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Marathi Use and Identity in Higher Education in Urban Maharashtra

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Introduction: Marathi in Higher Education?

Professor Bagh[1], a dynamic professor in the Sociology Department at a leading university in Pune, begins to lecture her Sociology of India class on the caste system.

> Prof.: The other very interesting and atrocious kind of idea here is the whole notion of purity and pollution.

Students fall silent until she begins to translate what she has already stated from English into Marathi.

> Prof.: *Mhanje ha purna* caste system*madhye saglat*, ummm.. *saglat tras ahet. Saglat…*uh… *Aapan kay mhantat saglat he kay kay* whatever, this whole notion of purity and pollution ki, um… um…
>
> (In Marathi: Meaning that in the whole caste system all, ummm… there's trouble in all of it, in all… uh…What do we say, in all of this whatever, this whole notion of purity and pollution that, um… um…)

I sit to the side of the small lecture hall and as I record her speaking I notice how some students begin to smile when she uses an accented Marathi. Professor Bagh is not a native Marathi speaker— a point which she soon reminds her students of. She begins to lose both her train of thought and the attention of the students as she struggles to find the correct words in Marathi.

"I don't get words," she exhales in English as she gives up searching for how to translate the concepts of purity and pollution into Marathi. Her defeat signals to the Marathi speaking students for help and a couple of students speak up to provide the Marathi words for purity and

[1] All personal names and names of educational institutions have been changed to protect privacy of these individuals.

pollution- s*hudhata* and a*shudata*. Though visibly flustered, Professor Bagh thanks them with a nod and switches to Hindi to continue her lecture. She does not translate from English to Hindi nor does she translate the Hindi into English, but instead provides new information mixing both Hindi and English.

> Prof.: *Agar hum woh dekhenge toh ye bohot* important *ho jata hai ye samajhna* that there are some occupations that are considered to be pure and some occupations that are considered to be impure. Right?
>
> (In Hindi: Now we will see that this is very important to understand that there are some occupations…)

She notices that some students are still smiling and she assumes it is from her struggle to speak Marathi and she stops her lecture to address it. She begins to address it in Marathi though she quickly switches to English and then back to Marathi again.

> Prof.: *Hasto na? Pan me prayetna karte bhag.* Please don't laugh. I-I really… *(class laughs)*. Yeah I really sincerely tried to make an attempt to learn Marathi but it is a difficult language yeah? So I'm trying my best, so please don't laugh. *(class laughs)* So— *me pan hasel*. Yeah? *He na?*
>
> (In Marathi: Oh you're lauRajung? But look, I'm making an effort. Please don't laugh, I-I really… […] So— I will also laugh. Yeah? Right?)

Though higher education in India is largely English medium, or with all instruction and textbooks in English, students and professors use other languages in addition to English in classrooms. Professor Bagh often makes great efforts to translate parts of her lectures and allows students to speak up in class in the languages most comfortable for them. However as she is a non-native Marathi speaker and sometimes has difficulty translating from English to Marathi, she relies on a few students who are native Marathi speakers, many of whom sit near the front, to help her to translate in class.

In the second part of the example of classroom interaction given here, Professor Bagh, flustered, begins to lecture again but partially in Hindi, introducing a third language to the class on this day. Then, she notices that students are laughing and she stops the lecture to address how students should respect the attempts she makes to use Marathi to help students who understand

Marathi better than English. Although her language is unclear, what is important and clear are her intentions of attempting translation. Professor Bagh's intentions are to create a more inclusive classroom for speakers of multiple language backgrounds and that she is able to convey her intentions even though the language is muddled, making these gaffs in language and then laughing at them, is aided by her position of authority as the professor. Her missteps with the language invite Marathi speakers to interact with her and disseminate information to her and to the class— solidifying their identities as Marathi students but also giving them an important role in the classroom. In this paper, through ethnographic observations and interviews with students and professors, I explore the effects of these moments of multilingual language use in classrooms, how language use inscribes identities onto students based on their language fluencies, and challenges brought about through multilingual expectations in higher education.

I first began to collect data on this phenomenon in 2015 when international students from European countries studying at X University complained to me that their classes moved slowly due to the professors constantly translating and speaking multiple languages. They felt that they only were able to cover half of what the courses should cover due to lengthy translation efforts and they had difficulties paying attention to the material when the languages used by teachers and students to communicate and lecture in the classroom was constantly changing. They were also frustrated because they felt as though they were always excluded from some of the lecture since they did not speak Marathi or Hindi and had joined their exchange program with the assumption of English instruction in higher education in India. I was also surprised because I had assumed higher education was completely in English at these prestigious institutions in Pune.

