



ISSN Print: 2664-8717
ISSN Online: 2664-8725
Impact Factor: RJIF 8.00
IJRE 2024; 6(2): 04-10
www.englishjournal.net
Received: 07-04-2024
Accepted: 10-05-2024

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A sociolinguistic study of linguistic variation in Moradabad, UP (2023)

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33545/26648717.2024.v6.i2a.196>

Abstract

In India, where social systems and languages are diverse, there is a complex but long-lasting relationship between linguistic differences and social classifications. This study investigates the language variation of Hindi dialects in various localities of Moradabad city, India. The main objective is to analyse how linguistic diversity manifests across different age groups and neighbourhoods. The research adopts a mixed-method approach, questionnaires to comprehensively explore language variation and its sociolinguistic implications.

The research employs a sociolinguistic approach, to gather data on language variation. The research sample comprises participants from diverse age groups residing in two distinct localities within Moradabad city. This study is conducted with adults or adolescents in various linguistic and social settings present nevertheless convergent evidence that speakers with strong ties within the local community maintain their local dialects more vigorously than others. One of the prominent factors contributing to these variations is "Mother Tongue Influence. It refers to the impact of an individual's native language or mother tongue on their pronunciation, vocabulary, and overall linguistic behaviour when acquiring or using a second language.

The NEP's role is enhancing the utilization of Hindi dialects. This abstract encapsulates NEP's support for Hindi dialects. The NEP asserts local language's importance as medium of instruction in schools until at least Grade 5 and beyond. Engaging local communities and parents which help in learning through Hindi dialects. When the language used in schools aligns with their understanding, parents and local communities are more likely to engage in their children's education, leading to positive impacts on the overall educational experience.

The survey explores the impact of migration, urbanization, and interactions with other languages on the local dialects, along with the influence of media and technology. In conclusion, there are several factors which influences the variation, mother tongue influence plays a pivotal role in shaping the rich tapestry of language variation observed across the globe. By recognizing its influence and studying its manifestations, we can appreciate the diversity of human communication and work towards more inclusive and effective linguistic interactions.

Keywords: Variation, NEP, sociolinguistic

Introduction

A language plays an important role in a person's life. The language helps people understand their surroundings, grasp concepts, and master a variety of abilities. A child who learns their lives well will acquire wide language abilities that will allow them to express themselves and expand their thinking capacity. Language is what defines a civilized society at its finest. It serves as a vehicle for expression, elaboration, and communication of ideas, emotions, and actions. In a society, many social forces and prejudices frequently regulate our behaviour and language use. Language surrounds us, shapes our personalities, dictates how we behave in social situations, maintains our societal structure, expresses our thoughts and feelings, and gives us a forum to collaborate and improve our developmental process. Thus, language is a result of human consciousness acting actively within clearly defined social groups. Language and society are closely related and can be clearly distinguished from one another.

Moradabad

Moradabad is a major industrial city of Uttar Pradesh and one of India's biggest export hubs. Its metal crafts industry alone accounts for more than 40% of total handicraft exports from India. Originally known as Brass city of India. In Moradabad, like in other parts of Uttar

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Pradesh, the predominant language spoken is Hindi. However, it is essential to note that Hindi itself is not a single monolithic language but rather a language family with various dialects and regional variations.

Hindi

Hindi is an Indo-Aryan language about 1200 million worldwide highest speakers in the world, after that Mandarin about 1030 million. It is also spoken in all parts of India, as well as Indian subcontinents in Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan. It's assessed that almost a large portion of a billion group overall communicate in this great dialects. The significance to Hindi is one of the numerous dialects in India that is viewed as the public and official language of India. Hindi is the most widely spoken language. However, it's important to note that the Hindi spoken in this region might have some regional variations and influences from neighboring languages, leading to distinct dialects. The abugida script used for several Indian languages, Devanagari, is used to write Hindi. Devanagari is an extremely phonetic writing system because it only includes 33 consonants and 11 vowels. Standard Hindi is well-known and frequently used in formal settings, Hindi also exhibits a wide range of regional variants and dialects throughout India. Local languages, cultures, and historical events have an impact on these dialects.

