

Language Contact and its Linguistic Consequences Due to Migration at the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh

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Abstract

This study explores the effects of recent language contact created in the Chittagong Hill-Tracts (CHT) through the immigration of Bangla speaking people from other parts of Bangladesh. The CHT, which borders India and Myanmar, has been the abode of approximately one million people, approximately 50% of whom are of minority speech communities, including the speakers of Tibeto-Burman (TB) languages such as Marma, Tripura (Kokborok), Kyang, and Khumi (Faquire 2010). The remaining 50% are Bangla speakers, the national and official language of Bangladesh. The government of Bangladesh has organized a new system of distribution of various speech communities, through a migration policy created during the 1980s, comprising an overwhelming majority of Bangla speakers. The Bangladesh Government Polic that led to the creation of language contact (the term carried over from Winford 2003) in the Chittagong Hill-Tracts can be listed as follows:

- The implementation of a common education policy for which the children of the TB speech communities are to receive education through the medium of Bangla
- The people of TB speech communities require Bangla for official, legal, and business dealings under the government's policy

- The TB languages regularly come into contact with the dominant language, Bangla. In this new situation of language contact, the spoken languages of TB speech communities have been found not to be mutually intelligible, though these speech varieties have common ancestry.

The speakers of Bangla cannot speak any of the minority speech community languages. Therefore, the speakers of minority languages as well as the Bangla speech community inhabiting the Chittagong Hill-Tracts communicate with each other in Bangla, the lingua franca for all communities, for their daily needs. Accordingly, people of these TB speech communities are growing to become bilingual, with different degrees of control in their second language, Bangla. In this way, the languages of the minority speech communities have grown to become recipient languages, and consequently to encounter the continuing effect of language contact from the dominant language Bangla in the new contact situation. Consequently, some of these recipient tribal languages, e.g., Marma, Murong, and Tripura, are now showing changes at different levels of their linguistic structures by borrowing and calquing from the Bangla language.

Keywords: *Language contact, Bangla, tribal languages, migration, political maneuver, demography, assimilation, Chittagong Hill Tracts*

Introduction

The CHT is a Sprachbund situated in southeastern Bangladesh, bordering India and Myanmar (Burma) covering 13, 295 square kilometers. Topographically, the CHT as a hilly region was historically sparsely populated. It was originally inhabited by different independent hill-tribes belonging to the Kuki-Chin group of Tibeto-Burman languages, who were later joined by post-tribal ethnic groups such as Chakma and Marma from the neighboring Arakan in the first phase, and subsequently Bangalee people from the plain of Bangladesh. In a 1991 census during the Bangladesh period, the population was 974,447, of which 501,114 were tribal peoples, and the rest were from the Bangalee (Muslim and Hindu) community.

The CHT having been surrounded by the Tripura Kingdom in the north, the Arakan Kingdom in the South, the Lushai Chiefdom in the east, and Bengal Sultanate (and later Mughal Bengal) in the Northwest, has been the focus of rivalry for centuries. Therefore, the CHT has always existed as a hinterland for all of the four centers of political power, and would receive influence from all of these centers. However, it fell under the control of the political authority of Bengal, from the

time of the Mughal domination over this region following the loss of Arakanese power to Mughal military power in 1666 (The East India Gazetteer by Hamilton, 1815, p. 358). The Mughal authority initiated political maneuvers, in order to integrate the people of the CHT into their political and economic domain. After the fall of Nawab of Bengal, the power was transferred to the British authority who had continued to apply political maneuvers in a similar manner. In a subsequent transfer of political power, from the time of Muslim Bengal up to the Bangladesh regime, similar political maneuvers were exercised in the CHT. These political maneuvers were exercised so as to integrate the Tibeto-Burman (TB) people into an economic and taxation system. These political measures consequently created conditions for the LC, which, in effect, brought forth various LC-induced outcomes.

This study thus aims to shed light on language contact (LC) and its outcomes with regards to the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) due to migration and demographic changes, by employing a framework of contact linguistics.

Foregrounding the Framework of Study

LC in the CHT, influenced by immigration from the neighboring Rakhine state (formerly the Arakan kingdom), from Tripura in the past, and from Bengal/ Bangladesh in recent decades, in different phases, has been the foci of interest among linguistics scholars. Recent developments in contact linguistics have grounded this study of LC and LC-induced changes. However, an LC study requires the analyses of data, information, narrative, and statistics of the past, which have only recently become available online by academic institutions, and hence, a study on the LC in the CHT has until recently been impractical.

A theory of LC accounts for LC and its related phenomena by incorporating social, political, and linguistic issues in an interactive manner. Uriel Weinreich (1953) and Einar Haugen (1953) are commonly regarded as the pioneers of language-contact studies, as a social and linguistic phenomenon in which languages (or different dialects of the same language) of one or more speech communities interact to bring forth different linguistic, social, and political outcomes. LC occurs through a number of phenomena: Language maintenance, creation of a new contact language, i.e., pidgin and creole, and language shift involving processes in each phenomenon instigated political, economic, and social movements. Given the backdrop of LC, this study will shed light on the outcomes of LC i) in consideration of migration and settlement patterns, ii) which occurred due to political maneuvers, iii) within a framework of LC in the CHT.

