

Multilingualism in North-East India

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The British had divided their Indian empire arbitrarily into different provinces for administration. After attaining her independence in 1947, India classified the units of the union into administrable parts called states based on the majority language spoken in the territory and geographical contiguity. This process is well known as linguistic reorganisation of the states of India. The *Report of the State Reorganization Committee* (1955) at page. 212 had said that *'The scheme of redistribution of state territories which we have recommended will result in many cases in bringing together people speaking a common language... there are obvious limitations to the realisations of the unilingualism at the state level, the limiting factors being the following: (i) not all the language groups are so placed that they can be grouped into separate states; (ii) there are large number of bilingual belts between different linguistic Zones; and (iii) there exists areas with a mixed population even within unilingual areas'*. Since then on some occasions the principle of major language is given a go by to the political, social and administrative reasons resulting in the splitting of some states resulting in further reorganisation.

The Indian Union as on today has 28 States and 8 Union Territories as administrative units. Popularly, Indian states based on their geographical location are identified as South Indian, North Indian, East Indian, West Indian and the states of the North-East India. The North-East India comprises of 8 states: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. The dates on which these states came into existence are as follows:

Dates on which the States came into existence

	State	Date		State	Date
1	Assam	Jan 26, 1950	5	Tripura	Jan 21, 1972
2	Nagaland	Dec 1, 1963	6	Sikkim	May 16, 1975
3	Manipur	Jan 21, 1972	7	Arunachal Pradesh	Feb 20, 1987
4	Meghalaya	Jan 21, 1972	8	Mizoram	Feb 20, 1987

According to the 2011 Census, India has 1369 mother tongues, grouped into 22 Scheduled languages and 99 Non-scheduled languages. Indian languages belong to (1) Indo-

European (a) Indo-Aryan [78.05%] (b) Iranian[N] (c) Germanic [0.02%] (2) Dravidian [19.64%] (3) Austro-Asiatic [1.11%] (4) Tibeto-Burmese [1.01%] and (5) Semito-Hamitic [N] families. South India dominates with Dravidian family of languages The North, East and West India are dominated by the Indo-Aryan languages. The North-East India is dominated by the Tibeto-Burmese languages.

For ages India has been a multilingual mosaic. It has been so built that every language or dialect under the Indian sun always had some role to play. No doubt that many languages and dialects were despised and looked down upon, and some were even banned and banished, but somehow multilingualism survived. People always had some pride in their own languages and dialects and were ready to show their loyalty by assigning some roles or the other to their languages and dialects. So, Indian multilingualism is not a post-independence phenomenon. Multilingualism existed since centuries. It has got the new impetus since independence and growing fast because of movement of people, spread of education, trade and communication. The *Handbook of Sociolinguistics* Edited by Florian Coulmas (1998) says that the term multilingualism ‘*can refer to either the language use or the competence of an individual or to the language situation in an entire nation or society*’. In a multilingual state/country, in addition to the speaker’s mother tongue / language many people tend to know/speak another one or two or more languages. A distinction between individual/societal bi/multilingualism is made, wherein the individuals or society per say know more languages.

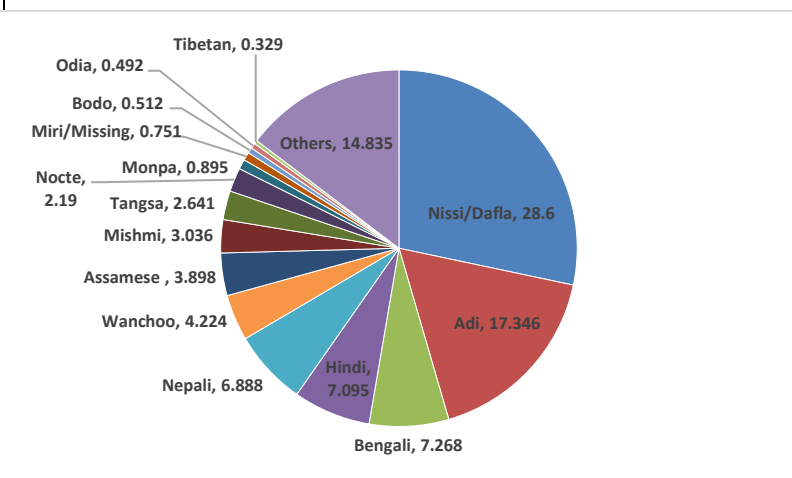
While studying bi/multilingualism to understand the phenomenon in its entirety it is essential to study why and how people are becoming multilingual - that is the reasons for becoming multilingual; in which language they are becoming multilingual; are they becoming multilingual due to internal reasons or external causes; what kind of connection exists between languages of multilingualism; to what extent the multilingualism is stay able in individuals and the society. The Census of India since decades is consciously gathering information about the number of speakers speaking the first subsidiary languages and the second subsidiary languages. The first subsidiary languages provide information on bilingualism and the second subsidiary languages provide an insight into the trilingualism.

This paper attempts to provide a profile of multilingualism of the North-East Indian states based on the language tables of the Census of India and other sources. All these states, unlike most of the other states of the country are linguistically extremely heterogeneous and unique. So, language profile of each state is discussed first and then the North-East as a unit is deliberated.

Languages of Arunachal Pradesh:2011

The Official language of Arunachal Pradesh is English. Major language of the state is Nissi / Dafla. It is spoken by 28.600% of the population of the state. The percentage of speakers of other languages is given in the table and illustrated in the graph.

	Language	%
1	Nissi/Dafla	28.600
2	Adi	17.346
3	Bengali	7.268
4	Hindi	7.095
5	Nepali	6.888
6	Wanchoo	4.224
7	Assamese	3.898
8	Mishmi	3.036
9	Tangsa	2.641
10	Nocte	2.190
11	Monpa	0.895
12	Miri/Missing	0.751
13	Bodo	0.512
14	Odia	0.492
15	Tibetan	0.329
16	Others	14.835



Multilingualism in Arunachal Pradesh

The percentage of bilingualism and multilingualism are indices of spread of languages among speakers of other languages and the names of first and second subsidiary languages indicate the people's choice of the language. In Arunachal Pradesh 64.026% of the population are bilingual. Among five statistically larger languages bilingualism among three language speakers Adi, Bengali and Nepali is above the state average. Hindi is the first subsidiary language preferred by the speakers of these 4 languages- Nissi/Dafla, Adi, Bengali and Nepali. As second subsidiary language speakers of Nissi/Dafla and Adi have English and Bengali, Nepali speakers have Assamese. Hindi speakers are least bilingual and they have English and Assamese as their first and second subsidiary language respectively, they may not be choosing the majority language of the state as their first or second subsidiary language.

Bilingualism among speakers of five statistically larger languages: 2011

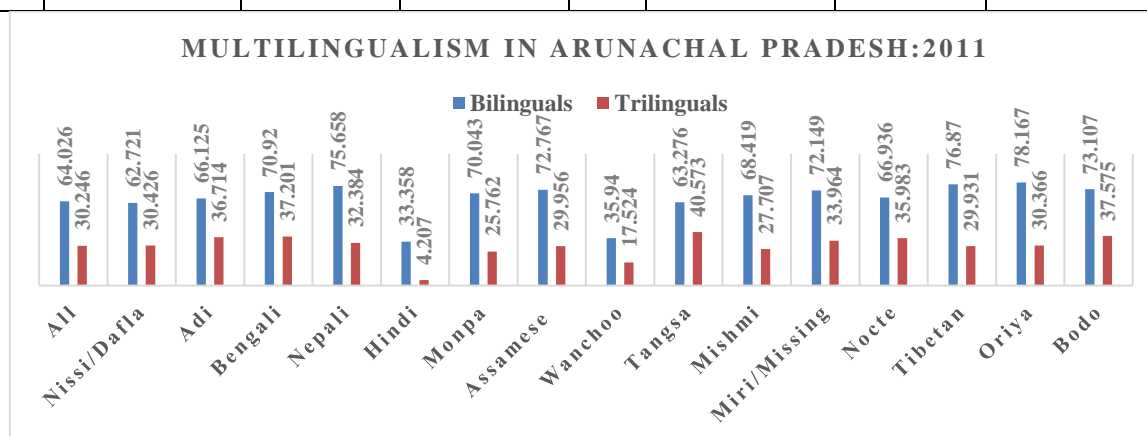
	Language	Bilinguals	Bilinguals - 1	%	Bilinguals- 2	%
1	Nissi/Dafla	62.721	Hindi	22.072	English	4.685
2	Adi	66.125	Hindi	13.325	English	3.619
3	Bengali	70.920	Hindi	4.986	Assamese	2.412
4	Nepali	75.658	Hindi	6.875	Assamese	0.667
5	Hindi	33.358	English	2.290	Assamese	1.089

In Arunachal Pradesh the state average of bilingualism is 64.026% and trilingualism is 30.246%. Among the 15 languages spoken in the state, speakers of 12 languages have more bilingual speakers than the state average. Only speakers of 3 languages are below the state average in bilingualism.