Khadi Boli: Khari Boli is the standard dialect of Hindi and serves as the base for the modern standard Hindi language. It is widely used in the media, education, and official communication. Khadiboli (or Khari dialect) is a dialect of Hindi language, spoken in Western Uttar Pradesh. It is the variation of Hindi language that is used by the Indian state. This is a colloquial and somewhat rustic variant of Hindi, commonly spoken in rural areas around Moradabad. Due to its location and political importance, Khari Boli evolved as a lingua franca, used for communication among people from diverse linguistic backgrounds. It absorbed linguistic elements from various local dialects and languages, including Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, and regional languages, giving it its unique identity. It's important to note that Khari Boli is just one of the numerous Hindi dialects that exist across India. Each region has its own local flavour and linguistic variations, contributing to the rich tapestry of languages and cultures in the country.

Database and Methodology

Speech data is collected from two different regions in Moradabad (Moradabad city, Moradabad rural) of Uttar Pradesh, representing four dialects of Hindi. For each dialect, speech data is collected by around 260 native speakers on Hindi Language. Speech data is collected from few speakers; by posing the questions arbitrarily such as describe the childhood, history of the home town and so on. Instead of reading some study material or uttering the small fixed text sentences, responses to the general questions through questionnaire, usually contain the natural accent of the language. Dividing the speakers in two parts helped me to reach the conclusion.

Findings: The research aimed to explore language variation

in Hindi dialects among participants from diverse age groups residing in two different localities within Moradabad city. The study revealed interesting insights into how the area of residence influences language usage patterns, irrespective of age and education.

Language variation based on locality

The findings clearly indicated a significant difference in the language spoken between the two localities. Participants from the city predominantly spoke the standard form of Hindi, characterized by its relatively formal and standardized vocabulary and grammar. In contrast, participants from the rural area tended to use a rustic or lower category of Hindi, characterized by more colloquial and regionally specific linguistic features.

Linguistics attitudes and identity

The research also delved into participants' linguistic attitudes and identity. It was observed that individuals from both localities exhibited a sense of pride and attachment to their respective linguistic practices. City dwellers considered their standard Hindi usage as a marker of education and urban sophistication, while rural participants valued their distinct rural Hindi dialect as a reflection of their local identity and heritage.

Language shift and maintenance

Although the standard form of Hindi appeared dominant in the city, there were indications of language shift among the younger generation in the urban locality. In contrast, the rural area seemed more resilient in maintaining its linguistic heritage, with less evidence of language shift to other languages.

Diglossia

Hindi is marked by the classic situation of diglossia, i.e., the presence of two distinct varieties of which one is used only on formal and public occasions which the other is used under normal everyday circumstances. The Indian society is multilingual and stratified. The informal and everyday language used by native speakers across different regions of India is commonly referred to as "Colloquial Hindi" or "Hindi dialects." These colloquial variations can differ significantly based on the region, and people often mix them with elements from their local languages or dialects. Like in this study, people of Moradabad city are mostly using standard form of Hindi or the local language depending on their environment and people of rural areas are generally using rustic forms of Hindi dialects.

Generation

- Older generation.
- Younger generation.

At the level of lexical choice, age variable as a linguistic factor has some effect. For instance, the older generation resorted to internal code – mixing (from various dialects of Hindi).

The younger generation prefers external code mixing/ code switching. But any significant variation among the generations cannot be noticed.

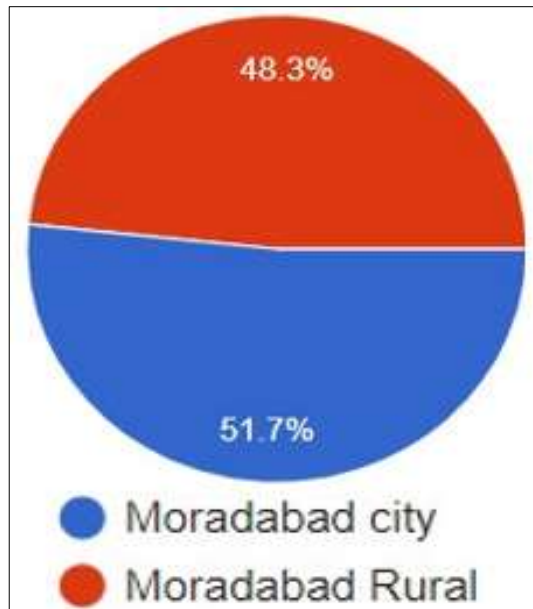


Fig 1: Locality in Moradabad

Multilingualism: Few people are living in Moradabad city are born in the city itself but they have touch in their accent of their mother tongue. Few of them are migrated from different cities so their Hindi accents have influence of other languages like Haryanvi, Urdu, Bengali, Punjabi.