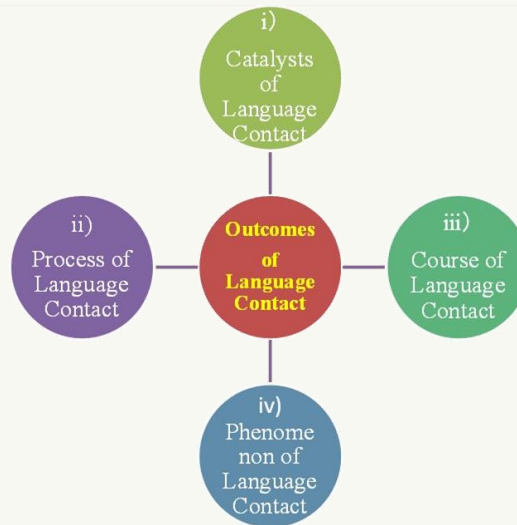


Figure 1: Theory of language contact at a glance

The CHT has been a Sprachbund for LC for centuries under political maneuvers and evidencing language changes in several phases. The speed and pattern continuously shifted owing to political maneuvers initiated for economic and political integration by each political authority. The theory of LC posits that LC involves three different LC phenomena: LC involves language maintenance when borrowing, calquing, and structural convergence, at varying degrees of bilingualism. During language maintenance, minority speech communities of recipient languages expect to retain the purity of their speech variety, though, all the recipient languages tend to experience LC through relexification, calquing, and structural convergence.

LC leads to the creation of new contact languages, i.e., pidgin and creole, through pidginization and creolization. The dominant language in an LC operates as superstrate which the speakers of recipient language learn as a second language for several generations, leading to a shift from their first language to the second language.

Methodological Issues

The study draws on qualitative analysis of information, narrative, and statistics, both present and past. I consider data from the Mughal period to the Bangladesh period from three different sources. These are i) the gazettes, books and administrative manuals compiled by the British Colonial Authority, ii) the census/survey and administrative manual of the government of Bangladesh (GOB) and the World Bank (WB), and iii) the research of individuals conducted over the past few decades. In addition, I have collected data in the form of ethnographic data and interviews, while visiting locations such as Chakma, Marma, and Tanchangya, in the CHT. In these interviews, we discussed their families' extent of control over their mother tongue and other

languages they use in day to day interaction. I also observed their speech to record the extent of use of Bangla and English, and asked the respondents to read legends or stories (given in the appendix of the Chakma (2000)) written in their language and to report on the extent to which they understand the legend or story written in their language.

In order to locate the LC-induced outcomes of the present time, we were required to reconstruct past LC. The gazettes, books and administrative manuals compiled by the colonial authorities have been the only source of information of this past LC. The British imperial authority conducted surveys and compiled Gazetteers and administrative manuals to consolidate their power over the CHT. These documents give a picture of characteristics of speech communities and their customs, religion, lives, education, and settlement patterns. They also shed light on the interaction among the inhabitants as well as with the outsiders from different speech communities. The aforementioned sources of censuses or surveys and administrative manuals of the GOB and WB provide a demography of present CHT, while the research outcomes of individuals conducted during the past few decades provide language information for an analysis of of the language context in the CHT.

The literature from different sources and information from my own interviews and observations landscape the LC emerging from the new demographic composition as well as the LC outcomes, including bilingualism, new contact languages, and language shifts.

Characteristics of the Population

The CHT had been an abode for the Tibeto-Burman (TB) people, until the latest large-scale immigration of the Bangalee people under the GOB migration plan in 1984. There are now four categories of inhabitants in the CHT; the Kuki-chin language speaking nomadic hill-tribes which include the indigenous Chak, Pankho, Mro, Murang, Bom, Lushei, Kheyang, and Khumi, the tribes that underwent political integration under the Tripura kingdom, e.g. Tippera and Riang, the people who underwent political integration under the former kingdom of Arakan, e.g. Chakma, Marma and, Tanchangya, and the newly settled Bangla speaking Bangalee people.

According to the 1991 census, the CHT population was 974,447, of which 501,114 were tribal peoples and the rest were from the Bengali (Muslim and Hindu) community. The population totaled 1,587,000 in the provisional returns of the 2011 census, within which the population density was roughly 120 per square km. Approximately 34% of the population are tribal peoples, and are mainly the followers of Theravada Buddhism; 65% of the inhabitants are Bengalis (Muslims and Hindus); and 1% are Christians or animists.

The tribes other than the Bangalee people were previously categorized into two major groups, the Toungtha (Hill-tribe) and the Khyoungtha [River Basin-tribe] in the British period. Lewin's

(1869) records shows that the Bangalee people used to distinguish these tribes into two classes: i) the hill-tribes, who were unable to speak the vernacular of Bangla as Kookies (Kuki), and ii) the friendly tribes, who could understand the vernacular of Bangla, living close along the Chittagong District border as Joomahs (jhumia). Though the latter is the known as Jhumia, both the hill-tribes and river basin-tribes would and still do practice jhum cultivation, i.e. shifting cultivation on the slope of hills.

The hill tribes are named so due to their tradition of dwelling on the top of the remote hills. They had been nomadic Mongoloid folks from antiquity, and live in small groups not exceeding 2000. They are independent and are mostly speakers of the languages belonging to the Kuki-chin groups (Eastern Bengal and Assam District Gazetteers by Hutchinson 1909, p. 8). The SIL International placed their five language varieties, including Bawm, Khumi, Khyang, Lushai, and Pangkhua, into the Kuki-Chin language group. Rengmitcha, a newly identified language, is also included in this group. The British authority found the communities to contain stout muscular people, but not tall, and to have the peculiar features of all the natives of the eastern quarter of Asia, namely, the flat nose, small eyes, and a broad round face.

The Jhumia tribes over the past few centuries underwent political integration, and practiced sedentary living. They comprise most of the TB population, including the Chakmas, who numbered 44,000; the Maghs, 35,000; and the Tipperas, 23,000, according to the 1901 census (Imperial Gazetteer of India vol. 10, 1908). They include i) the tribes who have undergone political integration under the Tripura kingdom, e.g., Tippera and Reang, and ii) the people from the present Rakhine state who have undergone political integration under the former kingdom of Arakan, e.g., Chakma, Marma, and Tanchangya.