The average trilingualism among the speakers of different languages in Arunachal Pradesh is 30.246%. Speakers of Nissi/Dafla is one of the 12 other languages who have more than average trilingual population. Here the Hindi speakers are least trilingual (4.207%).

Multilingualism among speakers of different languages: 2011

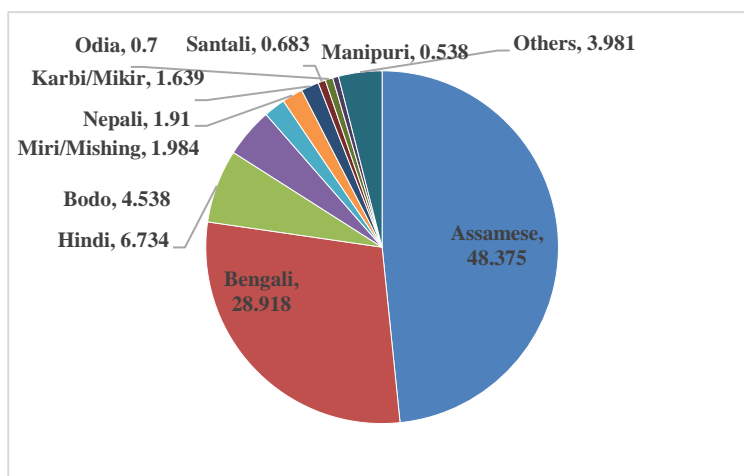
	Language	Bilinguals	Trilinguals		Language	Bilinguals	Trilinguals
	All	64.026	30.246	8	Wanchoo	35.940	17.524
1	Nissi/Dafla	62.721	30.426	9	Tangsa	63.276	40.573
2	Adi	66.125	36.714	10	Mishmi	68.419	27.707
3	Bengali	70.920	37.201	11	Miri/MISSING	72.149	33.964
4	Nepali	75.658	32.384	12	Nocte	66.936	35.983
5	Hindi	33.358	4.207	13	Tibetan	76.870	29.931
6	Monpa	70.043	25.762	14	Oriya	78.167	30.366
7	Assamese	72.767	29.956	15	Bodo	73.107	37.575



Languages of Assam: 2011

In Assam, Assamese (48.375%) is spoken by the majority of population. Bengali (28.918%) is the second largest spoken language in the state. Bodo is spoken by 4.538% of the population in Assam. Here, Assamese, Bengali and Bodo are the Scheduled Languages of India. Assamese and Bengali were in the Eighth Schedule from the beginning of the Constitution of India. Bodo was included in the Schedule in 2003.

	Language	%
1	Assamese	48.375
2	Bengali	28.918
3	Hindi	6.734
4	Bodo	4.538
5	Miri/Mishing	1.984
6	Nepali	1.910
7	Karbi/Mikir	1.639
8	Santali	0.683
9	Odia	0.700
10	Manipuri	0.538
11	Others	3.981



Multilingualism in Assam

In Assam 46.624% of the population are bilinguals. Among the five statistically larger languages in the state Hindi, Bodo and Nepali languages have bilinguals above state average. Amid the Bilingual Assamese speakers, Hindi is the first subsidiary language of 43.235% and Bengali is the first subsidiary language of 35.695% of the population. Assamese is the popular first subsidiary language of more speakers of these languages.

Bilingualism among speakers of five statistically larger languages :2011

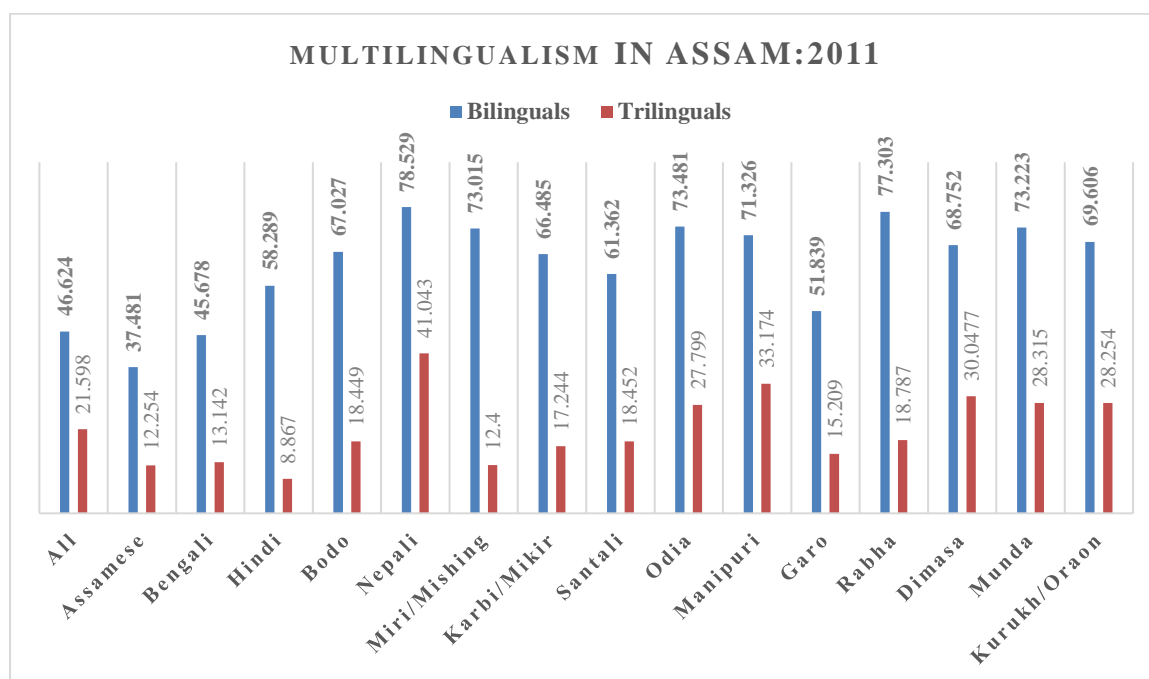
	Language	Bilinguals	Bilinguals-1	%	Bilinguals-2	%
1	Assamese	37.481	Hindi	43.235	Bengali	35.695
2	Bengali	45.678	Assamese	80.540	Hindi	13.782
3	Hindi	58.289	Assamese	72.629	Bengali	19.846
4	Bodo	67.027	Assamese	87.203	Hindi	5.309
5	Nepali	78.529	Assamese	78.818	Hindi	17.917

Multilingualism among speakers of different languages: 2011

	Language	Bilinguals	Trilinguals		Language	Bilinguals	Trilinguals
	All	46.624	21.598	8	Santali	61.362	18.452
1	Assamese	37.481	12.254	9	Odia	73.481	27.799
2	Bengali	45.678	13.142	10	Manipuri	71.326	33.174
3	Hindi	58.289	8.867	11	Garro	51.839	15.209
4	Bodo	67.027	18.449	12	Rabha	77.303	18.787
5	Nepali	78.529	41.043	13	Dimasa	68.752	30.047

