

**A SOCIOLINGUISTIC STUDY OF LANGAUGE USE AND LANGUAGE ATTITUDE
AMONG THE BODO PEOPLE OF UDALGURI DISTRICT OF ASSAM**

*A dissertation submitted to the University of Hyderabad in partial fulfilment of the requirement
for the award of the degree of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

IN

APPLIED LINGUISTICS

By

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June 2015



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I, Jenny Merry Daimari, hereby declare that the dissertation entitled “**A sociolinguistic study of language use and language attitude among the Bodo people of Udalguri district of Assam**” submitted by me in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in Applied Linguistics under the guidance and supervision of Dr.S.Arulmozi, Assistant Professor, Centre for Applied Linguistics and Translation Studies, School of Humanities, University of Hyderabad is a bonafide research work which is also free from plagiarism.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.” James 1:5 (Bible, NIV).

The success of my M.Phil. work is because of the special grace granted to me by Almighty God who has answered my crying and granted me wisdom and mercies.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. S. Arulmozi, who guided me by giving proper attention to my work and by providing inspiring feedbacks and useful suggestions, without whose guidance this dissertation would not have been a success.

I also extend my sincere gratitude to all the professors of CALTS for extending their valuable suggestions and moral support.

I am also eternally thankful to all my well-wishers who prayed for me. I pray that God’s abundant blessings will continue to abide with you all.

I am also eternally thankful to my mom, dad and my brother, for their immense love, care and encouragement and also for meeting all my financial needs. I am also thankful to my all my grandparents, uncles, aunties and my cousins for their generosity and encouragement.

I am also thankful to all the members of my church for praying for me.

I am also immensely thankful to all my school teachers who nurtured the seed of knowledge in me because of which I could come this far in my academic life.

I am also profoundly thankful to all the respondents who have responded to my questionnaires without whose responses my work would not have been completed. My sincere thanks to all of them.

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CHAPTER- 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Language constitutes an integral part of society and individuals' identity. We often tend to judge a person's background, character and intentions based simply upon the person's language. Cameron (as cited in Kanjilal, 2012) stated "Languages essentially both reflect and help to construct a social identity for the speaker." Thus people's attitudes towards a language have strong effects on its status within a given community. Human perceptions play a profound effect on their attitudes towards various aspects of life including people and society, culture and tradition, ways of behavior in different situations, use of language etc.

According to Fasold (1984), the study of language attitude begins with a decision to choose one of two theories about the nature of attitudes. One theory focused on "a mentalist view of attitude as a state of readiness", while the other one focused on the behaviorist view that "attitudes are to be found in the responses people make to social situations". According to Lambert (1967), attitude consists of three components: the cognitive, affective and conative components. The cognitive component refers to an individual's belief structure, the affective component to emotional reactions and the conative component comprehends the tendency to behave in a certain way towards the attitude (Gardner 1985). Baker (1992:32) states that there are two components of language attitude: 'instrumental attitudes' and 'integrative attitudes'. An instrumental attitude to a language is mostly self-oriented. On the other hand, an integrative attitude to a language is mostly social and interpersonal in orientation.

According to Deprez & Persoons (as cited in Florez 2006:121), the concept of ‘attitude’ stems from social psychology, but has also had a central role in several other disciplines in the social sciences, including sociolinguistics, during the last decades. The study of language attitudes in particular started in the early sixties, but it was not until seventies that the importance of this concept was widely recognized in the field of sociolinguistics (ibid.).

Richards et al. (1985) defines language attitude as the feeling that speakers of different languages or varieties of a language have towards each others’ language or their own. The way people look around things around him/ her is through a certain stance, which may differ from one another. People hold different views about different situations/ things which surrounds him/ her. Accordingly people have different feelings or opinions towards different language(s) or their own. In a community where different language groups’ co-exist, language attitude plays an important role in the lives of users of those languages. People generally have positive or negative attitude towards their mother tongue and towards other languages as well, with which they are in contact. By studying people’s attitude towards language(s) and people’s perception of different speech varieties with which they have contact, it is possible to determine their attitude towards their own language and towards other language varieties in contact. At the same time, a study of language attitude also reveals the attitude of speakers of a particular language towards code-mixing and code-switching between two languages.

Fasold (1984) suggests that language attitude can influence the course of sound change in a given language, teacher-student interactions and even employs’ hiring practices. In general, language attitude research can provide very useful information about the social value of language.

1.2 The linguistics situation of Assam

Located just below the Eastern Himalayan foothills, Assam is surrounded by other North Eastern states and occupies an important place among all the states. It is the largest in size and population and forms a gateway for the other North Eastern states. Linguistically, the state of Assam is somewhat different from the other hill states. Assamese, an Indo-Aryan language is the major language as well as the lingua franca for many ethnic communities in Assam. A variety of Bengali called Sylheti is spoken in the Cachar district and Barak Valley of lower Assam. Apart from Assamese and Bengali, the other Indo-Aryan languages spoken in the state are Rajbongshi and Bishnupuriya. Other than these, there are substantial number of languages belonging to the Tibeto-Burman language family spoken in different parts of Assam which include Bodo, Mising, Dimasa, Tiwa, Rabha, Deori and Garo. Thus, the people of Assam can be said to inhabit a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society. However, among all these languages, only Assamese and Bodo are recognized as official languages of India.

1.3 The Bodo people and their language

Anil Kumar Boro (2010:1) stated “The Bodos constitute a very important section of the different ethnic groups and races settled in Assam with their distinctive cultural and linguistic traits. Radically they belong to the Mongoloid stock of the Indo-Mongoloids or Indo-Tibetans”. The Bodos belong to a larger group of ethnicity called the Bodo-Kachari. The word “Bodo” denotes both the language as well as the community. Bodo is one of the major Tibeto-Burman tone languages spoken in parts of the North-Eastern states of India as well as in parts of West Bengal and Nepal. In Assam, Bodo is predominantly spoken in the districts of Goalpara, Nalbari, Barpeta, Dhuburi, Kamrup, Kokrajhar, Darrang, Sonitpur, Bongaigaon, Lakhimpur, Nagaon, Marigaon,

North Cachar and Karbi Anglong. According to 1991 census, the population of Bodo speakers was 1,184,569. The Bodo language has its written record from the last part of the 19th century. It was recognized by the government of Assam as official language in the Kokrajhar district and Udalguri sub-division from the year 1984. The language also got Indian government recognition as scheduled language from 2003. The Linguistic Survey of India recognized Bodo as one of the major groups of the Assam branch of the Tibeto-Burman.

1.4 The dialects of Bodo

According to Phukan Basumatary (2005:10), Bodo language has three dialects:

- The Western Bodo Dialect (WBD),
- The Eastern Bodo Dialect (EBD) and
- The Southern Bodo Dialect (SBD)

Western Bodo dialect group comprises the districts of Kokrajhar, Dhubri and Chirang. The Eastern Bodo dialect group comprises the districts of Baksa, Kamrup and mainly Udalguri districts; and the Southern Bodo dialect group comprises the districts of Goalpara and partial part of Kamrup district.

1.5 Script

Traditionally, Bodo had no script of its own. In the last decade of the 19th century, Christian missionaries adopted Roman script for publishing Bodo folk literature. In the beginning of the 20th century, Assamese script was used by most of the Bodo writers for the Bodo language. But, in the

early 1970's a movement was launched by the Bodo Sahitya Sabha to recognize the Roman script in lieu of the Assamese script. However, eventually as a result of the script movement, Bodo Sahitya Sabha agreed to accept Devanagari script as the standardized script upon the request of the central government of India. The Devanagari script was given the official status in 1980.

1.6 Aim of the study

The idea of the proposed research emanates from the axiomatic fact that in a community where different language groups' co-exists, language attitude plays an important role in the lives of the users of those languages. In the case of Bodo, which is surrounded by many other language communities, the study of language use and attitude of the speakers towards their language remains highly unexplored. The proposed research intends to undertake this task with the objective of testing the attitude of the speakers of Bodo towards their own language vis-à-vis other language or languages they know. With this objective the proposed study is undertaken and the research works is confined to the speakers in the district of Udalguri which is one of the 27 administrative districts of Assam in North-East India. This district is bounded by Bhutan and West Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh in the North, Sonitpur district in the East, Darrang district in the South and Baksa district in the West. The area of the district is 1676 km. Because of the time constraint only the district of Udalguri, where the dialect of Eastern Bodo (EBD) is spoken, is taken into consideration. According to 2011 census the population of Udalguri district is 8, 32,769 and its literacy rate is 66.6%.

1.7 Research questions

The research questions of this study are:

- Do the Bodo speakers of Udalguri district have positive attitude towards their own language?
- Does the language attitude towards Bodo differ according to age groups?
- Will there be any noteworthy variation between Bodo male and female's attitude towards their language?
- What is the vitality of Bodo language in the district of Udalguri? Is it likely to be maintained in the foreseeable future?

1.8 Methodology

A questionnaire was the main instrument employed for the present research work. In addition, informal interviews were also conducted as complementary instrument in order to obtain the desired data to answer the research questions. The data for this study was collected from the Bodo speakers of Udalguri district. The respondents were classified into the following three age groups of: 18-25 years, 26-40 years and above 40 years of age. A total of 196 respondents were taken into consideration out of which 35% of the total number of respondents belonged to the 18-25 age group, 33% to the 26-40 age group and 32% to the above 40 age groups.

The questionnaire consists of three parts. Part-I includes background information such as age, gender, occupation, education level.

Part-II consist of questions relating to language use, language ability, bilingual ability in Assamese and language use in five different domains. Part-II was divided into three groups:

Group-A consists of 15 questions focusing on eliciting which language they prefer to use mainly.

Group-B consists questions on language ability of the speakers in their mother tongue and also in other language(s) and also questions on eliciting the informants' bilingual ability in Assamese.

Group-C consists questions on language use in five different domains. Five different domains: home domain, education domain, neighborhood domain, market-place and office domain were taken into consideration.

Part-III include questions on social stereotypes and their attitude towards Bodo language and other Bodo speakers. The goal of Part-III was to elicit Bodo speakers' attitude towards their own language and other Bodo language speakers.

The questionnaire was the main instrument employed in the study, nevertheless, an informal interview was also employed. Seven women and six men belonging to above 40 years of age residing in the district of Udalguri were interviewed informally during conversation. An informal interview served as an important instrument because in most cases, the respondents gave their instant response rather than thinking over what the interviewer expects them to answer. They responded freely and without any hesitation and gave their opinion on what they think.

The sample undertaken for the study was the simple random sampling method. A sample is part of a population which reflects the nature of the whole population. In any study, taking the

whole population into consideration is not possible, so a sample to represent the population needs to be chosen. Therefore, in the present study, simple random sampling method was taken into consideration.

Finally the data were input into Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. The data was analyzed using pie-graph and bar diagram. Lastly, to find out if the Bodo people's attitude towards the language differ according to age group and gender, a chi-square test was done.

1.9 Chapter division

The dissertation is divided into five chapters.

Chapter 1: Chapter one (Introduction) deals with an introduction on the concept of language attitude, it also gives a brief overview about the linguistics situation of Assam. It also includes a brief introduction on the Bodo people, their language and the dialects of Bodo. The chapter also include the aims of the study, the research questions and the methodology adopted for the present study.

Chapter 2: Chapter two (Literature review) reviews the work related to the topic under consideration, i.e. language use and language attitude. Here an overview of different studies undertaken by different people with the related topic of the present study is given briefly.

