

A Bird's eye view of the movement for Language Emancipation – A Case Study of Konkani Language

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Abstract: From the 1960s onwards, historical minorities have experienced a period of ethnic renaissance and emancipation. Huss and Lindgren (2011: 2) define language emancipation as 'improving the position of an unprivileged language through political efforts and language planning'. Konkani a minority language with less than 3 million native speakers among 130 crore people of India have been attempting hard to attain the place of recognition to their mother tongue. The article attempts to identify various movements by the Konkani native speakers for the progression of their mother language.

Keywords: Konkani. Language, Movements, Emancipation, Struggle

Introduction:

India is a land of many languages, a land of diversity. This difference is a natural fact that in a diverse environment the 'stronger prevails'. Unity is strength. Unity is easily possible in living together. It is not surprising that the Konkani people, who did not live together in one land and were divided in many countries, divided into many religions and races, had to make a continuous movement to preserve and develop their mother tongue. But it is no doubt exciting that Tikkadi triumphed for equality and equality with the powerful while Konkani maintained its presence in several conflicting stages.

A Bird's eye view of the movement for Language Emancipation:

In the continuous struggle for the preservation, protection and promotion of the Konkani language, five main phases of the movement can be identified,

1. Konkani - Marathi Language - Dialects Argument Controversy.
2. Struggle against merger with Maharashtra to protect Goa's autonomy
3. Struggle for recognition of Konkani by Central Sahitya Academy
4. Tikkata to become Goa's state language Konkani.
5. Opposition to getting the status of national language included in the constitution
6. Struggle for special opportunities for Konkani in Karnataka.

Konkani - Marathi Language - Dialects Controversy

While there was a debate whether the Konkani language was a Sanskrit root or not, there were those who argued that Konkani was the language of the local tribes. The Portuguese, who defeated the Bahmani Sultans and captured Goa, needed the use of Konkani for business reasons. He came into constant contact with the upper caste Saraswat Shenavi (Shenvi/Shenai) making them partners in his business dealings. His language was called 'Lingua Brahmanika'. But for their religious purposes they made the people they converted speak the same 'Firangi' language and follow the Portuguese culture. Thus the language of the Saraswat Konkani was labeled as 'Lingua Canarina'. It was there that the seed of the original division arose.

The use of Konkani began to be restricted by the Portuguese clergy and rulers who bowed to their pressure. Officials like Conde de' Alvara, Manile de' Galdino, Jose Maria de' Silva Porres, Lorenzo de' Sant Mariano banned the use of Konkani. As a result, the growth of public use of Konkani was stunted.

There were no such prohibitions on neighboring Marathi. Not only did it flourish, but it also developed jealous feelings of Tatsara and Savati towards its neighboring country, Konkani. Konkani spread such propaganda with the attitude that it was only a small tsilu-dialect. Thus the Konkani language became a victim of both the imperialist oppression of the foreigners and the stepmother attitude of the natives. The nature of the problem became complicated because the colonial experience of Konkani native speakers who suffered under foreign rule was different.

The 'Inquisition' (religious court system), pressure on the Portuguese language due to conversions, along with humiliation of the Marathi and Sanskrit speakers both put Konkani under pressure. AD From 1510 to 1574, the Carmelite and Franciscan priests who had religious control over the Portuguese in Goa developed anti-Konkani sentiment. He prevented Konkani from ever getting the opportunities they should have naturally. The Jesuit priests who came after 1574 (Jesusabhe/Esuina) can be seen preferring the use of Konkani language for their own purposes.

In 1559 Manuel de' Olivera 'Dotrina Cristavan da Sam. Francisco Xavier' was translated into Konkani and published. Thomas Steven, who came to India in 1597, was an important priest who worked hard to bring Konkani into the mainstream. Steven Padri is credited with creating a printed Konkani work called 'Christa Purana' and a Konkani grammar work called 'Ndina je' itiguchi achitichiditchi (Arte de' Lingua Canarina) and strengthening the roots of the Konkani language.