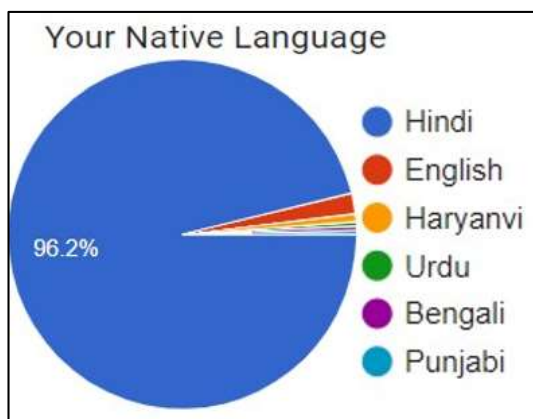


Fig 2: Your native language

Education: Educational background significantly contributes to language variation. The diverse linguistic experiences individuals encounter throughout their educational journey, from primary schooling to higher education, can shape their language proficiency, vocabulary, and communication style. Variations emerge in terms of pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary choices, and even dialects, as individuals adapt their speech patterns to align with the language norms and expectations of their educational institutions.

Mother Tongue: The mother tongue is the first language a baby learns, the language one grows up knowing, also known as the native language. A child first understands what is around them through the language that they hear their mother conversing in before they are born and throughout their lives. Mother tongue is valued for a variety of reasons. Individuals' thinking and emotions are shaped by their mother tongue. The usage of mother tongue in school enhances learning. The mother tongue is a powerful tool for

increasing people's learning. The value of mother tongue is examined because when children acquire their mother tongue, they also develop a slew of other important skills, such as critical thinking and reading.

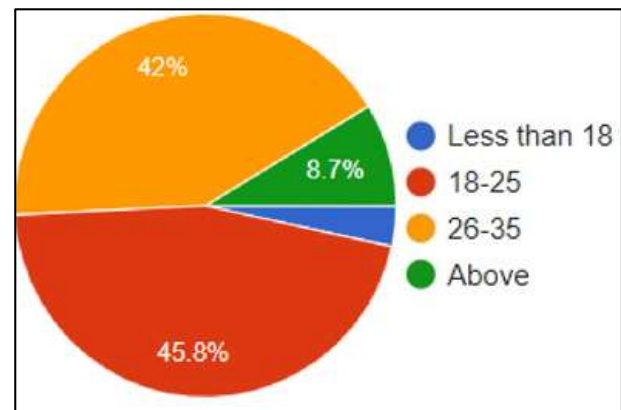


Fig 3: Your age, 264 responses

Reasons of Importance to Mother Tongue

- 1. Intellectual Development:** According to studies, those who are fluent in their mother tongue develop cognitively and intellectually at a higher rate. It has also been observed that when a student is educated in his or her mother tongue, the proportion of his or her educational accomplishment is higher than when a student is educated in a medium other than his or her mother tongue.
- 2. Develops a personal and cultural identity:** Personal identity develops from an individual's understanding of themselves, their environment, and their past. When a person is in the womb, they hear their native language for the first time, and it subconsciously influences their views and emotions. As a result, it lays the groundwork for future connections with family, community, culture, and identity. Its solid base fosters self-acceptance through a knowledge of social origin and character in the most fundamental and natural way. Furthermore, through preserving the various languages used in society, cultural identity emerges, which undoubtedly feeds into later stages of an individual's life.
- 3. Better connection with culture:** The most important way to maintain our culture is through our languages. It's possible that a direct translation from one language into another won't convey the original meaning. Knowing the language is therefore the best approach to fully understand something about a culture. Keeping our roots and culture close to us is facilitated by our mother tongue.
- 4. Develop and understand communication skills:** Children who spend time with their parents during childhood develop communication skills, which are crucial in school settings so that they can engage in class. Additionally, when parents discuss issues and tell tales with their kids, it helps them develop their vocabulary and ideas. As a result, when learning is conducted, the children easily follow and comprehend, leading to academic success.
- 5. Creates job opportunities:** The society is characterized by increased immigration and an influx of international students who speak languages other than English. Thus, knowledge of many languages is essential for successful communication and mutual

understanding in a variety of economic sectors, including those related to education, health, and commerce. As a result, there is an increase in demand for multilingual individuals on the employment market. People who are proficient in numerous native dialects have an advantage in becoming language specialists and finding lucrative employment.