Chapter 3: Chapter three deals with data analysis and findings on language use. It gives a detailed analysis of the study of the language use of the Bodo speakers of the district of Udalguri in Assam, which provided an indication of the extent of language maintenance among the Bodo speakers of Udalguri district of Assam.

Chapter 4: Chapter four deals with data analysis and findings on language attitude. It gives a detailed analysis of the study of the language attitude of the Bodo speakers of the Udalguri district

of Assam towards their own language as well as other language(s) and also towards other Bodo language speakers.

Chapter 5: Chapter five provides the concluding remarks of the study.

CHAPTER- 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Not much research has been done in the area of language use and language attitude in the State of Assam, although much work has been done in this area in India as a whole.

Kondakov (2010), did a sociolinguistics survey of the Rabha dialects of Meghalaya and Assam. The survey was undertaken with the objective of investigating the patterns of language use in the Rabha community as well as their attitude towards their own language and towards other languages spoken in the region and to assess the vitality of Rabha language. The result of the survey showed that majority (60-80%) prefers speaking Rabha rather than any other language(s). Ninety five percent of the subjects were convinced that their children should learn their mother tongue first. In fact, Rabha children were conscious about learning their other tongue and they did learn their mother tongue first and speak it with their friends outside the home domain as well. From the survey it also came to the light that ninety percent of the subjects want to see more literature produced in their mother-tongue. The result of the survey indicated that the Rabha language has a strong vitality and the attitude of the Rabha people's attitude towards its language is positive.

Morey in 2014, did a case study of language maintenance and loss in North-East India of Ahom and Tangsa languages. In the paper, Morey showed the contrast situation of these two language groups, where Tai Ahom, once the language of a powerful kingdom, is no longer spoken

as a mother tongue, whereas Tangsa, with a much smaller population, preserves significant linguistic diversity. Tangsa, although much smaller in population showed language vitality in almost all of the varieties. Tangsa, inhabitants of the hilly area, their contact with non-Tangsa people is much less than people residing in the plain areas which is the reason for their language vitality, in spite of their smaller population. On the contrast, Tai speaking Ahom, despite their political domination, assimilated culturally and linguistically with local Assamese speaking communities. Gradually, by the beginning of the 19th century, everyday usage of Ahom language ceased and Ahom people all spoke Assamese as their mother tongue. Morey (2014:52) suggested the following factors for the loss of the spoken language and of the wider cultural shift:

- Increasingly and eventually overwhelmingly non-Tai population of the Ahom kingdom.
- Intermarriage of the Tai speakers with non-Tai from the beginning of the Ahom kingdom
- Contact with the cultures of India
- Conversion to Hinduism, particularly under the influence of the Hindu Sage Simanta Shankaradeva (16th century).
- The costly nature of the traditional Ahom rituals.

Mohanty and Saikia (2007) in their paper “Bilingualism and intergroup relationship in tribal and non-tribal contact situations”, investigated the relationship between bilinguals and intergroup relationship in different language and culture contact. From their study, they concluded that stable bilingualism in language and culture contact situations is related to positive intergroup relation and social integration. Their analysis was formed on the basis of the examination of Bodo and Assamese high-school students, extracted from Bodo-majority BTC area and Assamese majority areas in Assam. In the situation where the indigenous language was maintained along

with contact bilingualism, the result of their study exhibited positive own-group maintenance and positive out-group relationship attitudes.

Shetty (2004), in her thesis “Language contact and maintenance of the Tulu Language in South India”, explored the motivation behind the survival of Tulu, a minority language in South India. From the observation done in her study she came to explore that because of the lack of code-switching between Tulu and Kannada, the maintenance of Tulu in the South Kannara district of South India is facilitated. The Tulu speakers in South Kannara, holds the view that their language is the salient indicator of group membership. They stuck to maintain their language as a marker of group identity by determining not to code-switch between Tulu and Kannada. By determining not to code-switch not between Tulu and Kannada, they could maintain their group identity. By doing an extensive study on the Tulu language in South India, Shetty came to the conclusion that lack of code-switching between Tulu and Kannada is the main factor behind the maintenance of the Tulu language in South India.

Baker (1992) discussed language attitude in his book entitled “Attitudes and Language” in great depth and length. Language attitude theory and research are discussed from different perspectives followed by research on the Welsh language illustrating and advancing these issues. He points out that language attitude is an umbrella term under which resides a variety of specific attitudes. He listed eight of them as follows (1992:29):

- Attitudes to language variation, dialect and speech style,
- Attitudes to learning a new language,
- Attitudes to specific minority language,
- Attitudes to language groups, communities and minorities,
- Attitudes to language lessons,

- Attitudes to uses of a specific language,
- Attitudes of parents to language learning and,
- Attitudes to language preference.

Baker suggested that there is a possible correlation between language attitudes and the subjects' age, gender, school, language ability, language background and cultural background. He also concluded that language background as the single most important effect on attitudes to bilingualism (Ibid.).

In the article entitled "Language attitudes studies: A brief survey of methodological approaches", Agheyisi and Fishman (1970), has presented a brief outline of the theoretical and methodological trends in attitude studies. In this article, they listed a number of studies that have been done in the area of language attitude studies and the various methods employed in each of the studies.

Although, methodology in attitude studies include both direct and indirect measures of all kinds, but it is observed that language attitude studies have to make more use of questionnaires than any other methods. A questionnaire is the most often used method in language attitude study. The questionnaires have been helpful in giving a general picture of how people feel about their languages. Commitment measure is a less direct instrument for measuring language attitudes study compared to a questionnaire where a subject is asked to commit him or herself to a certain activity without actually doing it. This method is found more suited for collecting data on behavioral tendencies. The main strength of this method lies in the fact that it taps the affective component as well as the cognitive component.

The matched-guise approach is one of the most popular indirect methods for measuring language attitudes. The matched guise technique may uncover facts that would not be simply

obtained by asking questions from a questionnaire, where respondents are asked to rate readers on a scale of personality attributes. The matched guise technique has been extensively used for studies relating to the social significance of languages and language varieties. Another indirect method of assessing language attitudes is the Observation method. Its primary strength is found in the idea that one can potentially infer an attitude towards a language by observing how and when people in a given community use that language. Agheyisi and Fishman suggested that observation method by itself may not be effective in collecting data about attitudinal nature but when combined with direct methods such as interviews and questionnaires, it can be useful (Ibid.).

Fasold suggested that attitude towards a language are often the reflection of attitude towards members of various ethnic group (1984:148). In “The Sociolinguistics of Society” (1984), Fasold summarized three trends in language attitude study. One of the trend on language attitude study is strictly limited to attitudes towards language itself. Subjects in these studies are asked to evaluate a given language by determining whether the language is rich, poor, beautiful, ugly, old-fashioned, modern etc. However, more often the definition of language attitudes is broadened to include attitudes towards speakers of a particular language or dialect.

Fishman (1964) introduced one way of looking at language choice by proposing the concept of domains. Further, Fishman (1972) stated that there are five domains of language use: family, friendship, religion, education and employment. He stated that the factors which influence the concept of domain are topic, role relation and locale. Fasold (1984) summarized in his study that domains are institutional contexts “in which one language variety is more likely to be appropriate than another. Domains are taken to be constellations of factors such as location, topic and participants....”

Ihemere in his paper “An Integrated Approach to the Study of Language Attitudes and change in Nigeria: The Case of the Ikwerre of Port Harcourt” investigated the language shift taking place in Port Harcourt by exploring the Ikwerre attitudes to their languages and tried to probe how these attitudes accommodate to prolong the language choice. From the study he observed that a hotfoot inter-generational language shift from Ikwerre monolingualism to Nigerian Pidgin English is advancing. From his analysis he perceived that age is the main component corresponding the change in language choice; where older people continue to use Ikwerre in almost all domains, the younger generations mostly used Nigerian Pidgin English for various communicative functions. It also came to the fore from his study that in Port Harcourt a bilingual is viewed more favorably when s/he speaks Nigerian Pidgin English than Ikwerre.

CHAPTER-3

LANGUAGE USE

3.1 Introduction

The present chapter discusses the language use pattern of the Bodo people of Udalguri district of Assam. The findings of the chapter contributes to answer the question: What is the vitality of the Bodo language in the district of Udalguri? Is the Bodo language likely to be maintained in the foreseeable future by the speakers of Udalguri district? As the pattern of language use by the speakers can predict the vitality of its language, the vitality of a language lies in the hand of its speakers. If the speakers of the language use the language in almost all the spheres, it is pretty sure that the language is in its safe side, i.e. the language is likely to be maintained in the foreseeable future. However, if the speakers shifts to speaking other language and ignore their own language, then it can be known that the language is in its way to doom. As the choices people make with regard to language use reflect trends toward either language maintenance or language shift.

Three sets of questions divided into Group-A, Group-B and Group-C were included in the questionnaire to draw the pattern of language use of the speakers. Group-A consists of 15 questions focusing on eliciting which language they prefer to use mainly. It mainly intended to draw the background information about their language use which may affect their language choice such as which language do they prefer to speak, which was the first language they learnt as a child, if both their parents are Bodo speakers and so on.

Group-B consists questions on language ability of the speakers in their mother tongue and also in other language(s) and also it had questions on eliciting the informants' bilingual ability in Assamese, i.e. how well they can speak, converse in Assamese and if they find it easier to speak in Assamese rather than to speak in Bodo.

Group-C consist questions on language use in five different domains. Five different domains: home domain, education domain, neighbourhood domain, market-place and office domain were taken into consideration.

3.2 Choice of language use

Table-1 provides the summary of the questions consisted in Group-A which concentrates mostly in drawing the information about their choice of language use.

#	Questions	Number	Bodo	Assamese	Both B/A	English	Both A/E	Both B/E	other
1	Which language do you prefer to speak?	196	136	5	12	28	0	14	1
2	Which language do you prefer to write?	193	62	9	-	95	8	19	0
3	Which language do you prefer to read?	193	63	9	-	93	8	18	2
4	Which language did you learn first as a child?	196	180	12	3	-	-	-	1
5	Which language do you speak best?	196	167	9	12	3	-	5	0
8	Which language do your parents use while speaking to you?	196	182	7	7	-	-	-	-
12	While praying, which language do you use?	196	127	9	15	18	-	27	-
13	Which language(s) T.V. programs do you watch?	196							
14	Which language(s) songs do you listen?	196							
15	Which language newspaper do you read?	182	-	41	-	119	19	-	3
		Number	Yes	No					
6	Are both your mother and father Bodo?	196	184	12					
7	Do your mother and father speak Bodo to each other?	196	187	9					
9	If married, is your spouse a Bodo speaker?	102	100	2					
10	Does s(he) speaks Bodo?	102	101	1					
11	If you have children do your children speak in Bodo?	101	101	-					

Table-1 N.B. Here, B/A denotes Bodo/ Assamese, A/E denotes Assamese/ English and B/E denotes Bodo/ English

From Table-1 it can be clearly seen that among 196 respondents, 136 responded to prefer to speak Bodo, where 5 of them reported to prefer to speak in Assamese. 12 respondents prefer to speak in both Bodo and Assamese, 28 prefer to speak in English and 14 prefer to speak in both Bodo and English where one respondent prefer to speak in other language. The pie-graph in Figure-1 shows the percentage of respondents' language preference for speaking.

