

Changing Linguistic Patterns in Indian Cities

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Abstract: There is an unprecedented increase in migration to cities because of push and pull factors resulting in socioeconomic pressures at the place of destinations. The lack of policies of sociocultural and economic integration was causing tension in the place of destination between the natives and new migrant groups. The purpose of this study was to understand the changes in linguistic patterns in selected Indian cities. The data for the study taken from 1991, 2001 and 2011 censuses of 14 major cities and 13 major languages in India. Analysis was carried using Microsoft Excel. In almost all cities (except Kolkata, Hyderabad, and Thiruvananthapuram), percentage of Hindi speaking population increased during 1991-2001 and 2001-2011. In cities such as Surat and Thane, the percentage of the Hindi speaking population had been doubled in the last two census decades. On the other hand, the percentage of Marathi speakers has declined during 1991-2001 and 2001-2011 in Mumbai, Thane, Pune, and Nagpur. Similarly, the percentage of Gujarati speakers was also shown a decline in the cities of Surat and Ahmedabad. For instance, in the last two decades, 13% of the Gujarati speakers declined in Surat, while 17% of Hindi speakers increased in Surat. It seems the significant change in linguistic patterns was occurring in some cities. This gives rise to possible tension between the natives and the new language groups. Hence, policymakers should proactively develop policies of integration to reduce the tension between the two groups.

Keywords: Indian Cities, Linguistic groups, Census of India.

Introduction

Rural-urban migration has played a significant role in process of urbanization in India (Singh, 1998; Bhagat, 2011). The post-independence period experienced unprecedented rural to urban migration due to industrial development resulting of economic activities in the trading and manufacturing sectors. The increased demand for the labour force in the industrial sector in the urban areas and lack of economic opportunities for upward mobility in rural areas resulted influx of migrants in the urban areas. Urbanization has contributed significantly for the improvement in the economic situation, growth of commercial activities and social & cultural diversities (Bhagat, 2017; Bhagat, 2018; Singh, 2018). On the other hand, for migrants from rural areas, the transition to the cities was a challenge due to newer demands on their language skills, occupational skills and adjustment to social-psychological insecurities associated with their minority status in the urban areas (Kerswill, 2006; David, 1995).

India's urban population has grown by 32% from 2001 to 2011 as compared to 18% growth in the total population of the country. As per census 2011, 31% of the country's population live in the cities and contributes to 63% of the country's GDP (Ministry of Urban Development, 2015).

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Estimation shows that urban population constitutes up to 600 million by 2031. Census of 2011 indicates cities with a million-plus population are accounting for 43% of India's urban population. Consequently, the number of towns in India increased from 5161 in 2001 to 7935 in 2011 due to the growth of census towns instead of statutory towns. India's urbanization nevertheless is in smaller proportion as compared to other large developing countries such as Brazil (87%), China (45%), Indonesia (44%), and Mexico (78%) (High Powered Expert Committee, 2011).

Though in India there are 22 official languages documented by the Constitution of India, Hindi is the main official language and used by nearly 40% of the population. However, at least southern states especially Tamil Nadu, resisted the imposition of Hindi as the main official language. Surprisingly, literature supports that linguistic discrimination and inequalities are rooted in the statutory and political processes of governance (Ministry of Urban Development, 2015). Languages are also recognized explicitly for many other public purposes such as for the promotion of culture and literature, as well as state-level recognition for use in limited spheres of governance (Mohanty, 2009). The power hierarchy of languages is socially constructed and legitimated process of primary socialization for multilingualism. It has social norms, and a host of the complex social, psychological processes associated with the construable of linguistic identities resulting in the perception of the legitimacy of the given roles of the languages lower down the hierarchy. Studies show that languages are deprived of their legitimate place, marginalized, kept out of the domains of power, privileges, and resources. The consequences of prolonged deprivation lead to the further disadvantage to the languages and their speakers in a vicious circle (Mohanty *et al.*, 2009; Schiffrin *et al.*, 2010). The metropolitan cities provide a unique case for studying the different type of languages. Further, it would be exciting to understand how the consequence of modernization and educational development that began after the introduction of globalization has encouraged the spread of multilingualism. The purpose of this study is to examine the changing linguistic patterns in selected Indian major cities.

