

Sneha Mishra

School of Social Sciences and Languages, Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore, India

Md Mojibur Rahman

Indian Institute of Technology (Indian School of Mines), Dhanbad, India

THE ETHNOLINGUISTIC VITALITY OF GULGULIA

Summary. Language death is a phenomenon with symptoms related to demeaning vocabulary count and depletion of domains of language use along with the simplicity of linguistic structures. It commences by exhibiting traits of a declining number of fluent speakers, dwindling attitude of the speakers with regard to their heritage language, language shift, lack of inter-generational language transfer accompanied by a feeling that heritage language is inferior to outside languages, and Gulgulia exhibits every trait of such a dying language. It has become a waning language that is very close to its permanent extinction. The present study elucidates the ethnolinguistic vitality of Gulgulia tested through chosen sociolinguistic parameters which were found suitable to Gulgulia's scenario. It also explores the linguistic situation of the Gulgulian community in Dhanbad, the community members' language use in their homes and in their miscellaneous interethnic interactions and examines what relation prevails between the community's language preference and their vitality. It was found that speaker variables, such as age, gender, and language competence governed the speaker's attitude toward the heritage language. The location of the speech community is also a regulating factor in determining the inclination for preservation or attrition of the native language. The analysis of the speech behavior in the Gulgulian community confirms the loss of major genres such as the art of narration. Out of all the genres of language use, only two are surviving, which is alarming.

Keywords: ethnolinguistic vitality; heritage language; intergenerational language transmission; language endangerment.

Introduction

Krauss (1992) and Crystal (2000) believed that in the 21st century, nearly 50 to 90 percent of the currently spoken languages would become extinct. Several such cases exist, where language documentation is the last hope in preventing languages from completely disappearing, as revitalization through other efforts seems impossible.

Gulgulia, a dying variety of Indo-Aryan language family spoken in the eastern part of India, is deficient in exhaustive language documentation

and sociolinguistic exploration. The present study aims to determine the vitality of this nomadic language which is very close to its permanent extinction.

Ehala (2015) describes ethnolinguistic vitality (EV) as 'a group's ability to maintain and protect its existence in time as a collective entity with a distinctive identity and language' (p. 1). Ehala (2015) further asserts that groups having low vitality are likely to diminish as they assimilate with stronger groups and lose their distinctive identity while groups having better vitality tend to survive.

The current study offers insights into EV among the Gulgulian community residing in Dhanbad from a qualitative perspective. The Gulgulians are a nomadic community chiefly distributed in the Indian states of Jharkhand, Bihar and Bengal often found on the outskirts of villages, near railway stations or forests. The study explores the EV of the Gulgulia language and focuses to determine the attitude of the group members in their interethnic communication pattern to either sustain or diminish from being a distinct linguistic group.

About the Gulgulian Community

Nomads are people who wander from place to place for their sustenance. In India, about five hundred nomadic groups have been identified, which represents about eighty million people or nearly 7 percent of the nation's more than a billion population (Misra & Malhotra, 1982). The nomadic community in India has been classified into three distinct groups: pastoralists, hunter-gatherers, and peripatetic or non-food-producing groups. Among these, the most abandoned and segregated social group in India is the peripatetic nomads (Berland & Rao, 2004). Among the several tribes or communities that fall under the category of peripatetic nomads, the Nats are a nomadic group found primarily traveling in the Northern and eastern parts of India. The Nat community is believed to be of 'Dom' origin which is an ethnic group originating in India. The word 'nata' originates from the Sanskrit language which means a dance, and entertainment and jugglery are the traditional professions of the Nats. This Nat community has fourteen sub-groups with Gulgulia being one of them (Singh, 2008).

