

REPORT OF THE PROJECT

Scheme for protection and preservation of endangered languages

For the month of October

LANGUAGE : GOJAPURI

DISTRICT : DODA

SUBMITTED TO

Central Institute of Indian Languages

(Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India, Department of Higher Education)

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LANGUAGE IDENTITY

Language is the main instrument of one's identity. No community can develop its identity without language, be it social, cultural, religious, national etc. Gojapuri, an Indo-Aryan language is spoken by some 400 people in Baraila which is small area of village khalu district Doda in J&K State of India. These Gojapuri speakers highly respect their mother tongue and freely use this language in their day to day affairs and with pride and honour the parents pass on their ancestral treasure to their offspring- but the problem is that the language has no written literature and has not been documented till now. In fact, the language is transmitted orally and can't be learned, still children use this language with pride in their day to day activities and feel free and expressive in their mother tongue; and use it within their family domain, friends whether it be in locality or within schools. They consider it their unique identity and want to preserve their priceless treasure of ancestors but feel helpless. Though in schools the medium of instruction is Urdu and English still students feel their mother tongue the best way of expressing themselves. They show a great interest in Urdu and English which they believe provides the hope of great educational career and good job opportunities. Students code- mix from Urdu and English and seem to be enthusiastic towards English and Urdu but feel English to be difficult to gain proficiency over it, though they can read and write in English and Urdu but feel helpless in speaking English.

This language is the identity of the Gojapuri speakers and we observe that the older and the younger generations have different opinions about the use and necessity of this language in their society. It has been observed that only Gojapuri people speak different language comparatively. The language which they use in their daily life is called as Gojapuri which they use in their homes and with other members of their community. Regarding their language and their identity, when we talk to their older people they believe that this language is

their inheritance which has to be carried on by every new-born child. This language distinguishes them from others and is used amongst them, and is the language of their home. Apart from their indigenous language, the Gojapuri person also seems to be proficient in other languages and is typically multilingual. Normally, they were observed to be proficient in Urdu & Badarwahi. This multilingual nature can probably be attributed to their nomadic lifestyle in the past or probably the need to communicate with the surrounding population has created this multilingualism.

The children too like elders have good control over other languages like Urdu, Badarwahi Similarly, having no written record of their mother tongue Gojapuri-they are not able to read and write in Gojapuri and can only speak it. Since, the language is only spoken with this community so it has no other dialects. Within the community they freely use their mother tongue whether it is in market while purchasing, in friend circle while discussing daily matters, in homes with their family members but outside the community they use Urdu.

Women too use mother tongue with kith and kin. Though they too have proficiency over other languages but they prefer and love to speak in their mother tongue. Almost all of them being illiterate cannot read and write. They too like men use their mother tongue in market, social gatherings, festivals, marriage ceremonies etc. Mothers strictly use their mother tongue with their wards though they sometimes code-mix from other languages. They narrate stories to their children in Gojapuri and even they have a rich repertoire of folklore which has been transmitted to them from their ancestors and them from their ancestors and so on which finally leads to the origins of Gojapuri. During marriage ceremonies or other rituals women sing folklore in their native language and this tradition has been there for ages but would not last for longer as Gojapuri is at the verge of its extinction with only few speakers left. It is

quite disappointing that nothing has been done so far in preserving this dying language.

Though the elders of the community seem to be a bit concerned about their mother tongue and grieve over not having any written literature of their mother tongue which needs to be documented so that it may pass on generations ahead.

Since the community has no such type of educational standard so they cannot work out their problem of preserving this language in written form. But there has not been a flash of concern shown by Government too in this matter because of which the language surely is going to extinct within few years.

The other languages they know are:

Gojapuri, Urdu, English, Badarwahi.

Language

LANGUAGE NAME	L	S	R	W
Gojapuri	yes	Yes	no	No
Urdu	yes	Yes	yes	Yes
English	no	No	yes	Yes
Badarwahi	yes	Yes	no	No

INDEX

L – Learning

S – Speak

R- Read

W- Write

LANGUAGE ATTITUDE

According to Crystal, language attitudes can be defined as the feelings people have about their own language or the languages of others. These attitudes may be positive or negative. Some of the studies conducted have discovered that social factors influence a person's attitudes toward a language, rather than any specific properties about a language or variety. Others have shown more specifically that even the perception of negative or positive attitudes toward a language by parents can affect the attitudes children have toward that language. The language attitude of the speakers of Gojapuri has been observed in the present field work to find out attitude of Gojapuri community towards its native language (Gojapuri) vis-à-vis other languages spoken in the community. The result of language attitude analysis demonstrates that the majority of Gojapuri people interviewed have positive attitudes towards their language.

The table1 shows the distribution of males and females by age. There are a much higher proportion of female participants than male participants. Sixty-seven per cent (67%) of the respondents are female, while only thirty-three per cent (33%) are male.