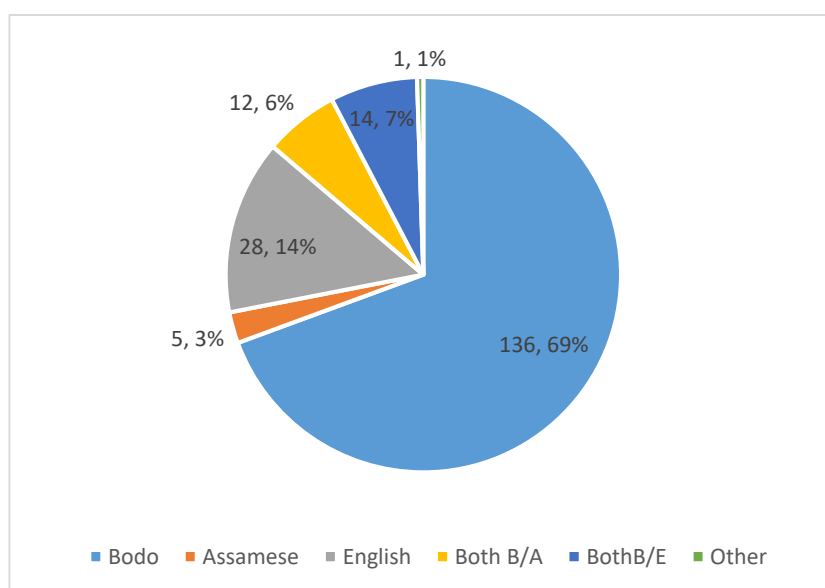


Figure-1 Pie graph of respondents' language preference to speak.

(Note: Here, B/A= Both Bodo & Assamese and Both B/E= Both Bodo & English)

From the above Pie-graph it can be seen that 69% of the respondents prefer to speak in Bodo. While 6% prefers speaking in both Bodo and Assamese and 7% responded to prefer speaking in both Bodo and English. 3% of the total respondents prefer to speak an Assamese, while 14% of the total respondents prefer to speak in English and only 1% prefer speaking in other language, other than Bodo, Assamese or English. As a whole, as shown in Figure-2 below in Pie-chart, it can

be noted that 83% of the respondents prefer to speak in Bodo. (Here, combining both those who prefer to speak in both Bodo and Assamese and both Bodo and English). And only 17% of the total respondents, responded their preference to speak other language than Bodo.

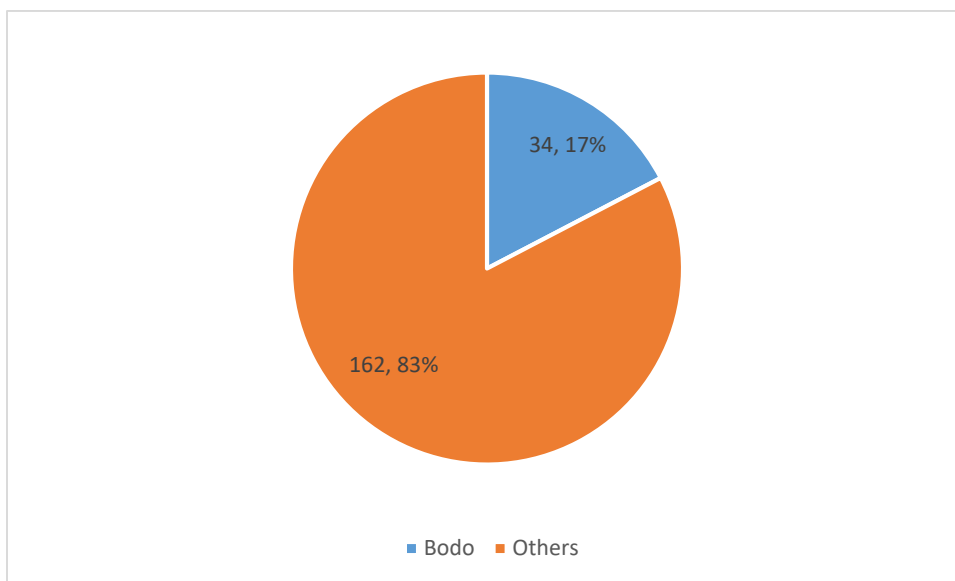


Figure-2 Pie-graph of respondents' preference to speak Bodo and other language.

In question-2, among 193 respondents 62 claimed to prefer to write in Bodo, 9 respondents prefer to write in Assamese, while 95 of the respondents prefer to write in English, 8 respondents showed their preference in writing both Assamese and English and 19 of them responded their preference for both Bodo and English. Although in Question-1, the respondents showed their maximum preference in speaking Bodo, while coming to writing, they showed their maximum preference in English. 32% of the respondents showed their preference for writing in Bodo and 49% prefer to write in English. And while coming to their preference for reading, among 193 respondents, 63 respondents showed their preference for reading in Bodo, 93 English and 9 Assamese. However, among 193 respondents, 18 showed their preference for reading both in Bodo

and English and 8 preferred to read both in Assamese and English. And two, among 193 respondents showed their preference in reading other language than Bodo, English or Assamese. So it can be seen that while coming to writing and reading, maximum number of respondents showed their preference for English.

Among 196 respondents, as can be seen from Table-1, 180 respondents claimed to have learnt Bodo first as a child, while 12 of them claimed that they learnt Assamese first and 3 responded as learning both Bodo and Assamese first and one claimed learning other language first. It can be seen as evident from the pie graph in Figure-3 below, that 92% of the respondents claimed their learning Bodo first as a child.

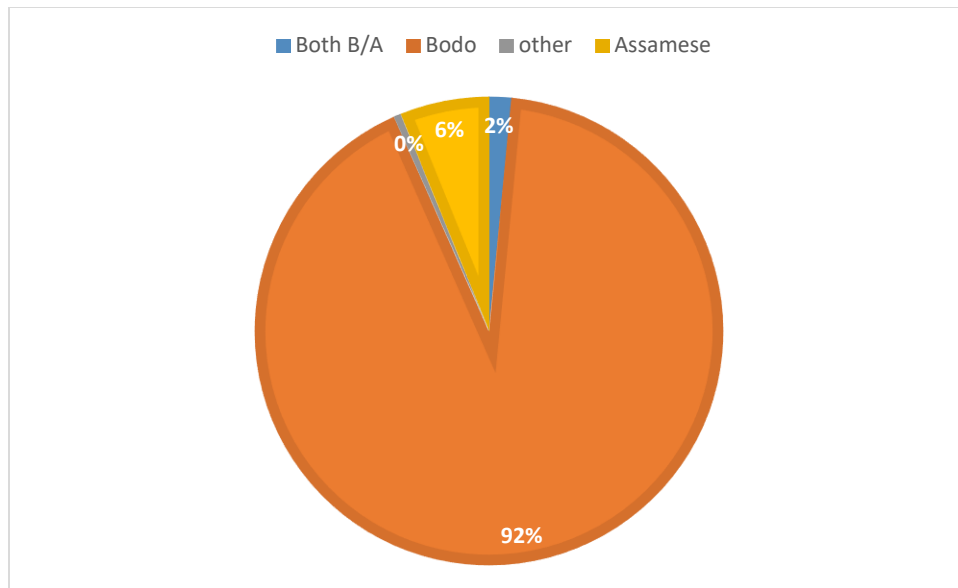


Figure-3 Pie-graph showing the percentage of respondents' claim of learning first language.

(Note: Here, Both B/A= Both Bodo & Assamese)

In question-5 as can be seen from Table-1, out of 196 respondents, 167 reported that they speak Bodo well, while 9 of them reported their fluency in speaking Assamese and 12 respondents claimed their ability in speaking both Bodo and Assamese well. While 5 respondents reported that they speak English well and 5 respondents claimed that they speak both Bodo and English well. As is evident from pie graph in Figure-4, it can be seen that 85% respondents reported that they speak Bodo well, 5% speak Assamese well, 6% reported that they speak both Bodo and Assamese well, while only 1% reported their ability to speak English well among all the other languages and 3% of the total respondents reported their ability in speaking both Bodo and English well.

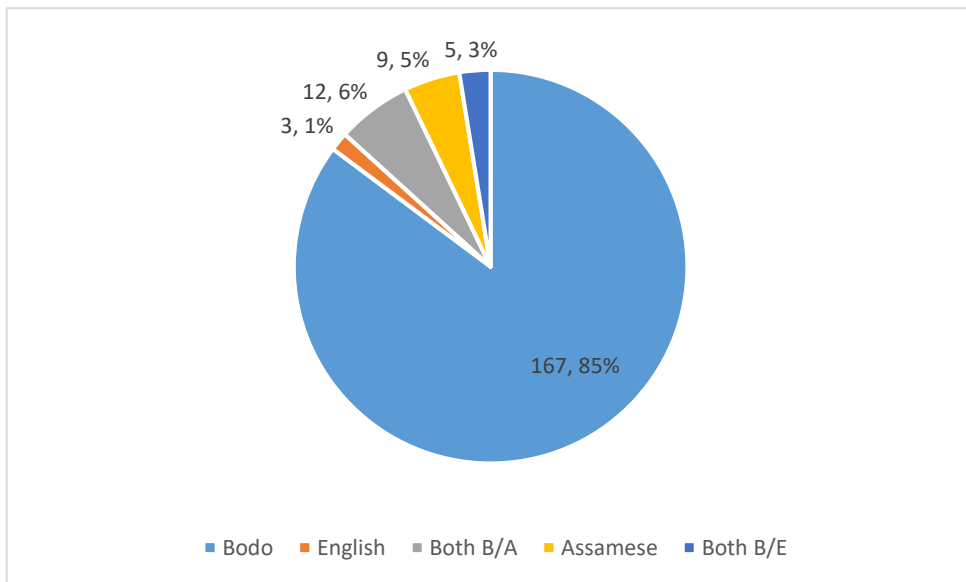


Figure-4 Pie-graph showing the percentage of respondents' language ability.

(Note: Here, Both B/A= Both Bodo & Assamese, Both B/E= Both Bodo & English)

As evident from Table-1 in Question-6, it can be seen that out of 196 respondents, 184 (94%) respondents claimed that both of their parents are Bodo while 12 (6%) respondents reported that either of their parents is not a Bodo speaker. Here, it can be pointed out that intergroup marriage among Bodo people of Udalguri is not common. 94% of the respondents claimed that both their

parents are Bodo and only 6% of the total respondents claimed that either of their parents is not a Bodo speaker. To the question whether both their parents speak in Bodo to each other, 187 (i.e. 95%) responded yes, while 9 (i.e. 5%) of them responded that their parents doesn't speak in Bodo to each other. 182 (93%) respondents out of 196, reported that their parents use Bodo while speaking to them while 7 of them responded that their parents use Assamese while speaking to them and 7 reported that their parents use both Bodo and Assamese while speaking to them. Among 102 respondents, 100 (98%) speakers claimed that their spouse is a Bodo speaker and only 2 (2%) speakers claimed that their spouse is not a Bodo speaker. So from here also it can be known that intermarriage is a rare phenomenon among Bodo speakers of Udalguri district. And among 102 respondents, 101 respondents claimed that their spouse use Bodo while speaking to them and only one speaker claimed that his spouse doesn't use Bodo while speaking to him. While out of 101 respondents all 101 (100%) respondents claimed that their children speak in Bodo.

Among 196 respondents, 127 respondents claimed that they use Bodo while praying while 9 of them pray in Assamese and 15 respondents reported that they use both Bodo and Assamese while praying. 18 of them responded that they use English while praying and 27 among them reported that they use both Bodo and English while praying.