6	Miri/ Mishing	73.015	12.400	14	Munda	73.223	28.315
7	Karbi/ Mikir	66.485	17.244	15	Kurukh/ Oraon	69.606	28.254

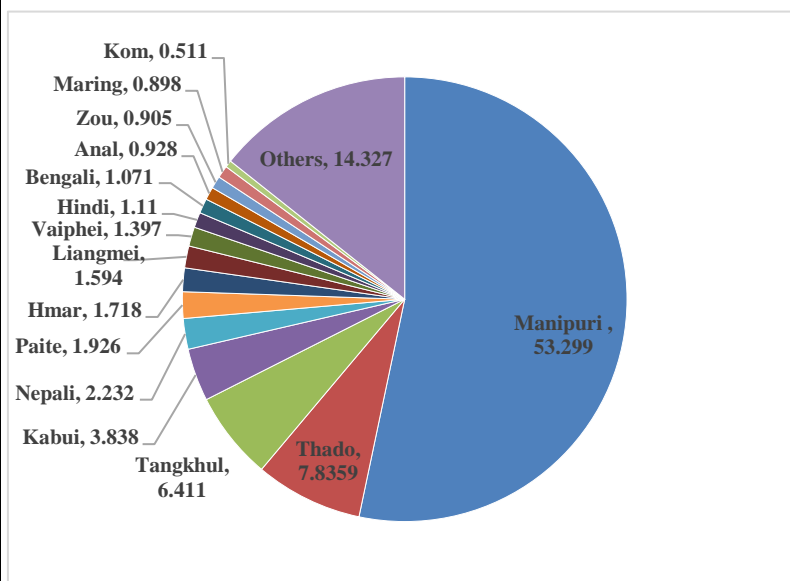
It can be seen that in case of all languages other than Assamese and Bengali percentage of bilinguals is above the state average. The state average of trilinguals is 21.598%. The Nepali (41.043%), Odia (27.799%), Manipuri (33.174%), Munda (28.315%), Dimasa (30.047) and Kurukh/Oraon (28.254%) are above the state average. In Assam also, Hindi speakers are least trilingual.



Languages of Manipur:2011

In Manipur, Manipuri is spoken by 53.299% of the population of the state. It is recognised as the Official Language of the state by the Manipur Official Language Act, 1979 (Act.No 14 of 1979). It was recognised by the Central Sahitya Akademi in 1971 for literary purposes. It became part of the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution (Bill No.71) in 1992.

	Languag e	%
1	Manipuri	53.299
2	Thado	7.8359
3	Tangkhu l	6.411
4	Kabui	3.838
5	Nepali	2.232
6	Paite	1.926
7	Hmar	1.718
8	Liangme i	1.594
9	Vaiphei	1.397
10	Hindi	1.110
11	Bengali	1.071
12	Anal	0.928
13	Zou	0.905
14	Maring	0.898
15	Kom	0.511
16	Others	14.327



All other languages in the state, each one is spoken by less than 10% of the population. This speaks a lot about the growth of multilingualism in the State.

Multilingualism in Manipur

The state average of bilingualism is 48.624%. This indicates that nearly half of the population of Manipur is bilingual. But, bilingualism average among Manipuri (39.585%) speakers is less than the state average. More Manipuri speakers are bilingual in English or Hindi. Among speakers of the five statistically larger languages Thado (62.444%), Tangkhul (61.340%) and Kabui (60.202%) are bilingual in Manipuri or English. Their average bilingualism is much above the state average.

Bilingualism among speakers of five statistically larger languages: 2011

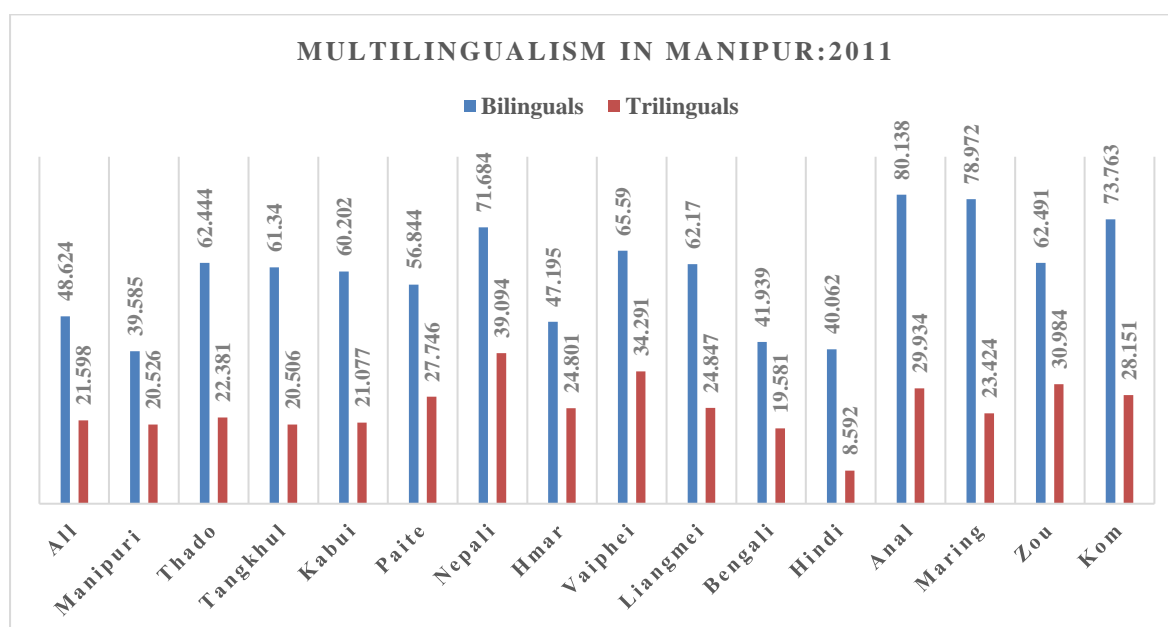
	Language	Bilinguals	Bilinguals-1	%	Bilinguals-2	%
1	Manipuri	39.585	English	75.855	Hindi	22.951
2	Thado	62.444	Manipuri	78.317	English	28.031

3	Tangkhu	61.340	Manipuri	56.405	English	37.040
4	Kabui	60.202	Manipuri	68.938	English	26.409
5	Paite	56.844	English	45.105	Manipuri	14.724

Trilingualism average in Manipur is 21.598%. Hindi speakers are least trilingual. Manipuri speakers are also below the state average. Among 15 languages listed below in case of 10 languages, trilingualism is more than the stage average.

Multilingualism among speakers of different languages: 2011

	Language	Bilinguals	Trilinguals		Language	Bilinguals	Trilinguals
	All	48.624	21.598	8	Vaiphei	65.590	34.291
1	Manipuri	39.585	20.526	9	Liangmei	62.170	24.847
2	Thado	62.444	22.381	10	Bengali	41.939	19.581
3	Tangkhu	61.340	20.506	11	Hindi	40.062	8.592
4	Kabui	60.202	21.077	12	Anal	80.138	29.934
5	Paite	56.844	27.746	13	Maring	78.972	23.424
6	Nepali	71.684	39.094	14	Zou	62.491	30.984
7	Hmar	47.195	24.801	15	Kom	73.763	28.151

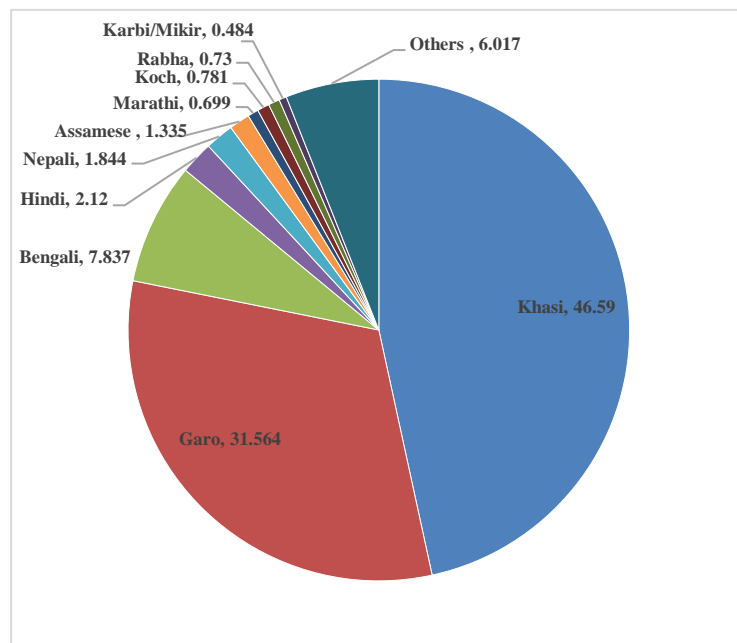


Languages of Meghalaya:2011

In Meghalaya Khasi (46.590%) is spoken by the majority of the population. Garo is spoken by 31.564% of the population. The Meghalaya State Language Act, 2005 provides for

the language (s) to be used for official purposes for the State of Meghalaya. English language, shall continue to be the official language of the State of Meghalaya. The Khasi language may be used as the associate official language for all purposes in the District, Sub-Divisions and Block level offices of the State Government located in the Districts of East Khasi Hills, West Khasi Hills, Jaintia Hills and Ri-Bhoi. The Garo Language may be used as associate official language for all purposes in the District, Sub-Divisions and Block Level Offices of East Garo Hills, West Garo Hills and South Garo Hills; Provided that only the English language shall continue to be used in all Civil and Criminal Courts located in the State; Provided, further, that all Inter-District Official communications shall continue to be in the English.

