

2 SOCIAL HISTORY OF MAITHILI LANGUAGE AND EIGHTH SCHEDULE

India, as a nation, is known for its linguistic diversity and pluralism. Languages of India primarily belong to six linguistic families: Indo-European, Dravidian, Austro-Asiatic, Tibeto-Burman, Tai-Kadai and Great Andamanese (Abbi, 2018). According to the Census of 2011 (ORGI, 2018), there are 121 languages and 270 mother tongues, having a speaker strength of 10,000 and above at the national level. To safeguard and promote languages, the Constitution of India has made a special provision in its Eighth Schedule (ES), which has provided formal and constitutional recognition to 22 dominant regional languages in the spheres of administration, education, economy, and society (Sarangi, 2009). At the time of the initial enactment of the Constitution of the Republic of India on 26 January 1950, there were 14 languages in ES (Khubchandani, 1995). However, the number of languages has increased to 22 by 2003 due to various movements and demands made by different language communities for the inclusion of their languages in the ES².

Language has been instrumental in the very first reorganisation of states after the independence of India in 1947. Since language is associated with different religions and ethnicity, this is one of the reasons that the reorganisation of Indian states happened, keeping in mind the linguistic diversity and avoiding any tension among different ethnicities or cultural groups. Further, it becomes more important to have organised language planning to control any tension in a multilingual nation. There is a special provision for languages under the Constitution of India

² <https://rajbhasha.gov.in/en/languages-included-eighth-schedule-indian-constitution>

under Article 343-351. Also, there is a special provision for the safeguard of minority languages under Article 29. After independence, there has been a long debate regarding the national language of India.

Moreover, the leaders of that time, like Mahatma Gandhi, wanted Hindustani to be the national language of India, seeing the religious conflict between Hindus and Muslims (Brass, 1994; 2004). Since Urdu became the official language of Pakistan, people protested against the Hindustani language and wanted Hindi to be used with a more Sanskritised vocabulary. The view to have one national language, Hindi, in this case, was protested in Southern India, especially in Tamil Nadu. Srivastava (1979) states that "Hindi movements in the South and in the North (i.e., anti-Hindi and pro-Hindi movements) act and react in a spiral way; each major political action of the North towards a policy formulation and implementation regarding Hindi gets rebounded by a reaction from the south and vice-versa" (p.88). The Tamil leaders started a Dravidian movement against Hindi, fearing the hegemony of Hindi. Political leaders were not in favour to make the coloniser's language, i.e., English to be the national language. The irony is that until today English is not added to the list of ES but still functions as a link language.

The language planners of India took the two most important decisions. First, the creation of the Eighth Schedule (ES) under the Constitution of India, and second was the linguistic reorganisation of Indian states. These decisions were taken to combat the multiplicity of languages and envisage India's linguistic diversity and multilingualism

2.1 EIGHTH SCHEDULE LANGUAGES

ES was created under the Constitution of India, which was one of the bases for the linguistic reorganisation of Indian states. The section of the Constitution of India under part XVII (Articles 343 to 351) spell out the official language at the level of the Union (i.e., the Central Government

and the national polity as a whole), the level of the states and at the level of the judiciary. Of these, the 14 languages initially included in ES languages were Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Tamil, Telegu and Urdu. Sindhi was added through the 21st amendment in 1967. After that, Konkani, Manipuri and Nepali were included through the 71st amendment in 1992. Subsequently, Bodo, Dogri, Maithili and Santhali were added in 2003 through the 100th amendment.

Table 2.1 List of 22 Languages of India Recognised by Constitutio

1. Assamese	12. Manipuri
2. Bengali	13. Marathi
3. Bodo	14. Nepali
4. Dogri	15. Oriya
5. Gujrati	16. Punjabi
6. Hindi	17. Sanskrit
7. Kannada	18. Santhali
8. Kashmiri	19. Sindhi
9. Konkani	20. Tamil
10. Maithili	21. Telegu
11. Malayalam	22. Urdu