Data and Method

The census of India has been the most abundant source of language data collected and published at the consecutive decennial censuses for more than a century. For this study, we have included 14 major cities (Delhi, Surat, Kolkata, Visakhapatnam, Bangalore, Chennai, Thiruvananthapuram, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Kanpur, Thane, Pune, Mumbai, and Nagpur), and we have used language information from 1991, 2001 and 2011 censuses. Mother Tongue data have been taken from 1991 census from the district profile files, and in 2001 census similar information is available in C-series file (social & cultural tables). On the other hand, language information for 2011 census was taken from recently published Language and Mother Tongue file from the census of India websites.

The format and presentation of the language tables have improved with time, regarding lucidity, detail to make it more understandable besides being user-friendly. The 1991 census recognizes 1,576 classified mother tongues (Vijayanunni, 1998), and more than a million people were 22 native language speakers. Similarly, more than 100,000 people spoke 50 languages and more than 10,000 natives spoke 114 languages (Vijayanunni, 1998; Mallikarjun, 2001). According to the 2001 census, there are 1635 rationalized mother tongues, 234 recognizable mother tongues, and 22 major languages (Census of India, 2001). Of these, more than a million natives spoke 29

Changing Linguistic Patterns in Indian Cities

languages, more than 100,000 spoke 60 languages, and more than 10,000 natives spoke 122 languages, respectively (Census of India,2001). The 2011 census of India has significantly improved the classification of languages and the 121 languages recognised (census of India, 2011). However, for this study, we have selected 13 languages out of 22 major languages such as Marathi, Hindi, Gujarati, Urdu, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Sindhi, Punjabi, Bengali/Oriya, Kashmiri/Assamese, English, and other languages. This study has studied only the changes in the composition of mother tongues. It is possible that a person may be bilingual or multi-lingual. For example, a person speaking Marathi can also speak Hindi or Kannada. The bilingual and multilingual population is an emerging reality in metropolitan cities of India. However, for this paper this may be considered as an limitation of the study. The data were analyzed in Microsoft Excel, using descriptive statistics to understand changing languages language patterns in the selected cities.

Results

Hindi language in Major Cities

Table 1 shows a percent variation in the different language speakers by cities from 1991 to 2011. It indicates that in almost all selected cities, Hindi language speakers have increased for the period 1991-2011. With regard to western cities, the notable increase has occurred in the percentage of Hindi language speakers. For instance, in Surat, the percentage of Hindi speakers was 11%, 19% and to 27% in 1991, 2001 and 2011 censuses respectively. Similarly, in case of Thane for the same censuses, the percentage of Hindi speakers increased from 13% to 27% respectively. The corresponding figures for Mumbai are 16%, 22% and 29% in the census year 1991, 2001 and 2011 respectively. When we examined North Indian cities such as Delhi and Kanpur, there was no change in Hindi language speakers in the first two censuses in case of Delhi (80%). However, in Delhi 5% increased among Hindi speakers according to the 2011 census. In case of Kanpur city, there was a slight increase in the percentage of Hindi language speakers, it was 84%, 85% and 89% in the census year 1991, 2001 and 2011 respectively. As for as cities in the south is concerned, the last two censuses show a slight increase among the Hindi language speakers. For instance, in Bangalore city, the percentage of Hindi language speakers doubled in the previous two decades, 1991 (3%) to 2011 (6%). on the other hand, in case of Kolkata, for 1991, 2001 and 2011 censuses, there is hardly any change in Hindi language speakers (21%, 21%, and 23% respectively).