The example here is a common exchange in Professor Bagh's lectures, which shows the difficulties of navigating a linguistic landscape in classrooms where students have diverse language proficiencies. My data in this paper is from time spent at multiple universities in Pune in the 2016-2017 academic year. I show that the ways professors attempt to minimize comprehension difficulties among students from Marathi speaking backgrounds with low English fluency ascribes linguistic identities, or identities closely aligned with language, onto students. However, Professor Bagh's translation efforts and the language policies of the university also reproduce a linguistic hierarchy that privileges English and employs a politics of

inclusion and exclusion based on English proficiency, insofar as it undermines efforts to include and improve Marathi speaking students' comprehension of classroom materials in English.

Demographics of Two Higher Education Institutions in Pune

There is a policy regulating language in classrooms at X University and its affiliated universities as part of the Maharashtra Public University Act which states in the English version that professors are "(64) to promote by itself, or in co-operation with other universities, the study of Marathi and the use of Marathi as a medium of instruction, study, research and examination, in adherence to the policies of the State Government," (Maharashtra Public Universities Act (English version), 2016). When asked to clarify what kind of promotion is intended, Professor Bagh said that each department can interpret the rule as they see fit, if at all. Many departments have in their policies that exams and assignments can be completed by students in either Marathi or English. However, sources used in classes are almost entirely in English in all departments except the Women's Studies department, which I will address later in this paper. Therefore, access to information occurs mostly in English and while the rule allowing students to write exams in Marathi is intended to make the exam process easier for students, it often adds an extra challenge for students to mediate the language of sources and the classroom to the language of the exam. Most students, from what professors and students told me, attempt their exams in English. This offers them a chance to gauge their level of English and students with low English proficiency also feel that professors will be lenient with their grades and favor their attempt at using English (Interview, Student, 1/21/17).

In her classroom, Professor Bagh makes great efforts to translate her lectures— usually by pausing in English to summarize them in Marathi. Her use of Hindi seems less intentional and fleeting as she mixes it with English or responds to Hindi speaking students in Hindi in brief asides instead of also translating her English lectures into Hindi. However, she is aware of the students' linguistic and educational backgrounds. This approach is not unique to Professor Bagh. The professors I spoke with, who spanned six departments in three different universities, could give me detailed accounts of where each of their students were from, the language medium of their educational backgrounds, and what languages they were most comfortable using in class. This level of detail into the individual backgrounds of students took me by surprise. The great

attention given to students' language backgrounds is meant to create a classroom where access to knowledge is available to all students regardless of English proficiency, but it also enables professors to attribute identities to their students or categorize groups of students based on the languages students speak best. So language becomes the predominant identity marker in the space of the classroom.

In social science departments at a leading university in Pune, and its well-known affiliates, students may write their exams, essays, and other assignments in Marathi, though instruction is largely English-only. Through my ethnographic observations and recordings, I detail in this paper how translating lectures, holding weekend sessions for Marathi translation, and allowing assignments to be completed in Marathi are intended to adhere to a more linguistically inclusive environment for students with low English proficiency from Marathi speaking backgrounds but also creates and solidifies linguistic identities of students. I argue that this process, instead of creating a more inclusive environment for all students, builds a parallel course in each class based on the preferred language of students which further divides classrooms based on languages and brings to the surface linguistic identity as the main identifying category for students. I explore this process by bringing to light ways that Marathi, and Hindi are used in English medium higher education.

This paper focuses on data collected from classrooms in state universities and colleges over the 2016-2017 academic year. The colleges have both junior and senior sections. Junior colleges are the equivalent to 11th and 12th grade in an American education system. The senior colleges award undergraduate bachelor's degrees and the state universities award post graduate Master's and PhD degrees. The state universities in Pune included in my study are considered prestigious and are funded both by the central government and the state government. As these are considered public universities which receive funding from the state government, there are reservations set by the government to admit students from educationally disadvantaged and rural backgrounds from Maharashtra, creating a broad range of student identities across diverse socioeconomic classes, languages, and ethnicities.