The Tipperas are found chiefly in the erstwhile Mong circle, and consider the Mong circle as their home, mainly as Hindus, and number 79,772 (census report of 1991), as hill-tribes in antiquity, which underwent political integration under the Tripura Kingdom, subsequently immigrating from Hill Tipperah into the Chittagong Hills (Lewin 1869). Their languages belong to the Bodo branch of Tibeto-Burman group, which was influenced by the Indo-Aryan variety. The Tippera tribe was previously distinguished into four clans: The Pooran, the Nowuttea, the Osuie, and the Riang. Among these, the Reang has lineage to the Kuki tribe (Hutchinson 1909).

The TB tribes from erstwhile Arakan are mostly Buddhist and practice Jhum cultivation, yet lead sedentary lives along the river basin. These tribes having originated in Arakan came into the CHT a few generations ago in several phases. The first group, being the Chakma, arrived in CHT at around the 16th century and later. Other tribes, e.g., Magh (i.e., Marma and Rakhine) arrived at the CHT after the fall of Arakan in the year 1783. Some others came later in the aftermath of the Burmese War in 1824 (Lewin 1869, p. 28), including the Marma (or the Rkhaine), the Chakma, and the Tanchangya.

The Marma until recently bore the tribal name Magh. The Maghs are found chiefly in the southern circle, under the sway of the Bohmong chief. They are, for the most part, the descendants of Arakanese, who fled there when their own country was overrun by the Burmese in 1784. They are Buddhist in faith and still speak one of the vernaculars of the Arakanese dialect belonging to the TB language group. These groups underwent a process of social assimilation and intermarriage under the political maneuvers of the Arakan kingdom. The British authority categorized the people into three groups: i) the Jhumia, or cultivators of jhums who regard themselves as the aborigines of the Hill Tracts, ii) the Roang or Arakan Maghs, iii) the Barua or Rajbansi Maghs, who have intermarried with Bengalis (Imperial Gazetteer 1908). Lewin (1869, p. 37) described that the Magh belonging to the last group had come from forced intermarriage during Portuguese hegemony in southeastern Bengal under the political domination of Arakan, and became renowned as good cooks in Kolkatta during the British period. This group of Barua or Rajbansi Magh has existed as a community for two centuries, as a legacy of Portuguese hegemony on Southeastern Bengal, assisted by the Arakan kingdom until their integration with either the Bangalee or the Marma.

The Chakma, along with the Doingnak and Tanchangya, form a large tribe. They are mostly Buddhist in faith and speak an Indo-Aryan dialect, which is close to the Chittagong vernacular of Bangla, and who previously spoke a dialect of Arakan. They are a Mongoloid race of Arakanese origin, which at first intermarried with different tribes of Arakan including Marma and later largely with the Bangalees (Hutchinson 1909, pp. 21-22). They emigrated from Myanmar owing to repression by the Burmese king, and settled in the CHT with the consent of the subedar of Bengal, who was the representative of the Mughal emperor. Among these people, the Chakma was the first to immigrate from Arakan at the decline of the Mughal domination in Arakan. The tribe can be traced from the myth to unions between the soldiers of Nawab Shaista Khan, the Governor of Lower Bengal, under the Emperor Aurungzeb, at approximately 1070, and Arakanese immigrants, and subsequently with the hill women. Buddhism appears to have always been their religion, and there are no traces of Muhammadanism, in spite of the fact that all their chiefs have Muhammadan names (Hutchinson 1909, p. 25). They have been an important tribe in terms of their number and political organization in Bangladesh. The Tanchangya immigrated from Arakan, and joined the Chakma as late as 1818, and spoke Arakanese until the British period. The Doingnaks broke away from the main tribe long ago and remained in the Rakhine state. The hill-tribes and river basin-tribes differ at least in the following aspects.

Describing the People

The hill-tribes and river basin-tribes vary in their origin. The hill-tribes are the earliest inhabitants of the CHT; the river basin-tribes entered the CHT from the Arakan kingdom in three

successive waves of immigration, beginning in the 16th century, and the wave of immigration from the Arakan continued until the fall of Arkan kingdom in 1824. Therefore, the origin of the river basin-tribes can be attributed to the present-day Rakhine state of Myanmar.

The hill-tribe and river basin-tribe respectively vary in size of population. A consensus report shows that there was a time when one-tenth of the population comprised the hill-tribes, while the rest were the river basin-tribes, in the 19th century. This demographic composition still exists in the CHT. The size of population of each hill-tribe is a few thousand, ranging from 3,000 to 10,000, where one of the hill-tribes named Rengmitcha has a population of only 25 people. However, most of the TB population belongs to each river basin-tribe, and numbers several hundred thousand, ranging from 79,772 to 252,986 (1991). Until the 16th century, there were no river basin-tribes in the CHT.

The settlement pattern of the hill-tribes and river basin-tribes was found to differ until a few decades prior. The hill-tribes were found to live on the top of a high hill, while the river basin-tribes were found to dwell along the river basin such as the Matamuhuri and Karnafuli.

The British documents describe the settlement pattern of the hill-tribes. A British Gazetteer recorded that, the hill-tribes built their home 'at a greater distance from the inhabitants of the plain, to whom they are known but little known to Europeans, and are seldom seen, except when they visit the markets on the borders of the jungles, in the Runganeah and Aurangabad divisions, to purchase salt, dried fish, and tobacco' (Hamilton, East India Gazetteer 1815). Another British administrative source documented that

'A Lhoosai village is always situated on the top of a high hill, and in time of war is fortified by a stockade of heavy timber logs. The time that a village stays in one place is determined by the facilities afforded for cultivation in the neighborhood. When all the land within easy reach is exhausted, the village is moved to a fresh site. The ordinary time of remaining in one place is four to five years. The houses are built, not of bamboos, as is usual in the hills, but of logs, and thatched with the palmated leaf commonly used throughout the hills for that purpose.