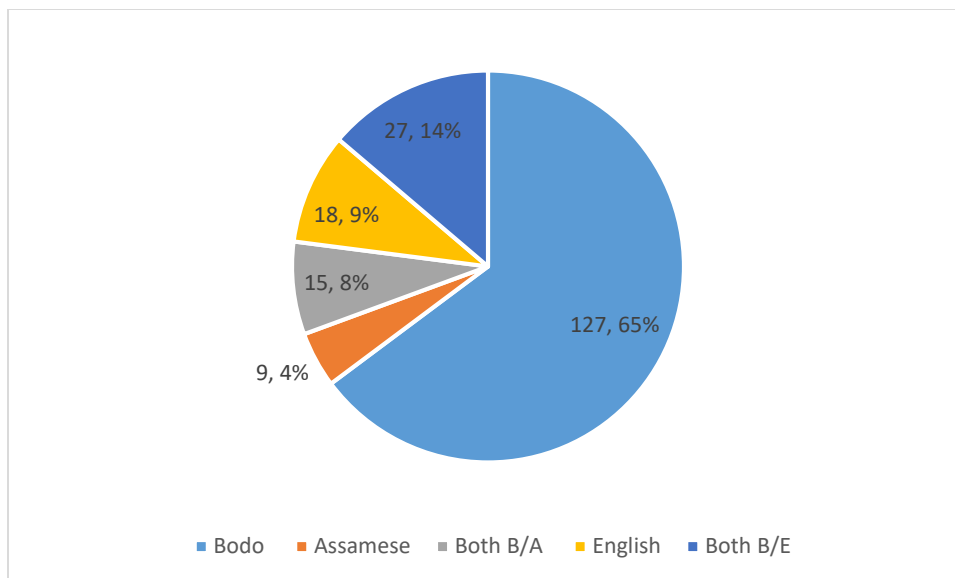


Figure-5 Pie-graph showing percentage of respondents' language use while praying. (Note: Here, Both B/A= Both Bodo & Assamese and Both B/E= Both Bodo & English)

It can be seen from the figure above that the maximum respondents (65%) prefer to use Bodo while doing their prayer.

To the question which language(s) T.V. programs do you watch, maximum responded that they watch Hindi while some responded that they watch Assamese and a few English. It was seen that nearly 90% of the respondents watch Hindi programs, while a very few people responded that they do watch Bodo program. The reason for this can be said that Bodo does not have their own respective T.V. program, and hence it is not included to represent the respondents count in the table. In question 14, which language(s) songs do you listen, respondents gave their responses as listening to Bodo, English, Hindi, while some responded that they listen to both Hindi and English; some responded as listening to Hindi and English songs; other responded as listening to English, Assamese and Hindi; and some as English, Hindi and Bodo; while still some others responded as listening to Assamese, Hindi, Bodo, English. As a whole it was seen that Bodo speakers of

Udalguri does not neglect to listen songs in their own language, in fact, they showed a positive response in listening to their own language songs. Nearly 95% of the total respondents claimed that they listen Bodo songs along with some other language(s) songs such as Hindi, Assamese, and English.

Among 182 respondents, 41 respondents reported that they read Assamese newspaper, while 119 claimed that they read English newspaper and 19 read both Assamese and English newspaper while 3 respondents reported that they read Hindi newspaper. Bodo newspaper is not frequently available in the district of Udalguri, so its speakers prefer to read newspaper mostly either in English or Assamese. Very few responded that they read Bodo newspaper which is not shown in the table because its readers are not regular newspaper enthusiasts as well as is rarely to be found. It was seen that among the three age groups i.e. 18-25 years, 26-40 years and above 40 years, 18-25 years age group respondents showed that they read English newspaper in maximum number while above 40 years age group responded their maximum number of Assamese newspaper readers.

3.3 Language ability

This section concentrates on drawing information about the language ability of the speakers, as to how well they can speak their mother-tongue and which other language(s) they can speak and especially on the speakers' bilingual ability in Assamese. To draw the language ability of the speakers, the respondents were asked to tick a box in a questionnaire according to their level of competence as to how well they can speak their mother tongue. Out of 196 respondents, 134 respondents claimed that they can speak their mother tongue very well, 49 of them reported that

they can speak their mother tongue well and 13 of them claimed that they cannot speak their mother tongue well, but none of them claimed that they don't know to speak their mother tongue. Among 196 respondents all of them reported their knowing to speak Assamese. Out of 196 respondents, 50 respondents claimed that they can speak Assamese very well, while 104 reported that they can speak Assamese well and 42 of them can't speak Assamese well. Again 186 respondents claimed their ability to speak in Hindi, out of which 29 respondents can speak Hindi very well, 98 speakers can speak Hindi well and 59 of them can't speak Hindi well. Still 164 respondents claimed their knowing to speak yet another language, English. 44 respondents claimed that they can speak English very well, while 101 respondents claimed that they can speak English well and 32 of them can't speak English well. Thus, among 196 respondents all of them reported their bilingual ability and 186 respondents reported their knowing to speak three languages (Bodo, Assamese and Hindi) and 164 respondents claimed that they can speak three other languages apart from their mother-tongue (Assamese, Hindi and English). Further, 87 respondents claimed their ability to speak four other languages apart from their mother- tongue. Thus, multilingualism is a common phenomenon among the Bodo speakers of Udalguri district.

3.4 Bilingual ability in Assamese

Speakers' bilingual ability in Assamese is also assessed to enable a better understanding of language use, why a certain language is used in certain situations. A self-evaluation questionnaire was employed to draw the respondents' bilingual ability in Assamese. Although there are other methods to draw the bilingual ability, in this study only self-evaluation questionnaire method was employed. Table-2 below provides a summary of self- evaluation bilingual ability.

Q#	Questions	Numbers	Yes (%)	No (%)	Same (%)
1.	If someone asks you in Assamese about the location of a particular place, can you tell him or not?	196	192 (98%)	4 (2%)	-
2.	Can you tell the location of a place where you reside in Assamese?	196	191 (97%)	5 (3%)	-
3.	Can you ask and tell the time of the day and day of the week in Assamese?	196	173 (88%)	23 (12%)	-
4.	Can you narrate a story in Assamese?	196	99 (51%)	97 (49%)	-
5.	While speaking in Assamese, do you feel lack of words sometimes?	196	168 (86%)	28 (14%)	-
6.	Can you interpret (i.e. translate words from Bodo) in Assamese?	196	117 (60%)	79 (40%)	-
7.	Is it easier to speak in Assamese than in Bodo?	196	14 (7%)	172 (88%)	10 (5%)

Table-2 Summary of self-evaluation bilingual ability

As can be seen from the table above only 2% respondents claimed that they cannot tell about the location of a particular place in Assamese, while 98% of the respondents gave their positive response. However, to the next question, if they can tell the location of the place where they reside in Assamese, the positive response drops to 97% and 3% of the respondents claimed that they cannot tell the location of the place where they reside in Assamese. Talking about the time of the day and day of the week, 88% of the respondents claimed that they can tell the time of the day and day of the week in Assamese, however 12% of the respondents gave their negative response. Thus it can be seen that the respondents' bilingual ability is dropping as the level of the question is getting higher. 51% of the respondents reported that they can narrate a story in Assamese while, 49% respondents reported that they cannot narrate a story in Assamese. Still going to the higher level of the question, if they sometimes felt lack of words while speaking Assamese, 86% of the respondents claimed that they feel lack of words while speaking Assamese and only 14% of the respondents reported that they doesn't felt lack of words while speaking Assamese. While talking about the interpretation of words from Bodo into Assamese, 60% of the respondents claimed that they can interpret in Assamese, while 40% respondents gave their negative responses. Lastly, as can be seen from the table above, 7% of the respondents claimed that it is easier to speak in Assamese, while 5% of the respondents claimed that they find both the language equal, i.e. their ability to speak in both the language is equal, while 88% of the respondents claimed that it is not easier to speak in Assamese, rather for them their mother-tongue, Bodo is easier to speak.

Thus, it can be seen that the bilingual ability of the respondents is high at the lower level of the questions, however their ability decreases as the level of question increases.

3.5 Language use in different domains

Domain is an area of human activity in which one particular speech variety or combination of several varieties is regularly used. In a situation of language contact, the speakers need to choose between different language(s) available to them in different settings. The use of different language(s) in a particular settings or domain demarcates one from the other. To fulfil different communicative goals one need to choose a language among languages available to them in different domains. Joshua Fishman (1964) introduced one way of looking at language choice by proposing the concept of domains. Fasold (1984) summarized in his study that domains are institutional contexts “in which one language variety is more likely to be appropriate than another. Domains are taken to be constellations of factors such as location, topic and participants....”

In the present study, language use of five domains were examined. The domains taken into consideration for this study are: home domain, education domain, neighborhood domain, market-place domain and office domain. 196 subjects were taken for examining the language use patterns in the above mentioned five domains. Table-3 provides the summary of language use in home domain.

Q#	Questions	Numbers	Bodo	Assamese	Both Bodo /Assamese	Both Bodo /English
	Which language do you use while speaking:					
1.	with your parents	196	183	8	5	0
2.	with siblings	196	184	9	3	0

3.	with grandparents	196	178	11	7	0
4.	with spouse	92	89	1	2	0
5.	with children	92	87	1	3	1

Table-3 Summary of language use in home-domain

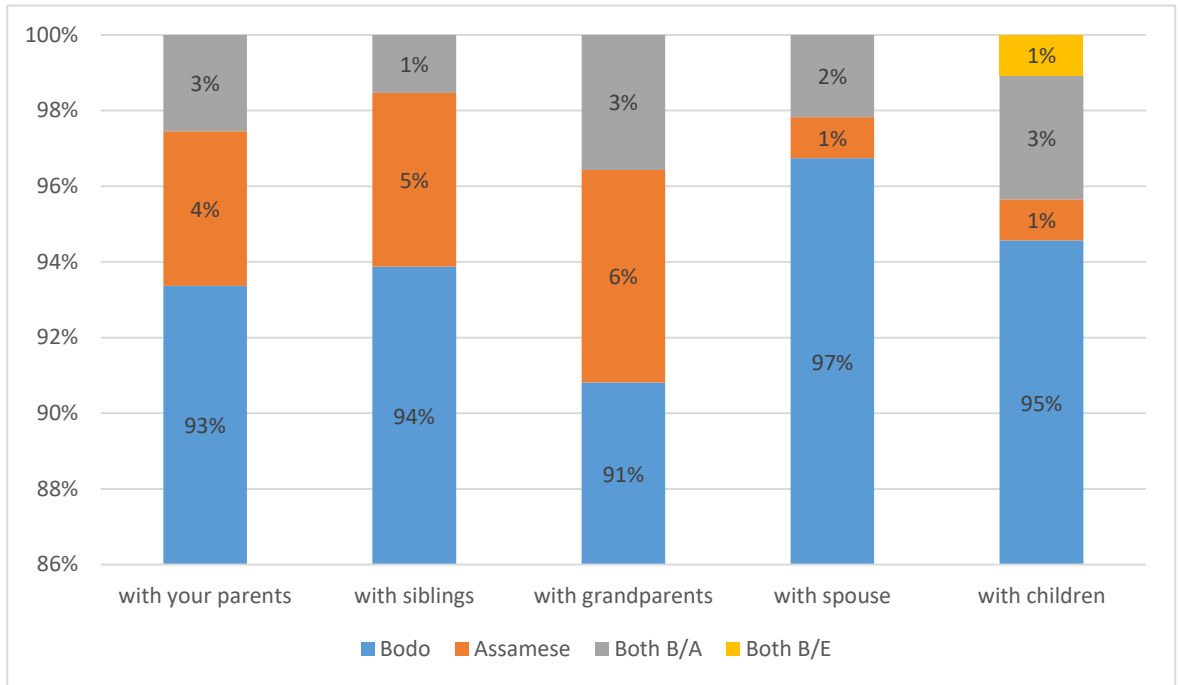
1. Home domain:

As can be seen from the Figure-6 below, 93% of the respondents use Bodo while speaking to their parents, while 4% use Assamese and 3% use both Bodo and Assamese while speaking to their parents. While speaking to their siblings 94% of the total respondents reported that they use Bodo, 5% reported of using Assamese and 1% use both Assamese and Bodo while speaking to their siblings. 91% of the respondents claimed that they use Bodo while speaking to their grandparents, while 6% use Assamese and 3% use both Bodo and Assamese while speaking to their grandparents. It can be seen from Table- 2 out of 92 respondents, 89 respondents, i.e. 97% claimed that they use only Bodo while speaking to their spouse, while only 1 of them reported as using Assamese while speaking to spouse and 2 respondents use both Assamese as well as Bodo while speaking to their spouse. Out of 92 respondents, 87 respondents (95%) claimed that they use Bodo while speaking to their children, and only 1 of them use only Assamese while speaking to children, while 3 among them use both Assamese and Bodo while speaking to their children and only one responded reported as using both Bodo and English while speaking to children.