I chose two institutions for data collection due to their student demographics and prestige. X University was established in 1949. The main building is a colonial structure and the university itself is located on a vast amount of land in the central-western part of the city. There

are forty-six departments and around a total of 500,000 students who attend X University. X University also boasts a large foreign exchange program with students coming mostly from Europe and the Middle East to study in various departments for a semester or year. Affiliated with X University, Y College was founded in 1885 as a privately run university in Pune. Y College is both a junior college for students to complete their 11th and 12th grades specializing in a technical area and a senior college for students to receive B.A. degrees. There are about 4,500 students, all mostly from India, who attend senior college at Y College in 29 disciplines. Both X University and Y College are ranked highly nationally for the arts and science educations they offer.

At X University, I attended lectures in the anthropology, English, and sociology departments in addition to interviewing professors in all three departments. At Y College my data is from the sociology and political science departments. I observed meetings held by the student-run sociology club and spoke with professors and students from different parts of Maharashtra. At these two institutions, I spoke with professors and students; some who had fluent English and others who claimed to be stronger in Marathi than English.

Promoting Marathi Language, Prescribing Marathi Identity

Professor Bagh's Sociology of India class consists of Indian, European, and Middle Eastern students. The native Marathi speaking students from rural Maharashtra have low English proficiencies and most of the European and Middle Eastern students have proficient English though some also struggle with it. The students from urban centers in Maharashtra and those from outside the state of Maharashtra have strong English proficiencies and most have also attended English medium schools, though not all. All the Indian students have high Hindi proficiencies as well though they do not prefer to speak it for multiple reasons such as their Hindi is informally learned and therefore colloquial, or they prefer to speak English to improve fluency and make friends with people who do not speak Hindi like the foreign students. Upon arriving at the universities and colleges, students expect the classes and their materials to be in English, but the reality is that in both informal and formal classroom discourse multiple languages are used.

Identity construction is relational and based on social interaction (Bucholtz and Hall 2005). Languages and how one speaks are key aspects of identification. My observational data shows that university students are attuned to moments when the professor speaks different languages or translates parts of the lectures as a sign that the professor is speaking either to them or to another linguistic group, based on whether the professor speaks English, Hindi, or Marathi. Therefore the students and teachers have internalized which language applies to them and this shapes or solidifies their academic identities. The lectures are organized around appealing to different linguistic groups and the professor and students know exactly to whom each language includes and excludes.

Regional languages, also commonly referred to as mother tongues, in India are often indicated to be parts of identities rather than useful tools for accomplishing tasks, which Mitchell finds are the uses for Hindi and English in her investigations (2009:10). Marathi, as a mother tongue, also represents deep emotional connections to a shared history in a region. Students in classes therefore identify with and are identified by their language strengths which become their linguistic identity, standing for identification with a geographic region and its history as well. Students identify themselves this way, such as the students who speak up to assist Professor Bagh with her Marathi. They claim those moments when Marathi does not come easily to Professor Bagh by positioning themselves to show their Marathi proficiency in relation to her low proficiency. The term linguistic identity refers to a speaker's identity as produced through linguistic interactions and language choices such as these from my observations in Professor Bagh's lectures, which are particularly salient in multilingual societies such as India with such strong identity polities fixed to language (Bucholtz and Hall 2005, Mitchell 2009).

Language use in classroom discourse is key in investigating identity construction, since it is through communication that relationships and identities are enacted and produced and schools become sites for the production of language ideologies and identities (Heller 2007). Students accept or resist identities through interactions that take place in educational institutions— a fertile area for socialization and relational identity formation (Willis 1977, Eckert 1989). Students who can conform to expected and accepted academic speech styles are then viewed as good and successful students (Cazden 1988). My studies show that students who speak, write, and comprehend English are seen to be better students in higher education in Pune. It is as

though students are to progress through a hierarchy of languages with English at the apex. However, students who express interest in the material and speak up in class in Marathi are also viewed as good and successful students in the sociology and women's studies departments at X University. It is assumed that these students have some level of comprehension in English though are shy or unconfident to speak in English. In this way, Indian students differentiate their identities from peers and coalesce their social identities through appropriating speech patterns (Eckert 1989, Paris 2013). However, Paris' and Eckert's studies show identification and differentiation on behalf of the students themselves. In this paper, my data show professors' attitudes and actions towards students based on how professors identify students in relation to the languages students use and their backgrounds. Professors then reinscribe linguistic hierarchies reinforced by student identities when trying to make space or allowances for students in multilingual classrooms such as through translating lectures or holding parallel sessions for students who speak Marathi.

