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LANGUAGE ATTITUDE AND THE LANGUAGE ATTITUDE OF NOCTES OF ASSAM : BEHAVIOURIST VIEW

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ABSTRACT:

Noctes are one of culturally rich tribe of North-eastern region of colorful and diverse country India, who live permanently in the district of Tirap which is situated in the South-West region of Arunachal Pradesh. From Anthropological researches Noctes are Mongolian and their language is under 'Naga' group of Sino-Tibetan language family. Two divisions of Noctes entered Assam before five hundred years and have been living in villages named as 'Dihing Kinar Nocte Gaon' of Naharkatia of Dibrugarh district, 'Shiloni Naga Gaon' of Borhat of Charaideo District and 'Panidariya Gaon' of Namrupa for nearly last five hundred years. The language of Noctes of Assam who have been living mainly in these three villages are influenced by Assamese language due to constant interactions. Nowadays, they started using Assamese in their day-to-day conversations. Therefore, for studying their feelings for own language, positive attitude towards other languages, their opinion regarding use of language in day-to-day life and standpoint regarding profit of adopting another language. Noctes of Assam used to communicate in Nocte dialect in home mostly but some of the masses use a mixed language of Nocte and Assamese can be termed as Nocte-Assamese. Assamese speakers are increasing in Noctes of Assam due the influence of neighborhood and their kinship or marital relationship with Assamese speakers. Noctes of Assam mostly use Assamese language not only to interact with neighbors but also to communicate with Noctes of other village due to their variation in dialect. In market Assamese language is mostly used to communicate with not only with Noctes of Assam and Assamese people but also with Noctes of Arunachal Pradesh. One of the reasons behind the changing attitude of Noctes of Assam towards their own language is Religious factor because of which Noctes of Assam and Noctes of Arunachal Pradesh almost lost their socio-cultural communication.



KEYWORDS: Language Attitude, Nocte Language, Sociolinguistics, Behaviorist view.

0.0 INTRODUCTION

The study of 'language attitude' is comparatively a new Approach which was introduced only in the second half of twentieth century and dealt with Sociolinguistics, the descriptive study of the effect of

any and all aspects of society, including cultural norms , expectations, and context, on the way language is used, and society's effect on language. In a nutshell, the opinions, ideas and prejudices that one speaker or a population have with respect to

a language being a part of the society can be termed as 'language attitude' . Judging people on the basis of their way of talking, choice of words and use of words from other languages is a common human nature. Language attitude of a

person also can be demonstrated through behaviors including use of words, avoidance or approach to other languages, their desire to learn or not to learn other languages and their conscience while speaking. Language attitude develops in masses not only for mother language but also for other languages. The study of language attitude helps identifying how people of one language group view the personal character and social status of speakers of another language and how they form associations about other languages. Language attitude is one of the salient topic with great significance in Sociolinguistics due to the fact that social rituals, beliefs and community-based feelings of individuals as well as of the masses is deeply attached with their language attitude.

Noctes are one of culturally rich tribe of North-eastern region of colorful and diverse country India who live permanently in the district of Tirap which is situated in the South-West region of Arunachal Pradesh. From Anthropological researches Noctes are Mongolian and their language is under 'Naga' group of Sino-Tibetan language family. Two divisions of Noctes entered Assam before five hundred years and have been living in villages named as 'Dihing Kinar Nocte Gaon' of Naharkatia of Dibrugarh district, 'Shiloni Naga Gaon' of Borhat of Charaideo District and 'Panidariya Gaon' of Namrupa for nearly last five hundred years. The language of Noctes of Assam who have been living mainly in these three villages are influenced by Assamese language due to constant interactions. Nowadays, they started using Assamese in their day-to-day conversations. Therefore, for studying their feelings for own language, positive attitude towards other languages, their opinion regarding use of language in day-to-day life and standpoint regarding profit of adopting another language; the study of the language attitude of Noctes of Assam from Behaviorist view is absolutely essential.

0.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To learn the use of language in the habitual life of Noctes of Assam.
- To learn the language used by Noctes of Assam in public places like a market.
- To learn the language used by Noctes of Assam during interaction with neighbors.
- To predict their potential in approaching future analyzing the contemporary situations of Noctes of Assam through studying their languages attitude.

1.0 THEORETICAL APPROACHES AND DEFINITION OF LANGUAGE ATTITUDE

Linguists are the scientists who apply the scientific method to questions about the nature and function of language. Linguists conduct formal studies of speech sounds, grammatical structures, and meaning across all the world's over 6,000 languages. Many linguists have studied the language attitude of a population and mentioned two sides: Mentalist view and Behaviorist view.

According to *Appel* and *Muysken*, "Generally two theoretical approaches are distinguished to the study of language attitudes. The first one is the behaviorist view, according to which attitude must be studied by observing the response to certain languages- their use in actual interactions. The mentalist view considers attitudes as an internally, mental state which may give rise to certain forms of behavior. It can be described as 'an intervening variable between stimulus affecting a person and that person's response. "Though linguistics have kept different opinions already in their ways, yet none of them can be termed as absolute and finale.

According to *Crystal*, "Language attitude is actually the feelings people have about their own language or the language of others, and further defined, as an individual's psychological construction regarding their own language and/or the language of others. Neurologist *Petty* and *Cacioppo* stated regarding language attitude that "language attitude should be used to refer to a general and enduring positive or negative feeling about same person, object or issue."

Sociological physiologist *Eagly* and *Chaiken* mentioned, "A psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor." It's notable that language attitude may not be permanent."

Romaine described that, "Attitude is more general concept that can be accurately determined from the answer to a specific question or from the responses given by a informant in a carefully controlled experimental situation."