Gulgulia is a nomadic community predominantly found in the eastern zone of India with around 132,000 population (peoplegroups.org). Several newspaper articles and reports depict the socio-cultural position of this nomadic community. However, sparse information is available about the language used by this community. The available reports casually mention Hindi or Bhojpuri as the language of this community. Nevertheless, language documentation tasks carried out on the language of this community highlight several linguistic features distinct from, those of the dominant languages amidst whom this language community is surviving. The community has also retained vocabulary which is unique to their traditional lifestyle such as:

Equipment: (/horpa:/ 'tool for digging mud')
Household items: (/sira:m/ 'head rests made of mud for sleeping')
Zoology: (/pinni/ 'ants', /ti:til/ 'butterfly')

The term 'Gulgulia' (language) is preferable as this is what the majority of community members call their heritage language, or their mother tongue. It would be irrelevant to give any new name to this heritage language that the speakers themselves do not identify with.

The Gulgulians are a nomadic group with no fixed settlement and who also get married outside their community. They have inherited linguistic elements and features of other local and dominant languages based on the contiguity of their temporary dwellings and co-habitation which depicts a situation of severe code-mixing.

Ethnolinguistic Vitality Framework

Giles et al. (1977) define EV as the vitality of an ethnolinguistic group that makes a group likely to behave as a distinctive and active collective entity in inter-group situations' (p. 308). Nyota (2015, p. 3) states that since its inception, the ethnolinguistic vitality framework has been employed in sociolinguistic research. The framework utilizes socio-structural aspects to determine a language's maintenance and shift.

EV corresponds to two kinds of vitality: Objective Vitality (OV) and Subjective Vitality (SV). OV highlights a linguistic community's robustness and is established via three types of variables that are a demographic factor, a status factor, and an institutional support factor. The demographic factors include the absolute number of speakers in a group, their geographical distribution, the proportion of the group size as compared to several out-groups, and the "historical ties to the territory that they populate" (Ehala, 2015, p. 1). These variables have a role to play in a language's survival. Giles et al. (1977, p. 313) state, "Minority group speakers who are concentrated in the same geographical area may stand a better chance of surviving as a dynamic linguistic community by virtue of the fact that they are in frequent verbal interaction and can maintain feelings of solidarity."

The status factors constitute those variables that influence a language's prestige such as social, economic, and socio-historical variables and the language status of that linguistic group. Giles et al. (1977) emphasize that whenever the group exhibits higher social status, it indicates its greater vitality.

There are two components to the institutional support factor: a formal support factor and an informal support factor (Esteban-Guitart et al. 2015). Formal support factors indicate the representation of the language in formal institutions and platforms, such as educational institutions, government institutions, business and media. The informal support factors imply the extent to which a group organizes itself as a pressure group to its language in various social institutions as in education, administration, and culture.

Giles et al. (1977) assert that whenever an ethnolinguistic group exhibits conducive demographic aspects, higher prestige, and increased institutional support, it is more likely that its members would conduct themselves as collective idiosyncratic entities in intergroup circumstances. However, utilizing only the OV factors in EV interpretation received much criticism and has endured alterations since. Suggestions were made to incorporate subjective perceptions of the group members too, in the EV interpretation. This led to the introduction of a subjective vitality questionnaire (Bourhis et al., 1981) that contains items to measure the group members' perceptions of OV. According to Kraemer et al. (1994), the use of subjective perceptions has been particularly effective in the matters of interethnic

relationships such as in determining issues related to status, prestige, and attitude of group members.

There is no previous work on the ethnolinguistic vitality of Gulgulia. Therefore, after identifying the appropriate factors to suit the Gulgulia case, the following factors were compiled to be examined:

- 1) The number of speakers
- 2) Speech community
- 3) Intergenerational language transmission
- 4) Domains of language use
- 5) Linguistic competence
- 6) Bilingualism/ Multilingualism
- 7) Language attitudes
- 8) Identity functions
- 9) Literacy

The sociolinguistic framework applied in the context of Gulgulia is a combination of factors from previous ethnolinguistic approaches (Ferguson, 1966; Haugen, 1972; Giles, Bourhis, & Taylor, 1977; Haarmann, 1986; Schreiber & Sitaridou, 2018, Zuipers-Zandberg & Kircher, 2020).