6. **Pride:** It's an accomplishment to be proficient in your mother tongue. It helps people better connect with their cultural identities while also boosting their self-esteem and raising their level of awareness. Although a person's mother tongue has a significant positive impact on defining their personality, the fact that English is typically the medium of instruction also motivates parents to communicate to their children in a second language. Children therefore experience difficulty learning both their primary and second language as a result of this confusing their thoughts.
7. **Promotes the growth of strong family ties:** Mother tongue promotes the development of strong family ties. Many families, especially those headed by immigrants, have grandparents and parents who do not speak English as it is spoken in other nations. As a result, when a youngster places a lot of focus on communicating in a language other than their mother tongue, it causes a linguistic gap with some family members and an emotional divide with others.

How to improve to mother tongue learning

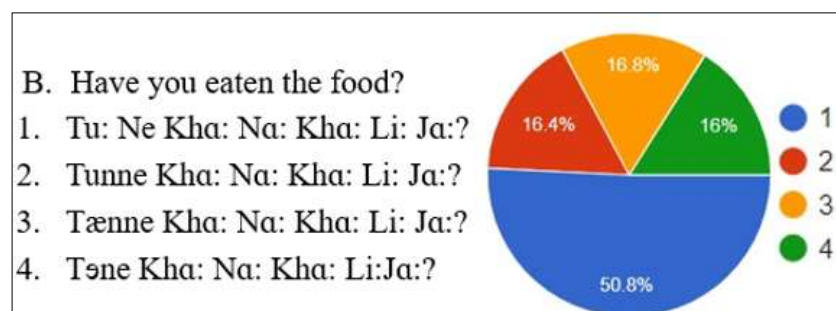
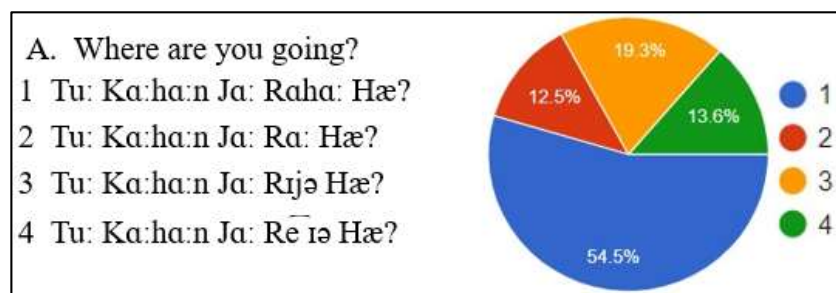
1. **Begin literacy teaching in mother tongue:** Early learning success depends on a curriculum that is grounded in the child's own language, culture, and environment, as well as on locally designed reading and teaching resources. Early instruction in the home language in multilingual settings supports child-centric approaches. It begins with the known while incorporating fresh information. It facilitates a seamless transition between home and school, sparks curiosity, and ensures higher levels of participation and engagement. This develops fluency and confidence in the child's native language as well as, subsequently, in