(Lewin 1869)

Another British Gazetteer evidenced that

Choomeas (Khumi) who is a savage people, who inhabit the first range of hills to the north and east of the province of Chittagong, in Bengal and are tributary to the British government. Their villages are called Chooms, but they seldom remain longer than two years on one spot. Beyond them are the Kookies, with whom the Choomeas traffic; but the

Kookies do not allow the latter ever to enter their villages

(The East India Gazetteer by Hamilton 1815, pp. 282)

However, the river basin-tribes have long experienced sedentary lives in the Arakan, and continued these practices of living and moved into the CHT. By the time of colonization of the British, the hill-tribes accepted the city lives at the urbanization of CHT. The river basin-tribes experienced urbanization, and now prefer city life to hill life. Following many decades of political maneuvers, the hill-tribes have now become accustomed to creating shelters near their locality. Nonetheless, many are shifting to towns.

Richness of Language

The languages of the hill-tribes and the river basin-tribes clearly differ in amount of vocabulary and grammatical complexity. While the language of the former contains a few hundred words and a simple grammatical structure, the later has abundant vocabulary borrowed from Pali, as it does complex grammar. Among these, the languages of the hill-tribes have no script, and therefore no record about their origin exists; they depend on an oral tradition to understand their origin. The river basin-tribes have written language.

The British authority recorded the characteristics of hill-tribe languages in that they

possess no written character, and the languages spoken by them are simple to a degree, expressing merely the wants and sensations of uncivilized life. The information obtainable as to their origin and past history is therefore naturally meager and unreliable.

(Lewin 1869, pp. 33)

Another document shows that their speech was (and is still now) comprised of several hundred words, and no words can be called perfect verbs. Another survey by the British authority ([The Imperial Gazetteer of India the Indian Empire, Vol I, 1909, pp. 388]) has described the impoverishment of their language as that

the Kuki-Chin are the most typical of all the Tibeto- Burman languages. They do not possess a real verb, the conception being expressed with the aid of a verbal noun. When a speaker of Lushei, for instance, wishes to say 'I go,' he says 'my going'; and for 'I went', 'my doing completion.

Similarly, Barbe (1845) found that language spoken by Bonzoos (probably Bwam) has very few words. The language does not contain the days of the week, and borrows many words from

Kookie and Burmese.

However, the languages of the river basin-tribes received their richness from the Indo-Aryan variety for the first time when they underwent Arakanization and later at the CHT by receiving the effects of contact from the vernacular Bangla. Their language had undergone LC during their inhabitancy in Arakan, where their language received heavy influence from the Pali, as a vehicle of Buddhism, and subsequently experienced LC with Bangla vernacular over the last few centuries. The Tippera was also influenced heavily by the Bangla vernacular during LC with the Tripura Kingdom. Hence, two groups of languages spoken by each of the two groups of people differ in their richness of vocabulary and grammatical complexity, the former being the least complex and the later being the most complex.

Custom of Inter-marriage

The hill-tribes and river basin-tribes differ in the extent to which they intermarried in the past. The later had experienced more than the former. Genetic studies suggest that the river basin-tribes had frequent inter-tribal intermarriage and intermarriage with the people of Indian origin, yet including Bangalee people. A genetic study by Gazi et al (2013) suggests that the Arkanese tribes of Bangladesh carry substantially higher mainland Indian ancestry than the Northeast Indian Tibeto-Burmans, and that haplotype diversity exists among them, as the highest level among Marma, followed by Tripura, and then Chakma. The Marma populations share a high frequency of Indian influence and a low frequency of East Asian influence, as specific maternal haplogroups, and have the highest haplotype diversity when compared with Tripura and Chakma populations. Thus, the genetic study evidences intermarriage among the river basin-tribes, other tribes, and Bangalee people.

Migration and Demographic Change

LC requires social interaction, for which it is necessary to know about the people, demographic change, and their settlement patterns, to understand the LC-induced changes and its outcomes. From the earliest known records compiled in the British imperial period to the latest census in 1991, various patterns of settlement and demographic changes occurred in phases due to migration in the CHT.

In antiquity, the CHT was a scarcely and sparsely populated region and was inhabited by Kuki-Chin hill tribes. The Kuki-Chin hill tribes were driven to the northeast by the invasion of the Chakmas, who had gained settlement in the southern portion of the District of Chittagong, but who, in the time of the Burmese wars, was ousted by the Maghs from Arakan and forced to enter the CHT. They finally settled in the central and northeastern portions, while their former

possessions were absorbed by the Maghs (cf. Eastern Bengal and Assam District Gazetteers by Hutchinson, 1909 p. 8). Since then, the district has been inhabited by a variety of tribes, each speaking its own distinct dialect.

We can observe changes in population and demography by comparing the census data left by the British authority and that of the present time compiled by the GOB. The Imperial Gazetteer of India is one such source compiled by the British authority that shows a population of 69,607 in 1872 and an increase from 69,607 in 1872 to 101,597 in 1881, to 107,286 in 1891, and to 124,762 in 1901 (Imperial Gazetteer of India vol.10, pp. 319). The latest census conducted in the Bangladesh period in 1991 shows the population of the CHT as 974,447, of which 501,114 were tribal peoples and the rest were from the Bengali (Muslim and Hindu) community. The WB reported an increase in population with an estimate in the year 2001. According to the Chittagong hill tracts commission (2000), the tribal inhabitants were Tibeto-Burman folk, and include the Chakma, Marma, Kokborok (Tripura), Tanchangya, Mro (Mrung), Lushai, Khumi, Chak, Khiyang, Bawm, and Pankhua. The following Table shows the name of each different speech community and its population for the censuses of 1901 and 1991.