Methodology

The present study involved first-hand data collection from six distinct settlements of the Gulgolian community from varied parts of the Dhanbad district. These six settlements were specifically chosen as they were situated amidst busy localities and were well-surrounded by the presence of other regional languages prevalent in the neighboring vicinity. Data collection from settlements surviving amidst other languages rendered a propitious environment to identify the dwellers' attitude towards their heritage language. For the purpose of the study, thirty respondents were interviewed. These participants were selected through the snowball sampling method. Eleven respondents were from three connected families residing in a compact labyrinth in the same vicinity while the rest were their acquaintances belonging to the other five sample settlements. There were fifteen males and fifteen females as respondents. The thirty respondents belonged to the age group 12–75 years. The age range was chosen to mark the crucial phases of life such as

school entry, marriage, other life experiences, etc. Data was also retrieved from individuals (belonging to the Gulgulia community) who started working in government organizations and currently live in company townships and colonies.

The data has been collected by the linguistic fieldwork methodology (Abbi, 2001) comprising mainly of observation method and interview method. The researchers periodically visited the Gulgulia settlements to interview the participants of the study and simultaneously observe their day-to-day activities and make note of their inter-ethnic linguistic behavior. The entire process of data collection, transcription, and analysis extended for about thirteen months since the inception of the study in October 2020.

As the language of data collection, Hindi was employed because there were only respondents above sixty years of age who were fairly proficient in the Gulgulia language and, for the purpose of this paper, the researcher was attempting to study EV and language attitudes cross-generationally. As the interviewers were also not proficient in the Gulgulia language, therefore, a common medium was chosen. In order to prevent any interference by the language of data collection, proficient respondents were asked to respond to certain questions in Hindi (or any preferred language) and Gulgulia. Occasionally, the elicitation through this mode was problematic because respondents sometimes felt hesitant about their competence or misinterpreted the activity. Data collection was challenging on several occasions. Although the respondents were contacted and approached through NGOs and established contacts, the speakers seemed guarded and hesitant in responding to interviews and unwilling to allow the interviews to be recorded.

Moreover, data related to attitude was also procured from the participants. They were displayed items and asked to identify or describe the objects in their language of preference such as either in Hindi or Gulgulia. The language in which these respondents either identified or described these objects indicate their inclination towards that language. The questionnaire to elicit attitude and language identity was conducted orally mainly because Gulgulia exists only in oral form and most respondents (except school going children) were illiterate.

Following Schreiber & Sitaridou (2018) collecting responses orally

enabled the interviewers to maintain better track of respondents' reactions and non-verbal cues while responding during their participation. As Mishra (2022) advises, the participants were asked to identify or describe the objects in a relaxed setting to ensure reliable data. As the respondents spoke, their statements were audio-recorded after seeking permission from them. Later, the question-and-answer pairs were transcribed. The data collected was analyzed qualitatively. Data related to the language competence of the community members was collected from self-reports of speakers and no form of language testing was employed on them.

The study applies the EV factors to the sociolinguistic situation of Gulgulia in the Dhanbad region and explores the following research questions.

- 1) What is the linguistic situation of the Gulgulian community in Dhanbad?
- 2) Which language do the Gulgulian community members use in their homes and in their miscellaneous interethnic interactions?
- 3) What relation prevails between the community's language preference and their vitality?

Findings

The Linguistic Situation of the Gulgulian Community

In Dhanbad, as reported by the participants, all group members are multilingual and usually proficient in four languages: Hindi, Bengali, Khortha, and Gulgulia. Since Hindi is the official language of the region, it is crucial for the Gulgulia members to be orally proficient in Hindi. Moreover, Dhanbad shares its geographical border with the neighboring state of West Bengal. Due to this, there is much influence of Bengali culture and language on Dhanbad. There are several inhabitants of Dhanbad who may not be proficient in Hindi as they utilize Bengali in their day-to-day conversations. Therefore, Gulgulians too, learn and employ Bengali in their conversation as and when required.