The number sides of Behaviorist view to be taken for analysis is not a crystal clear fact. Therefore, an analysis is put together on language attitude of Noctes of Assam studying the use of language in the habitual life, the language used in places like markets and language used by them during interaction with neighbors to predict their potential in approaching future analyzing the contemporary situations of Noctes of Assam through studying their languages attitude.

2.0 THE LANGUAGE ATTITUDE OF NOCTES : BEHAVIOURIST VIEW

Behaviorist view provided a framework within which language attitude could be discussed analyzing the use of words in different situations and different context. Ralph W. Fasold stated his opinion on behaviorist view of language attitude that the glimpse of it is spotted in individual's response to different social situations which gives shape to the social conditions. In case of Noctes of Assam, their language is different from Assamese language. Their language attitude is studied on the basis of -

- ✓ The use of language in the habitual life
- ✓ The language used in public places like a market and
- ✓ The language used by Noctes of Assam during interaction with neighbors

2.1 THE LANGUAGE USED IN HABITUAL LIFE

Home is birth place of not only language application but also language attitude.

Noctes are asked regarding the importance given by them in using own language in their habitual life and the influence of Assamese language as well as the effect of marital relationship between Assamese people and Noctes.

"Which language is preferably used in daily conversations?", Answering this question nearly 73.33% of the masses replied that they use Nocte language while 5.83% of the masses don't even know Nocte language and they are basically Assamese speakers. Though those 5.83% can't speak their own language fluently they try to reply with the very little word stock of own language they have.

Many of Noctes established kinship with Assamese community or other community. On our question regarding the language of interaction between them 54.17% of the masses replied that they interact in a mixed language unifying both the languages. 44.16% of the masses choose Assamese as the suitable language for interaction as their better halves can't speak or understand Nocte language.

"Does your child use Nocte language?" When this question is asked 95% of the Noctes replied negatively while only 5% let us know that their children use Nocte language. The use of Assamese language in schools, marital relationship with Assamese people and interactions with Assamese neighbors are reasons behind this as per their believes.

2.2 THE LANGUAGE USED IN PUBLIC PLACES LIKE A MARKET

The language used by the Noctes of Assam in public places especially in a market is another analysis which is covered to study their language attitude. Markets are part of day-to-day life of any men and women. Noctes are also not separated in this case. There are many local markets including the Tuesday market of Dihingkinar Nocte Gaon and Sunday market of Joypur. It is remarkable that people from Arunachal Pradesh also come to these two weekly markets. Most of the people used to communicate in Assamese language in markets.

"Which language do you use to communicate with the people from Arunachal Pradesh who come to weekly markets?", Answering this question 95% of the masses answered it as Assamese, while 4.17% replied it as Nocte-Assamese and rest 0.83% replied as Assamese-Hindi.

When they are asked the question "If one Nocte language speaker and one Assamese speaker are selling same quality products in the same price, from whom you would like to buy the goods?", 25% of the masses replied that they would buy from the Nocte speaker as everyone has a emotional attachment with mother language and it's easier to interact in it. 9.17 percentage of native speaker willing to buy daily useable goods from Assamese or other language speech community. Rest, 65.83%

replied that they would be happy to buy from anyone as they believe that language difference can't bring separation in case of buying same good with same quality in equal rate.

2.3 THE LANGUAGE USED WHILE INTERACTING WITH NEIGHBORS

Noctes of Assam have been living in area with neighbors who speak Assamese, Nepali, Tribal language, Tai phuke etc. At the other hand, the three Nocte villages also have variants in their language. The Nocte language of 'Shiloni Naga Gaon' and 'Panidoria Gaon' is similar but the Nocte language of the 'Nocte Gaon of Dihingkina' of Naharkatia is different. Because of the variation in their dialect Noctes of different villages have to talk with their own community members in Assamese.

"In which language do you interact with your neighbors?" Answering this question 100% of the masses replied that they use Assamese language as they know the language and face no difficulty while interacting in Assamese.

Because of the difference between dialects between the three villages, they found difficulties to understand language of other villages. Hence, When it's asked that "In which language do you interact with Noctes of other two villages?", most of the masses that is 94.17% replied that they use Assamese. According to other 5%, there are some similarities between Nocte language of each village and hence though they interact in a mixed language unifying both Assamese and Nocte, yet they try their best to interact in Nocte language. Rest 0.83% understand both the dialect spoken by the people of both Nocte villages and they hence can interact in their own language.

"In which language you interact with Noctes of Arunachal Pradesh?", Answering this question 61.67% of the masses revealed it as Assamese while 20.83% replied as "Nocte-Assamese" and rest 17.5% speak Hindi for communication. According to Hindi speakers the advantage of Hindi is that it can express more things.

3.0 CONCLUSION :

- Noctes of Assam used to communicate in Nocte dialect in home mostly but some of the masses use a mixed language of Nocte and Assamese can be termed as Nocte-Assamese. Assamese speakers are increasing in Noctes of Assam due the influence of neighborhood and their kinship or marital relationship with Assamese speakers.
- Noctes of Assam mostly use Assamese language not only to interact with neighbors but also to communicate with Noctes of other village due to their variation in dialect.
- In market Assamese language is mostly used to communicate with not only with Noctes of Assam and Assamese people but also with Noctes of Arunachal Pradesh.
- One of the reasons behind the changing attitude of Noctes of Assam towards their own language is Religious factor because of which Noctes of Assam and Noctes of Arunachal Pradesh almost lost their socio-cultural communication. Noctes of Arunachal Pradesh were previously following 'Baishnava Dharma' with Satriya tradition ; but they adopted Christianity nowadays. On the other hand, Noctes of Assam still practicing their old Religious traditions under 'Bareghar Satra' situated in Sasoni of Naharkatia.

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