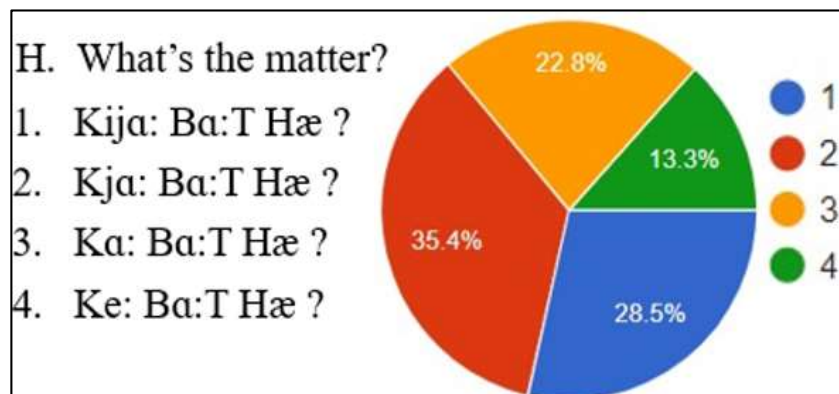
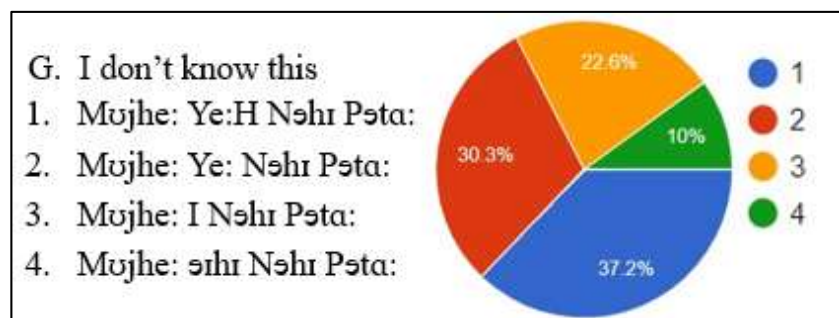
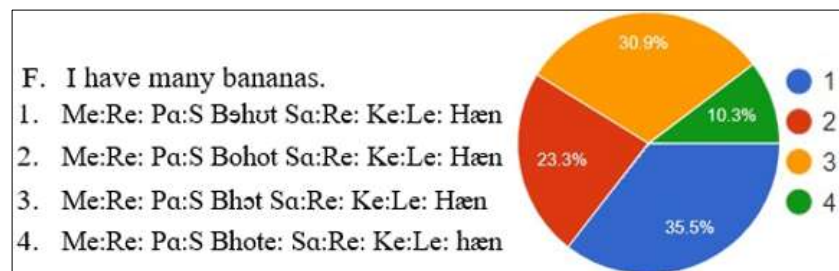
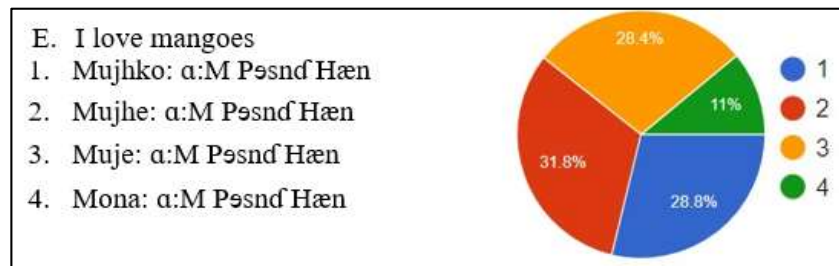
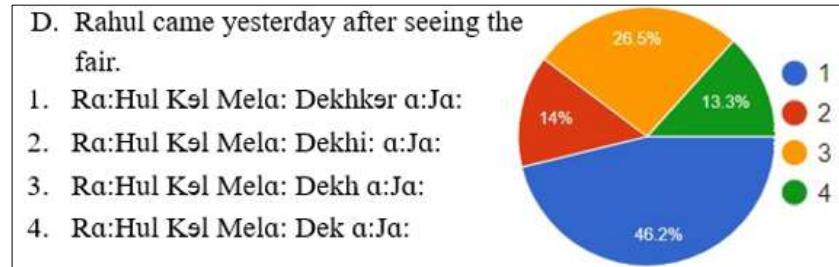
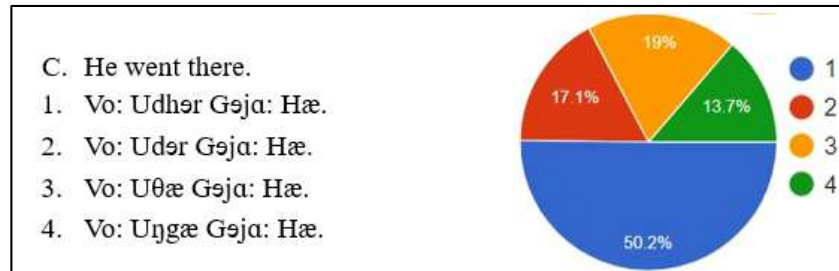
other languages, if necessary, since it prepares them for learning literacy.