The participants state that usually, they initiate their conversation in Hindi with an outsider, even if that person may not know Hindi. After that, following the opening lines in Hindi, if they realize that the receiver is not well-

versed in Hindi as they may be a native Bengali or Bhojpuri speaker, they switch their codes to Bengali or Bhojpuri to sustain the conversation with them.

The participants further add that the Gulgulians restrict the use of their mother tongue only among their community members. Although, Gulgulia is mostly employed in their home domain, yet the participants highlight that in several Gulgulian families, the mother tongue is only practiced among the senior members of the family, while they speak in Hindi during conversations with their children.

Demography

A language with a more significant number of speakers has a greater chance of withstanding dominance from other languages. Similarly, with fewer speakers, chances of assimilating with dominating languages grow.

The Gulgulia-speaking community in the Dhanbad region comprises nearly six thousand speakers, as recorded by the community Panchayat head. However, due to the diasporic nature of the community, stating an exact figure of Gulgulia speakers is challenging. Yet, the population figure for the Gulgulia language highlights that with proper motivation and efforts its speakers can well prevent the erosion of their heritage language.

Group Identity

Gulgulia spoken in the Dhanbad region exhibits a virtual and willing assimilation with the dominant languages due to fragile group boundaries, highlighted, for example, by dynamic marriage patterns and migration for earning a livelihood. Marriage and co-habiting with people outside their community concluded in interaction with outside community people and inheriting their languages. However, community members find pride in claiming themselves as Gulgulia speakers, even when only a few speak it and none speak it in its pure form. For example, one participant was reported as saying 'hama:r b'ha:sa: gulgulia ꞑh' (*Gulgulia is our Mother tongue*). This suggests that Gulgulians have an appreciation for cultural identity but the connection between the heritage language and what the informants presume as 'identity' is inconsistent.

The community members value their heritage language privately, within the community, but prefer bilingualism or multilingualism. As the native language cannot garner their livelihood, these people find bilingualism cognitively and socially empowering. For example, one participant highlighted: 'gulgulia hama:r pehṭa:n ṭṭṭ. hama gulgulia ḍa:ṭi ṭṭṭ Lekin hinḍi a:r bangla ḍa:nal ḍṣaruri ṭṭṭ. hinḍi se hi hama:ra peṭ palṭa: hai.'

(Gulgulia is our identity. We are the Gulgulia people. But knowing Hindi and Bengali is essential. We earn our livelihood through Hindi.). Speaking in dominant languages is prestigious in front of outsiders for the Gulgulians.

Potential for Contact and Migration

The approachable location of Gulgulia speaking community in the Dhanbad district facilitates contact-induced changes. The Gulgulian community settles in close proximity to other speech communities — the Gulgulians do not have a permanent settlement. They often settle down in large open grounds outside towns and colonies. They generally wander inside these neighboring places with the intention to earn some livelihood and for marketing purposes. As a result, they come in contact with outsiders and gradually adopt their linguistic behavior. The inter-marriages among members and people from outside the community resulted in a mixed variety of languages in which one can readily find features of three distinct languages.

Outward migration is a threatening factor in the traditional ways of life and for language preservation. In recent times, community heads, as reported by the interviewees, have started banishing members if they take up jobs different from what they have been traditionally practicing. Members are supposed to practice only their traditional occupations such as animal shows, Bahurupiya 'enacting characters,' etc. Despite people not emigrating in search of better job opportunities, migration has been on the rise with inter-community marriages and due to an increase in urbanization. The community members' living conditions are improving with government efforts and social work in the form of medical aid and education.

Multilingual Language Practices

Gulgulian community members are generally bilingual or multilingual in their language behaviour as all thirty participants in the age group of 12 to 75 exhibited instances of mixing Gulgulia along with other regional languages and vice-versa. However, the degree of mixing codes varied depending on age and gender. More specifically, participants above the age of 60 despite having a working knowledge of Hindi, preferred interacting in Gulgulia among the community speakers. The researchers, therefore, conclude that for members above the age of 60 Gulgulia is spoken as L1. Yet, it was observed that these senior members employed content words from Hindi out of habit.