After Thomas Steven, several priests made various non-creative, creative literary compositions in Konkani literature. The printing press in Goa was instrumental in promoting this literature. Diego Ribeiro wrote a commentary on the literature of his guru Stevanna. Gastar de' Sam Miguel composed 14 works. Prominent among these is 'copious syntax'. Amador de' Sant Anna brought 'Plos Sancturama' to Konkani. Joao de' Sant Mathias translated 'Simbom Fidei'. Fa| Stephen of the Cross (1579-1643) composed the 1200-stanza epic 'Introduction to the Life of Saint Peter'. Fa| Antonio de' Saldaña, fa| Leonardo Cinnamon, Fa| Priests like Mingel de' Almeida composed mostly religious works in Konkani. The prolific growth of literature in Konkani due to the continuous efforts of these priests gradually spread the idea that 'Konkani is not a non-literary dialect but a rich language capable of developing a strong literary heritage'.

Eduardo Jose Bruno de' Souza founded and cultivated a newspaper called 'Udentichem Salak' (The Sun of the East). 'Christuvam Gharabo' written by Bruno de' Sooja is known as the first Konkani novel. Jose Gerson wrote a book called 'Cunha 'Eotinhachitii Aichitiguchige Chitija Ainedichinudie'. Thus after 1560 several priests and scholars were brought up using Konkani. But Konkani faced some problems in developing as a universal language as most of the literature composed was of a religious nature. The use of Marathi as the vernacular in the north of Goa and the use of Kannada as the vernacular in the south of Goa started to create some problems for Konkani.

Joachim Heliadaro de' Cunha (Dicunha) de' Rivara (1800-1879) and Monsignor Sebastião Rudolph Dalgador said 'The Konkani language must regain its natural place of honor, for which all Konkani native speakers must work together. The Konkani themselves called for their language to be respected and used and nurtured. Joachim De'Rivara wrote a great essay 'Itischii ooisnaodiichchichi Zachititiguchi Aotichichichittii'. After that, the Konkani native speakers in Goa had a passion for their mother tongue and started fighting for its natural privileges. Despite the pressure of the Portuguese, the struggle of these two pundits to give dignity to the Konkani language inspired the next pundits and in a way, it is no mistake that the rebirth and further progress of Konkani was the result of the efforts of these two.

An English linguist named John Leydon (1775-1811) made a small mistake in his studies that led to the idea that Konkani was a dialect of Marathi. This may be due to the limited barriers to academic achievement in that context. But the Marathaists deliberately continued the argument and jumped into the movement saying that Konkani is a dialect of Marathi and does not need its own privileges. Jose Gerson Dacunha (1844-1900) elaborated on the importance and necessity of striving to preserve Konkani's individuality.

The great historian R.G. Bhandarkar in his works came up with the study that Konkani might have been a dialect of Marathi. Scholars like Ramachandra Bhikaji Gunjkar, Angelo Maffe, Jerome Antony Saldanha have advanced arguments about the similarity of Prakrit root between Marathi-Konkani. But the Marathaists, who did not understand the arguments of these scholars, created an atmosphere of unrest and intolerance, arguing that Konkani was only a dialect of Marathi.

George Abraham Grierson and Stan Kanover made some fundamental mistakes in their study of Konkani when they were working for the British government in 1905 on a project called ITI. Konkani Marathi native speakers were happy that their argument was won. Not only that, he proceeded to hit Konkani's head. Shamba Krishnaji Surya Rao Sardesai Prominent leaders of the sect who argued that Konkani is only a dialect of Marathi believed that Konkani was a dialect and had no literary status just like Adu language.

Fernando Lyall, Dada Vaidya, Cristuvam Pinto etc. fought for the preservation of Konkani's own form despite strong resistance from the Marathaists. Dadavaidya roared in Konkani at the 1916 Goa Provincial Conference (Pdiotigdiess Pdiotitichichita). Vaman Valavlikar (1-3), known as Shenay Goni Bob, (1-3), known as Shenay Gony Bob, (1-3), Monshaneer Rudolph Sebastiao (1-1) Chavan etc. Linguist, Sumitra Mangesha Khatre, Sunita Kumar Chatterjee, who has done immense service for Konkani, historian Dr. Mariano Saldanha and (1878-1975) Shenay Gony Bab named as Vaman Raghunath Varde Walavlikar, would have woken up all the Konkani with their lion's roar The disaster that came to their mother tongue together Organized to get rid of or not? That is still a question.

Konkani has no literary force. The Marathaists, who claimed that they had no literary heritage of their own, got a new weapon that Konkani had no script. Marathaists like Raghunath Talwadkar, Priolkar, Sukthankar, Prabhu Desai etc. strongly increased the power of Marathism against Konkani after 1950s. Konkani native speakers have no mamkara over their mother tongue. Konkani have no classical knowledge of their mother tongue other than other languages. His argument was that Konkani are unscientific, arrogant, the history of Konkani language and land is very recent.