	Language	%
1	Khasi	46.590
2	Garo	31.564
3	Bengali	7.837
4	Hindi	2.120
5	Nepali	1.844
6	Assamese	1.335
7	Marathi	0.699
8	Koch	0.781
9	Rabha	0.730
10	Karbi/Mikir	0.484
11	Others	6.017



Multilingualism in Meghalaya

In Meghalaya 29.401% of the population are bilinguals. Among the speakers of five statistically larger languages only Khasi (46.590%) and Garo (31.564%) speakers are above the state average in bilingualism. Majority of speakers of both these languages are bilingual in English or Hindi. The Bengali, Hindi and Nepali speakers also have Hindi, English or Bengali as a language for bilingualism.

Bilingualism among speakers of five statistically larger languages: 2011

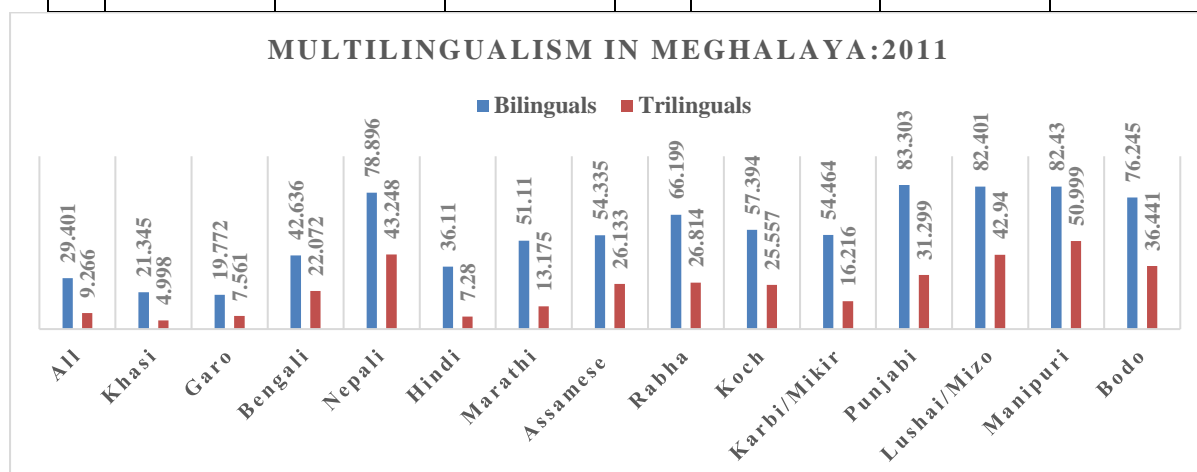
	Language	Bilinguals	Bilinguals -1	%	Bilinguals -2	%
1	Khasi	46.590	English	79.152	Hindi	16.882
2	Garo	31.564	English	49.115	Hindi	28.922

3	Bengali	7.837	Hindi	47.446	English	22.276
4	Hindi	2.120	English	68.162	Bengali	12.331
5	Nepali	1.844	Hindi	69.102	English	18.260

In Meghalaya 9.266% of the population are trilinguals. Hindi (7.280%) speakers are least trilingual in the state. It is interesting to note that trilingualism among the speakers of majority languages of the state Khasi and Garo are below state average in trilingualism. Whereas in case of all other 12 languages both bilingualism and trilingualism are above the state average. This means in this state majority language speakers are less multilingual and more minority language speakers tend to be multilingual.

Multilingualism among speakers of different languages: 2011

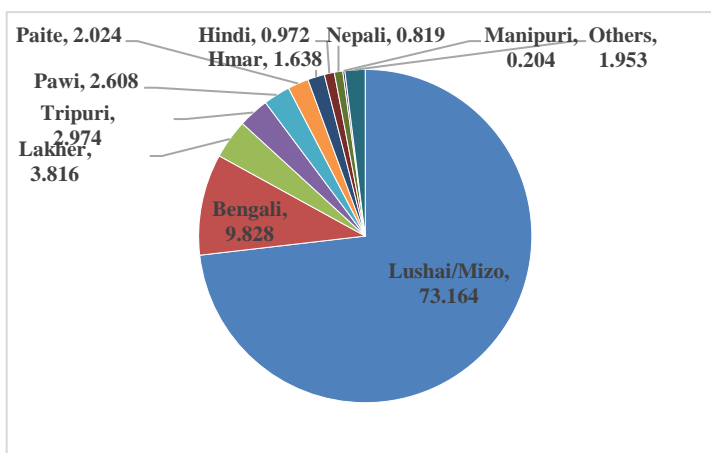
	Language	Bilinguals	Trilinguals		Language	Bilinguals	Trilinguals
	All	29.401	9.266	8	Rabha	66.199	26.814
1	Khasi	21.345	4.998	9	Koch	57.394	25.557
2	Garo	19.772	7.561	10	Karbi/Mikir	54.464	16.216
3	Bengali	42.636	22.072	11	Punjabi	83.303	31.299
4	Nepali	78.896	43.248	12	Lushai/Mizo	82.401	42.940
5	Hindi	36.110	7.280	13	Manipuri	82.430	50.999
6	Marathi	51.110	13.175	14	Bodo	76.245	36.441
7	Assamese	54.335	26.133				



Languages of Mizoram: 2011

In Mizoram Lushai / Mizo is spoken by 73.164% of the population of the state. The next majority language is Bengali spoken by 9.828% of the people. Mizo and English are the official languages.

	Language	%
1	Lushai/ Mizo	73.164
2	Bengali	9.828
3	Lakher	3.816
4	Tripuri	2.974
5	Pawi	2.608
6	Paite	2.024
7	Hmar	1.638
8	Hindi	0.972
9	Nepali	0.819
10	Manipuri	0.204
11	Others	1.953



Multilingualism in Mizoram

In Mizoram 28.226% of the population are bilinguals. It is interesting to note that bilingualism among all languages other than Lushai/Mizo and Bengali is much above the state average. And low among Lushai/Mizo (21.545%) and Bengali (25.425%) speakers.

