



A Linguistic Analysis on Meghalaya's Biodiversity- Exploring the Terminologies And Cultural Significance in Local Language

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Abstract

The linguistic analysis of biodiversity in Meghalaya has been conducted and explained in this chapter along with the literature review of biodiversity. In addition to this, the particulars of the local language of Meghalaya have been elaborated in this research. Furthermore, it is also explained how the culture and tradition of Meghalaya is dependent on different factors such as language, location, gender and many other factors. The value of language to communicate cultural beliefs has also been elaborated. Keyword: Linguistic, Meghalaya, Languages, Communication

I. Introduction

Language practice is essential for communication among people and various languages practices are used for this purpose. Culture is closely related with language practice and several cultures exist in Meghalaya and for this reason different language practices are performed in the state. There are various languages are performed in India and it has reflection in Meghalaya. Biodiversity diversity belongs to Meghalaya and cultural difference is noticed for thus diversity in the state. Linguistic difference exists in the state due to this biological diversity. Various tribes such as Garo, Khasi are found in Meghalaya. These tribes have individual languages for communication. Mostly, these tribes are comfortable to communicate with their own language. Literature review, method and discussion are to be performed in this research article on linguistic analysis on Meghalaya based on biodiversity.

Literature review The Linguistic Analysis of the Biodiversity of Meghalaya Biological diversity is defined as the variability that is seen among various genes, species, and communities. The role of nature in man and man in nature has been acknowledged by the people of Meghalaya. The people of Meghalaya have the idea of living a profound life with nature. The term biodiversity in short is defined as biological diversity and it has become the most widely used term in the modern days (Alcocer et al., 2021, p.2209). The definition of biodiversity according to the United Nations is defined as the variety of life existent on the planet Earth. Various cultural rituals and traditions are followed in Meghalaya and these rituals play a major role in the conservation of nature. There are many villages in Meghalaya which are having sacred grooves as dedicated parts of the forest.

The extraction of any kind of forest is banned in Meghalaya. Jhum cultivation is one of the traditional agricultural systems of Meghalaya. Jhum cultivation involves the burning of forest cultivation (Nath et al., 2020, p.425). Nevertheless, this cultivation does not involve deforestation on a large scale. The primary languages spoken in Meghalaya are Garo and Khasi. The initiative of making these two languages the primary language was taken by the Christian missionaries. Moreover, the other languages that are spoken in Meghalaya include English, Nepali, Hajing, and Jaintia. The language of Meghalaya reflects the culture and tradition of the state. Moreover, the people of Meghalaya believe that the forests are the residence of god Forests are involved in the welfare of the people, land, and cattle in Meghalaya, . Furthermore, it is believed by the people of Meghalaya that forests help in driving the evil spirits away. Religious belief is one of the most important factors for the conservation of forests. It is also believed by the people of Meghalaya that the sylvan gods become offended, whenever trees are cut. The mythological stories associated with the forests are considered the most important factor in preserving the forests. The terminologies and cultural significance in the local language of Meghalaya The culture of Meghalaya is the reflection of the language and tradition of Meghalaya. There are three major tribes that exist in Meghalaya. They are Garo, Khasi, and Jaintia. English is the official language of Meghalaya and the principal languages that are spoken in Meghalaya are Khasi, Garo, and Jaintia. The literature of these three tribes has been developed by the Christian missionaries. The principal language of Meghalaya is taught at the postgraduate level B of the colleges in India. The Khasi language is also known as Khasia and it originates from the surviving dialects of the families in Meghalaya (Rony et al., 2022, p.596). The primary places that are situated in Meghalaya are the Jaintia Hills and Khasi Hills. The language that is spoken by the people residing in the hills is the Khasi language. Moreover, there are many people from Assam and Bangladesh who are fluent in the Khasi language. The Khasi language was first coined by William Carey which was written in the form of a Bengali script initially.

Furthermore, this language was translated into Latin by Thomas Jones who belonged to the Welsh missionary. Therefore, the scripts used in this language are Latin and Bengali, and it is taught in the elementary level school in Meghalaya. The Khasi language was also declared as the associate official language by the government of Meghalaya (Blah, 2020, p.1). The Garo tribe is the second-largest tribe that is residing in the western part of Meghalaya. This language is basically spoken in northeast India and the Garo hills of Meghalaya. Furthermore, the Garo language is a combination of Tibetan and Burmese languages. The scripts of the Garo language were collected by British officials in the 18th century, The Latin-based spelling was gained by the language in the late 19th century. The Jaintia language is the most important language of Meghalaya which needs special attention. This language is basically a variation of the Khasi language and it is spoken by the people of Jaintia Hills Methodology The research methodology refers to the strategies undertaken by the researcher to collect and analyse data for addressing the research question. Choosing a suitable methodology is crucial in research as it enables the researcher to access adequate information and accurate data for addressing the research objectives. According to Saunders' research onion, the methodology can be viewed as an onion where each layer represents a step that needs to be accomplished before moving to the next one. The current chapter delves into the main methodologies that have been used to research on the topic and collect and interpret data.