2.2 LINGUISTIC REORGANISATION OF INDIAN STATES

The linguistic states were formed based on 12 dominant regional languages between 1956 and 1966. Eight states, including Assam, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Karnataka, Kashmir, Kerala, Orissa, and Tamil Nadu, were formed in 1956. Gujarat and Maharashtra were formed in

1960, while Punjab was formed in 1966. There were five states, namely, Bihar, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh for Hindi (Krishnamurti, 1995). The post-independence language scene of India is dominated by a hierarchy, where Hindi and English occupy the central position, then comes regional languages with official recognition in their linguistically organised states (Brass, 1994). Languages like Bengali, Malayalam, Marathi, and Tamil fit in this category. At the third level comes the non-territorial ES languages that do not have the luxury of territorial anchorage in particular states, such as Maithili, Nepali, Sanskrit, Santhali, Sindhi, etc. The mother-tongues that are neither recognised as the official languages of India or of any state nor listed in the ES come at the lowest level. These languages constitute the bulk of minority languages (Thakur, 2002).

A large volume of literature is flooded with the plight of minority languages and their shift to the dominant language, especially concerning non-scheduled languages (Pattanayak & Illich, 1981; Abbi, 1995; Pandharipande, 2002; Bhatt & Mahboob, 2008; Benedikter 2013). There is a general notion that the ES endows languages with privilege and prestige, and such languages benefit from various government schemes and policies that further enhance the status of these languages (Aggarwal, 1995; Bhattacharya, 2002, and Sarangi, 2015). There is an underlying notion that there is an existing hierarchy in the linguistic landscape of India (Annamalai, 2001; Mohanty, 2006; 2010; Abbi, 2009; Babu, 2017; Groff, 2017). According to Abbi (2012), the languages of India can be categorised based on their degree of socio-economic prestige and status. The most important language is English from the socio-economic and educational point of view, which is not even listed in the ES. The other important language in terms of prestige is Sanskrit, one of the classical languages, and all the modern Indian Indo-Aryan languages have its root in it. This is followed by the rest of the Scheduled languages and their respective dialects. The non-scheduled

languages come after the Scheduled languages in this hierarchy. The lowest level in the hierarchy has been assigned to mother tongues that have less than 10,000 speakers. The demographic details of the mother tongues having less than 10,00 speakers are not documented in government reports after the 1961 census. These languages may or may not be on the verge of being lost, either demographically or linguistically. For example, Great Andamanese may be considered a moribund language (Abbi, 2018), on the verge of getting extinct as the last fluent speaker of the language died in 2010, and the remaining few speakers have gone on a heavy shift to the major dominant languages around.

Hierarchy of language labels such as official language or dominant language, and minority language etc., in which languages are segregated, obscure the plight of some of the officially recognised languages in a multilingual nation. For example, Pashto (Nichols, 2012), Quechua (Escobar, 2011), & Catalan (Newman & Trenchs-Parera, 2015) are some of the languages globally that are facing language shift, despite their official recognition and large population size. Pandharipande (2002) explains that a demographically dominant language can be defined as a minority language based on its functional load and functional transparency. The concept of 'functional load' refers to the ability of languages to function in one or more social domains successfully. Similarly, 'functional transparency' refers to the autonomy and control that the language has in a particular domain (p.2). Any language which typically carries relatively less or marginal functional load and functional transparency is considered a minority languages. According to Pandharipande (2002), a language can be considered as a minority language based on its restricted functional load and functional transparency rather than demographic or official status. Some large population size languages with official recognition are also going through a shift due to reduced functional load and functional transparency. The present study uses functional

load and functional transparency concepts to determine the viability of the Maithili language (see

2.3 EIGHTH SCHEDULE (ES)

The ES was introduced for the corpus planning of the Hindi language. The main purpose of the ES is reflected in Article 351 of the Constitution in the context of corpus planning of Hindi.