Marathi language shrinking

Table 1 also presents the percentage of Marathi speakers in 14 cities from 1991 to 2011 censuses. The results revealed the percentage of Marathi language speakers declined in all cities during the last two census decades including the cities in Maharashtra. For instance, in case of Thane, Marathi language speakers declined and found 54%, 45% and 44% for the census years 1991, 2001 and 2011 respectively. Similarly, in case of Pune and Mumbai, the corresponding Marathi language speakers declined from 70% to 69% and to 67% as well as 42% to 38% and to 35% for the census years 1991, 2001 and 2011 respectively.

Gujarati language shrinking

According to table 1, the percentage of Gujarati language speakers in the industrial cities of Gujarat namely Surat and Ahmadabad, the percentage of Gujarati language speakers declined

from 68% to 60% and to 55% as well as from 72% to 71% and to 68% for the census years 1991, 2001 and 2011 respectively.

Table 1: Percentage of thirteen languages speakers in selected cities of India, census 1991-2011

City	1991	2001	2011	1991	2001	2011	1991	2001	2011	1991	2001	2011	1991	2001	2011
	Hindi			Marathi			Gujarati			Urdu			Sindhi		
Delhi	80.20	80.21	84.63	00.23	0.19	0.16	0.31	0.35	0.25	5.80	6.66	5.28	0.43	0.33	0.19
Surat	10.79	19.12	26.97	11.89	10.89	9.72	67.83	59.72	54.54	4.80	3.42	3.05	0.56	0.52	0.48
Kolkata	21.14	21.04	22.84	00.05	0.04	0.04	0.55	0.66	0.57	11.82	13.75	13.04	0.09	0.09	0.08
Visakhapatnam	01.57	01.90	02.15	00.13	0.14	0.11	0.11	0.10	0.10	2.72	2.55	2.52	0.05	0.03	0.03
Bangalore	02.93	03.67	05.64	02.71	2.41	2.03	0.45	0.52	0.51	13.90	13.85	12.90	0.23	0.18	0.14
Chennai	02.11	02.40	03.43	00.50	0.43	0.39	0.68	0.61	0.69	4.78	4.15	4.27	0.16	0.14	0.12
Thiruvananthapuram	00.23	00.19	00.29	00.09	0.05	0.05	0.03	0.04	0.02	0.10	0.08	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.00
Hyderabad	06.87	06.36	07.38	01.86	1.74	1.73	0.68	0.61	0.62	38.86	40.74	43.24	0.29	0.19	0.18
Ahmedabad	12.94	15.23	21.98	02.50	2.17	2.02	72.36	71.75	68.31	7.18	6.40	3.50	2.90	2.51	2.29
Kanpur	83.73	85.12	89.37	00.06	0.02	0.13	0.02	0.02	0.02	13.97	13.01	8.24	0.40	0.28	0.22
Thane	13.05	20.72	26.64	54.09	45.09	44.53	6.62	6.60	5.64	9.40	10.35	9.78	5.42	3.81	2.72
Pune	11.23	13.99	17.57	70.27	69.07	66.56	2.09	1.87	2.30	4.77	3.70	3.90	1.17	0.99	0.60
Nagpur	20.97	23.84	26.06	64.25	62.44	60.63	1.15	1.07	1.16	7.02	6.61	6.36	1.66	1.55	1.79
Mumbai	15.72	21.56	28.92	41.66	37.77	35.40	13.89	11.98	11.48	12.08	13.26	11.73	2.19	1.81	1.69
City	Malayalam			Punjabi			Tamil			Telugu			Kashmiri/ Assamese		
Delhi	0.74	0.69	0.54	8.64	7.44	5.31	0.96	0.70	0.50	0.26	0.21	0.16	0.16	0.20	0.16
Surat	0.25	0.25	0.16	0.21	0.25	0.19	0.13	0.12	0.09	1.32	1.10	0.72	0.00	0.01	0.02