Similarly, younger respondents in the age group of 12 to 40, mixed Gulgulia words in their Hindi sentences. For such a younger generation, Hindi is predominantly their L1 and Gulgulia is L2. As few members in this age bracket are attending schools too, they speak a few words of English as well.

Respondents who were above 40 years were mostly multilingual as other than Gulgulia and Hindi, Bengali, and Bhojpuri were uniformly seen as part of their verbal repertoire.

Apart from language competency being influenced by age, it correlated with the variable of gender as well. During interviews, it was observed that in comparison to male respondents, their female counterparts were more proficient in responding in Gulgulia. These women participants highlighted that since they are mostly homemakers, they spend more time with the elder members in the house. Moreover, women do not get extensive opportunities to interact with speakers belonging to other linguistic groups. Since women get to use Gulgulia more, they are more proficient in it. The respondents themselves agreed upon the difference in the level of competency between genders in terms of code-switching, language competence and language use as men mostly go out for earning livelihood while women stay at home.

Intergenerational Language Transmission

In the Gulgulian community, intergenerational language transmission was disrupted chiefly due to low prestige of the heritage language in society and

negative attitude of the community members. For example, one participant aged 50 said the following when asked about his opinion on heritage language learning for the younger generation:

hama:r ʃʰaɖva: dʒiɽna: gulgulia dʒa:nal ʃʰ, ũh ka:fi ʃʰ. a:r si:kʰal
ka: karal ʃʰ
(As much Gulgulia our boys know, that is sufficient. What will they do by learning it further?)

The community, which was nomadic traditionally, has now started settling in one place for a very long time. This has led to the loss of their traditional ways of living unique to the community. Rapid acquisition of Hindi (or other dominating languages of the region) mainstream also led to the disruption in intergenerational language transmission. When the older generation found that conversing in the dominant languages was economically more suited, they gradually started conversing more in non-heritage languages to make their children more proficient and acceptable in the society.

It was also noticed that families where members (particularly women) belonging to a different ethnicity joined the Gulgulian community after getting married to a Gulgulian partner had much weaker intergenerational language transmission as compared to families with both Gulgulian partners. This mainly happened because a parent from a different speech community passes their respective language to their children instead of Gulgulia. This loss of intergenerational language transmission has led to varying acquisition patterns and degrees of multilingualism caused by social aspects like economic prosperity and loose marriage patterns.

Contexts of Language Use and the State of Literacy

Gulgulia as a mother tongue is surviving in a diglossic environment with Hindi (or other dominating languages) elucidating a raptured linguistic identity. Gulgulia represents the home and family language whereas Hindi (or other languages) exists as the respondent's national or regional identity and regulates their economic prosperity. The community members are fully aware of this diglossic situation of their heritage language.

Gulgulia exists only in oral form and that is also not in its pure form. The language suffers from a low prestige even among the community members and is not promoted through the media either. In the intra-community set-up, the situation where community members use Gulgulia is limited. At times members make use of this language as slang, and this practice is widely prevalent among the oldest members of the community. The number of registers where the heritage language is used is also very sparse. Even such speakers who were found to be more fluent than the rest were unable to tell an anecdote or a story in Gulgulia as a mother tongue. In all the narrations, the dominant languages like Hindi, Bengali and Bhojpuri would become the main language whereas the application of Gulgulia would be restricted to just words or phrases. The speakers were incapable of adhering to the heritage language beyond the phrasal level. The rest of the speakers preferred using other dominant languages of the region in most of their conversations. During the process of data collection, it was noticed that members of the grandparental generation used Hindi or Bengali to communicate with the younger members of the community.

The Gulgulians predominantly make use of Hindi with people outside their own community. Although Hindi is the lingua franca of Dhanbad, yet members can speak a few other regional languages and the younger generation can speak some English too, which they learnt in schools or through the media. It was found that some members were employed in governmental organizations too and learnt other languages in their work place. However, these members have been excluded from the community. Marriages with outsiders have also contributed to such a language pool.