Article 351 under Indian Constitution states that—

“It shall be the duty of the Union to promote the spread of the Hindi language, to develop it so that it may serve as a medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India and to secure its enrichment by assimilating without interfering with its genius, the forms, style and expressions used in Hindustani and in the other languages of India specified in the Eighth Schedule, and by drawing, wherever necessary or desirable, for its vocabulary, primarily on Sanskrit and secondarily on other languages.” (Article 351 Constitution of India)³

Initially, the main idea behind the inclusion in the ES was to entitle the included languages for representation on the Official Language Commission. Also, the languages in the list were supposed to serve as the bases to draw upon resources for the enrichment of Hindi, the official language of the Union. Similarly, Article 344 constitutes a “Commission and Committee of Parliament on official language, which will make recommendations on the progressive use of Hindi for the

³ <https://rajbhasha.gov.in/en/constitutional-provisions>

official purposes of the Union, language to be used in the Supreme Court and the High Courts and for Acts, Bills, and the communication between the Union and a state or between one State and another and restrictions on the use of English for all or any of the official purposes of the Union.” The makers of the Constitution wanted Hindi to be used for official purposes, as they were not in favour of English because many thought of it as a coloniser’s language. The main idea was to develop Hindi to be used as a national language by 1956. Since the main idea was to make Hindi serve as a medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India, it was decided that Hindi would draw vocabulary from Sanskrit and secondarily from the other ES languages.

There are 38 language communities already in the queue demanding their languages to be included in the list of ES (Committee on Government Assurances, 2017). Since the ES languages are entitled to be represented on the official language commission also, it helps in the status planning of languages through officialisation. According to Bhattacharya (2002), the status policy planning of a language begins with its recognition as a language. "Status of a language is the total sum of what one can do with a language, legally, culturally, economically, politically, and demographically. The status of a language varies in time and space, and the status may be changed by the promotion or by pressure" (p.62). Different language communities want their languages to be included in ES since ES languages get dominance in the field of education, mass media, and examinations by the public service commissions of the union and the state for recruitment.

The ES languages acquire a certain degree of cultural capital since they play a crucial role in social mobility (Sarangi, 2009). It is believed that the inclusion of languages in ES creates employment opportunities for the language speakers. Not only this, but the conferment of status also leads to programs that require speakers of ES languages to participate as teachers, literacy

workers, translators, and so on (Aggarwal, 1995). Hence this creates job opportunities for the speakers in their regions, which do not take them away from their communities (Brass 2004; Benedikter, 2013). However, this is not always true as English is overpowering major domains, especially the job sector, and makes it mandatory for people to learn English to get white-collar

2.4 CRITIQUE OF ES

The criteria for the inclusion of languages in ES are still debatable among researchers: as no prerequisite criteria for selecting languages have been specified in the Constitution of India (Gupta et al., 1995). Abbi (2009) states, “the so-called *assimilationist* goal while laudable from the ‘national’ and administrative point of view, is a device to swallow the small fish – the languages not included in the Eighth Schedule” (p. 300). The ES has been often criticised for making some languages more prestigious and privileged than compared to others (Austin, 1966; Gupta & Abbi, 1995; Agnihotri, 2015; Bodra, 2016). The divide created between Scheduled and non-Scheduled languages due to ES creates tension and discord among speakers of other minority languages (Gupta et al., 1995; Abbi, 2009; Singh, 2015 and Babu, 2017).

The inclusion of languages in ES seems somewhat arbitrary and conditioned largely by politics (Aggarwal, 1995; Abbi, 2009; Benedikter, 2013). There are many large population size languages like Bhili/Bhilodi with 9.6 million native speakers, Gondi with 2.7 million speakers, Khandesi with 2.1 million speakers, which have been excluded from the inclusion despite their large population (Benedikter, 2013). The population size of the language is not the criteria for inclusion in ES. On the contrary, Sanskrit being an ES, is not widely spoken and limited only to a few hundred speakers. Sanskrit was included in ES mainly because of its cultural, historical and literary significance. It is symbolic of the Hindu religion and also taught as a classical language in

schools. The selection of languages in ES ignores the fact as to why and how some languages and their communities, despite large population size do not make it to the list of ES. None of the tribal languages, such as Bhili and Lammi spoken by thousands of speakers, was given official recognition until 2003, when Santhali and Bodo became the first two tribal languages added. Surprisingly, the two language families, Tibeto-Burman and Austro-Asiatic families, were disregarded in the ES (Abbi, 2012). Moreover, the ES languages cover more than 96 per cent of the total population of India because the majority of the languages in the Schedule belong to Indo-Aryan and Dravidian families. The inclusion of languages mostly happened due to continuous political pressure from their respective language communities (Munshi & Chakrabarti, 1979; Aggarwal, 1992; Brass, 2004; Sarangi, 2017).