Table 1

Age	18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	TOTAL
Male	2	1	3	2	8
Female	3	6	9	6	24
TOTAL	7	7	12	6	32

LANGUAGE ATTITUDE OF GOJAPURI SPEAKERS TOWARDS LEARNING/SPEAKING

Majority of the speakers think that mother tongue learning/speaking is the easiest thing for anyone. Children pick up words what they listen from their parents, family members or in the environment they live and are likely to learn/speak it naturally. Thus, according to majority of the speakers of the Gojapuri language, the people have positive attitude towards learning or speaking there mother tongue. Approximately 70% of the total subjects thought it is necessary for a Gojapuri speaker to be able to speak Gojapuri. So people feel ease and are comfortable while learning or speaking their mother tongue. Although there is neither written script nor any book magazine or newspaper in their language but still people feel it easy to learn or speak their mother tongue.



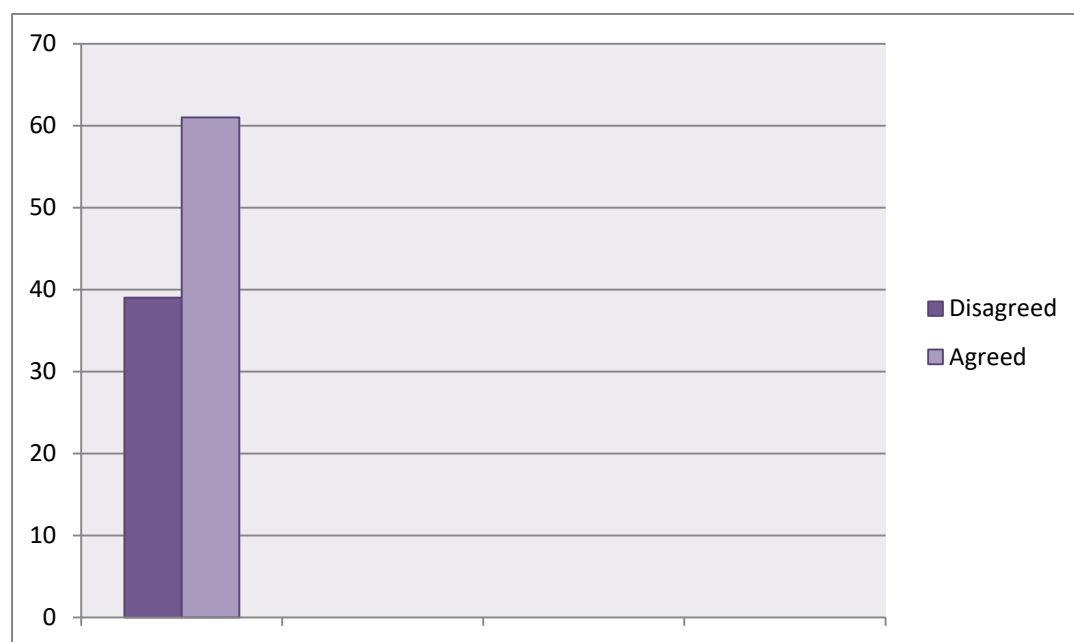
LANGUAGE ATTITUDE TOWARDS EXPRESSING THOUGHTS IN GOJAPURI:

According to Gojapuri speakers, mother tongue is the best tool for expressing thoughts, feelings, expressions and other ideas. Mother tongue has cultural associations, beliefs and other related things which can't be best expressed by using any other language. People are acquainted with Badarwahi and Urdu but they prefer to express their thoughts in their native language. However People who have language contact with other neighbouring languages sometimes lack

the words to express their thoughts in Gojapuri and thus choose words from other languages. It is said that those people who migrated to other places, their children have problems for expressing thoughts in their mother tongue as they lack cultural specific terms. They feel comfortable and effective to express their thoughts in their mother tongue rather than in any other language.

LANGUAGE ATTITUDE TOWARDS MIXING OTHER LANGUAGE WORDS TO GOJAPURI

Gojapuri speakers usually mix words from all neighbouring languages, especially the language which is associated with power and prestige. They also use sentences and terms from languages used in media and terms created by technology. It is generally felt by investigators that at conscious level the people have very conservative attitude towards their mother tongue but at unconscious level they mix words quite frequently. They accept code mixing but the speakers of the Gojapuri language think that it doesn't have any negative effect in their own language. According to the subjects the code mixing or borrowing gives the language a new charm and makes it much more effective. The speakers of this language feel easy and comfortable while communicating with other language.