As far as literacy is concerned, despite rigorous efforts to provide formal education to the Gulgulians, only seven children from the entire population attend school for formal education. The rest of the members of this community are completely uneducated. These seven members are still in class three as they do not attend their classes regularly. This scenario highlights that the community is yet to embrace the benefits of formal education and its members are still living in primitive ways in several contexts.

Attitude of the Group Members

Gulgulia is always prevalent among some other languages, such as Hindi, Bengali, or Bhojpuri in the verbal repertoire of the community members and mostly elucidates a raptured identity as noted in participants' responses. The negative attitude to Gulgulia is primarily because Gulgulia lacks prestige socially and does not provide any economic benefits being mostly limited to home domains. Moreover, based on participants' responses and observations made, it was found that Gulgulia frequently includes linguistic input from dominant languages of the region. As the language faces such strong influence from other languages, it becomes challenging to identify the extent of the influence of other languages and specify which elements are mixed. Other than the above-stated reasons, factors such as level of language competence, age, gender and the location of the speech community also influenced the community members' language attitude.

Language competence was a significant factor in determining the attitudes of the respondents. As highlighted by the interviewees, when the speakers had better competence, they were more enthusiastic in speaking in their heritage language. On the contrary, if speakers lacked competence, they further detached from the heritage language application.

Other than language competence, the study highlighted that the community members from the younger generation had a more positive attitude compared to the members of the older generation. It was found that the respondents of the older generation found it unnecessary to converse in their heritage language as it did not provide them any monetary benefit. Contrary to the attitude prevalent among the older generation, younger members of the community were more enthusiastic about the preservation of their heritage language. Some members, particularly the school-going group, also favored the orthography of the heritage language. The enthusiasm and attitude of the younger generation can be exemplified by the following statements:

- 1) Ham gulgulia me likhenge, haan jeh badhija: rahega.
saf me aisa: ho sakta: hai kya!
(We could write in Gulgulia, yes, that would be nice. But is this really possible!)

2) Ham apne naniha:l mē gulgulia mē khaṭ likhēge
(hahaha) maḍa: a:jega:
*(We will write letters in Gulgulia to our maternal grandparents
(laughs). It will be fun.)*

The older and the middle-aged groups were unaware of the value of language orthography and so were confused about this point. The older the respondents, the lesser they favored the idea to preserve Gulgulia. This was mainly because with the extensive use of the heritage language, societal acceptance and economic success gets hampered. Yet, the older generation has never denied Gulgulia being their heritage language, which could be understood as a factor that represents an individual's identity. Consequently, the speakers who had better Gulgulia competence were more confident about their identity and a sense of belonging to the community.

Other than age being a determinant, the gender of the participants also governed their attitude towards their heritage language. It was found that the female respondents in the community established a more positive attitude towards their heritage language than the men. Men were not inclined towards their heritage language because they were the breadwinners of the family and had to deal with the issue of integration and livelihood.

The location of the speech community also influenced the speakers' attitude towards their heritage language. The more remote the community is, greater is the affection for the heritage language among the speakers. Contrary to this, when the community is easily accessible, speakers concentrate more on acceptance within the larger group. In Gulgulia's case at Dhanbad, all the six settlements are closely situated near towns or cities. Therefore, the influence of dominant languages from these neighboring towns and cities is distinctly visible in the group members' linguistic practices and thereby their attitude towards their heritage language is also turning into a more negative one.

Conclusion

As discussed above, it was found that EV in Gulgulia is chiefly influenced by the variables related to the speaker's age, gender, and level of language competence. Since participants do not associate progress and financial

prosperity with their heritage language, they see their heritage language as significantly lower in value than the popular and dominant language Hindi. However, such a mindset varies depending on the participants' age and gender. For example, the older participants favor the proficiency of Hindi while the younger generation, despite being not proficient in Gulgulia, tends to identify with it. It is observed that due to the economic prosperity attached to Hindi, the group projects a high degree of integrative attitude towards dominant languages in hopes of becoming socially valued.