There is a long debate among the researchers that the language policy has a significant shortcoming as it failed to envisage a multilingual solution for the language question. Agnihotri (2015) argues that "an inbuilt flexibility that does not threaten any community and provide equal opportunities for all languages to develop in a dialogic relationship with each other was actually what was needed". Similarly, Gupta and Abbi (1995) critique the ES of the Constitution of India: "it is our contention that rather than assuring any semblance of equality, the ES has succeeded only in creating new cleavages, new hierarchies and new conflicts." The ES has created a divide between majority and minority languages of India and has also affected the attitude of speakers towards different languages, which affects the language loyalty of the speakers.

The shift of non-scheduled languages deprived of official recognition has been widely studied (Annamalai, 2003; Rao, 2008; Mohan, 2010; Groff, 2007; 2017). At the same time, the issue of language shift of non-territorial ES languages is comparatively understudied. For instance,

non-territorial Eighth Schedule languages like Sindhi, Kashmiri, Santhali, Maithili, etc., are facing language shift despite Constitutional recognition. Interestingly, not much work has been done on how inclusion helps in the development of a language. Also, there are no fixed criteria or parameters to measure the degree of development of these languages.

NON-TERRITORIAL ES LANGUAGES

Non-territorial ES languages are the languages that are not the official language in any of the states. For instance, even though Kashmiri is spoken by more than half of the total population in Kashmir, its functionality is restricted to the home domain (Kak, 2005; Bhatt & Mahboob, 2008; Bhat, 2017; Khandy, 2020). On the other hand, Urdu is the official language of Kashmir and is used in education and administrative domains. Similarly, existing literature on the Sindhi language suggests that inter-generational language shift is taking place among Sindhi speakers in India (Khubchandani 1963; Daswani 1985; Parchani 1998). Most of the speakers have shifted to either English or Hindi as their home language. Iyengar (2013) provides lack of affinity and exposure as some of the reasons for language shift.

Additionally, languages such as Dogri and Maithili, which were considered dialects in the past, have a long history of struggle from acquiring the status of a language to getting inclusion in the ES. These recently included languages are a perfect example of 'assertive language maintenance' (Dorian, 2004), which have risen above dialect positions in hierarchical multilingualism. Although comments have been made about the adverse impact of the growth of Hindi on the continuing use of local, regional languages or non-scheduled languages (Abbi 2004; 2009) only a few notable studies have been done on the language shift of ES languages (Satpathy, 2012; Choudhary, 2013; Iyengar, 2013; Mandi & Biswas, 2015; Bhat, 2017).

2.6 LINGUISTIC ASSIMILATION OF LANGUAGES IN NORTH INDIA

The Hindi belt region exemplifies this assimilationist goal of Indian language policymakers as more than 47 mother tongues are grouped under Hindi as its dialect (Abbi, 2009). Ironically, the policymakers have created the dichotomies of language at various levels, majority vs minority, Union vs state, Schedule vs non-scheduled languages consciously or unconsciously (Babu, 2017). A similar idea is expressed by Bodra (2016), that the ES has legitimised the language hierarchy in India, where Hindi is at the apex and after that comes the regional languages, and at the bottom comes those languages with millions of speakers which are rejected as the dialects of ES languages such as Awadhi, Bhili, Gondi, Kurukh and so on. The demarcation between language and dialect is politically motivated. Regional languages have taken over sub-regional linguistic identities by reducing the difference between historically different varieties and creating a new hierarchy (Khubchandani 1991; Annamalai 2001). As a result, there is forced bilingualism, and there is a continuous threat of a language being wiped out due to sheer lack of usage. It is estimated that in India, half of the tribal people have lost or shifted their mother tongue (Kailash, 1995; Sonntag, 2002; Abbi, 2008; Agnihotri, 2020). A clear example of this is Punjabi which was considered a dialect of Hindi but later turned into a language within a few decades (Shapiro & Schiffman, 1983, p.5). The linguistic identity of Punjabi was affirmed by creating a separate state Punjab, where Punjabi became the language for the medium of education, administration and broadcasting. Until the 1991 census, Maithili was also grouped under Hindi. It shows the exact case of linguistic assimilation since Hindi is promoted as a language of entire northern India; however, Khari Boli is the language of the northern Hindi speaking elites. Although Maithili had a fluid linguistic identity, it was relegated to a dialect position for a long time. However, it later asserted itself as an independent language due to continuous pressure from the Maithili protagonists (P. Jha, 2004; M.