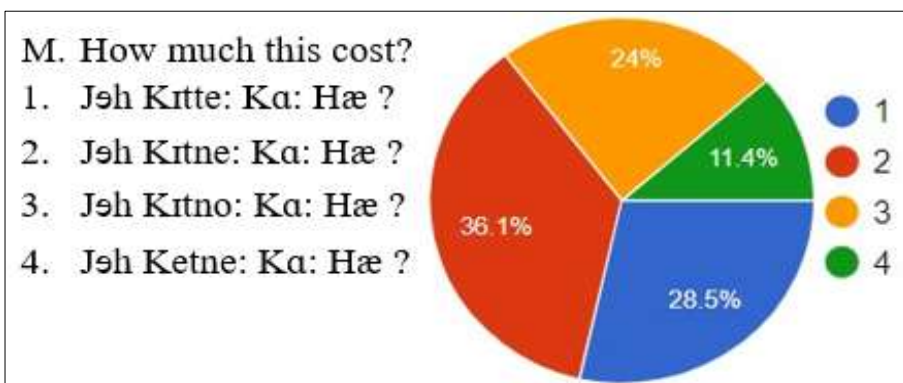
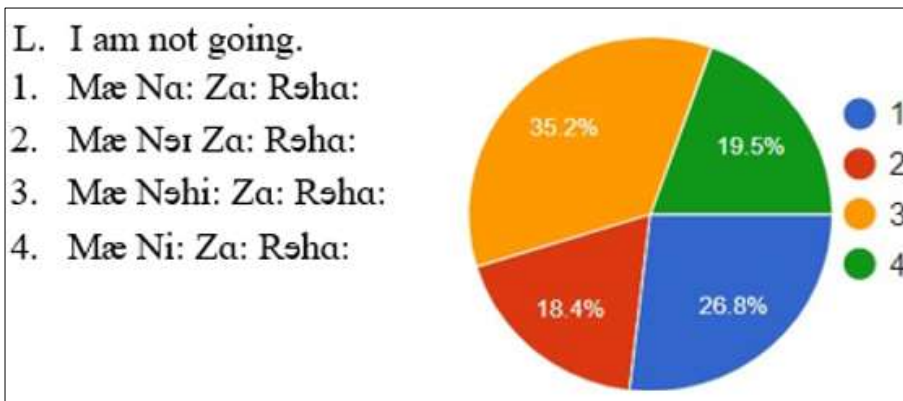
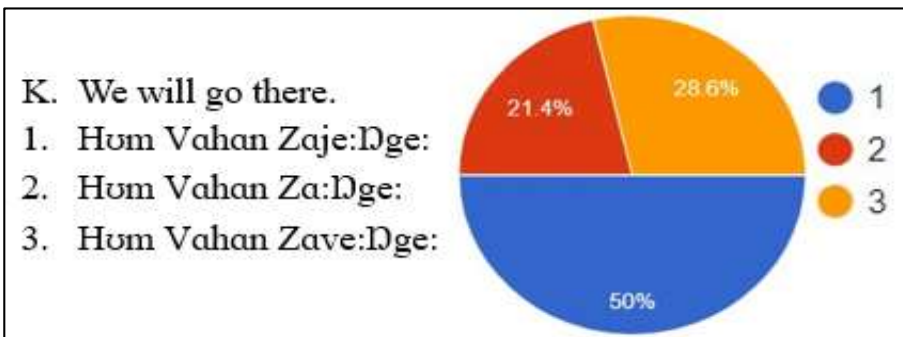
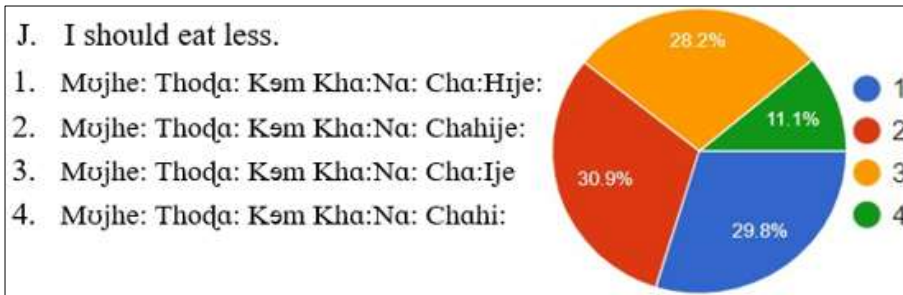
2. **Ensure availability of mother-tongue materials:** The only way to ensure that children are interested in and thrilled about reading and learning is to choose materials that they will comprehend and love. Children in most underdeveloped nations only have access to school textbooks, which are frequently in low supply. Rarely are there other educational resources available. Without access to quality resources, kids find it difficult to study and acquire literacy. Most elementary schools in low- and middle-income nations lack libraries, and books are luxury items that most families cannot purchase. The situation is significantly worse for kids from communities where their native languages are spoken. Rarely are textbooks offered in regional tongues.
3. **Support effective teaching methods:** Supporting efficient teaching strategies is important since the introduction and instruction of early reading skills depends not just on the availability of appropriate materials. A child's reading fluency and comprehension will probably remain limited as a result of repetitive learning and memorization with a textbook concentration. Teachers must employ interactive teaching methods that encourage student participation.