Figure-6 Language use in home domain.

(Note: Here B/A = both Bodo & Assamese and B/E= both Bodo and English)

In this study, the language use of Bodo in the family domain stands out to indicate the strong vitality of the Bodo language. On an average, 93% of the subjects reported that they speak only Bodo in the family domain.



2. Education domain: Table-4 below provides the summary of language use in education domain.

Q#	Questions	English	Bodo	Both B/E	Both A/B	Assamese
1.	Which language do you speak at school/ college?	74, 49%	36, 24%	24, 16%	12, 8%	4, 3%
2.	Which language do you speak with teachers inside the classroom?	87, 58%	23, 15%	24, 16%	12, 8%	4, 3%

3.	Which language do you speak with teachers outside the classroom?	81, 54%	36, 24%	17, 11%	12, 8%	4, 3%
4.	Which language do you speak with friends inside the classroom?	54, 36%	43, 29%	32, 21%	19, 13%	2, 1%
5.	Which language do you speak with friends outside the classroom?	22, 35%	78, 52%	9, 6%	39, 26%	2, 1%

Table-4 Summary of language use in education domain.

(Note: Here, Both B/E= Both Bodo & English and Both A/B= Both Assamese and Bodo)

From the table above it can be seen that the use of English remains dominant in education domain. It can be seen from the table above that 49% of the respondents claimed that they use English at colleges, while 24% reported that they speak in Bodo at colleges, and 16% reported that they use both English as well as Bodo, 8% of the respondents reported that use Assamese and Bodo while 3% claimed of using Assamese at school/ colleges. It can be seen that respondents reported of speaking English mostly at school/ colleges. While speaking to the teachers inside the classroom, 58% of the respondents reported that they use English. Whereas while speaking to the teacher outside the classroom, 54% respondents claimed that they use English. And 24% of the respondents claimed that they use Bodo while speaking to teacher outside the classroom while 15% of the respondents reported as using Bodo with the teachers inside the classroom. 16% of the respondents use both English and Bodo while speaking to teacher inside the classroom while 8% use both Assamese as well as Bodo and 3% use Assamese while speaking to teacher inside the classroom. 11% of the respondents reported that they use both English and Bodo while 8% use

both Bodo and Assamese and 3% use Assamese while speaking to teachers outside the classroom. It can be seen that majority of the respondents prefer to speak in English to their teachers inside the classroom as well as outside the classroom. While speaking with friends, 36% of the respondents reported that they use English inside the classroom while if it's outside the classroom, 15% respondents prefer to speak in English with their friends. 29% of the respondents as can be seen from the table above, reported that they use Bodo while speaking to friends inside the classroom, while 52% of the total respondents reported that they use Bodo while speaking with friends outside the classroom. While 21% reported that they use both English as well as Bodo while speaking with friends inside the classroom, 13% reported that they use both Bodo and Assamese and 1% reported that they prefer to speak in Assamese inside the classroom with their friends. On the contrary, while outside the classroom, 6% respondents claimed that they prefer to use both Bodo and English while speaking with their friends, 26% prefer to use both Assamese as well as Bodo and 1% use Assamese while speaking with their friends outside the classroom.

Thus, it can be seen that in the domain of education, English remained dominant. Except in the settings where the respondents are outside the classroom with their friends, in all the other settings, respondents reported their preference for English. Only while they are outside the classroom with friends, the respondents reported their maximum use of Bodo while speaking. Thus in the domain of education, English remain the dominant figure. The reason behind this can be that in colleges, the medium of instruction is mostly in English, so English remains a dominant figure in the domain of education.

3. Neighborhood domain: To draw language use pattern in the neighborhood domain, two questions were asked to the respondents, as to in which language they talk to their neighbor whose mother tongue is other than Bodo and in which language do they talk to their neighbor whose

mother tongue is Bodo. Out of 196 respondents, 192 respondents reported that they use only Bodo while speaking to their neighbor whose mother tongue is Bodo. And only 4 female respondents, 2 belonging to the age group 18-25 years and 2 belonging to the age group 26-40 years responded that they use mostly Assamese even while talking to their neighbors whose mother tongue is Bodo. 98% of the total respondents use only Bodo while speaking to their neighbor whose mother tongue is Bodo. So it can be said that the vitality of Bodo language is strong in the area as the speakers prefer to speak in Bodo with their neighbors and they are keen in retaining their language. Only 2% of the total respondents claimed that they prefer to use Assamese even while speaking to their neighbors whose mother tongue is Bodo. Talking about as to which language do they use while talking to their neighbors whose mother tongue is not Bodo, the majority of the respondents reported that they use Assamese while speaking to them. This shows the bilingual ability of the respondents.

4. Market-place: Regarding the market domain, out of 196 respondents, 195 respondents reported that they use only Bodo while speaking with a Bodo merchant and only one respondents belonging to the age group of 18-25 years claimed that she use Assamese while speaking with a Bodo merchant. However, while coming in contact with a non Bodo merchant, 88% of the respondents (168 respondents) reported that they use Assamese while speaking with a non Bodo merchant. While the remaining 28 respondents (12%) claimed that they use either Assamese or Hindi, and some even reported that they use either Assamese or Bodo with a merchant who is not a Bodo speakers. Here it may be noted that some merchants because of their regular contact with Bodo speakers, can understand Bodo although they can't speak back to them, so in that case some respondents reported that they use even Bodo while speaking with a non Bodo merchants. While going to a shop, or railway stations, 66 respondents (34%) reported that they use only Assamese

during transaction, while 47 respondents (24%) claimed that they use both Assamese and Hindi during transaction in railway stations or while going to a shop. The rest 83 respondents (i.e. 42%) claimed that they use either Bodo or Hindi or Assamese whichever is applicable, during transaction in railway stations or in shops. Thus, it can be seen that Assamese is used mainly in the domain of market as most of the merchants in the area used to be a non Bodo merchant, however if the merchant is a Bodo speaker, they always use only Bodo while speaking to a merchant, except one, as reported in the data.

5. At office: While going to an office, 56 out of 108 respondents claimed that they use only Assamese while speaking with an office person, while 52 of them responded that they use either English or Bodo or Assamese or Hindi, whichever language is applicable to them while speaking with an office people. While writing official letters, out of 102 respondents, 94 of them claimed that they write official letters in English, while 8 among them reported they use either Assamese or English while writing an official letters. Thus it can be seen that Assamese is used mainly in office domain where 52% of the respondents claimed that they speak in Assamese with an office person, while 48% claimed that they use either English or Bodo or Hindi or Assamese as is applicable. And while writing official letters English remained dominant as 92% of the total respondents claimed that they use only English while writing an official letters.

3.6 Summary

Thus, in this chapter the language ability of the speakers and their bilingual ability in Assamese and their language use in five domains are examined. It can be seen from the above analysis that Bodo remained the dominant figure in home domain, while at education domain, as it is a domain of mixed grouped people, English can be seen as a dominant figure, however the respondents reported of using Bodo in the maximum number when they are outside the classroom with their

friends. Also in the neighborhood domain, 98% of the respondents reported of using only Bodo with their Bodo neighbors, and even in the market domain 99% of the respondents reported as using Bodo with a Bodo merchant. Whenever they are within their own community group people, they always prefer to speak in Bodo, hardly throughout the analysis it was seen using other language when they are within their own community group people. Only when they are in mixed-group domains, it can be seen that they use other language(s) as is applicable to the situation and place.

Thus, this chapter provides an answer to the research question “What is the vitality of the Bodo language in the district of Udalguri? Is it likely to be maintained in the foreseeable future?” The result from the analysis of this chapter indicates that Bodo has a strong vitality. It can be predicted strongly that Bodo is likely to be maintained in the foreseeable future.

CHAPTER- 4

LANGUAGE ATTITUDE

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the language attitude of the Bodo speakers of Udalguri district of Assam. The findings of this chapter contribute to answer the question: if the Bodo speakers of the Udalguri district have positive attitude towards their own language. Further it also tries to answer the question if the attitude towards the Bodo language differ according to age groups and according to gender? For this purpose the respondents were divided into three age groups: 18-25 years, 26-40 years and above 40 years of age. 35% of the total number of respondents belonged to the age group of 18-25 years, 33% to the age group of 26-40 years and 32% to the age group of above 40 years. As attitude towards language tend to change along with age, so three age groups were taken into consideration. As the present study also tries to see if the attitude towards the Bodo language differ according to gender, the respondents were divided into male and female group. 49% of the respondents belonged to female category and 51% of the total respondents are male.

4.2 Social stereotypes

The word stereotype is derived from the Greek word (stereo) 'solid' and (typos) 'impression', hence 'solid impression.' A stereotype is '...a fixed, over generalized belief about a particular group or class of people' (Cardwell, 1996). Stereotypes generally constitute a specific form of verbalization of attitude. Therefore, eight questions were placed in the questionnaire to

draw the respondents' social stereotypes, as stereotypes constitute an articulation of attitude.

Table- 5 provides a summary of the respondents' social stereotypes.