Jha, 2017). However, the question arises, does the change in linguistic identity also change the attitude of its speakers? In the case of Maithili, its functioning is restricted to a few domains, while Hindi is the dominant language in Bihar. The relationship of inequality still exists, and

2.7 MAITHILI IN BIHAR (INDIA)

Bihar has three major languages, namely Bhojpuri, Magahi and Maithili along with Hindi. Hindi and Urdu are the official and second official languages of Bihar, respectively. Until 1951, the policy of the Bihar government was based on the notion that Bihar is a Hindi speaking state (Brass, 1974, p.107). It ignored the linguistic distinctions identified in Grierson's (1903), *A Linguistic Survey of India*. Grierson (1903), coined the term Bihari and grouped all the languages, Maithili, Bhojpuri and Magahi as its dialects. If Grierson's classifications were accepted, there would be no Hindi speakers at all in Bihar, except for migrants. As S. Jha (1994, p.392) says, "Bihar has been given the status of Hindi speaking state on the assumption that most of the people speak Hindi as their mother tongue, but the figures of the 1961 census suggested that only 44% of the population speak Hindi as their first language." He reflects on the inconsistent approach taken by the census agencies, which has blurred the distinction between languages, dialects and mother tongues.

2.7.1 History of Maithili Language

Maithili belongs to the Central Magadhan group of the Indo-Aryan language family and is spoken in Nepal and Northern India, especially in Bihar. According to the 2011 Indian census, 13,583,464 people speak this language in India. Maithili received Constitutional recognition in 2003 under the 100th amendment of the Constitution of India. For a long time, Maithili was treated as a dialect of eastern Hindi, although both are genetically unrelated; Hindi originated from

Sauraseni Prakriti, the central branch of Middle Indo-Aryan language family (Bhattacharya, 2016). The works of early philologists ignored this fact and called Maithili a dialect of Bengali, Eastern Hindi and Bihari (see Yadav 1981, and references therein). Colebrooke (1801) first declared Maithili a distinct language, whereas Hoernle (1880) recorded Maithili along with other dialects of Eastern Hindi as a dialect of Bengali, with some reservation. Kellogg (1893) also treated it as a dialect of Eastern Hindi. Grierson (1881, 1906) rejected other classifications and coined a new term, 'Bihari' included Maithili and other dialects, Bhojpuri and Magahi.

Throughout the works of Grierson, contradiction is prevalent regarding the position of Maithili; at one point, Grierson declared it an independent language (1880) but later grouped it as a dialect of Bihari (1903). Chatterjee (1926) and S. Jha (1958) disapproved of earlier classifications and recorded Maithili as an independent language belonging to the central Magadhan group. Still, Maithili was grouped under Hindi until the 1991 census. S. Jha (1994) argues that this classification "reflect[ed] the socio-political dynamics of north India which ignores the structural and historical differences between languages like Hindi and Maithili and relegates politically weaker languages to dialect status" (p.398). Among heterogeneous languages classed as dialects of Hindi, Maithili was the first to revise its identity from "dialect of Hindi" to a scheduled language in its own right. Grierson considered the speech area of Maithili to be the entire districts of Darbhanga and Bhagalpur in the 20th Century. Besides, he included Maithili as the mother tongue of most people in the districts of Muzaffarpur, Monghyr, Purnea and Santhal Parganas. According to the census of India 1901, Maithili was spoken in the following regions- All of Darbhanga and Bhagalpur; 6/7th of Muzaffarpur; ½ of Monghyr (presently Munger); 2/3rd of Purnea; 4/5th of the so-called 'Hindi' speakers (enumerated in the census) under the Santhal Parganas. In contrast, Brass (1974) considered Bhagalpur, Darbhanga, Purnea, Saharsa, and Muzaffarpur as the