Name of Language	Number of Speakers according to Census conducted in 1901	Number of Speakers according to Census conducted in 1991	Number of Speakers as estimated by the WB in 2001
Bangalee people		473,333	
Chakma	44, 329	252,986	4,44,748
Bawm (6,978)	696	6,978	10,327
Chak (2,000)		2,000	2,960
Kheyang (2,345) Hyow	416	2,345	3,471
Khumi (1,241)	1,469	1,241	1,873
Lushei (Mizo) (662)	1,615 (Kuki)	662	978
Marma [157,301]	31, 906	157,301	2,28,240
Mro (Mru)/Murang	10,540	22,178	32,823
Pankhua (3,227)	144	3,227	4,776
Rengmitcha*	None	25	-
Tanchangya	2,500 [in 1909]	21,057	31,146
Tippera	23, 341	79,772	1,18,063

Table-1: Table showing the name of different speech communities and their populations

*Rengmitcha has long been Murang, but a survey shows their speech variety as Rengmitcha.

Until the 17th century, the demography of the CHT remained unchanged, and inhabited by a number of hill-tribes of Kuki-Chin speech communities who have an ethnic affinity with hill-

tribes of Lushai hills. An increase in population occurred with a number of immigration waves of the Arakanized tribes from the erstwhile Arakan Kingdom. In these immigration waves, the first who poured into the CHT were the Chakma (along with Tanchangya) and then the Marma (Rakhine) people. Lewin (1869, p. 28) has described their exodus from the Arakan Kingdom and their habitancy in the CHT in the following way. The Chakma left Arakan due to escaping the repression and hostility by the Rakhaine people, and entered the southern part of CHT in the 16th century. They dwelled there until the influx of the Maghs during the second wave of immigration from the Arakan. The Maghas (Rakhine) people came into the CHT after the fall of the Arakan kingdom. They entered the CHT to escape persecution by the occupational army of the Burmese king Bodawpaya in 1784. The influx of the Marma people continued even after the annexation of the Arakan kingdom in the British Indian Empire in 1824. The immigration of the two groups of people caused a change in the demography. By the time of British imperialism, the demography of the CHT was comprised of the Chakma and Marma as major groups, and of 10 other minor groups which belonged to the Kuki-Chin hill-tribes. A census conducted in 1901 during the British regime shows that there were 124,762 tribal people and about 9,000 Bangla speaking people (cf. Eastern Bengal and Assam District Gazetteers by Hutchinson, 1909).

From the beginning of the 20th century, the Bangla speaking Bangalee people sporadically entered the CHT for administrative and commercial purposes, without making a major change in the demography of the CHT. In 1962, the third phase of demographic change occurred when the displacement of TB tribes occurred due to the rise of water levels for the construction of a dam for producing hydroelectricity. Here, many people lost their shelter, some of whom escaped to the neighboring countries, Myanmar and India. This out-migration again caused a decrease in the population and a change in the settlement pattern.

The fourth phase of dramatic demographic change occurred in recent decades, when a hundred thousand Bangalee people immigrated and settled in the CHT under a settlement plan undertaken by the GOB. The GOB made this plan to counter the militancy of the Shanti Bahini, by changing the ratio of TB people and Bengalee people. This GOB policy ushered 400,000 people, who mostly were river erosion-stricken landless people. This move of the GOB caused a change in the demographic mosaic, making the Bangalee a major share of the population. With the new demographic composition, a new kind of LC started to occur.

Political Maneuvers, Settlement Patterns, Language Contact

LC theory posits that LC occurs when different speech communities come together for social, economic, and religious purposes. The immigration occurred in the CHT in phases due to the political maneuvers that created a condition for social interaction among the different speech communities. Each event of immigration of new speech communities led to changes in the LC

situation, which, in effect, yielded different LC-induced outcomes. The major demographic changes occurred in at least four phases, once during the Mughal period, and then twice in the British period, and finally in the Bangladesh period. LC took a new form in each event of immigration, and occurred in the past as it occurs in the present. The speed and pattern of LC were not the same throughout its development; rather, it changed depending on the demographic and settlement pattern. In this respect, I present the situation of LC that was likely to have existed in each phase of historical development, including the present.

The LC situation of this period is unknown. This is the period when the Arkainezed tribes, who make up much of the population of the CHT had not yet entered. At his time, only the hill-tribes would have inhabited the region, who would dwell on hill summits. Therefore, LC would have not occurred, due to their isolation. Hence, this period can be characterized as the antecedent of occurrence of the LC. This is the earliest pattern of LC, of which we know little. However, we can reconstruct the LC situation from documents retained by the British colonial authority. The British government records show the practice of making shelter, settlement patterns and their practice of perpetual intertribal and intratribal warfare. This practice of the Kookies, and hill-tribes, can be found in the East India Gazetteer (East India Gazetteer 1815, pp. 173), which evidences that

Kookies is a wild race of people, who live among the mountains to the northeast of the Chittagong district, at a greater distance from the inhabitants of the plain----. Like other savages, the Kookies are engaged in perpetual warfare and prefer ambushes and surprises to regular open fighting. This miserable race are of a most vindictive disposition, and blood must always be shed for blood on the principle of retaliation. Every five years they migrate from one situation to another, but seldom to a greater distance than 12 hours journey.

In this warfare, the dominant hill-tribes would often conquer the opponent tribes and integrate them into their society. There is even an instance (Lewin 1869) that a hill-tribe once attacked a Bangalee village and removed its whole population in a surprise raid. From the aforementioned practice of warfare, the haunt of other people and settlement patterns, we can assume that either full-fledged LC would have occurred in the case of absorption by the powerful tribe by raid, or no LC at all.