Bilingualism among speakers of five statistically larger languages i: 2011

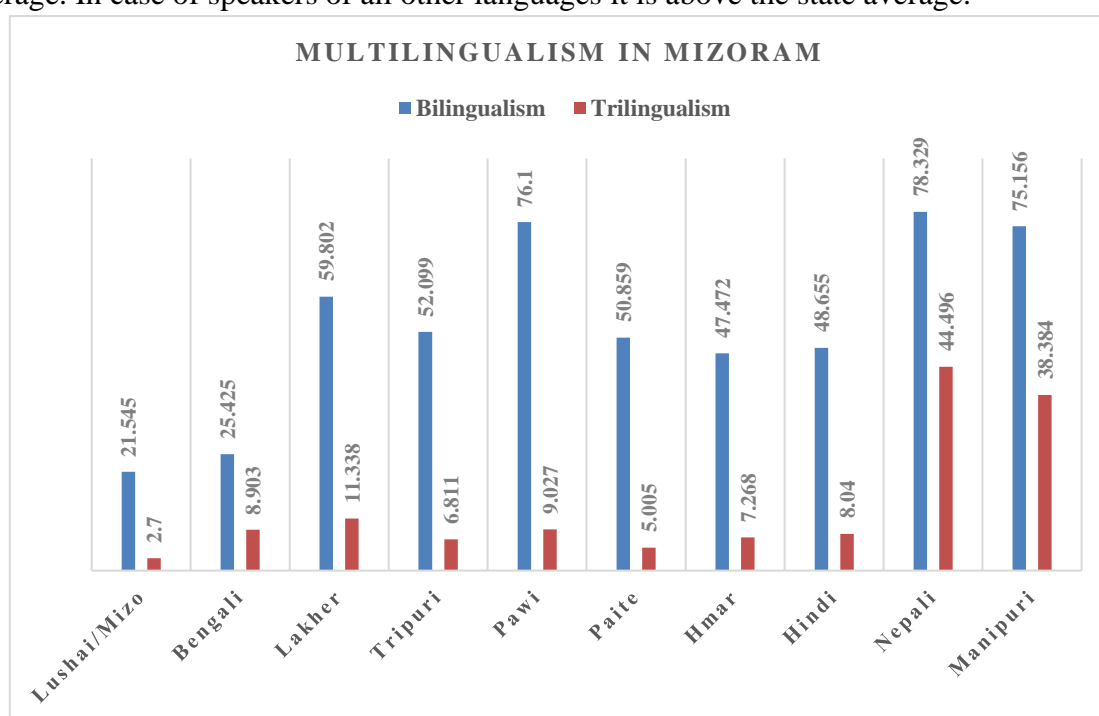
	Language	Bilingualism	Bilinguals	%	Bilinguals	%
1	Lushai/ Mizo	21.545	English	80.509	Hindi	12.189
2	Bengali	25.425	Hindi	43.688	Lushai/Mizo	29.844
3	Lakher	59.802	Lushai/Mizo	94.086	English	10.601
4	Tripuri	52.099	Lushai/Mizo	88.248	Hindi	5.516
5	Pawi	76.100	Lushai/Mizo	96.781	English	2.442

More Mizo speakers are bilingual in English than in Hindi. Among the minority language speakers more Bengali speakers are bilingual in Hindi and then in Lushai/Mizo. The rest of the minority language speakers are bilingual in Lushai/Mizo, Hindi or English.

Multilingualism among speakers of different languages: 2011

	Language	Bilingualism	Trilingualism		Language	Bilingualism	Trilingualism
	All	28.226	4.827	6	Paite	50.859	5.005
1	Lushai/Mizo	21.545	2.700	7	Hmar	47.472	7.268
2	Bengali	25.425	8.903	8	Hindi	48.655	8.040
3	Lakher	59.802	11.338	9	Nepali	78.329	44.496
4	Tripuri	52.099	6.811	10	Manipuri	75.156	38.384
5	Pawi	76.100	9.027				

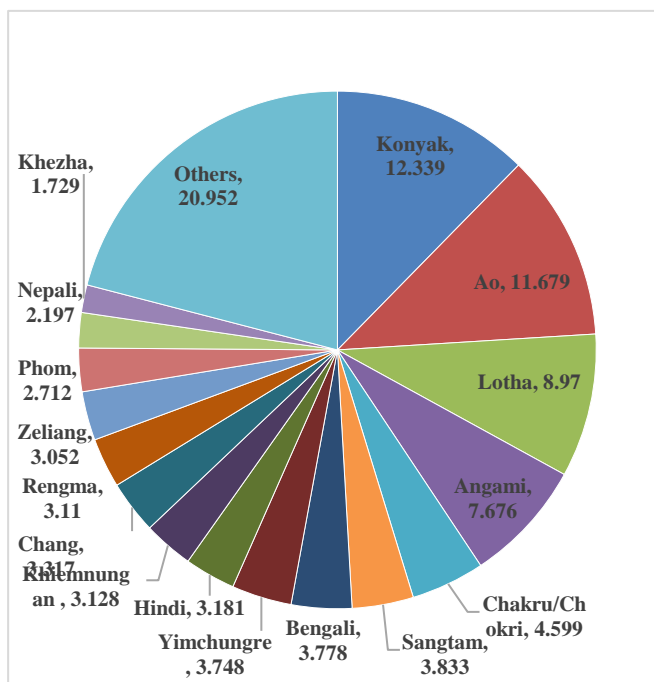
The state average in trilingualism among Lushai/Mizo speakers is below the state average. In case of speakers of all other languages it is above the state average.



Languages of Nagaland:2011

In Nagaland Konyak is spoken by the majority of population 12.339%, with Ao being the second largest language spoken by 11.679%. The state of Nagaland has adopted English as its state official language but Nagamese is also partially used in Government administration (LSC-1976).

	Language	%
1	Konyak	12.339
2	Ao	11.679
3	Lotha	8.970
4	Angami	7.676
5	Chakru/ Chokri	4.599
6	Sangtam	3.833
7	Bengali	3.778
8	Yimchungre	3.748
9	Hindi	3.181
10	Khiemnungan	3.128
11	Chang	3.317
12	Rengma	3.110
13	Zeliang	3.052
14	Phom	2.712
15	Nepali	2.197
16	Khezha	1.729
17	Others	20.952



Multilingualism in Nagaland: 2011

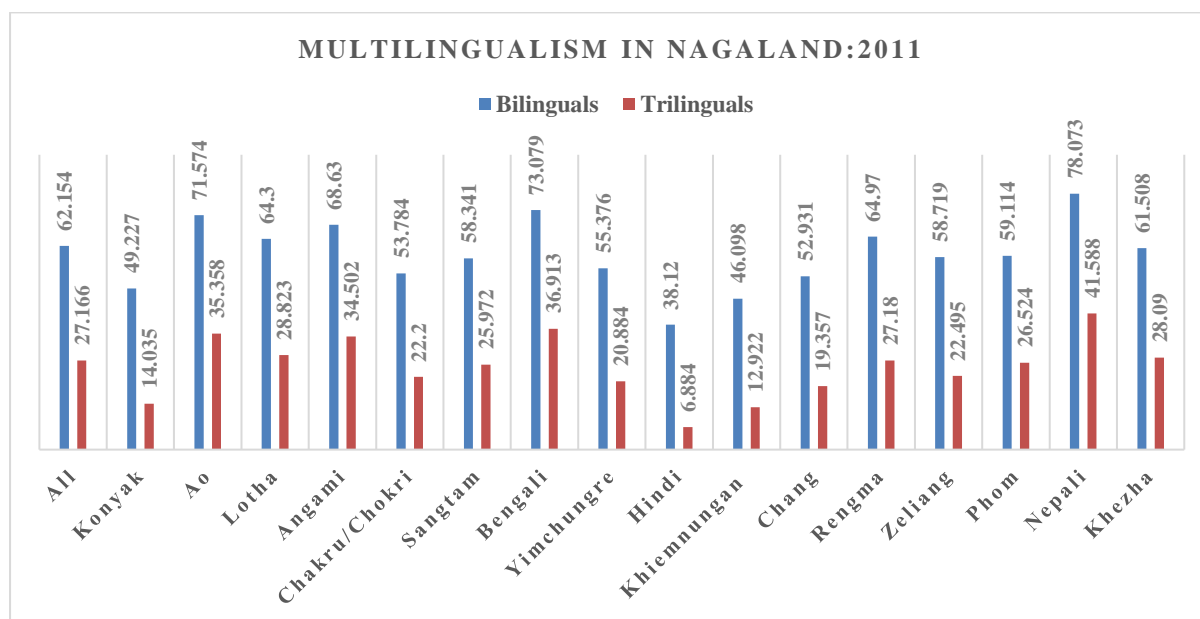
The state average of bilingualism in Nagaland is 62.154%. Konyak speakers are least bilingual than speakers of all other languages. Bilingual speakers of Konyak and Ao are bilingual either in Assamese or English. Speakers of other three languages are bilingual mainly in English or Assamese. Hindi speakers are least trilingual in Nagaland.