Professor Bagh at X University spends a great deal of time considering the linguistic abilities of her students with the intention of all her students comprehending classroom material equally. She once spent a full class day organizing presentation groups based on students' language proficiencies because she wanted groups with mixed linguistic abilities. The result was to be that one student would deliver a presentation first in English and then another would present the same slides, though in a slightly shortened manner, in Marathi. This way students who were already known to the class as students more comfortable speaking in Marathi rather than in English were given a sanctioned space and purpose to use Marathi and information was disseminated to students in both languages.

However, the outcome of Professor Bagh's careful planning was that students paid attention to the language that they understood best and the presenters needed to not deliver any information outside their linguistic comfort zone. In each presentation, Marathi material was translated from English rather than new information first being given or brought to the project in Marathi to be translated into English. Before one of these presentations, a non-Maharashtrian Indian student educated in English medium schools with no Marathi proficiency leaned over and whispered to a German student while rolling her eyes and laughing saying, "Ok, get ready to understand nothing but nod your head to pretend like you do!" Showing frustration among non-

Marathi speaking students and an attitude of derision for the fact that she knew the student presenting would present in Marathi and that translation needs to be provided for some students. This student's casual aside shows that during the Marathi presentation, students with high proficiencies in English disengaged from the presenters once the English presentation was over, turning to their laptops or phones instead of keeping their attention on their classmates at the front of the class. Some Marathi speaking students also disengage from the English portion during presentations as well. So not all of the Marathi speaking students remain attentive throughout the English presentations, which is always the first version presented. This shows that only some of the students with high Marathi proficiencies attend to the English used in class, through socialization or personal interest, while the students with high English proficiencies do not approach the Marathi portions of presentations the same way. The effect is that there seems to be two classes held simultaneously based on language medium— one in English and one in Marathi. Through these classroom practices, the students are categorized into different groups based on their English and Marathi proficiencies.

Marginalized Marathi Identities in Higher Education

Ankur, a sociology student at Y College, is new to an English-medium education and therefore said he studies at least six hours a day to keep up because as he is from a rural and primarily Marathi speaking background. Luckily, he is outgoing and has made many friends in his classes. These are the same friends who encouraged him to sit down and speak with me when he entered the professor's office to ask a question during my interview with their professor. He briefly described to me his struggles with language that the professor and his classmates had already begun to describe to me. He smiled but recalled how he despaired his whole first year and almost paid for an exorbitantly expensive spoken English class offered through one of many private institutions in the area around the college intended for students just like him who struggle with their English curriculums. Instead, he received help from his classmates to improve his English. Sanjeevani, one of Ankur's native Marathi speaking peers with high English proficiency, responded to Ankur's comments by saying just a week before she had edited and made him re-write a sociology paper "about twelve times" to help improve his English writing, saying nothing of the sociological concepts he was writing about in the paper. It seemed that for

written assignments, the focus is entirely on producing an essay in English regardless of the content. While Ankur was getting help through the kindness of his classmates and professors, it was not enough for Ankur to succeed and his language abilities were an insurmountable hindrance. Ankur left this program of study before completing his degree at the end of the 2017 term.

Raju is a recent graduate of environmental science MS degree program at X University. He was a strong student and top of his classes all throughout his schooling until he reached his higher education. Like Ankur, Raju is also from a rural Maharashtrian background and dropped out of his classes. He left X University to return home to begin a career as a farmer after his father when he saw that he failed three out of four of his classes in his first semester. He found it too difficult to keep up in already challenging classes where English was primarily used. He had come from a Marathi speaking town where even Hindi was rare so he found the mix of languages, coupled with moving away from home and other social pressures, overwhelming. Raju eventually returned to his studies and was successful at his degree and English by putting in extra effort to learn English. He took private classes, made friends with English speakers who he made sure corrected his mistakes, and even sought out a specific friend to be his roommate who he wanted to help him improve his English. His efforts are unique to Raju's personality and go above and beyond those expected of students. Raju found that in classes students spoke Hindi and Marathi with each other but in his degree program, the professor and texts were too challenging to follow in English and he claimed he wished he had attended English medium schools and learned English earlier.