This period began with the immigration of Arakanized tribes in the 16th century, as the period during which the LC began among the hill-tribes and the Arakanese tribes. The migration en masse of the Arakanized tribes made a significant change in the demography of the CHT, forcing nine-tenths of the total population of CHT to leave the hill-tribes as minority communities, and

marks the onset of LC in the history of CHT.

The Arakanese tribes including the Chakma, Marma, and Tanchangya, were originally the speakers of one of the vernaculars of the Arakan. The Arkanized tribes formed from the amalgamation of the people of different ethnicities, including Bangalee, involving the social process of Arakanization. Here the term Arkanization requires qualification. Arkanization is a cultural shift whereby people of diverse ethnicities adopted an Arakanese culture characterized with the religion of Buddhism and its vehicle of Pali. As the Arakan kingdom developed and grew, diverse peoples, including the hill tribes of TB ethnicity, including Mon, Shan, Kuki and Chin, as well as Bangalee, underwent a process of Arkanization. An early form of Arkanization occurred during the Arakan Kingdom among the local population of Arakan, involving intermarriage, religious conversion, linguistic shift, and interethnic relationships, which today is reflected in the genetic makeup of the Doingnak (cognate to Chakma) and Magh people. Hence, all Arakanised tribes once had undergone LC and before arrival in CHT, when their speech variety was significantly affected by the Indo-Aryan variety for which the Arakanised languages, Marma, Doingnak and the language formerly spoken by the Chakma are seen to contain elements from the Indo-Aryan variety, i.e. Pali and the vernacular of Bangla.

LC created a new condition in the CHT when the Arkanised tribes, Chakma, Marma, and Tanchangya entered the CHT en masse. This period witnessed the increase in the population. When the Mughal domination extended to the CHT in the 17th century, the Chakma chieftaindom was established under the vassalage of the Mughal authority. One study (Faquirie 2017) shows that the political maneuver exercised by the Chakma chieftaindom (raj) brought the people of the CHT under an overarching economic and taxation system. The Chakma raj would encourage intertribal marriage between the Chakma people and the Magh and Bengalee people. This practice of intermarriage had caused assimilation of the people of other tribes into the overarching post-tribal society of Chakma and hence increased in the population of Chakma. This, in effect, would have created LC, where the speakers of different speech communities adopted the vernacular of Bangla as a lingua franca. The use of vernacular Bangla as a lingua franca led towards the creation of a new Indo-Aryan pidgin, which has now been revitalized to a full-fledged language under the name of Chakma language, itself a variety of Bangla.

LC in the British Period

With British domination in the CHT in 1760, LC began to move in a new direction. The British East India Company took control over the CHT region and made it a tributary after battling tribal leaders up to 1787. This brought the CHT under direct control in the year 1860, when it administratively divided the CHT into three circles, the Chakma Circle, the Bohmong Circle, and the Mong Circle, who were each placed under a hereditary chief of the Chakma and Marma

ethnicity.

Two major events occurred, which mapped the later course of LC. One was migration and the other was a political maneuver, which together made headway towards the a new LC. The event of migration caused a change in the demographic mosaic and settlement pattern. However, a political maneuver exercised by the British authority caused it to consolidate the people of CHT so as to easily exploit the people within a new socioeconomic and taxation system.

The major event in this period was the immigration en mass from Arakan, changed the size, makeup, and ratio of the demography of the CHT. The immigration of Magh (Marma and Rakhine) people occurred in phases and continued after the acquisition of Arakan from the Burmese force by the British authority in 1824. In this immigration, the founding chieftain of the Mong circle named Mrachai entered the CHT as an immigrant in the year 1782 (Eastern Bengal and Assam District Gazetteers by Hutchinson 1909, p. 17). The wave of immigration of Maghs caused several changes: i) increase in the population; ii) pushing of the earlier Arakanese inhabitants, i.e. Chakma, towards the Northeast of the CHT, i.e. Khagrachari, iii) change in the ratio of population, iv) creation of two new administrative circles, i.e. the Mong circle and the Bohomang circle under hereditary chieftainship. In this immigration, some Bangalee from the plain also joined, contributing to demographic change. The assimilation of indigenous people and new immigrants made headway, supplemented by the political maneuver.

In the event of a political maneuver, the British authority built educational, administrative, and communication infrastructures by the 19th century. This maneuver created an administrative district by placing its headquarter at Rangamati, with the business centers at Bandarban, Chandraghona, Rankhiang, Rangamati, Subalong, Barkal, Mahalchari, and Ajodhya. As part of this maneuver, it created three circles, namely the Chakma Circle, and the Bohmong Circle, and the Mong Circle, each under a hereditary chief of the Chakma and Marma ethnicity. The then British authority found that Bangla is mostly intelligible among the hill people for which it introduced Bangla as a court language. It built the educational infrastructure to assimilate the hill people by giving modern education in English and Bangla. The school then built to impart education in October 1862 was divided into a Burmese class and a Chakma class. In the former, Burmese, English, and Bengali were taught, and in the latter only English and Bengali (Eastern Bengal and Assam District Gazetteers by Hutchinson 1909). It attempted to build a communication system so that administrative control could be enhanced with ease. It also launched a military expedition to bring control over the savage hill-tribes. All these political maneuvers brought changes in socioeconomic interaction, which, in effect, contributed to the creation of a new LC with new intensity and direction. The LC can be assumed from a census report by the authority (Imperial Gazetteer, vol.10, and pp. 319) that

there were no towns, and 211 of the villages had populations of less than 500 apiece; only one exceeded 2,000. The population density, excluding the area of uninhabited forest (1,385 square miles), was 33 persons per square mile. There was a little immigration from Chittagong, and a few persons had emigrated to Tripura. The proportion of females to every 100 males was only 90 in the district-born, and 83 in the total population. Buddhists numbered 83,000, Hindus 36,000, and Muslims 5,000.