Bilingualism among speakers of five statistically larger languages: 2011

	Language	Bilinguals	Bilinguals - 1	%	Bilinguals- 2	%
1	Konyak	49.227	Assamese	66.190	English	29.049
2	Ao	71.574	Assamese	51.480	English	41.616
3	Lotha	64.300	English	58.276	Assamese	34.387
4	Angami	68.630	English	59.454	Assamese	34.106
5	Chakru/ Chokri	53.784	English	41.408	Angami	28.063

Multilingualism among speakers of different languages: 2011

	Language	Bilinguals	Trilinguals		Language	Bilinguals	Trilinguals
	All	62.154	27.166	9	Hindi	38.120	6.884
1	Konyak	49.227	14.035	10	Khiemnunga n	46.098	12.922
2	Ao	71.574	35.358	11	Chang	52.931	19.357
3	Lotha	64.300	28.823	12	Rengma	64.970	27.180
4	Angami	68.630	34.502	13	Zeliang	58.719	22.495
5	Chakru/Chokri	53.784	22.200	14	Phom	59.114	26.524
6	Sangtam	58.341	25.972	15	Nepali	78.073	41.588
7	Bengali	73.079	36.913	16	Khezha	61.508	28.090
8	Yimchungre	55.376	20.884				

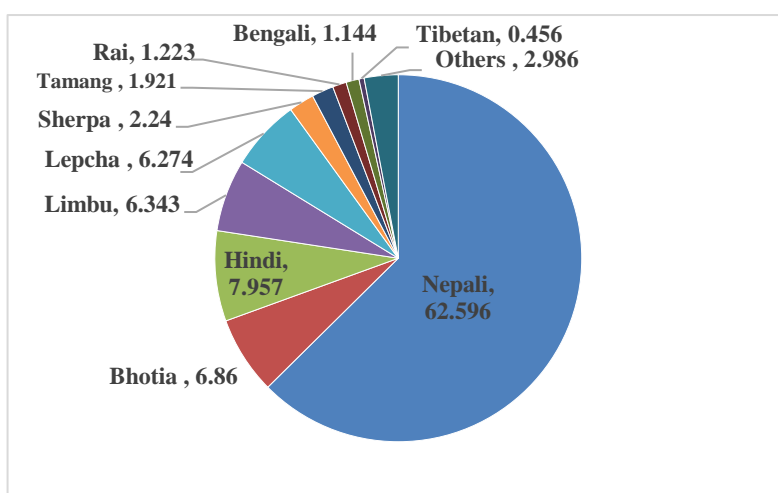


Languages of Sikkim: 2011

Nepali (62.596%) is the major language of Sikkim. It was recognised by the Central Sahitya Akademi in 1975 for literary purposes and added to the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution in 1992. The Sikkim Official Languages Bill 1977 (Bill No.7 of 1977) provides for the adoption of the Nepali, Butia and Lepcha to be used for the official purposes of the State of Sikkim. An amendment in 1981 (Bill No.5) added Limbu to the list and it was further amended in 1995 (Bill No.6) to include Newari, Rai, Gurung, Mangar, Sherpa and Tamang.

Through Act No. 5 of 1996, Sunuwar was added. All the 11 languages form part of the official languages of the state. Sikkim is the only state in the country with such a large number of languages as official languages. It is unique in this respect.

	Language	%
1	Nepali	62.596
2	Bhotia	6.860
3	Hindi	7.957
4	Limbu	6.343
5	Lepcha	6.274
6	Sherpa	2.240
7	Tamang	1.921
8	Rai	1.223
8	Bengali	1.144
10	Tibetan	0.456
11	Others	2.986



Multilingualism in Sikkim: 2011

More than half of the Nepali speakers of Sikkim are bilinguals (55.394%). They are bilingual in Hindi (65.899%) or in English (30.094). This is below the state average of bilingualism of 63.71%. The bilingual speakers of other 4 languages are bilingual either in Nepali or English.

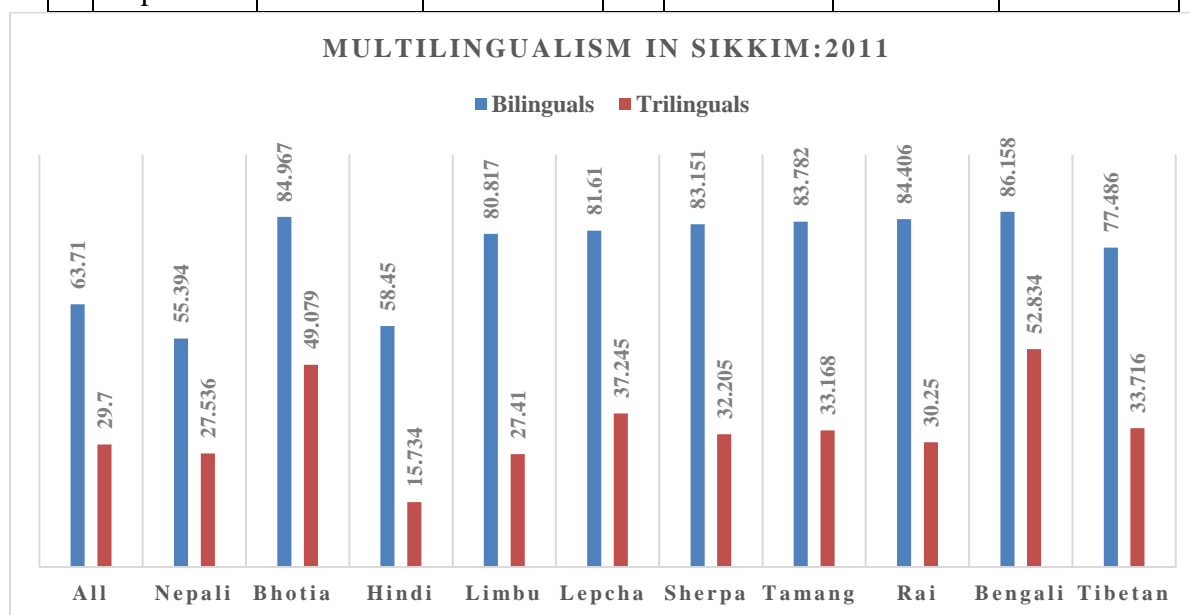
Bilingualism among speakers of five statistically larger languages: 2011

	Language	Bilinguals	Bilinguals - 1	%	Bilinguals- 2	%
1	Nepali	55.394	Hindi	65.899	English	30.094
2	Bhotia	84.967	Nepali	65.615	English	22.367
3	Hindi	58.450	Nepali	60.797	English	35.867
4	Limbu	80.817	Nepali	82.931	English	9.168
5	Lepcha	81.610	Nepali	73.103	English	13.972

Maximum Bengali speakers are multilingual in Sikkim. The state average of trilingualism is 29.700%. Among the speakers of 10 languages 8 language speakers have more than the state average of trilingualism.

Multilingualism among speakers of different language: 2011

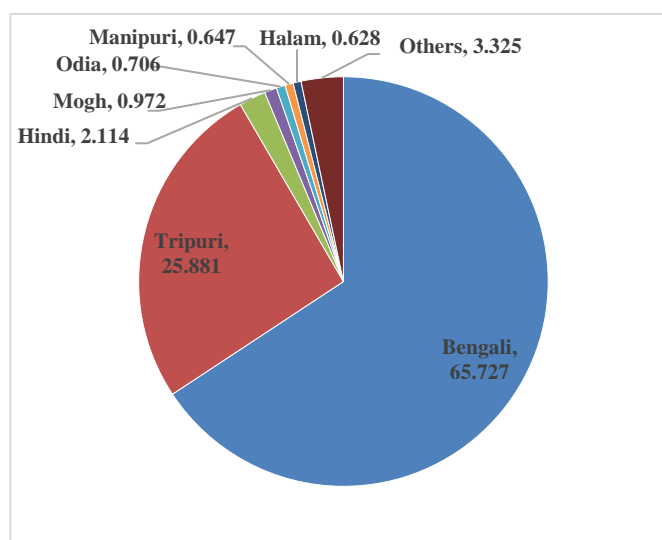
	Language	Bilinguals	Trilinguals		Language	Bilinguals	Trilinguals
	All	63.71	29.700	6	Sherpa	83.151	32.205
1	Nepali	55.394	27.536	7	Tamang	83.782	33.168
2	Bhotia	84.967	49.079	8	Rai	84.406	30.250
3	Hindi	58.450	15.734	9	Bengali	86.158	52.834
4	Limbu	80.817	27.410	10	Tibetan	77.486	33.716
5	Lepcha	81.610	37.245				



Languages of Tripura:2011

Bengali the major language of Tripura is spoken by 65.727% of the population of the state. Tripura And Tripuri is spoken by 25,881% of the population. The Tripura Official Language Act, 1964 (Act 5 of 1964) and later amendments of 1979, Bengali and, Kak-Barak are used for official purposes in the state of Tripura.