Research philosophy refers to the belief associated with conducting research by selecting an appropriate approach. Research philosophy can be broadly categorised into three segments 12 such as positivism, interpretivism and realism. However, it is essential to select the most suitable paradigm for the study to gather maximum relevant information on the specific topic. The Positivusam philosophy has been used here as it includes the perspective of obtaining information in a scientific and systemic manner (Marsonet, 2019). Research design is a critical tool of research methodology to make the design and execution of the entire research procedure to accomplish the aim of the study successfully. In this regard, the descriptive research design has been followed as it helps in gathering adequate qualitative information on the selected topic to discuss descriptively based on evidence. The research approach indicates the path of conducting research in a systematic and strategic way. It helps in focusing on specific types of data phenomena and characteristics to obtain maximum relevant information. As opined by Okoli., research approaches can be classified into three groups such as deductive, inductive and abductive approaches. However, the inductive approach has been chosen in this study as it emphasises specific observations and pattern recognition based on existing knowledge in terms of drawing general conclusions. Inductive Deductive el dato Do/don't reject hypothesis

The data collection method is considered the most crucial tool of the methodology by means of gathering adequate authentic information. Data collection methods can be primarily classified into two parts depending on the characteristics of the data, including primary and secondary data collection. Moreover, it can be further categorised as qualitative and quantitative data . Qualitative data is usually expressed in a descriptive form of language: while quantitative data involves values and numeric data. This study follows a secondary

qualitative method for data collection to gather relevant qualitative information from secondary sources including journals, articles and websites. Moreover, a qualitative thematic analysis has been selected to interpret collected information based on specific articulated themes. Data findings and discussion Biodiversity and linguistics in Meghalaya. Meghalaya has a rich cultural heritage with the majority of the population hailing from diverse tribal and ethnic communities, essentially from Garo, Khasi and Jaintia cultures (Wouters, 2020). The cultural diversity dates back to its origins: the inhabitants of Meghalaya have diverse ancestral origins which influence their linguistic dynamics. For instance, the Khasi tribe has its origin in the Mon-Khmer ancestry and has an Austro-Asiatic influence on its language. The majority of Meghalaya is populated with Khasi speakers and the language is closely associated with Munda; a language spoken in the Eastern part of central India (Tribal Tours India, . According to recent statistics, Khasi or Mon-Khmer is the most dominant language of Meghalaya with nearly 900,000 native speakers using different dialects of the language across various regions, Another variation of the Khasi language is Jaintia which is spoken by the tribal groups of War, Bhoi, Pnar and Khyntiam. The Garo language is another dominating language used by inhabitants of the Gar Hills district of Meghalaya. With over 800,000 speakers, the Garo language shows a Tibeto-Burman as well as Latin influence along with a close association with Bodo (Tribal Tours India). The geographic locations of the communities also have a major influence on their linguistic dialects. For instance, the Khasi dialects differ significantly across regions due to separate languages of localities; although there are minor differences among most dialects, the "Bhoi" and "Nonglung" dialects differ to the extent that they can be categorised as separate languages altogether. "War", "Cherrapunji" and "Khyntiam" are some other distinct dialects which have a minimal lexical similarity. Considering the dominant Khasi dialect in Meghalaya, a significant influence of Hindi and Bengali can be detected in the language, indicating the influence of geographic locations. On the other hand, lexical changes caused by biodiversity and geographic locations are evident in the various dialects of Garo, such as "Atong", "Chibok", "Ruga", "Gan-ching", "Matchi", "A beng" and "Matabeng" (Tribal Tours India,). Hence, it can be affirmed that biodiversity and geographic locations have a significant influence on linguistic constructions.

Local linguistic Terminologies and their cultural significance As per the views of Tursunovich, language has an inherently cultural nature where the norms, beliefs and attitudes of ethnic groups reflect on their terminologies. Looking into the scenario of Meghalaya, the state's official language is English; however, the Meghalaya State Language Act, of 2005 declared Garo and Khasi as its official language as well (Tribal Tours India). In the Garo community, individuals follow a matrilineal culture where they prioritise female members and provide special benefits to the family's youngest daughters.

Although obscurity exists in tracing the origins of the Garo language, the tribe is divided into nine ethnic groups with diverse linguistic settings. Upon close inspection, the different linguisticReferences Alcocer, I., Lima, H., Sugai, L. S. M., & Llusia, D.

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Terminologies used among various tribes of Meghalaya reflect their cultural narratives. For instance, linguistic usage in Khasi folklore reflects the tribe's traditional beliefs of being descendants of heaven. Most of the oral narratives in the Khasi language reflect the myth of "Ki Khanatong U Hynniewtrep" (Tales of the Seven Huts) which claims that the sole purpose of Khasi is to preserve biodiversity and maintain a balance in the environment (Badlani, 2020). On the other hand, the oral linguistic terms used by the Garo tribe reflect their metaphoric connection with the environment and their age-old beliefs of "Songsarek"

II. Conclusion

Biodiversity has been defined as the biological diversity on the planet Earth. The language spoken in Meghalaya defines the cultural and traditional aspects of Meghalaya.

Languages such as Khasi, Jaintia, and Garo were made the primary languages by the Christian missionaries. The mythological stories are involved in preserving the forests of Meghalaya. The citizens of

Meghalaya believe that gods reside in forests and this is the main reason why the people of Meghalaya are not involved in deforestation

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