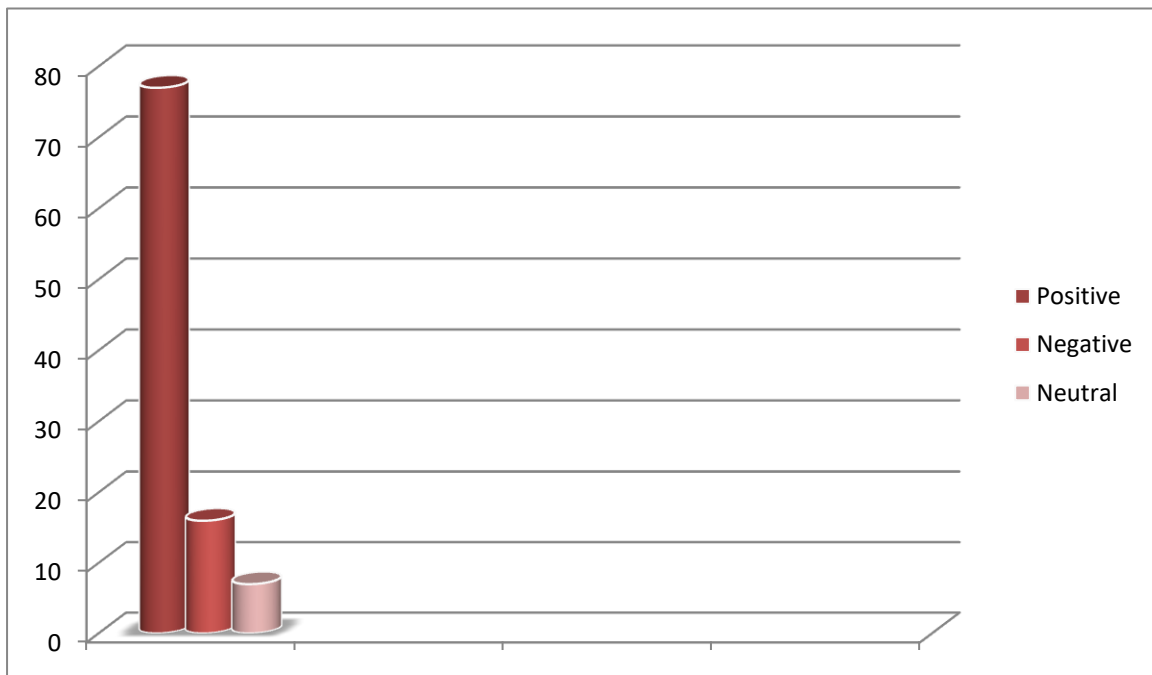


Approximately 60% of the subjects agree that code mixing should take place while below as 40% of the subjects believe that code mixing needs to be restricted.

LANGUAGE ATTITUDE TOWARDS WRITING IN GOJAPURI:

It is seen that people show positive attitude towards developing writing system in Gojapuri. There are various minority languages which are orally spoken. This Gojapuri language is one of them and has been given little attention till now, as such languages are at the point of extinction or it can be said they are endangered. Every community of the world wishes to have written script of their own language. According to some of the informants, if opportunity will be given, they will definitely make best use of it. According to the informants, this language needs a written script so that they can have an identity of its own. Everyone answers in positive when asked; when you are given opportunities will you use it to learn to write in your mother tongue. Both male and female showed positive response for their mother tongue learning and writing. It is said much of the beliefs are associated with mother tongue and it is fully loaded with traditional items as well for performing various day today activities. The trade, business, schooling, religious ceremonies are best suited by using mother tongue expressions in locality. But at other markets or work place they, use other languages for their writing purpose because they have no writing system

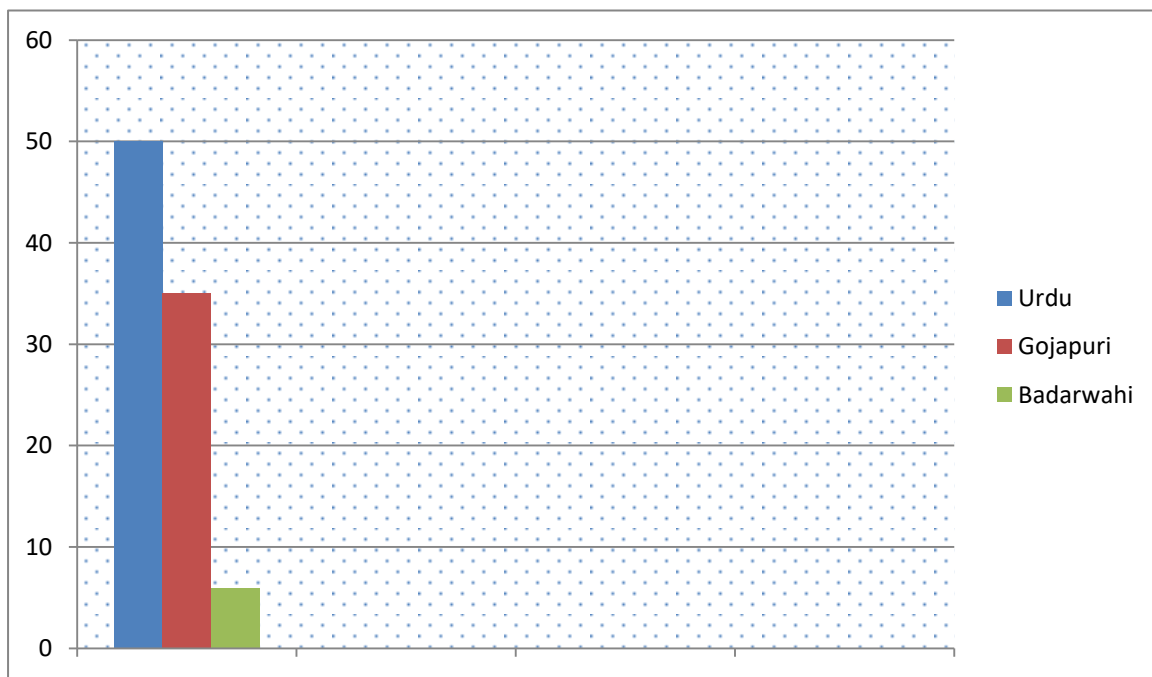
of their own language.