	Language	%
1	Bengali	65.727
2	Tripuri	25.881
3	Hindi	2.114
4	Mogh	0.972
5	Odia	0.706
6	Manipuri	0.647
7	Halam	0.628
8	Others	3.325



Multilingualism in Tripura

The state average of bilingualism in Tripura is 34.520%. Though Bengali speakers are in majority in the state, they are least bilingual. They are bilingual either in Hindi or English. The Tripuri bilingual speakers are bilingual either in Bengali or in English. Bengali is popular among bilinguals in Tripura.

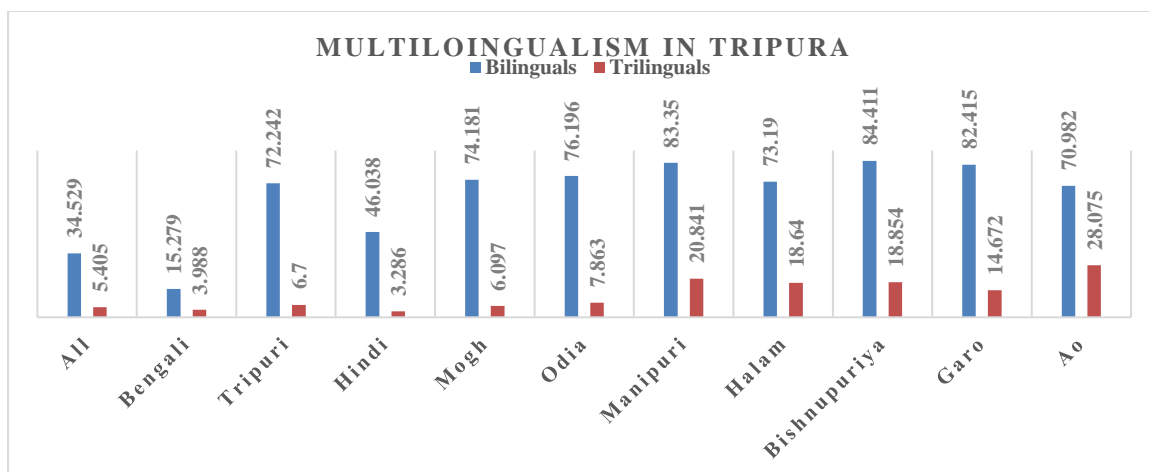
Bilingualism among speakers of five statistically larger languages: 2011

	Language	Bilinguals	Bilinguals - 1	%	Bilinguals- 2	%
1	Bengali	15.279	Hindi	7.536	English	7.181
2	Tripuri	72.242	Bengali	69.743	English	0.935
3	Hindi	46.038	Bengali	36.670	English	8.259
4	Mogh	74.181	Bengali	71.927	Tripuri	1.413
5	Odia	76.196	Bengali	70.847	Hindi	4.293

Tripura has very less trilinguals. Bengali speakers are least trilingual. The state average of trilingualism is 5.405%. Maximum trilingual speakers are Ao speakers and next come Manipuri speakers.

Multilingualism among speakers of different languages: 2011

	Language	Bilinguals	Trilinguals		Language	Bilinguals	Trilinguals
	All	34.529	5.405	6	Manipuri	83.350	20.841
1	Bengali	15.279	3.988	7	Halam	73.190	18.640
2	Tripuri	72.242	6.700	8	Bishnupuriya	84.411	18.854
3	Hindi	46.038	3.286	9	Garo	82.415	14.672
4	Mogh	74.181	6.097	10	Ao	70.982	28.075
5	Odia	76.196	7.863				



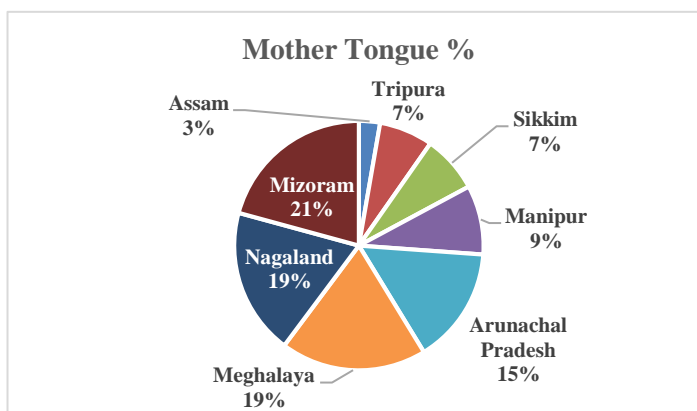
Scheduled Tribal Languages

In his book *Marxism and the Language Problem in India* Satyendra Narayana Mazumdar says that ‘the following have been scheduled as tribal languages by a Presidential Order published in the Gazette of India, Part II, Section I, dated 13 August 1960: 1. Abor/Adi, 2. Anal, 3. Angami, 4. Ao, 5. Assuri, 6. Agarva, 7. Bhili, 8. Bhumij, 9. Birhor, 10. Binija/Birijia, 11. Bodo including Kachari, Mech etc., 12. Chang-Naga, 13. Chiri, 14. Dafla, 15. Dimasa, 16. Gadaba, 17. Garo, 18. Gondi, 19. Ho, 20. Halam, 21. Juang, 22. Kabui, 23. Kanawari, 24. Kharia, 25. Khasi, 26. Khiemnungam, 27. Khond/Kandh, 28. Koch, 29. Koda/Kora, 30. Kolami, 31. Konda, 32. Konyak, 33. Korku, 34. Kota, 35. Korwa, 36. Koya, 37. Kurukh/Oraon, 38. Lushai/Mizo, 39. Mikir, 40. Miri, 41. Mishmi, 42. Mru, 43. Mundari, 44. Nicobarese, 45. Paite, 46. Parji, 47. Rabha, 48. Rangkhul, 49. Rengma, 50. Santali, 51. Savara, 52. Sema, 53. Tangkhul, 54. Thado, 55. Toda, 56. Tripuri (The list given here is not complete)’. Many scheduled tribal languages from this list are significant languages in the North-East India.

In these states of the North-East, percentage of scheduled tribes speaking their mother tongue varies from state to state and it is comparatively high. The following table illustrates the same with the 2011 Census of India data. It may be observed that it varies from 12.447% in Assam to 94.32% in Mizoram.

**All Scheduled Tribes
Total Speakers by Mother tongue in the North-East India: 2011**

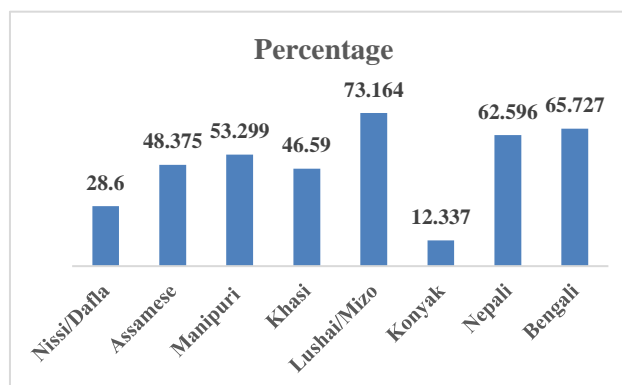
	State	Mother tongue %
1	Assam	12.447
2	Tripura	31.759
3	Sikkim	33.797
4	Manipur	40.879
5	Arunachal Pradesh	68.787
6	Meghalaya	86.146
7	Nagaland	86.478
8	Mizoram	94.432



Major languages of the North – East India :2011

Population strength of the major language in these states varies between 73.164% in Mizoram to 12.337% in Nagaland. It can be seen from the table and chart below that in four states – Assam, Manipur, Sikkim and Tripura Scheduled languages, Assamese (48.375%), Manipuri (53.299%), Nepali (62.596%) and Bengali (65.727%) are major languages. In other four states Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland Non-Scheduled languages- Nissi/Dafla (28.600%), Khasi (46.590%), Lushai/Mizo(73.164%) and Konyak (12.337%) are the major languages are major languages.