Moreover, when speaker-oriented factors in Gulgulia's case interact with extralinguistic factors, they contribute in shaping Gulgulia's EV. The sociolinguistic aspects, such as intergenerational language transmission, bilingualism/ multilingualism, language competence, and domains of language use, are highly essential for determining language vitality and are not just anecdotic and are operating in Gulgulia's case. The pattern of language use also shows significant changes related to accessibility or remoteness of the speech community, migration away from the community, and preservation of the traditional way of living through vocabulary, songs, the art of storytelling, and etc.

The Predicament

Gulgulia posits a complicated situation as it is nearing its extinction because even the best speakers of the community cannot speak their heritage language in its pure form. They tend to switch codes as they speak other languages. Due to this, it becomes difficult to trace the antecedent of the contemporary Gulgulia. Moreover, the mixed parentage of Gulgulia members resulted in a mixed variety of the language with inputs from Hindi, Bengali, Khortha, Bhojpuri as observed in their repertoire.

Therefore, one can rightly claim, based on the above discussion, that Gulgulia is a moribund language. The speakers have lost several genres of their heritage language, with hardly one or two genres, such as slang and songs, surviving the challenges of contact-induced changes. The most fluent speakers of the community are above sixty years of age, but as the influence of dominant languages permeates the conversational patterns of the older generation, one

can say that the heritage language is breathing its last. Moreover, education, culture at work place along with interaction with outsiders have a straight adverse influence on the language attrition. Despite the gloomy linguistic scenario, the community members, particularly the younger generation, is in favor of learning their heritage language, but in reality, there hardly seems to be any motivation on their part to learn and use their native language. The oldest community speakers enjoy the highest fluency among all members. However, the number of members of the oldest age group is the lowest, which means a difficult situation that heritage language may be lost in their absence.

The speakers' attitude towards a language plays a paramount role in its existence and revitalization. With regard to Gulgulia, the discussion above clearly established how the heritage language is gradually nearing its death. It is a hard fact, but the only times when the researchers witnessed efforts for 'revival' were during field visits to this community where speakers were asked to converse in their native language among one another and with the interviewers for the purpose of data collection. However, this interest cannot stay for too long, after this documentation process is over. Once the language ceases to pass inter-generationally and stops being used in the home domain, one cannot prevent the heritage language, a symbol of the community's identity, from an impending threat of extinction.

References

- Abbi, A. (2001). *A manual of linguistic fieldwork and structures of Indian languages*. Lincom Europa.
- Berland, J. C., & Rao, A. (Eds.). (2004). *Customary Strangers: New perspectives on Peripatetic Peoples in the Middle East, Africa and Asia*. Greenwood.
- Bourhis, R. Y., Giles, H., & Rosenthal, D. (1981). Notes on the Construction of a 'Subjective Vitality Questionnaire' for Ethnolinguistic Groups. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 2(2), 145-155.
- Crystal, D. (2000). *Language death*. Cambridge University Press.
- Ehala, M. (2015). Ethnolinguistic vitality. In K. Tracy, C. Ilie, & T. Sande (Eds.), *The international Encyclopedia of language and social interaction*. John

Wiley & Sons.

