həm=ko mət dek-o sərəm ləg ra e*
 1PL=ACC PROH see-IMP shy feel PROG.SG aux.PRS.3SG
 ‘Do not look at me, I feel shy.’ (Sharma 2013:82)

Another feature which is not shared is that the CHM has not developed prohibitive negation *mət*. Thus, it is not surprising to get the following kinds of sentences which invite ridicule from the Hindi speakers in the town of Shillong:

- (54) *k^hao k^hao fərəm bi nei*
 Eat eat shame also NEG
 ‘Please eat, don’t be shy.’

Many other SH features such as the use of copula at the end of the sentence, conditional negative *nəhī to* ‘otherwise’, interrogative constructions of both yes/no and wh-questions, use of honorific pronoun *ap* ‘you’ etc. exist in the CHAP but not in the CHM. For the detailed study of the two Hindis, viz. CHAP and CHM, readers may refer to Sharma (2013).

Contact Hindis have spread widely in the Northeast region of India. As far as acceptability is concerned, the CHAP is acceptable as a link language at all the formal and informal domains, whereas the CHM is primarily restricted to formal spheres of life such as offices, and informal spheres as local markets, etc. While

the former is used widely among disparate ethnic and linguistic communities, the CHM serves the limited purpose of communication between the communities engaged in various occupations and the market. As far as the structure of the two varieties of Hindi is concerned, the CHAP seems to be structured whereas Meghalaya Hindi is still evolving and thus offers many conflicting and incomplete sentence structures.

Examples of conflicting structures are seen in the variation of word order because Khasi and Jaintia are SVO languages while Hindi is an SOV language. Sometimes the speaker uses the Hindi verb in the middle of the sentence and sometimes at the end of the sentence. This tendency spreads over other adjuncts too. For instance, the languages of the Austroasiatic family have prepositions while Hindi offers postpositions. In the uneducated speech, one finds structures like the following in the conversation that I (AA) had with the speaker who was a tea seller (TS) in Shillong. Not only that the speaker drops the postposition in the first clause he uses them as prepositions in subsequent clauses marked by angular brackets for clarity. Notice that the speaker does not have ordinals in his verbal repertoire so he uses only cardinal numbers:

(55) AA: *ap=ke bəcc-e kja kər-te haĩ*
 2HON=GEN child-M.PL what do-PRS.M.PL aux.PL
 ‘What do your children do?’

(56) TS *pərtə ø-skul, ek <me klas> pac, do*
 study.PRS.M.SG ø-school, one <LOC class> five two
 <me klas> tin or tin me klas ek
 <LOC class> three and three <LOC class> one
 ‘[They] study in the school, the first one in class five, the second one in class three, and the third one in class one.’

Note: For the convenience of interpretation, I have underlined the ordinal indicating the class the child studies in.

To summarize the discussion so far, we can very well observe that when the SH meets other languages it changes its grammar because the users of the contact Hindi restructure it in various ways:

- (i) Features that are prone to diffusion are dropped viz. the agreement strategy and the oblique case marking or the expression of modality with the verb *sək-* ‘to be able to’ used as an independent verb are completely restructured to simplify the task.
- (ii) Semantic extension of Hindi lexicon such as the word *kʰol* ‘open’ in the CHAP and grammaticalization of Hindi lexical items such as *bol-ke* ‘say- CVB’ as

- complementizer or a causal linker are some of the innovations according to the convenience of the users and the structure of the base language.
- (iii) In non-Hindi regions, the model language is rarely the SH and thus, the model language of the immigrants influences the structure of the contact Hindi, e. g. *it^hu-ut^hu* ‘here’ from Maithili in the CHM.
 - (iv) The sociolinguistic situation of each area governs the spread and use of the contact Hindi. The larger the use, the closer the structure to the SH. The CHAP in the non-Hindi zone and the CHB in the Hindi belt are cases in point.
 - (v) Acceptance and prestige of the language are related to the attitude of the speakers of a community. Tribes in general (Abbi et al. 1998–2000) including those of Arunachal Pradesh and non-tribes of Andaman Islands consider pride in speaking Hindi. This single reason motivates the community to learn and move towards the SH.
 - (vi) Idiosyncratic features of the SH are dropped first and forms are analogized based on the forms which are statistically larger in number. In other words, exceptions and rare features are dropped in contact varieties. Thus, the intransitive-transitive-causative paradigm of verbs takes the standard derivation and ignores the exceptions.
 - (vii) Major speculation can be made that Hindi in Arunachal Pradesh will expand its scope in domains and may establish stable formal and informal registers. It may also become the mother tongue of the second generation. Contact Hindi in Meghalaya, on the other hand, has a long way to gain a stable structured grammar as the influx of English in the region is attracting the community to learn English and not Hindi. However, contact Hindi will remain to be used in the market place as the only lingua franca available for the semi-educated people of Meghalaya.