	State	Language	%
1	Arunachal Pradesh	Nissi/Dafla	28.60
2	Assam	Assamese	48.375
3	Manipur	Manipuri	53.299
4	Meghalaya	Khasi	46.590
5	Mizoram	Lushai/Mizo	73.164
6	Nagaland	Konyak	12.337

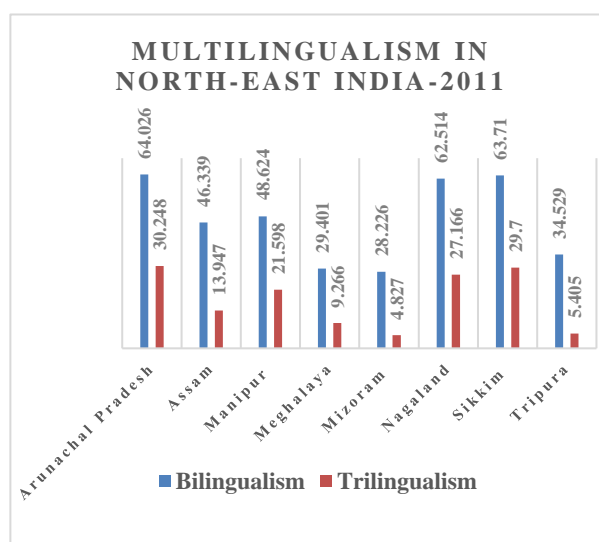


7	Sikkim	Nepali	62.59 6
8	Tripura	Bengali	65.72 7

Multilingualism in the North East India: 2011

The Census of India in 2001 presented the national average of bilingualism at 24.79% and trilingualism at 8.51%. Where as the Census in 2011 indicated bilingualism at 26.01% and trilingualism at 7.10%, an increase in bilingualism and a decrease in trilingualism in a decade. In India, bilingualism among Scheduled languages and Non-Scheduled languages is 24.849% and 59.03% respectively. Trilingualism among them is 6.889% and 12.752%. In this context of Indian multilingualism we can look at the multilingualism in North-East India.

		Bilingualism %	Trilingualism %
	India National Average	26.01	7.10
	Scheduled	24.849	6.889
	N-Scheduled	59.03	12.752
1	Arunachal Pradesh	64.026	30.248
2	Assam	46.339	13.947
3	Manipur	48.624	21.598
4	Meghalaya	29.401	9.266
5	Mizoram	28.226	4.827
6	Nagaland	62.514	27.166
7	Sikkim	63.710	29.700
8	Tripura	34.529	5.405



Bilingualism among all the states of the North-East India is above the national average. Among 8 states, other than Mizoram (4.827%) and Tripura (5.405%) in all other 6 states trilingualism is above the national average. Majority language speakers of each of the states tend to be less bilingual and trilingual than the speakers of other languages of the state. Normally more number of minor language speakers tend to be multilingual. Wherever bilingualism has evolved it is because of given socio-political and demographic reasons, it always has remained vibrant. People acquire bilingualism in these contexts from their early childhood. They do not have to go to school to learn to use two or more languages. However, bilingualism/multilingualism relating to English and Hindi in the North-East India is a different

category altogether. It is a government-sponsored, institutional arrangement. This is evident when we look at the languages taught at different stages of education and the medium of education in the schools. Bilingualism is driven by formal necessities, not an acquisition in early childhood. There is bound to be some competition between Hindi and English to occupy the bilingual space. It is hard to visualize the contours of this competition right now. But, if we go by the historically proven Indian mindset, the socio-political conditions of the region will evolve some functional separation between the two and keep both the languages within the bilingual/multilingual space.

Language Education in the North-East

In the absence of latest data on language education in the North-East, we are left with no alternative other than discuss the data available in public domain. It may reflect the present scenario or not, but it will certainly provide the direction in which it was moving at that time. Seventh All India School Education Survey (7th AISES)-Media of Instruction and Languages Taught provides information as on September 30, 2002. Published in March 2007 by the National Council of Educational Research and Training.

Languages Taught at Different Stages of Education

The table given below gives the details of languages taught at different states of education in the 8 states of the North-East India according to 7th AISES. This table is self-explanatory. Clearly indicates that Hindi and English are playing a major role as languages of education in the schools.

	State	Primary	Upper Primary		Secondary	
		Primary	1 st , 2 nd 3 rd combination	Number of schools	1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd combination	Number of schools
1	Arunachal Pradesh	English, Hindi	English, Hindi, Assamese	53	No information	-
			English, Hindi, Bhoti	40		
			English, Hindi, Sanskrit	485		
2	Assam	Assamese, Bengali, Bodo, English, others	Assamese, English, Hindi	6076	Assamese, English, Arabic	293
					Assamese, English, Hindi	2972
			Bengali, English, Hindi	651	Bengali, English, Hindi	238

3	Manipur	English, Hindi, Manipuri, other languages and others	English, Hindi, Manipuri	134	English, Hindi, Manipuri	56
			English, Manipuri, Hindi	310	English, Manipuri, Hindi	172
			Manipuri, English, Hindi	673	Manipuri, English, Hindi	342
4	Meghalaya	English, Garo, Khasi, others	English, Garo, Hindi	249	English, Garo, Hindi	104
			English, Khasi, Hindi	279	English, Khasi, Hindi	113
			Garo, English, Hindi	140	No information	
			Khasi, English, Hindi	244		
5	Mizoram	English, Hindi, Mizo, Other languages, others	English, Mizo, Hindi	210	English, Mizo, Hindi	220
			Mizo, English, Hindi	626	Mizo, English, Hindi	81
6	Nagaland	Angami, Ao, English, Hindi, Konyak, Lotha, Sema, other languages and others	Angami, English, Hindi	42	English, Hindi, Angami	56
			English, Hindi, Angami	75	English, Hindi, other languages	35
			English, Hindi, other languages	64		
7	Sikkim	Bhotia, English, Hindi, Lepcha, Limboo, Nepali, others	English, Bhutia, Hindi	74	English, Bhutia, Hindi	21
			English, Hindi, Nepali	32	English, Hindi, Nepali	14
			English, Lepcha, Hindi	69	English, Lepcha, Hindi	14
			English, Limboo, Hindi	54	English, Limboo, Hindi	12
			English, Nepali, Hindi	199	English, Nepali, Hindi	50
			English, Nepali, Lepcha	16	English, Nepali, Lepcha	9

			Nepali, English, Hindi	19		
8	Tripura	Bengali, English, Kakbarak, others	Bengali, English, Hindi	119	Bengali, English, Sanskrit	63
			Bengali, English, Sanskrit	847		

Medium of Education at Different Stages of Education

In Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Sikkim English is the dominant medium of instruction. The situation seems to be different in Assam where Assamese, Bengali, Bodo occupy an important role. Similarly, Nagaland and Tripura have given important role to the indigenous languages.

	State	Primary	Upper Primary	Secondary	Higher Secondary
1	Arunachal Pradesh	English	English	English	English
2	Assam	Assamese, Bengali, Bodo, English, others	Assamese, Bengali, Bodo, English, Hindi others	Assamese, Bengali, Bodo, English, Hindi others	Assamese, Bengali, English, Hindi others
3	Manipur	English, Hindi, Manipuri, other languages and others	English, Hindi, Manipuri, other languages and others	English, Hindi, Manipuri, other languages and others	No information
4	Meghalaya	English, Garo, Khasi, others	English	English	English
5	Mizoram	English, Mizo, others	English, Mizo, others	English, Mizo, others	English, Hindi Mizo
6	Nagaland	Angami, Ao, English, Hindi, Konyak, Lotha, Sema, other languages and others	Angami, Ao, English, Hindi, Konyak, Sema, other languages and others	Angami, English, Hindi, other languages and others	Angami, English, Hindi, Sema, other languages and others
7	Sikkim	English, others	English, others	English, others	English, others
8	Tripura	Bengali, Kakbarak, others	Bengali, English, others	Bengali, English others	Bengali, English others

This paper has exhibited that multilingualism as a landmark of North-East India. Here bilingualism is rich and trilingualism has to gain momentum. Bilingualism is due to both neighbourhood and schooling. Trilingualism, like in some other states of India is not a dominant player. It has a long way to go.

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