Kolkata	0.19	0.16	0.10	0.56	0.48	0.35	0.30	0.21	0.14	0.13	0.20	0.12	0.01	0.02	0.02
Visakhapatnam	0.80	0.53	0.32	0.20	0.15	0.09	0.75	0.55	0.33	91.94	92.32	92.72	0.00	0.01	0.02
Bangalore	3.35	3.24	3.12	0.21	0.18	0.18	22.37	19.53	16.10	15.72	14.96	13.85	0.03	0.05	0.10
Chennai	3.23	2.62	2.26	0.08	0.07	0.06	76.71	78.83	78.34	10.54	9.65	9.30	0.01	0.01	0.01
Thiruvananthapuram	94.36	95.21	97.12	0.01	0.01	0.01	4.42	3.58	1.90	0.32	0.32	0.15	0.00	0.01	0.03
Hyderabad	0.52	0.38	0.26	0.39	0.32	0.24	1.95	1.50	1.15	46.86	46.47	43.35	0.04	0.01	0.03
Ahmedabad	0.45	0.37	0.33	0.36	0.35	0.35	0.47	0.32	0.31	0.29	0.24	0.21	0.01	0.01	0.02
Kanpur	0.06	0.04	0.05	0.99	1.03	1.20	0.05	0.02	0.02	0.05	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01
Thane	2.27	2.43	1.61	0.58	0.76	0.64	1.62	1.66	1.21	2.82	2.44	1.67	0.01	0.02	0.04
Pune	1.23	1.11	0.72	0.83	0.67	0.65	1.26	1.15	1.07	3.15	3.00	2.59	0.03	0.05	0.09
Nagpur	0.38	0.33	0.24	1.01	0.92	0.91	0.44	0.35	0.26	0.63	0.86	0.65	0.01	0.01	0.01
Mumbai	1.75	1.29	0.97	1.17	0.98	0.89	2.83	2.69	2.37	1.86	2.01	1.63	0.02	0.02	0.05
City	Kannada			Bengali/Oriya			English			Others					
Delhi	0.11	0.08	0.06	1.55	1.76	1.30	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.56	1.16	1.41			
Surat	0.10	0.09	0.06	1.92	3.47	0.46	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.21	1.03	3.54			
Kolkata	0.01	0.01	0.01	64.37	63.37	61.45	0.19	0.22	0.20	0.58	0.57	1.03			
Visakhapatnam	0.09	0.07	0.05	1.31	1.37	0.31	0.11	0.08	0.06	0.21	0.18	1.17			
Bangalore	35.80	38.95	42.35	0.27	0.52	0.65	0.26	0.21	0.19	1.77	1.74	2.22			
Chennai	0.61	0.52	0.48	0.10	0.14	0.17	0.32	0.26	0.22	0.18	0.19	0.26			
Thiruvananthapuram	0.08	0.08	0.05	0.06	0.04	0.09	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.28	0.35	0.05			
Hyderabad	1.00	0.92	0.88	0.27	0.40	0.26	0.16	0.13	0.10	0.25	0.23	0.58			
Ahmedabad	0.12	0.09	0.08	0.17	0.23	0.28	0.02	0.04	0.02	0.24	0.29	0.3			
Kanpur (Nagar)	0.01	0.00	0.02	0.48	0.27	0.44	0.02	0.04	0.08	0.14	0.11	0.17			
Thane	1.66	1.99	1.45	0.64	1.48	1.31	0.19	0.25	0.23	1.63	2.38	2.54			
Pune	2.29	2.48	1.89	0.37	0.63	0.70	0.20	0.20	0.27	1.11	1.09	1.10			
Nagpur	0.08	0.06	0.04	0.71	0.77	0.58	0.08	0.07	0.08	1.59	1.13	1.24			
Mumbai	2.01	1.76	0.04	0.72	0.89	1.14	0.98	0.54	0.55	4.09	3.43	3.17			

Sources: Census of India, 1991, 2001, 2011

Urdu language

Table 1 reveals some interesting patterns in the percentage of Urdu language speakers among 14 major cities. About 11% of the population speaks Urdu language in Kanpur, Bangalore Mumbai and Kolkata cities. In case of Hyderabad city, percentage of Urdu language speakers increased from 39% in 1991 to 41% in 2001 and to 43% in 2011. Surprisingly, in case of Kanpur city in Uttar Pradesh, the percentage of Urdu language speakers declined from 14% in 1991 to 13% in 2001 and to 8% in 2011.