The aforementioned events of immigration and political maneuver contributed in intensity, speed and pattern of LC, in which Bangla operated as a superstrate over all other speech varieties being the substrate. The new phenomena of LC created in this period had manifested as various outcomes.

LC from the Pakistan Period to Bangladesh Period

LC during the British period continued after the transfer of regime to the Pakistan government and to the Bangladesh government in the year 1947 and in 1971 respectively. Here, LC made further headway with the political maneuvers of the Pakistan and Bangladesh governments, involving consolidation of power as well as with a new immigration of Bangla speech communities. After the withdrawal of British colonial authority, the postcolonial authority continued to exercise political maneuvers in order to consolidate power over the hill people of CHT. The postcolonial regime, especially the GOB, encouraged Bangalee immigration, thus changing the demographic mosaic and settlement pattern.

The authority, particularly the GOB, attempted to increasingly build an educational, administrative, and communication infrastructure. As part of this effort, the Pakistan government created three subdivisions (later elevated to Districts by GOB), namely the Rangamati, Bandarban, and Khagrachari, in the administrative district of CHT. The postcolonial authority, including both Pakistan and Bangladesh governments, began to use Bangla as an official language. As with the British government, the GOB built the educational infrastructure in order to impart education to the growing number of Bangalee people in which the hill people were to receive education in Bangla. The GOB had furthermore constructed roadways, and established telecommunication systems and mass communication systems under a megaplan with a view to enhancing an overarching communication system, so that the CHT came within reach of administration. It also launched military administration to place control over the hill-tribes. All of these political maneuvers brought changes in socioeconomic interaction, which, in effect, contributed to the creation of a new LC with a new intensity and direction.

As part of the political maneuver, the authority encouraged the immigration of the Bangalee of the plain under an immigration plan augmented by the establishment of administration,

communication, and transportation systems that ushered in a huge number of Bangla speakers from the interior districts of Bangladesh. The immigration of the Bangla speech communities altered the makeup of the demography, and brought several changes: i) an increase in population; ii) dominance in the business and commerce of the Bangla speech communities over the tribal people, iii) rapid urbanization, creating favourable conditions conducive to LC between the Bangla speech communities and tribal speech communities. After the subsequent immigration of Arakanese tribes and Bangalee people, the CHT now accommodated a population of approximately 1.5 million, less than half of whom were minority speech communities, including the speakers of Indo-Aryan speaking Chakma and Tanchangya, and Tibeto-Burman (TB) languages such as Marma, Tripura (Kokborok), Chak, Pankho, Mru, Murung, Bawm, Lushei, Kyang, and Khumi. The remaining were speakers of Bangla. The new distribution of various speech communities with an overwhelming majority of Bangla speakers created intensive LC.

The new distribution of different speech communities in the well-designed socioeconomic setup created a new LC situation where Bangla operated as a superstrate over all other languages of minority speech communities in the following ways:

- The common education policy of Bangladesh required all children of minority speech communities to receive education through the medium of Bangla.
- The official, legal, and business dealings under the government's policy required the people of minority speech communities to use Bangla in communication.
- The Tibeto-Burman people did not understand the language of each other but had a certain control over Bangla for which they used Bangla as a lingua franca for day-to-day communication.
- In the LC of CHT, LC now involved different kinds of phenomena that were manifested as various outcomes.

Language Contact Phenomena and Manifestations

LC now manifested itself as an outcome, illustrated in the two below sections. LC now involved various phenomena: i) a LC phenomenon involving language maintenance, ii) a LC phenomenon involving the creation of a new contact language, and iii) LC phenomenon involving the acquisition of dominant as a second language leading to language shift. The LC phenomena can be distinguished political outcome, sociolinguistic outcomes, and linguistic outcomes, as follows.

LC between Indo-Aryan and Bangla and the languages of other tribal speech communities had been found to occur through various phenomena. They are as follows.

Language contact phenomena are found to occur involving language maintenance with varying degrees of bilingualism among the TB speakers. As minority speech communities of the CHT, the TB tribes expect to defend their ethnic boundary by conserving the purity of their

speech variety. However, in practice, all the TB languages are receiving the effects of LC involving relexification, calquing, and structural convergence. Chakma, as a speech variety of Bangla, has experienced revitalization. However, the speakers of this language continue to attempt to maintain its structure, while it is affected by all forms by LC.

Language contact led to the creation of new contact languages. The creation of contact languages, i.e., pidgin and creole, occurred throughout the. There are several instances of creation of contact languages in the CHT as follows:

The important two Indo-Aryan creoles, i.e., Chakma and Tanchangya, spoken by the people of the TB ethnicity were created out of contact between the vernacular of the Arakan and the vernacular of the Chittagong dialect. The speakers of the Chakma and Tanchangya were originally the people of the TB ethnicity who were the speakers of one of the vernaculars of the Arakan, but their speech underwent a process of LC, while the Chittagong dialect of Bangla operated as its superstrate. Thus, LC between the vernacular of the Arakan and the vernacular of the Chittagong dialect continued for decades, leading to the creation of Indo-Aryan varieties of Chakma and Tanchangya.

Another instance of the creation of TB (Marma) pidgin was the contact language based on the Marma now spoken by the speakers of Chak, Khumi, and Kheyang. The Chak, Khumi, and Kheyang living in Bandarban spoke a different variety of TB languages mutually unintelligible to each other, for which they created a pidgin out of the local variety of Marma through contact, in order to ease their day-to-day verbal communication.

Language contact was found to involve Second Language Acquisition (SLA) by the TB speakers through their language shift. There were many instances when the TB speakers learned the Indo-Aryan variety, including standard Bangla as a second language. After several generations, they shifted to Bangla, some of whom, especially the young generation, received education in Bangla, more so by living in the city.