Raju and Ankur represent only two of the many students who are marginalized by their rural identities, which become synonyms for a Marathi identity in higher education due to the high level of reservation seats for rural students. This mix of rural and urban student backgrounds is unique to higher education in Pune as Pune is the educational hub of Maharashtra and more centrally located than Mumbai, which also boasts top universities though not as many as Pune. This mix or urban and rural students is not found in the primary or secondary schools in Pune either, where all students are from Pune and therefore an urban background. If there is access to English medium education in rural locations, it is often English medium in name only with textbooks provided in English but where teachers and parents are unable to effectively teach

or use English based on their own low English proficiencies (Gupta 2006, Richard 2013). The product is a degraded education where concepts are not fully taught or learned in either language— the vernacular or English (Mody 2015). Students sidestep using proper English in classrooms because "evaluations are so low that professors just look for keywords on exams," Anand, a Y sociology student explained to me (Interview, 1/21/17). Therefore students coming to these universities in Pune from rural backgrounds are often assumed to have low educational levels, standards, and low English levels but can earn a degree without having to use fluent English. Cleavages between students from urban and rural backgrounds relate to language and quality of education, whereby a language gets associated with socioeconomic and educational disadvantage and geographic regions all at once.

Sanctioned Spaces for Hindi and Marathi in English Higher Education

Ankur's insistence on doing his degree in English without English proficiency is a common story. Parallel courses in Marathi are offered in some colleges and universities as a means to disseminate the same information in Marathi to students in the same degree course. The parallel classes are supposed to mirror their English counterparts at Y College though these classes are taught by different professors. However, though these classes exist, they are still often unpopular choices for Marathi proficient students for the reasons of prestige and educational style. "Students like Ankur are vernacular medium students. But they choose the English medium stream (at Y College) because they want to learn English and this is the first opportunity for them to do so" (Interview, Bagh, 1/21/17). In addition, the English stream of classes has more prestige and often more dynamic teachers than the Marathi parallel classes. Often these courses are only offered for general education or core classes and electives are only provided in English making availability of Marathi parallel classes selective to begin with.

When I asked if the quality of the Marathi parallel classes is similar to the quality of the English classes, the students all vigorously shook their heads. Sanjeevani spoke up quickly saying, "So few people take the Marathi medium class. And a lot of material has not been translated so the resources available in different languages are very different. Also the teachers themselves may not have good teaching skills. As they are Marathi medium teachers." When I asked her to clarify her point about the teaching skills, Professor Bagh, who I had initially come

to speak with in her office which doubled as a very small classroom housing just six wooden desks, quietly added that the pedagogy in Marathi medium government schools rests on memorization and having students copy answers from the board into notebooks. Therefore, they had the impression that these teachers bring a style of teaching that is looked down upon into their Marathi parallel classes because it is what they and their students know and are used to, based on their backgrounds and educational exposure. This shows a hierarchical divide also among the teachers along the lines of language, as Professor Bagh continued to explain, "They are often first generation college-goers themselves and they're not English speaking people so they decided to teach in Marathi." According to her, not only the students are categorized as Marathi speaking or English speaking based on their backgrounds but a divide also exists among professors as well.

To bridge the divide among students in the English and Marathi streams and even among students with high and low English proficiency in the English parallel classes, the sociology department has created a space for student initiatives based on linguistic inclusivity. Students take it upon themselves to organize events outside the classroom such as discussions and film viewings that focus on classroom material. Because these groups are student-led and take place outside classroom hours, students are encouraged to speak in any language they feel most comfortable using. Some students are extremely comfortable in English and since they learn the material in class in English or feel that they can help improve other students' English, they continue the discussion outside of class on these topics in English. However, these groups are built for conversational involvement unlike a classroom lecture so most students use Hindi. Hindi becomes the inclusive language at these events used to bring together the Maharashtrian and non-Maharashtrian Indian students in a more colloquial atmosphere.

Professor Bagh and the two students who mainly run these events explained that a year ago they used to only use English at the sociology club events as they were intended to be an extension of lectures. However, some Marathi-speaking students complained saying that they felt excluded and while they could not feel fully comfortable participating in classes due to a language barrier, they did not want to remain excluded from these events as well. So Professor Bagh officially relaxed the English-only rules around these extracurricular events so that there was a conscious effort to use Marathi and Hindi as well and has since had a rise in student

participation. However, these events reinscribe linguistic identities upon students based on the conscious effort for students to use languages other than English and because these extracurricular opportunities become spaces extending from the classroom where students fall into the linguistically labeled categories they have inside the classroom. In one meeting for example, students had taken turns presenting their views on the subject and finally the student leader paused and said, in Marathi, "Now let's hear from the Marathi students" who were all sitting to one side as a group, granting them space to speak based on their language proficiencies. They had not tried to speak up before then and had sat silently listening to the other students speak in Hindi and English. When explicitly told to contribute their perspectives based on their language backgrounds, which had become their linguistic identities in class, two of the four students provided their opinions on the topic.