6 Conclusion

Considering the similarities of changed features of varieties of the CH one can identify a subset of those which are prone to diffusion or loss. One can safely say that these are guiding principles to give us the power of prediction as to which features of the SH will be diffused first in case of any new contact situation. The case in point is the loss of agreement phenomenon of the SH or the use of the verb ‘to be able to/can’ as an independent verb, or loss of oblique case marking on nouns.


Semantic extension of the available lexicon of the SH and reanalysis and restructuring of the grammar of the SH into new contact Hindi is inevitable. Thus,

the SH verb *beṭh* ‘sit’ becomes multifunctional and the verb ‘to say’ operates as linker and complementizer.

To conclude, intensive language contact is the genesis of diffusion of forms phonetically, morphologically, syntactically, and semantically. Both internal innovation and external pressures help in restructuring existing grammar in such a way that the language of contact is widely accepted and is prestigious. Multilingual mosaic of the country feeds the structure of the contact language in multiple ways. Languages grow in layers as the model language is constantly changed by extension, innovation and grammaticalization processes.

The use of Hindi across states and social and religious identities has given rise to non-standard varieties of Hindi not only in non-Hindi states but also within the states of the Hindi belt. However, contact Hindi, more often than not, operates in a diglossic relation with SH in Hindi-belt. Coupled with different registers, we have several varieties of non-Standard Hindi which are used in day-to-day life. The complex mosaic of the Hindi speech community is further enlarged by the emergence of cosmopolitan Hindi, i. e. Hindi used in multilingual, multicultural and multi-ethnic communities, which shows traits of convergence of several languages and dialects spoken in the cosmopolitan cities. The shared structural similarities between various CH indicate the vulnerable linguistic features of SH that are affected in contact situations. What lies in the underlying system of these categories which make them easy to be dropped, negotiated, and changed warrants future research.

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Appendix

Data from the Census of India 2011

Total strength of speakers of Hindi 528,347,193

1. Awadhi 3,850,906
2. Baghati/Baghati Pahari 15,835
3. Bagheli/Baghel Khandi 2,679,129
4. Bagri Rajasthani 234,227
5. Banjari 1,581,271
6. Bhadrawahi 98,806
7. Bhagoria 20,924
8. Bharmauri/Gaddi 181,069
9. Bhojpuri 50,579,447
10. Bishnoi 12,079
11. Brajbhasha 1,556,314
12. Bundeli/Bundelkhandi 5,626,356
13. Chambeali/Chamrali 125,746
14. Chhattisgarhi 16,245,190
15. Churahi 75,552
16. Dhundhari 1,476,446
17. Garhwali 2,482,089
18. Gawari 19,062
19. Gojri/Gujjari/Gujar 1,227,901
20. Handuri 47,803
21. Hara/Harauti 2,944,356
22. Haryanvi 9,806,519
23. Hindi 322,230,097
24. Jaunpuri/Jaunsari 136,779
25. Kangri 1,117,342
26. Khari Boli 50,195
27. Khortha/Khotta 8,038,735
28. Kulvi 196,295
29. Kumauni 2,081,057
30. Kurmali Thar 311,175
31. Lamani/Lambadi/Labani 3,276,548
32. Laria 89,876
33. Lodhi 139,180
34. Magadhi/Magahi 12,706,825
35. Malvi 5,212,617
36. Mandeali 622,590
37. Marwari 7,831,749
38. Mewari 4,212,262
39. Mewati 85,643
40. Nagpuria 763,014
41. Nimadi 2,309,265
42. Padari 17,279
43. Pahari 3,253,889
44. Palmuha 23,579
45. Panch Pargania 244,914
46. Pando/Pandwani 15,595
47. Pangwali 18,668
48. Pawari/Powari 325,772
49. Puran/Puran Bhasha 12,375
50. Rajasthani 25,806,344
51. Sadani/Sadri 4,345,677
52. Sirmauri 107,401
53. Sondwari 229,788
54. Sugali 170,987
55. Surgujia 1,738,256
56. Surjapuri 2,256,228
57. Others 16,711,170

Bilingualism in Hindi.

Total strength of Hindi and Urdu as non-mother tongue

Number of Speakers who claimed Hindi as the second language:
138,909,608, viz. 11.47% of the entire population.

Number of Speakers who claimed Hindi as the third language:
24,307,234. Viz. 2.00% of the entire population.

Number of Speakers who claimed Urdu as the second language:
11,348,978, viz. 0.93% of the entire population.

Number of Speakers who claimed Urdu as the third language:
117,836, viz. 0.09% of the entire population.

Source: Census of India Website: Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India. Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India. (<<https://censusindia.gov.in/2011-common/censusdata2011.html>>, accessed: August 10, 2019).

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