Q#	Questions	English	18-25yrs	26-40yrs	above 40yrs	Male	Female
1.	Which school do you think is better?	English	62	45	34	69	72
		Bodo	6	21	28	31	24
2.	In which medium school will you prefer to get your child admitted?	English	66	45	29	70	70
		Bodo	2	20	22	33	21
		Assamese	0	1	11	7	5
	State whether you agree or disagree:						
3.	Cultural identity can be maintained without even learning mother- tongue	Agree	15	16	11	19	23
		Disagree	53	50	51	81	73
4.	Learning state language is more important than learning mother- tongue	Agree	23	24	34	43	38
		Disagree	45	42	28	57	58
5.	Your ability to speak English will broaden your scope for getting better job	Agree	61	48	41	77	73
		Disagree	7	18	21	23	23
6.	Your ability to speak English makes you feel superior among those who cannot speak English	Agree	33	27	22	35	47
		Disagree	35	39	40	65	49
7.	Learning Bodo and passing it to the next generation is your responsibility	Agree	62	63	61	94	92
		Disagree	6	3	1	6	4
8.	You feel inferior to speak in Bodo among other language speakers	Agree	2	3	10	9	6
		Disagree	66	53	52	91	90

Table-5 Summary of respondents' social stereotypes

Thus table-5 provides the summary of the respondents' social stereotypes where the respondents are divided into three age groups and between male and female. As can be seen from Table-5, a total of 62 respondents belonging to 18-25 age group showed their preference for English medium school, while 45 respondents belonging to 26-40 age groups and 34 respondents belonging to above 40 age group showed their preference for English medium school. While only 6 respondents belonging to 18-25 age groups showed their preference for Bodo medium school, 21 among 26-40 age group and 28 respondents belonging to above 40 age group showed their preference for Bodo medium school. It can also be seen from the table that 69 male respondents and 72 female respondents showed their preference for English medium, while 31 male respondents and 42 female respondents showed their preference for Bodo medium school. To the next question as to in which medium school would they prefer their children to get admitted, 66 respondents belonging to 18-25 age group, 45 respondents belonging to 26-40 age group and 29 respondents belonging to above 40 age groups gave their responses as English medium school; while only 2 respondents belonging to 18-25 age groups and 20 respondents belonging to 25-40 age group and 22 respondents belonging to above 40 age group gave their responses for Bodo medium school. It can also be noticed that no respondents belonging to 18-25 age group is willing to get their children admitted in Assamese medium school, while only one respondent belonging to 25-40 age group gave his/ her response as Assamese medium school and 11 respondents belonging to above 40 age group admitted their responses for Assamese medium school. Also it can be seen from the table above that 70 male respondents as well as 70 female respondents preferred their children to get admitted in English medium school, while 33 male respondents and 21 female respondents preferred their children to get admitted in Assamese medium school and

only 7 male respondents and 5 female respondents showed their preference for Assamese medium school.

Figure 7 shows the percentage of the respondents' responses to question no. 1 of Table-5 and Figure 8 shows the percentage of the respondents' responses to question no. 2 of the Table-5 above.

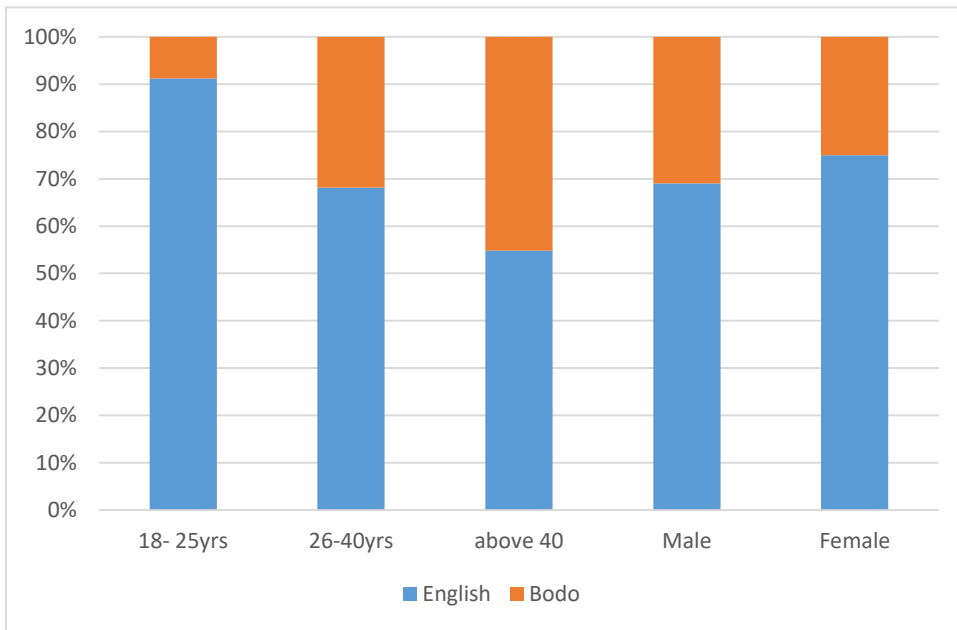


Figure-7 Figure showing the respondents' responses to question no. 1

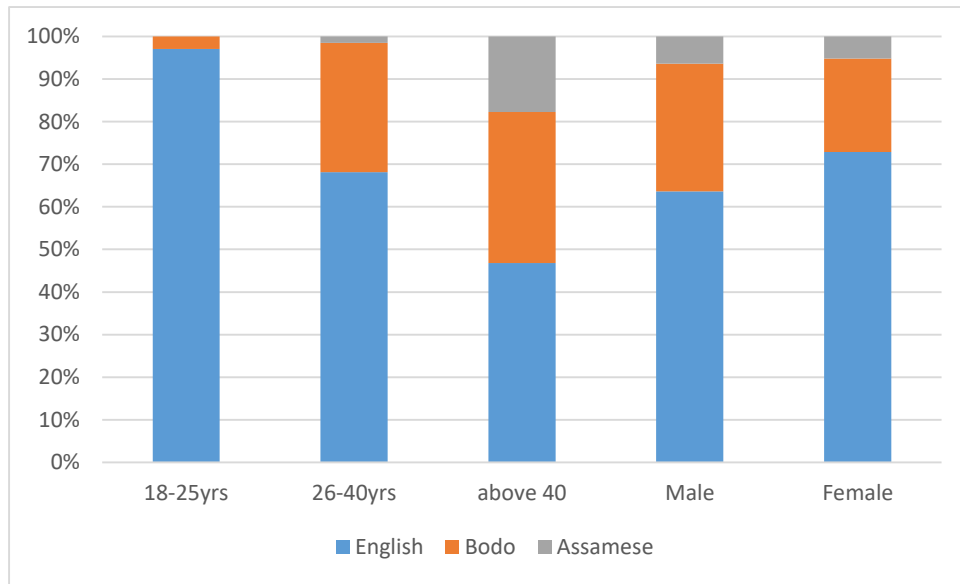


Figure-8 Respondents responses to question no.2

Thus, it can be seen from Figure 7 and 8 that in both the cases preference for English medium school remains high in the age group of 18-25 years and the lowest preference can be seen in the age group of above 40 years for English medium school. But not much difference can be seen between male and female groups where the preference for both the sex groups remained almost same. Also the preference for Bodo medium school is seen the highest in above 40 years age group in both Figure 7 and Figure 8 where the preference for the same is seen the lowest in 18-25 years age group. But again not much difference can be seen for the preference for Bodo medium school between both male and female. And it can be seen from Figure- 8 that no preference was shown for Assamese medium school by the age group of 18-25 years while a few preference can be seen in the age group of above 40 years.

Below is the figure of the percentage of the respondents' responses from question no.3 to question no.8.

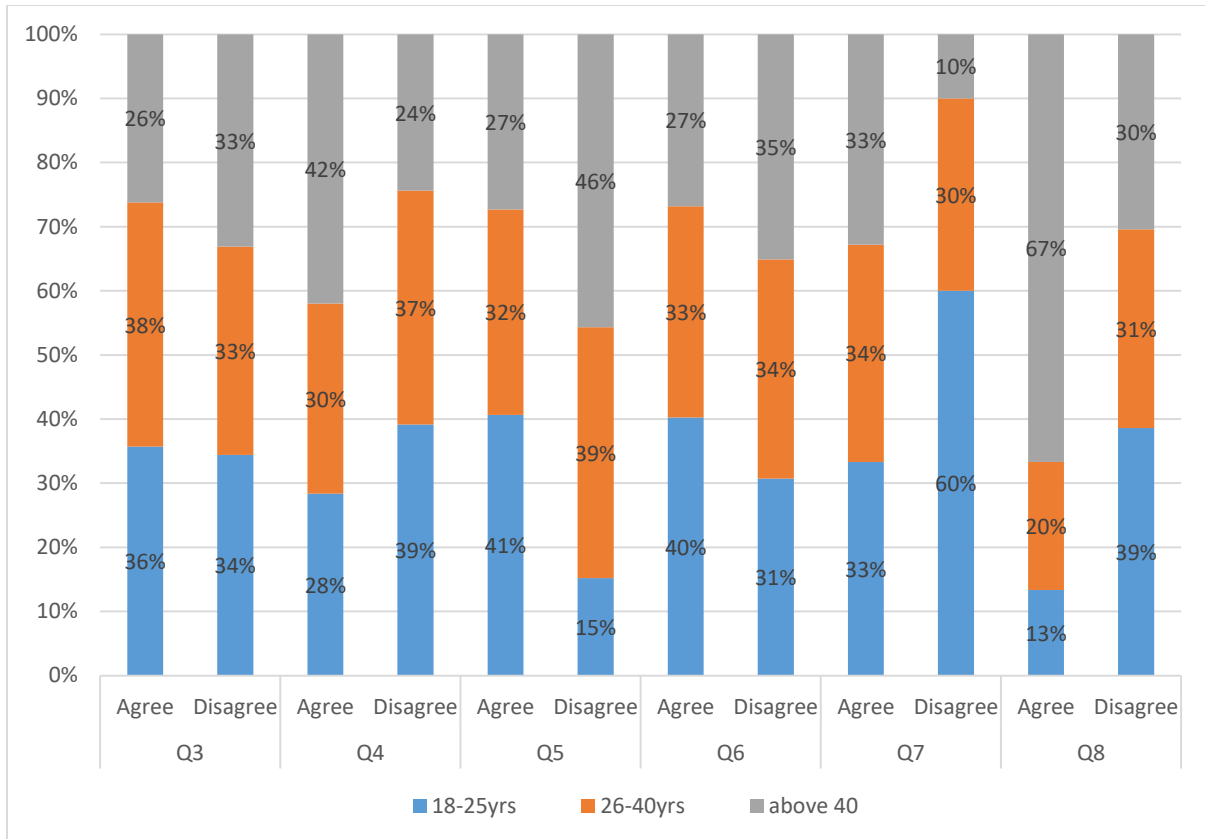


Figure-9 Percentage of respondents' social stereotypes

From the above Figure-9 it can be seen that in question no.4 42% of the respondents belonging to above 40 years age group agree that learning state language is more important than learning mother tongue, whereas only 28% of the respondents belonging to 18-25 age group agree to it. Also in question no.5 it can be noticed that 46% of the above 40 years age group respondents disagree to the point that their ability to speak English will broaden their scope for getting better job while only 15% respondents belonging to age group 18-25 years disagree to it. Whereas it can be seen that 60% of the 18-25 years age group respondents disagree that learning Bodo and passing it to the next generation is not their responsibility, only 10% above 40 years age groups disagree to it. Also it is noteworthy that 67% of the above 40 years age group respondents agree that they

feel inferior to speak Bodo in front of other language speakers, but only 13% respondents belonging to 18-25 years age groups agree to it. Thus, a distinction can be noticed in the point of agreement and disagreement between the three age groups, and it can be clearly seen from the figure- 9 above. However, such noteworthy distinction could not be seen between the two genders.

4.3 Language attitude

Richards et al. (1985) defines language attitude as the feeling that speakers of different languages or varieties of a language have towards each others' language or their own. The way people look around things surrounding him/her differs, in a way people hold different views and opinions about it. In the same manner, people holds different opinions or feelings towards different language(s) surrounding him/her including their own language. In language attitude studies, some studies are strictly limited to attitudes about language itself, and some studies are broadened to include attitudes towards speakers of a particular language or variety. Further broadening of the studies treat all sorts of behaviour concerning language including attitudes towards language maintenance and planning efforts (Fasold 1984:148).