Language contact has involved various different kinds of phenomena throughout the last few centuries, and has brought forth various outcomes which have resulted in a linguistic outcome, a sociolinguistic outcome, and political outcomes, as follows:

The linguistic outcomes manifested from LC were of different types including lexical borrowing, calquing, and structural convergence. Significant levels of lexical borrowing in Kheyang from Marma occurred, e.g. names of days and names of months; b) The percentage of lexical borrowing in Kheyang from Bangla was smaller, e.g. taka→táa (Zakaria 2018). With regards to nomenclature, personal names were mostly borrowed in almost all of the TB languages from the Indo-Aryann languages, i.e. Sanskrit, Pali, and Bangla. For example, Amit Chakma, Raja Devasish Roy, Manabendra Narayan Larma, Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma; Names

of the kings during 17th to 18th centuries: Jan Baksh Khan, Tabbar Khan, Jabbar Khan and Dharam Baksh Khan; b) The names of religious rites or rituals, and other things, e.g. Sangrai (year ending festival), had mostly been borrowed from the TB languages of the ancestral languages of Bangla, i.e. Sanskrit or Pali. Owing to the strong effects of the superstrate Indo-Aryan varieties, i.e. Pali and Bangla, many grammatical structures of the TB languages converged with their superstrates. The examples are as follows.

Evidence of structural convergence in Marma (Chakma 2000)

Pretɔbreman-sa ɔmaittɔ-saarakaittɔ-sathuŋ-ya

Country one son of king son of minister and son of Kotwal 3 person ataitpɔŋyasapɔɔtoak pre
banɔtoulakhare education learning purpose of country other for went off.

The sons of a king, a minister and a Kotwal of a country went to another country for the purpose of receiving education.

Evidence of structural convergence in Tripura [Chakma 2000]

Tripura has received the relative clause pattern of Bangla as follows:

Odaini za munbo bono salaiyo.

from there Rel-M (which) can bring Corl-M (that) Eat

They eat those things that they can bring from there.

(They eat whatever they can bring from there.)

Tripura has received the phrasal verb pattern of Bangla as follows:

Araikhayoi konorokom sal ktaiyo. That way somehow days pass.

They somehow pass there days.

In addition to the above, Zakaria (2018) has given evidence that Khyang bears Relative-correlative construction, which is carried out from Pali via Marma. The LC that occurred in the past and is still occurring brings forth sociolinguistic outcomes. Among which, the important are i) bilingualism, ii) multilingualism, iii) code-switching and code-mixing, and iv) language-shift.

Almost all members of TB speech communities were bilingual by this time, as they lived with LC for the longterm, for which they were bound to their ancestral language, e.g. Riang, Marma and Chakma along with the superstrate Bangla. Many people of a young age belonged to the TB speech communities and some people of Bangalee communities received education in both Bangla and English, who again encountered LC for the longterm. They now had control over more than two languages along with their mother tongue, e.g. Bwam, Marma and Bangla. Code-switching and code-mixing between Bangla, as a superstrate, and tribal languages, as a substrate, had been common in the speech of the hill people. Throughout the history of LC in the CHT, there

were many instances of language-shift. The Chakma people as the speakers of Arakanese vernacular created an Indo-Aryan variety to which they all shifted. The total population of Chakma was around half million, all of whom shifted to Chakma by leaving their original language. This can be seen as mass shifting in the LC history of CHT. As their language is cognate to Bangla, they comprehend and speak Bangla. Therefore, the Chakma have now been natural bilinguals, being the speakers of Chakma with different degrees of control over Bangla. Likewise, the speakers of Tippera experienced longterm effects of Bangla, being the Kingdom Tripura, where the court and literary language was Bangla. For this, many Tippera people were found to have more control over Bangla than Tippera. The result of my survey and interviews suggests that almost all of the TB population is now on the verge of language-shift owing to the fact that many bilingual people belonging to the TB speech communities can comprehend their language but cannot speak it thoroughly.

In antiquity, the inhabitants of the CHT were the speakers of different languages for which they long remained disintegrated. However, the political maneuver supplement by the administrative, economic planning, exercised by the different political authorities led to creating different kinds of LC phenomenon, which, in the end, shifted almost all the TB speaking tribes to become a bilingual population.

Thus, LC consequently brought forth different sociolinguistic outcomes, which consequently led to assimilation of the different speech communities in a political superstructure. The Arakanese of different ethnicities first assimilated into greater society in the language situation of Arakan and further integrated in the political superstructure of Bangladesh. Along with other indigenous hill-tribes, they encountered a further political maneuver in the subsequent period, leading to the assimilation and integration of TB speech communities, who are now attempting to build the political and economic superstructure of Bangladesh.

Conclusion

The CHT, as a region of linguistic richness, once accommodated various speech communities speaking different speech varieties unintelligible to each other. However, the language situation of the CHT has changed much, through LC in past two centuries, and more so over the past few decades. LC has now mirrored itself in the political and socioeconomic makeup of CHT society. It brought forth outcomes that can be categorized as linguistic, sociolinguistic, and political. Thus, the present socioeconomic makeup of the CHT evidences the various outcomes of LC, which occurred through various phenomena. LC is ongoing and involves LC, due to large-scale immigration, positioning Bangla speakers as a majority in demographic composition as well as in the development of physical, economic, and administrative infrastructure. In present LC, Bangla operates as a superstrate over other tribal languages, reflecting a change inclined toward

the Bangla language. Here, almost all of the tribal people have been bilingual, many of whom tend towards learning Bangla as a second language. Accordingly, the people who have been learning Bangla as a second language tend to shift toward their second language Bangla by leaving their ancestral language of TB origin. This movement of tribal people in favour of the current of LC is contributing to their assimilation in the political superstructure of Bangladesh. Consequently, it has now become facile for the GOB to exercise administrative control over the socioeconomic and taxation systems of the CHT.

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