- Esteban-Guitart, M., Viladot, M. À., & Giles, H. (2014). Perceived institutional support among young indigenous and mestizo students from Chiapas (México): A group vitality approach. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 36(2), 124–135.
- Ferguson, C. (1966). National sociolinguistic profile formulas. In W. Bright (Ed.), *Sociolinguistics*. Mouton.
- Giles, H., Bourhis, R. Y., & Taylor, D. M. (1977). Towards a theory of language in ethnic group relations. In H. Giles (Ed.), *Language, ethnicity and intergroup relations*. Academic Press.
- Haugen, E. (1972). Language and immigration. In A. S. Dil (Ed.), *The ecology of language: Essays by Einar Haugen*. Stanford University Press.
- Haarmann, H. (1986). *Language in ethnicity: A view of basic ecological relations*. Mouton de Gruyter.
- Kraemer, R., Olshtain, E., & Badier, S. (1994). Ethnolinguistic vitality, attitudes and networks of linguistic contact: The case of the Israeli Arab minority. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 108, 79–96.
- Krauss, M. (1992). The world's languages in crisis. *Language*, 68, 4–10.
- Kuipers-Zandberg, H., & Kircher, R. (2020). The objective and subjective ethnolinguistic vitality of West Frisian: Promotion and perception of a minority language in the Netherlands. *Sustainable Multilingualism*, 17, 1–25.
- Misra, P. K., & Malhotra, K. C. (Eds.) (1982). *Nomads in India: Proceedings of the National Seminar*. Anthropological Survey of India: Seagull Books.
- Mishra, S. (2022). Multilingualism in urban Vellore. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 19(4), 539–552.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2022.1757678>
- Nyota, S. (2015). Language shift among the Tonga of Mkoka? Assessing ethnolinguistic vitality in Gokwe South. *South African Journal of African Languages*, 35(2), 215–224.
- Schreiber, L., & Sitaridou, L. (2018). Assessing the sociolinguistic vitality of Istanbulite Romeyka: An attitudinal study. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 39(1), 1–16.
-

Singh, K. S. (Ed.) (2008). *People in India: Vol. XVI Bihar including Jharkhand, Part I*. Calcutta: Anthropological Survey of India: Seagull Books.

Sneha Mishra

Vellore technologijos instituto Socialinių mokslų ir kalbų mokykla,
Vellore, Indija

sneha.carmel@gmail.com

Md Mojibur Rahman

Indijos technologijos institutas (Indijos kalnakasybos mokykla),
Dhanbadas, Indija

mrahmanelt@gmail.com

GULGULIJOS ETNOLINGVISTINIS GYVYBINGUMAS

Santrauka. Kalbos mirtis – tai reiškiny, kurio simptomai susiję su mažėjančiu žodyno terminų skaičiumi ir kalbos vartojimo sričių išsekimu bei su vis paprastėjančiomis kalbos struktūromis. Ji prasideda, kai pasireiškia šie požymiai: mažėja laisvai kalbančiųjų ta kalba skaičius, menkėja kalbėtojų požiūris į savo paveldėtą kalbą, kalba keičiasi, nesirūpinama perduoti ją iš kartos į kartą, lydi jausmas, kad paveldėta kalba yra prastesnė už kitas kalbas. Gulgulija turi visus tokios mirštančios kalbos bruožus ir yra labai arti visiško išnykimo. Šiame tyrime aiškinamas etnolingvistinis Gulgulijos kalbos gyvybingumas, patikrintas remiantis pasirinktais sociolingvistiniais parametrais, kurie buvo pasirinkti kaip tinkami scenarijui. Taip pat nagrinėjame Dhanbado Gulgulia bendruomenės kalbinę situaciją, bendruomenės narių kalbos vartojimą namuose ir įvairiose tarptautinėse bendravimo situacijose, tiriame, koks ryšys vyrauja tarp bendruomenės kalbos preferencijų ir jos gyvybingumo. Nustatyta, kad kalbėtojo požiūrį į paveldėtą kalbą lemia tokie kintamieji, kaip amžius, lytis ir kalbos mokėjimas. Kalbančiųjų bendruomenės vieta taip pat yra svarbus reguliuojantis veiksnys, lemiantis polinkį į gimtosios kalbos išsaugojimą ar jos nykimą. Gulgulijos bendruomenės kalbinės elgsenos analizė patvirtina pagrindinių žanrų, tokių kaip pasakojimo menas, nykimą. Iš visų kalbos vartosenos žanrų išliko tik du ir tai kelia nerimą.

Pagrindinės sąvokos: etnolingvistinis gyvybingumas; paveldo kalba; kalbos perdavimas iš kartos į kartą; grėsmė kalbai.