The present study is limited to the study of language attitude of the Bodo speakers of Udalguri district of Assam. Ten questions were asked in the questionnaire focusing on eliciting the speakers' attitude towards Bodo language and its other speakers. Table-6 summarizes the responses.

Q#	Questions		18-25	26-40	above 40	Male	Female
1	Do you think you should continue to speak in Bodo and pass it to the next generation?	Yes	91%	95%	98%	96%	94%
		No	9%	5%	2%	4%	6%
2	Do you think a Bodo should be able to speak in Bodo?	Yes	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
		No	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
3	Do you think a Bodo should know how to write in Bodo?	Yes	100%	94%	79%	91%	92%
		No	0%	6%	21%	9%	8%
4	Do you think a Bodo should know how to read in Bodo?	Yes	100%	94%	77%	91%	91%
		No	0%	6%	23%	9%	9%
5	Do you think being Bodo is better than being an Assamese?	Yes	93%	95%	85%	94%	89%
		No	7%	5%	8%	4%	9%
6	When you go to a market and see that the same product is being sold by a Bodo merchant as well as other speaker merchant at the same price, from whom would you prefer to buy the product?	Same	0%	0%	6%	2%	2%
		Bodo	100%	86%	94%	94%	93%
7	When you go to a market to sell oranges and two persons, one Bodo and speaker and the other speaks other language, to whom would you prefer to sell the oranges?	Anyone	0%	14%	6%	6%	7%
		Bodo	100%	85%	87%	92%	90%
8	If a drama is being telecast in the T.V, where in one channel Assamese version and in other Bodo translation is shown, which would you prefer to watch?	Anyone	0%	15%	13%	8%	10%
		Bodo	98%	88%	73%	90%	83%
9	If you want to marry, would you prefer your spouse to be a Bod speaker or other speaker?	Assamese	2%	12%	27%	10%	17%
		Bodo	92%	84%	92%	86%	93%
10	If you are married and have children, whom would you prefer your child to get married with, with a Bodo speaker or other language speaker?	Anyone	8%	16%	8%	14%	7%
		Bodo	89%	71%	81%	81%	80%
		Anyone	11%	29%	19%	19%	20%

Table- 6 Summary of the respondents' responses on language attitude

Figure 10(a) and 10(b) is a summary of the responses to all the questions in Table-6 as a whole, considering all the age groups and gender together.

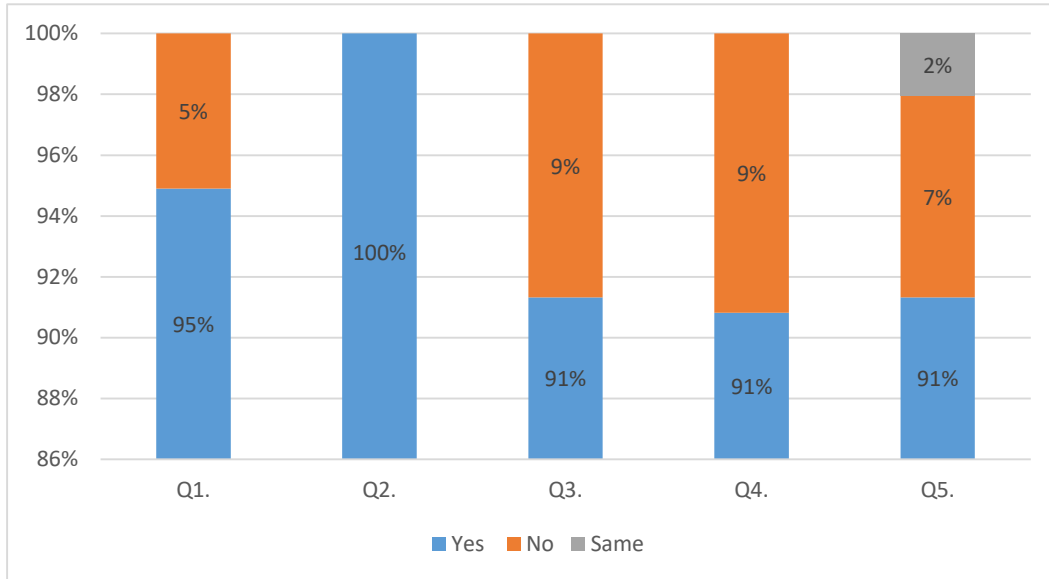


Figure 10(a) Responses percentage from question no 1 to 5.

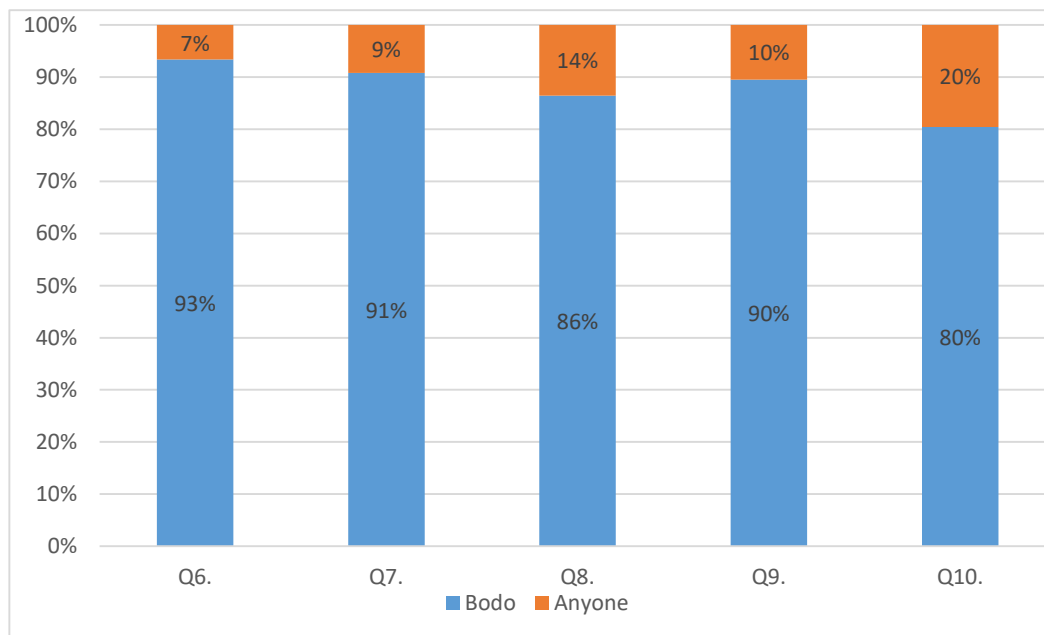


Figure 10(b) Responses percentage from question no 6 to 10.

Based on figure 10(a) and 10(b) it can be seen that the respondents have more inclination towards their own language. From Figure 10(a), it can be seen that 95% of the total respondents think that they should continue to speak in Bodo and pass it to the next generation. Regarding knowing to speak in Bodo, all the respondents (100% respondents) think that a Bodo should be able to speak in Bodo. They strongly believe that a Bodo should know how to speak in Bodo. Also 91% of the respondents think that along with knowing how to speak in Bodo, they should also know how to read and write in Bodo, while 9% of the respondents think that knowing how to speak in Bodo is enough and that knowing how to read and write in Bodo is not necessary for them. It can also be seen from Figure 10(a) that 91% of the total respondents think that being Bodo is better than being an Assamese, in fact they feel proud to be a Bodo, however, 7% of the respondents think that being Bodo is not better than being an Assamese, while 4% of the respondents consider both way same. For them neither being Bodo, nor being Assamese is better, both are equal for them. From this it can be seen that the respondents have a very strong positive attitude towards their language.

Again in Figure 10(b) it can also be seen that the respondents' percentage is high towards Bodo. People's attitude towards a language can also be drawn from their attitude towards the speakers of that language, so with that thought in mind, 5 questions were placed in the questionnaire to draw Bodo peoples' attitude towards other Bodo speakers. From Figure 10(b), it can be seen that the percentage remained high in all the five questions towards Bodo. 93% of the total respondents preferred to buy a product from the Bodo merchant, while only 7% respondents claimed that they will buy the product from anyone. Also 91% of the respondents preferred to sell their product to a Bodo speaker, if two customers, one Bodo speaker and the other is other language speaker, although both are agreeing to offer the same price. To the question, if a drama is being

telecast, in the T.V. where in one channel Assamese version and in other Bodo translation is shown, which would you prefer to watch, 86% of the respondents preferred to watch the Bodo translation of the drama, while only 14% respondents claimed that they would watch the Assamese version. In the situation of marriage, 90% of the respondents preferred their spouse to be a Bodo speaker, while only 10% of the total respondents showed neutral attitude. With regards to their children's marriage as well the majority of the respondents showed their preferences for the Bodo speaker. 80% of the total respondents want that their children should get married with a Bodo speaker, and only 20% respondents showed their neutral attitude.

To summarise, it can be said from the above elaboration that the speakers have positive attitude towards their own language and also they have a strong positive attitude towards other Bodo speakers.

4.4 A comparison of language attitude

Various factors, such as gender, age, education, occupation, place of residence, etc. may affect people's language attitude. In this study, only the factors of age and gender is taken into consideration. The study tries to find out if the Bodo people's attitude towards the language differ according to age group and gender. For this purpose a chi-square test was done.

In order to run a chi-square test to find out whether the attitude towards the language differs according to age group with statistical difference, a null hypothesis is stated as "There is no difference in the attitude towards language between the three age groups, i.e. between 18-25 years, 26-40 years and above 40 years".

Running a chi-square test gives the result of $p < 0.05$. This result rejects the null hypothesis and indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the three age groups. This chi-square test result is based on the responses from all the questions in Table-6 as a whole. Below in Table-7, the result of chi-square test applied to each questions are presented using the same null hypothesis.

Q#	P value	Statistical significance
1.	0.169801	No
3.	0.001534	Yes
4.	0.000628	Yes
5.	0.138195	No
6.	0.062303	No
7.	0.106546	No
8.	0.000100	Yes
9.	0.255149	No
10.	0.043429	No

Table- 7 The chi- square test results of questions concerning attitude towards language of three age groups: 18-25 years, 26-40 years and above 40 years.

Thus, it can be seen from Table-7 that in questions 3, 4 and 8 the three age groups can be demonstrated to differ in their attitude towards the language with statistical significance at $p < 0.05$.

Again, in order to run a chi-square test, to find out whether the attitude towards the language differs according to gender with the help of statistical difference, a null hypothesis is stated as “There is a no difference in the attitude towards language between male and female”.

Running chi-square test gives the result of $p= 0.61$. This result does not reject the null hypothesis and indicates that the difference between male and female in their attitude towards language is not significant.

The above chi-square test is based on the responses from all the questions as a whole. The following deals with each single question using the same null hypothesis. The results of the chi-square test applied to each questions in Table-6 are presented in Table-8.

Q#	P value	Statistical significance
1.	0.474219	No
3.	0.868333	No
4.	0.927591	No
5.	0.317449	No
6.	0.716411	No
7.	0.558114	No
8.	0.205693	No
9.	0.149106	No
10.	0.826486	No

Table- 8 The chi-square test results of questions concerning attitude towards language of male and female.

Thus, it can be seen from Table- 8 that in all the questions there is no statistical differences in the attitude of the speakers towards their language among male and female.

Thus, it can be said that there is no difference in the attitude of the Bodo speakers of Udalguri district with regards to gender. However, differences in the attitude towards language can be seen with regards to the three age groups.