South Indian languages

Four major Dravidian languages in the South are Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, and Malayalam. As far as Telugu is concerned, in case of Visakhapatnam city, more than 92% of the population speak Telugu language and has remained the same in the last three decades. However, less than 50% of the population speak Telugu in case of Hyderabad and nothing much has been changed in the last three censuses. Though the relatively small percentage of the population are Tamil language speakers in the north, west, and east regions of India, around 77% population speak Tamil language in Chennai city, and it has almost remained the same for the last three census years. Though in Bangalore the notable percentage of Tamil language speakers were found in 1991 (22%) but it declined to 20% in 2001 and 16% in 2011. Surprisingly, in the capital city of Karnataka Kannada language speaking population was only 36% in 1991 and increased to 39% in 2001 and 42% in 2011.

Discussion

Since independence linguistic empathy has served as a basis for forming interest groups; the "language question" itself has gradually become a sensitive political issue (Heitzman and Worden, 1996). Diversity in the culture and migration has over the years found a fertile base in the linguistic patterns related to cities and with the development of urbanization. Some of the investigations made clear that a move to a city had linguistic effects (Fishman et. al.,1971). The changing residence and linguistic impulses of socioeconomic forces provide historical evidence for changes over time (Fishman et. al.,1971). Thus, the aim of this study was to show the changes in linguistic patterns in Indian metropolitan and selected major cities by using 1991, 2001 and 2011 censuses.

The present study indicated that the spread of Hindi language speakers increased in most of the major Indian cities, and the highest percentage increased in Maharashtra cities especially in Thane and Mumbai. Historically, Mumbai has been the site of blending and melting of linguistic diversity. However, in present years, there has been a formation of a new linguistic pattern and showing signs of competing pressure dividing the ethnic groups. Demonstrated by Spolsky (1975), the process of sub-urbanization gives rise to language and culture change, and the mass media has heightened this process (Spolsky, 2002).

In south Indian cities, percentage variation observed among the Tamil speakers in Bangalore and Telugu speakers in Hyderabad. The system paves the way for the development of an exciting model for the management of ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity. Supporting the urbanization of languages and their use in urban institutional spaces may, therefore, constitute a specific linguistic policy for peoples interested in maintaining their languages and, consequently, their

ethnic identity. The signs of ethnic conflicts already witnessed in different parts of the country may lead to the ethnic clinging and formation of different city-states.

Studies have shown migration is negatively viewed in many countries (Spence et al. 2009), and there is an absence of integration of migration with development. Western Indian cities show that tension between Gujarati and Hindi speakers in Surat city, whereas Marathi v/s Hindi in Mumbai city. For instance, during the past two decades, there has been more than 13% of the decline among the Gujarati language speakers in Surat city. It may be worth mentioning that the most recent experience in the state of Gujrat has been the mass exodus of migrants from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh in the first week of October of this year (2018). According to newspaper reports, more than 1500 Hindi-speaking migrants from Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Bihar reportedly fled from Gujrat after the outbreak of violence. Likewise, 'Different people reported receiving threats by masked men who asked them to leave the state before the next morning after questioning them where were they from?' (Mirror now news.com, 2018).

Similarly, some political parties in Mumbai are also creating fear and tension for migrants, especially from Bihar with the perception that there is a threat of safety for Marathi people and language identity (Katzenstein, 1973). It is important to note a rise of a unique combination of different ethnicity and culture or diverse identities and communities in the major cities. One wonders about the consequences of these developments for the future.

Conclusion

Findings confirmed that of marked difference and changing patterns of languages in the major cities of India. For policymakers, the study may be useful to explore further to know whether there are signs of competing pressures; an education-influenced variation in the direction of economic as well as cultural integration or ethnic diversity leading to socio-political tension.

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Changing Linguistic Patterns in Indian Cities

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