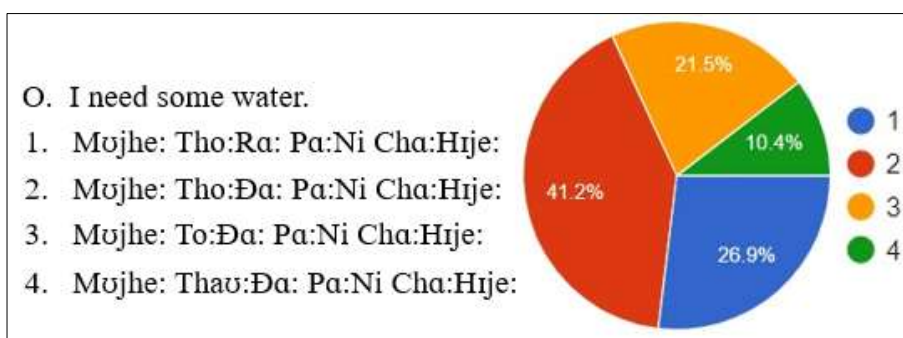
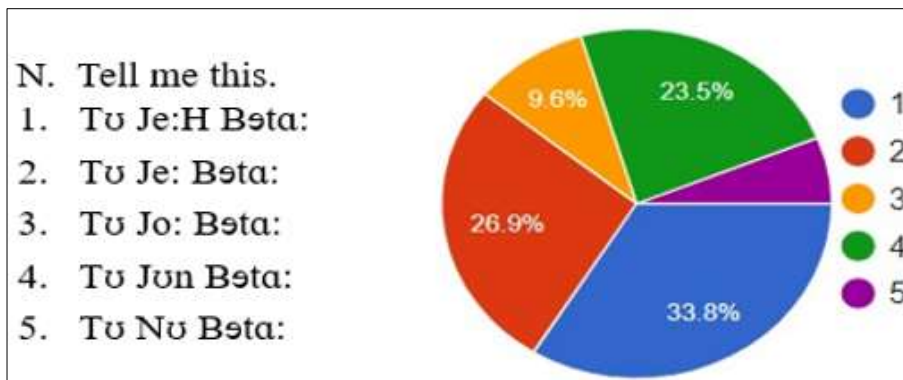
Train and deploy mother tongue teachers: Teachers who are familiar with the children's language and culture are necessary for mother tongue education. Additionally, it mandates that teachers receive training in the language in which they will instruct. Some teachers might not be truly fluent in the language of instruction and struggle to teach in a "dominant" language they are not themselves proficient in. Other teachers might be members of minority language groups who have been shut out of the learning process because there aren't enough training resources available in their language.

Questionnaire









Conclusion

The study's goal was to examine how participants from various age groups who lived in two separate localities of Moradabad city spoke different dialects of Hindi. Regardless of age or degree, the study provided intriguing insights into how location affects language usage patterns. The majority of speakers from the city were fluent in standard Hindi, which is distinguished by its somewhat formal and codified vocabulary and syntax. Participants from the rural area, on the other hand, tended to speak a lower category of Hindi that was more colloquial and had regional linguistic characteristics. People from both localities were seen to have a sense of pride in and connection to their unique language traditions. While participants in rural areas valued their distinctive rural Hindi dialect as a reflection of their local identity and heritage, city dwellers saw their standard Hindi usage as a sign of education and urban sophistication. Mother Tongue has a big impact on grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation in spoken and written communication, which contributes to linguistic variety. The importance of mother tongue influence must be acknowledged and understood in order to fully appreciate the richness of linguistic diversity and to support efficient language learning, communication, and planning in multilingual societies. Mother tongue teaching at least in early years can enable teachers to teach, and learners to learn further effectively. For too long, mother-tongue education has been mostly unnoticed by policy makers.

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