4.5 Summary

In this chapter, the language attitude of the Bodo speakers of the Udalguri district of Assam are investigated which includes their social stereotypes, attitude towards Bodo language and its other speakers. The result of the analysis indicated that majority of the Bodo speakers have positive attitude towards their language and its other speakers. Thus, it answers the research question, “Do the Bodo speakers of Udalguri district have positive attitude towards their own language?” The answer to this question is yes, the Bodo speakers of Udalguri district have positive attitude towards their own language.

Also, running a chi-square test the chapter tried to find out if there is any significant difference in the attitude towards language between male and female and between different age groups. The result drawn from the chi-square test indicated that the difference between the three age groups: 18-25 years, 26-40 years and above 40 years, is statistically significant. However there was no statistical difference between male and female. This result answered the research question: “Does the language attitude towards Bodo differ according to age groups?” And is there any noteworthy variation between male and female’s attitude towards their language?” The result thus drawn from the analysis of this chapter is that there is a difference in attitude towards the language between the three age groups taken into consideration, however there is no noteworthy variation between male and female in attitude towards their language.

CHAPTER- 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

Language attitude plays an important role in a community where different languages co-exists. People generally hold positive or negative attitude towards their own language or other language(s). Assam, located just below the Eastern Himalayan foothill, can be said to inhabit multi-ethnic and multi-religious society. Substantial number of languages including Bodo are spoken in the state of Assam. Bodo, which is surrounded by many other language communities, the study of language use and attitude of the speakers towards their own language remains highly unexplored. With this objective in view the present study was conducted to assess the vitality of Bodo language and the people's attitude towards their own language, in the district of Udalguri, which is one of the 27 administrative districts of Assam. Questionnaire was the main tool employed to elicit data from 196 respondents residing in the district of Udalguri whose mother tongue is Bodo.

5.2 Language use

To draw the pattern of language use by the respondents, three sets of questions divided into Group-A, Group-B and Group-C were employed. The main aim of Group-A questionnaire was to draw the background information of language use of the respondents, while Group-B focused on eliciting the language ability of the speakers in their mother tongue and other language(s) and also

on eliciting the bilingual ability of the speakers in Assamese. Finally, Group-C questionnaire was concentrated on examining language use pattern in five domains.

From the discussion in Chapter-3, it was seen that nearly 70% of the respondents showed their preference in speaking Bodo. Also from the discussion in Chapter-3, it can be stated that intergroup marriage is a rare phenomenon among the Bodo speakers of the Udalguri district. And it could also be observed that the parents are very keen about their children learning their mother-tongue as 92% of the respondents claimed of learning Bodo first as a child. It could also be seen that multilingualism is a common phenomenon among the Bodo speakers of the Udalguri district.

Language use in five domains, namely: home domain, education domain, neighbourhood domain, market-place domain and office domain were also examined. The study revealed that on an average, 93% of the respondents use only Bodo in family domain. Bodo has the absolute dominance in the family domain (Figure 6 in Chapter-3). However, in the domain of education, English remained the dominant figure. Also in the domain of neighbourhood, the study revealed that almost all the speakers use only Bodo while speaking to their Bodo neighbours and only with other language speaker neighbours they use other language than Bodo. The same holds in the domain of market place domain. And in the domain of office, Assamese remained the dominant figure as 52% of the respondents claimed that they use Assamese while speaking to office person. Throughout the analysis in Chapter- 3, it was seen that Bodo remained a dominant figure whenever the speakers are within their own community group. Hardly throughout the analysis was it found Bodo speakers using other language within their community. Only in the mixed-group domains, it was seen that they use other language(s) as is applicable to the situation and place.

The analysis from Chapter-3 showed that the usage of Bodo is at its safe side. It can be concluded that the Bodo language has a very strong vitality in the hands of the Bodo speakers of the Udalguri district of Assam.

5.3 Language attitude

The attitude of the Bodo speakers of the Udalguri district of Assam was examined and discussed in detail in Chapter-4. Social factors of gender and age was taken into consideration. Respondents were divided into three age groups: 18-25 years (35% of the total respondents), 26-40 years (33% of the total respondents) and above 40 years (32% respondents). And 49% of the respondents belonged to the female category and 51% of the respondents were male.

From the discussion in Chapter-4, it was revealed that most of the respondents have positive attitude towards their language and also towards its other speakers. All the 196 respondents claimed that a Bodo speakers should be able to speak in Bodo. From the discussion in Chapter- 4, it was seen that majority of the Bodo people preferred English medium school and want their children to enrol in English medium school, however they are also conscious that as a Bodo speaker one should know how to read and write in Bodo, as approximately 91% of the total respondents claimed that a Bodo should know how to read and write in Bodo. This demonstrates that Bodo people have positive attitude reading and writing in Bodo. Also, from the discussion in Chapter- 4, it was revealed that majority of the Bodo people have positive attitude towards other Bodo speakers.

Also, to see if there is any noteworthy difference in the variable of age and gender in the attitude towards language, chi-square test was conducted. And the result of the test revealed that

there is no significant difference in the attitude towards language between male and female. However, the chi-square test result demonstrated that the difference in the language attitude between the three age groups taken into consideration in the present study was statistically significant.

5.4 Final remarks

Thus the findings of the study indicated that the Bodo language has a strong vitality in the district of Udalguri. In the present study, due to time constraint only the district of Udalguri was taken into consideration. However, for further research, it is recommended that the other three districts of Bodoland namely, Kokrajhar, Baksa and Chirang can be taken into consideration. And then a comparison between all the four districts can be made. This will create a general awareness among the speakers of the language about the status and future of their language.

Also it is recommended that some other social variables like income, education, place of residence can be taken into consideration and also some other domains like: friendship, work-place, place of worship, strangers, etc. can be included. Some other methods other than questionnaire and interview, like matched-guise technique and participant observation method can also be used, given enough time and space.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE:

The following questionnaire is a part of my study for obtaining M.Phil. degree. Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability. The success of my present study is largely dependent upon your serious and honest answers. Thank you.

PART- I BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Name:

Age Range: 18- 25 years [], 26-40 years [], above 40 years []

Sex: Male [] Female []

Religion:

Occupation:

Mother tongue:

Place of birth:

Place of residence:

EDUCATION

PLACE

MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

Primary:

Middle:

Secondary:

Graduation:

Post-graduation:

PART- II LANGUGAE USE AND LANGUAGE ABILITY:

GROUP-A

1. Which language do you prefer to speak?
2. Which language do you prefer to write?
3. Which language do you prefer to read?
4. Which language did you learn first as a child and where and from whom?
5. Which language do you speak best?
6. Are both your mother and father Bodo?
7. Do your mother and father speak Bodo to each other?
8. Which language do your parents use while speaking to you?
9. If married is your spouse Bodo?
10. Does s(he) speaks Bodo?
11. If you have children do your children speak in Bodo?
12. While praying, which language do you use?
13. Which language(s) T.V. programs do you watch?
14. Which language(s) songs do you listen?

15. Which language newspaper do you read?

GROUP- B

LANGUAGE ABILITY:

Tick the box according to your level of competence:

1. How well can you speak your mother tongue?

Very well well not very well not at all

2. How well can you read in your mother tongue?

Very well well not very well not at all

3. How well can you write in your mother tongue?

Very well well not very well not at all

4. Which other language(s) can you speak? Specify the name of the language and tick the box according to your level of competence.

a) _____ Very well well not very well.

b) _____ Very well well not very well.

c) _____ Very well well not very well.

d) _____ Very well well not very well.

5. Which other language(s) can you read? Specify the name of the language and tick the box according to your level of competence.

a) _____ Very well well not very well.

b) _____ Very well well not very well.

c) _____ Very well well not very well.

d) _____ Very well well not very well.

6. Which other language(s) can you write? Specify the name of the language and tick the box according to the level of your competence.

a) _____ Very well well not very well.

b) _____ Very well well not very well.

c) _____ Very well well not very well.

d) _____ Very well well not very well.

BILINGUAL ABILITY:

1. If someone asks you in Assamese about the location of a particular place, can you tell him or not?
2. Can you tell the location of the place where you reside in Assamese?
3. Can you ask and tell the time of the day and day of the week in Assamese?
4. Can you narrate a story in Assamese?
5. While speaking in Assamese, do you feel lack of words sometimes?

6. Can you interpret (i.e. translate words from Bodo) in Assamese?
7. Is it easier to speak in Assamese than in Bodo?

GROUP-C LANGUAGE USE IN DIFFERENT DOMAINS

1. Home domain:

Which language do you use while speaking:

With your parents _____ , with spouse _____

With siblings _____ , with children _____

With grandparents _____

2. Education domain (if at school/ college):

Which language do you speak at school/ College?

Which language do you speak with teacher in the classroom?

Which language do you speak with teacher outside the classroom?

Which language do you speak with friends inside the classroom?

Which language do you speak with friends outside the classroom?

3. Neighborhood domain:

In which language do you talk to your neighbor whose mother tongue is other than Bodo?

In which language do you talk to your neighbor whose mother tongue is Bodo?

4. Market- place:

Which language do you use while talking to a merchant who is not a Bodo speaker?

What language do you speak at market with a Bodo merchant?

In shops, railways stations, etc which language do you use mostly?

5. At offices:

What language do you speak when you go to the government offices?

In what language do you usually write official letters?

PART- III SOCIAL STEREOTYPES AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS BODO LANGUAGE

AND OTHER BODO SPEAKERS:

A. SOCIAL STEREOTYPES:

1. Which school do you think is better?

- a) English medium school [] b) Bodo medium school []

2. In which medium school will you prefer to get your child admitted?

- a) English medium school [] b) Bodo medium school []

- c) Assamese medium school []

State whether you agree or disagree to the following points:

3. Cultural identity can be maintained without even learning mother- tongue.

- Agree Disagree

4. Learning state language is more important than learning mother- tongue.

Agree Disagree

5. Your ability to speak English will broaden your scope for getting better job.

Agree Disagree

6. Your ability to speak English makes you feel superior among those who cannot speak English.

Agree Disagree

7. Learning Bodo and passing it to the next generation is your responsibility.

Agree Disagree

8. You feel inferior to speak in Bodo among other language speakers.

Agree Disagree

9. You feel proud of your mother tongue.

Agree Disagree

10. Would you rate English as better language than Bodo.

Agree Disagree

11. Would you rate Assamese language as better than Bodo.

Agree Disagree

ATTITUDE TOWARDS BODO LANGUAGE AND OTHER BODO SPEAKERS

1. Do you think you should continue to speak Bodo and pass it (Bodo language) to your next generation?
2. Do you think a Bodo should be able to speak in Bodo?
3. Do you think a Bodo should be able to write in Bodo?
4. Do you think a Bodo should be able to read in Bodo?
5. Do you think being Bodo is better than being Assamese?
6. If a drama is being telecast in the T.V, where in one channel Assamese version and in the other Bodo translation is shown, which would you prefer to watch?
7. If you go to a market and see that the same product is being sold by a Bodo merchant as well as other speaker merchant at the same price, from whom would you prefer to buy the product?
8. Suppose you go to a market to sell oranges, and two persons, one Bodo speaker and the other speaks other language, both offering the same price, to whom would you prefer to sell the oranges?
9. If you want to marry, would you prefer your spouse to be a Bodo speaker or other language speaker?
10. If you are married and have children, whom would you prefer your child to get married with, with a Bodo speaker or with other language speaker?