LANGUAGE ATTITUDE OF GOJAPURI SPEAKERS TOWARDS MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION:

It was observed that old aged females and males considered Gojapuri as the best option in terms of medium of instruction. When we move from old generation to younger generation, the view that Gojapuri should be medium of

instruction decreases while the chance of Urdu increases.



Thus, it was seen that Gojapuri speakers (especially youth and 50% percentage of middle aged males and females) are being influenced by Urdu. Urdu is acquired from outside the home domain that is mainly from school, Gojapuri as the mother tongue is acquired inside the home domain and Baderwahi being the neighbouring language has some influence on the mother tongue.

LANGUAGE ATTITUDE OF GOJAPURI SPEAKERS IN SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT

School and community environment plays an important role in any language learning/speaking. If education is imparted in mother tongue, children build vocabulary and learn/speak mother tongue easily. It is said that if children in school and community environment have some other language speakers and if education is imparted in some other languages, then mother tongue learning/speaking is delayed to some extent.

ATTITUDE OF GOJAPURI SPEAKERS TOWARDS THEIR OWN LANGUAGE

Gojapuri people generally expressed positive attitudes to their own language and thought that their children would continue to use Gojapuri more than any other language when they grew up, at least in their home area. All of the Gojapuri men and women interviewed also expressed interest in learning to read their language. Most of them indicated that they would buy literature, especially poetry, in Gojapuri if it was available. It is interesting, however, that generally, those interviewed thought that Gojapuri would be difficult to learn to read and write, whereas they considered Urdu to be easy.

ATTITUDES OF GOJAPURI SPEAKERS TOWARD OTHER LANGUAGES

The Gojapuri people seem to have positive attitudes to all languages, including those of neighbouring language groups. Majority of the subjects hold the view that learning other languages will obviously improve their knowledge level. The respondents believe that learning new languages opens the window to the new knowledge system. People considered Urdu to be better than their own language because it facilitates greater opportunities for creating economic resources.

ATTITUDE OF GOJAPURI SPEAKERS WHEN THE SPEAKERS OF THEIR LANGUAGE SPEAK OTHER LANGUAGE

Gojapuri speakers do not get annoyed when the speakers of their language speak some other language. However they prefer Gojapuri to be used for major sociolinguistic domains of the society.

ATTITUDE OF GOJAPURI SPEAKERSTOWARD LANGUAGE SHIFT OR CHANGE

Although Gojapuri is probably still spoken in much the same way as it has been for hundreds of years, and seems to have been less affected by Urdu and other neighbouring tongues than most other languages, some changes are occurring. More people are learning and using Urdu, and as they do so they are adopting some of the Urdu words into their Gojapuri speech. Up to now these trends have not reached major proportions. As more of the population becomes educated, however, borrowing of Urdu words into everyday Gojapuri speech will undoubtedly accelerate. Although the Gojapuri people take pride in their language and appreciate its purity, most do not seem concerned about these changes.

ATTITUDE OF GOJAPURI SPEAKERS TOWARDS MEDIA

The subjects desire for having Gojapuri programs in electronic media. The majority of the subjects are eager to have Gojapuri programmes broadcasted through Radio and telecasted through TV channels. The subjects show positive attitude towards using Gojapuri in print media as well.

It is clearly seen in the figure that the majority over 80% of the informants demonstrated the desire to have radio programs in Gojapuri above 30% showed desire to have TV programs in Gojapuri. Regarding newspaper only below 70% of the informants showed a desire to have it.