geographical territory of Maithili speaking regions, whereas Singh et al. (1985) recommended 10 out of 31 districts of then Bihar as Maithili regions - Bhagalpur, Katihar, Purnea, Saharsa, Madhubani, Darbhanga, Samastipur, Sitamarhi, Muzaffarpur and Vaishali.

2.7.2 History of Maithili Language Movement in North Bihar

Paul Brass (1974) speculates the reasons for undue treatment of the Maithili language. He clearly states that religion has been the most powerful symbol in North India. He reasons that Maithili's lack of association with a distinctive religion is one of the reasons for its failure. On the one hand, languages like Punjabi and Urdu were successful in getting their demands fulfilled. Punjabi became the official language of the state of Punjab; Urdu was made the official language of the state of Kashmir and also enjoyed the additional official language status in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. On the other hand, the Maithili language leaders supported the cause of Hindi as a national language over their regional identity during India's independence movement. However, the leaders of the Maithili movement later demanded the inclusion of Maithili in the ES, based on Grierson's claim that Maithili is distinctively different from Bengali and Hindi.

The demand for forming a Mithila state was first made in 1940, in a resolution at a meeting of the Maithili Mahasabha at Darbhanga. Jankinandan Singh presented a memorandum to the State Reorganization Commission in 1954. The ruler of Darbhanga repeated the demand for a separate statehood on several occasions during his annual speeches at the Maithili Mahasabha. In 1954, the movement reached its high point when a series of meetings was held in Darbhanga under the leadership of Jankinandan Singh to support the demand for a separate state (Jha, 1952). The State Reorganization Commission rejected the demand. According to Brass (1974), the Maithili movement lacked an association with religion, but the protagonists of the Maithili movement failed

to create a regional consciousness among the mass of Maithili speakers. However, language politics in north India are overshadowed by the popular discourse of the Hindi-Urdu conflict. M. Jha (2017) explored the dynamics of the relationship between Hindi and Maithili in his book. He brings to light how the relationship between Hindi and Maithili has been ignored, unlike the Hindi and Urdu conflict. Nevertheless, the idea of including the Maithili language in the ES was strengthened by the recognition given to it by different educational institutions and the assurances of politicians. In 1965, Maithili was recognised as a literary language from the Sahitya Akademi, the literary body of India. Despite this, it took Maithili a long time to achieve a place in the ES. Languages like Manipuri, Nepali and Konkani were included in the ES in 1992, before Maithili. However, these languages were recognised by the Sahitya Akademi much later (Manipuri in 1973 and Konkani and Nepali in 1977).

In the absence of serious political pressure, the Bihar government has undertaken a policy of symbolic concessions. While it grants sympathy to Maithili speakers, no state assistantship has been provided to foster a sense of separateness among them. The plight of Maithili leaders increased when in 1967, Urdu was made the second official language of Bihar, and Maithili was side-lined in its state. Interestingly the literature suggests that the number of Urdu speakers in Bihar is less than Maithili speakers. Additionally, not all Muslim speakers speak Urdu, but their regional language (Brass, 1974; Warsi, 2014; 2018). Furthermore, the language scene in India is also dominated by caste politics (S. Singh, 1977; Sarangi, 2009; 2017). When Grierson (1906) wrote about the Maithili language, he found three scripts in use for Maithili. Earlier, the Maithili speakers used Kaithi and Trihuta/Mithilakshar scripts, whereas the Hindi scholars promoted the Devanagari script. Brahmans used to write in Trihuta, and the Kaithi script was used by the Karna-Kayastha, the business class community of the region. The usage of the script also showcases the

caste politics mentioned by scholars (Brass, 1974; Burghart, 1993) for the weakening of the Maithili movement. Brass (1974) and Burghart (1993) univocally voiced the sharp differences in the oral and written form of Maithili language among the different classes of Mithila, which also affected the spread of the Maithili language. Besides, the expansion of Hindi has taken over both the Kaithi and the Trihuta/Mithilakshar scripts.