Similarly, X University's women's studies department works to normalize bilingualism in the classroom by creating spaces where Marathi is not only the preferred language but is the necessary language. Their goal to take Marathi and English out of a hierarchy where English is seen to be better than Marathi and give equal status to both languages through teaching and introducing texts in both languages is stated clearly in their mission statement. The women's studies department at X University is famous for their focus on linguistic equality as a means to provide an education to minorities and traditionally educationally disenfranchised populations such as rural women. Here again we see a Marathi identity conflated with a rural one. Professor Das and her colleagues introduce Marathi primary sources translated into English rather than the other way around in their classes. Parallel sessions in this department are mandatory for all students to attend and as a result, while native Hindi and English speakers learn some Marathi, the classes are heavily focused on linguistic topics which surprises and upsets some exchange students and students from outside Maharashtra who did not expect to get an education in the Marathi language along with their women studies degree. However, the model of education the women's studies department follows seems to be the most successful at creating an institutionalized space for Marathi within their degree, challenging a linguistic hierarchy which places English before Marathi as the most useful language in education. The unique policies in place in the women's studies department help to combat the stigma where one language is more

valued over the other and is useful to integrate both categories of linguistically identified students (Marathi speakers and English speakers) into an interactive setting in classes.

The ways that Marathi, and Hindi to some extent as well, are incorporated officially into classrooms and departments across various higher education institutions in Pune appear to be successful for Marathi-speaking students with lower fluency levels in English where all students are required to attend all classes (therefore not substituting the additional Marathi tutorials for English medium lectures) and when there are enough materials available in both languages. The efforts from the students and professors in X University's women's studies department welcome bilingualism in the classroom where Marathi is valued and useful. These linguistic practices are some ways that successfully include and promote Marathi in university classrooms while maintaining an English medium educational system at the higher education level though students are still saddled with their linguistic identities through the organization of the course.

Inscribing Linguistic Hierarchies

Professor Bagh makes great effort to include Marathi in her lectures to create a rapport with the students who are more proficient in Marathi. In a private meeting with me, she lamented that she feels her level of Marathi to be low and the attempts she makes to use it proficiently in her lectures often causes students to laugh or not take her seriously. I was surprised to hear that a very experienced professor felt diminished and often defeated by her language abilities in Marathi in her classrooms. I argue that through her status and authority of the professor and because her linguistic shortcomings is due to poor Marathi but strong English, rather than the other way around, she is allowed to make mistakes without the same repercussions that students would receive who speak inadequate English but strong Marathi. Professor Bagh is from the state of Orissa, located on the eastern coast of India. She speaks multiple other Indian languages but only began learning and using Marathi as an adult. Through her attempts of using Marathi and position as a non-native Marathi speaker, Professor Bagh defers to the Marathi speakers in the classroom for assistance with the language.

Language ideologies reveal organization in society that motivates behavior as "mediating link(s) between social forms and forms of talk" (Woolard 1998:3). In my data, Marathi is shown to be a boon in departments like the women's studies department and for moments of translation

where professors who are not proficient in Marathi are compelled through the Maharashtra Public University Act to introduce Marathi into their classes and need the assistance of their Marathi students to do so. Ideologies surrounding Marathi in higher education organize students into categories, often ordered in a hierarchy based on who the education works best for (those who can speak English, an academic and global language) and those who speak Marathi who need linguistic concessions to be made for their inclusion in higher education. In higher education in Pune, Marathi was defined in discussions with professors as associated with students from low socioeconomic statuses and disadvantaged educational backgrounds, often from rural areas who generally struggle when adjusting to the academic culture in Pune. Associating Marathi proficiency with students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds becomes a powerfully motivating ideology cast upon students who have higher Marathi proficiency than English proficiency. For example, Professor Bagh said, "here Marathi is an identity issue" and "some students feel targeted because they are Maharashtrian. They may feel that they have been given a bad grade or are asked to work with another student because of their mother tongue" (Interview, A. Bagh, 9/29/16). Indeed, Professor Bagh did not draw the connection between lamenting to me about this and her day-long attempt to form student presentation groups solely based on the language abilities of the students. Therefore the linguistic medium, as defined by the professor, motivates students' academic attitudes and performance and also how professors feel they must teach towards groups of students based on their linguistic backgrounds.

According to the Maharashtra Public University Act of 2016, in the English medium classes students can submit papers in either Marathi or English. Hindi is largely absent and is not included in the university policy on the language of student submissions as Hindi speakers are assumed to either hail from outside Maharashtra or never have attended a Marathi medium school and should therefore be proficient enough to do their education in English. Indian students who are more proficient in other Indian languages or foreign students who also struggle with English are excluded from these language policies at the higher education level and write their papers in English sometimes with great difficulty. Professor Bagh at X University and Professor Bagh at Y College both confirmed that most students attempt their papers in English as the majority of instruction and material is in English. Though often when students with low English proficiency attempt their assignments in English, it results in a struggle for many

students and low quality or barely comprehensible English on assignments for which these professors are always at a loss for how to grade.

Language ideologies reveal organization in society, which help to explore the role of power relations in social group formation, group cohesion, and motivating decisions that drive behavior. Additionally, language ideologies reflect politically charged, purposeful, and directed ways of using language as well as representing shared beliefs about language. In the examples above, language ideologies about Marathi shape professors views of students and the students' identities. In classrooms, students are unofficially divided into Marathi speakers or English speakers. Marathi speakers are assumed to be from rural, educationally disadvantaged backgrounds, which in turn conflates Marathi in the classroom with educational disadvantage and English with educational advancement, except for in the women's studies department at X University. In this way, analyzing language ideologies provides a key method of linking micro level observations of practices to macro level systems and doing this allows for stronger consideration of political economic structures, power, social inequality, and constraints on language behavior (Woolard 1998:27).

Conclusion: Results of Marathi, Hindi, and English in higher education

The Marathi language is the predominant aspect of a Maharashtrian identity and societies' beliefs about language are produced in schools (Wortham 2002). Language therefore emerges as a key feature of student identities in higher education because classrooms in many urban higher education institutions are often composed of students of various linguistic, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds, compared to primary and secondary educational institutions where there may not be as many students from such diverse backgrounds. Higher education therefore is not only for higher degrees and specialization but for students like Ankur and Raju, it was the first time in their educational careers where they needed to branch out of familiar settings and comfort zones— socially and linguistically. Therefore, language becomes a contentious divider and marker of different groups of students if teachers identify and categorize students by linguistic abilities and teach towards those abilities, dividing the class by language.

Although teachers and students in various departments in the three higher educational institutions know that they are to only use English, they "smuggle the vernacular into the

classroom," as there are institutional barriers to allowing for complete English medium classrooms (Probyn 2009). Students like Sanjeevani and Anand at Y College express that for higher education to be more inclusive and egalitarian it should be necessary and accepted to appreciate and use Marathi in higher education. However, in Nitin's view, a feeling of giving into regional language speakers in higher education by providing sanctioned space for Marathi use hinders English learning and further disadvantages students who already began their advanced degrees at a disadvantage, in his view, from coming from Marathi medium educational backgrounds. Apart from being a crutch, foreign exchange students highlighted the extra time it takes to orally translate lectures and written material. Language training, in Nitin's and Raju's views, should have occurred in the primary and secondary schoolings level so as to ease students into the academic rigor and social differences of higher education instead of students also needing to adapt linguistically in addition to changing academic and social norms.

English is seen to be an academic language necessary for all to succeed in higher education. Marathi becomes a concession that some professors make on behalf of department policies or politics. English is a form of academic pressure for professorial performance as well. Classes are supposed to be English medium but departments that encourage Marathi use in classes still have pressure for their professors to attend international conferences and publish books and articles in English to garner prestige for the department (Interview, Bagh, 9/29/16). English, as an international language of research, is a way for their work to reach outside the state, which is beneficial for the careers of professors and their departments. The result of the examples I have provided here show how language ideologies are created and perpetuated around the use of Marathi, English, and Hindi in higher education classrooms and how these ideologies play into identity construction on behalf of professors ascribing identities onto students and how students appropriate language as a marker of their own identities. My data also show how institutionalized spaces for Marathi are created and used, and the ways in which mixing Marathi, Hindi, and English occurs on a daily basis.

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