According to Brass, the script played a vital role, especially in the language politics of North India. In the case of Urdu and Punjabi, the script was used as a demarcation to distinguish both the languages from Hindi and establish them as separate languages. However, in the case of Maithili, it was not possible as Maharaja of Darbhanga (Kameshwar Singh) promoted the cause of Hindi and extended financial support to the Indian National Congress before independence of India. The contemporary leaders of the Maithili movement mention the role of Darbhanga rulers with some regret. During that time, the ideology of nationalism was used to strengthen the cause of Hindi, and Maithili was overlooked. Besides, India's census also helped unify the cause of Hindi by naming many mother tongues as Hindi in the census report. According to Burghart (1993), "the institutional continuity of the census and language policy in the colonial and postcolonial India, including the unchanging classification of Maithili as dialect, implies that census has to do with how modern states construct society as they monitor and control it".

Moreover, the state governments in Bihar who wish to secure the identity of majority regional languages such as Hindi in their states, and therefore, seek to assimilate the speakers of other local regional languages, tend to resist the idea of recognising dialect as a language (Brass, 1974). The discrepancy in census reports is also one of the reasons that it took so long for Maithili to claim its status as an independent language. It was acknowledged as a dialect of Hindi, and there were many drifts in the opinion of census enumerators and Grierson regarding the status of

Maithili. Both Grierson and the census enumerators agreed that Maithili was a dialect, but they differed, whether it was a dialect of Hindi or Bihari language (a term coined by Grierson).

On the other hand, census enumerators stated all these languages as dialects of Hindi. Chatterjee (1926), like Grierson, believed that Maithili is not a dialect of either Hindi or Bengali. The unchanging classification of Maithili as dialect implies that the census reflects how modern society is constructed and tries to maintain the language hegemony of Hindi (Burghart, 1993). The idea of Maithili's inclusion in the ES was strengthened by the recognition given to it by the different literary bodies like Sahitya Akademi. Also, there was political pressure during Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) governance and the then Prime Minister of India, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who had assured that Maithili should get included in ES. Eventually, in 2003, Maithili was included in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, which allows it to be used in education, government, and other official contexts.

According to Kumar (2001), the Maithili speakers are shifting to the Hindi language because of its accompanying prestige. In his study, conducted before ES inclusion of Maithili, Kumar observed that the shift in the Maithili language was taking place at both the syntactic level and other levels of grammar where code-mixing or switching does not take place or is not very common. He discusses the functional dimension of the language shift of Maithili to Hindi, specifically at the syntactic level. Similarly, Boopathy (1992) conducted a sociolinguistic investigation of Maithili to explore the attitude of Maithili speakers and the language's function in different domains. He observed that the function of Maithili is restricted to the home domain and has minimal functions in other domains. One of the earliest studies was done by Singh et al. (1985), where he did a sociolinguistic investigation of the Maithili language movement in North Bihar.

2.7.3 After Inclusion

Choudhary (2013) discussed the language shift and maintenance of Maithili, where he emphasised that the language community of approximately 35 million speakers is shrinking on account of its limited use in different domains. Additionally, he found that most of Maithili speakers are bilingual and prolonged bilingualism can lead to two possible outcomes: either the speakers of the less dominant language will shift to the dominant, or the speakers of both languages will maintain their languages. Regardless, minority languages will frequently develop commonalities in structure with the dominant language. The influence of Hindi on the Maithili can be observed at both structural and phonological levels, where code-mixing and code-switching do not take place or are not very common (Kumar, 2001). Also, M. Jha (2017) explored changes in the development of Maithili from dialect to language in the pre-and post-independence era. According to his observation, Hindi has the upper hand in a formal setting, whereas Maithili is used mainly in informal settings. Unfortunately, there is hardly any literature on the treatment of Maithili language after inclusion that employs sociolinguistic theories of language shift. Thus, the present study will focus on assessing the status of the Maithili language after getting inclusion in the ES.