Struggle against merger with Maharashtra to protect Goa's autonomy

While the Konkani-Marathi language-dialect argument was still prevalent, the idea of a linguistic state with Konkani as the mother tongue began to develop. Madhava Manjunath Shanubhagar, a famous lawyer, brought together some social leaders and Konkani lovers and started the 'Konkani Language Board' in Karwar in 1934. Narasimha Govinda Shanbhog, Narasimha Babanna Kamath, Suvasini Narahari Borkar, Vinayaka Subbarao, Gokarna, Krishnabhaji, Panjkar, Severin Silva and famous freedom fighter K.N. Rao, Dandeli was the leader of this organization. Although this organization is outside Goa, his services to build the state of Konkani by keeping Goa as the power center are immense. Not only did he become committed to the development of Konkani drama, poetry, literature and thereby the service of the Konkani language and the Konkani people, he also worked hard to develop a Konkani political personality.

Kaka Saheb Kalelkar, Professor George Mark Morais, B.A. Salethur, P.S. Konkani warriors like Kamath, Pandits fought for the construction of Konkani state. Marathas in Badag of Goa, Kannadigas in Tenkan dreamed of their own state and fought for it. The Konkani who were affected by that struggle were fighting for their mother tongue, but due to several reasons they did not get extended support. At that time the political control of Goa was in Portugal and any decisions were taken there.

The Congress, which was in favor of the creation of linguistic provinces before independence, had advanced the idea of a unified nation in the post-independence situation. Dhar Commission, J.V.P. (Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Pattabhi Sitaramaiah) Commissions reported against the creation of linguistic provinces. When the process of creation of linguistic territories started (November 1956) with the sacrifice of Potti Sriramulu, the question of Goa's existence between Karnataka and Maharashtra arose. The Marathi argued that

entire Goa should be merged into Maharashtra as Konkani was a dialect of Marathi. Not only was it not possible for the Mysore government to put forward any argument that Konkani is a dialect of Kannada, it was necessary to present the argument that Konkani is an independent language and prepare the necessary documents when the majority of Konkani native speakers were already part of the Mysore state.

When the large number of Karwars already belonged to the Mysore state, it became necessary to present the argument that Konkani is an independent language and prepare the necessary documents for it.

The argument for Konkani-Marathi dialect, the formation of Konkani mother-tongue linguistic province, and the argument for the liberation of Goa became stronger in post-independence India. In 1928 T.B. Under the leadership of Dikunhara, the Goa Congress Committee came to the forefront of the freedom struggle. It was also a problem of foreign policy to make contact with Portugal and liberate Diu, Daman, Salsette, Bessin and Goa. So of course Goa started to get full independence. Finally on December 18, 1961 it became necessary for the Government of India to conduct an army operation into Goa and capture it.

After Goa's independence, it was immediately constituted as a union territory. However, its fate was inevitable. Along with those who argue that the dialect of Konkani Marathi and its parts should be included in Maharashtra as a whole, the number of people who argue that the culture of the people of Goa should be included in Karnataka as the original Kannada culture is now increasing.

Meanwhile, two regional parties emerged in Goa. U.G.P. (Utiniya Uchiti Pchidinathi) fought for Goa to become an independent state. M.G.P. (Ochihchidichishnadichitichiji Uomchitinachinchachi Pchidinathi) fought that Goa should join Maharashtra. These two parties continued to fight for and against the merger, causing unnecessary confusion to the central government. In 1966 the Congress Working Committee (CWG) sanctioned an act allowing for a referendum on its continued existence in Goa. The Union Legislature passed the Goa, Diu and Daman Referendum Act, 1966. 1) Goa Maharashtrian Gomantaka Party won the elections in Goa and formed the government. D.B. Bandodkar's Maharashtrian government, Marathi leaders like YB Chavan, Srinath Pai, S.A. Dange, Peter Alvaris, Mr. S. A. Despite the influence of Joshi etc., the Konkani in Goa, the Konkani who were working in the sea, but also the Konkani who were working abroad, on that great day on January 16, 1967, in the referendum on the future of Goa, out of 3,88,392 voters, 1,72,191 voted in favor of central government in Goa, 1,38,170. Voted in favor of merger in Maharashtra. Goa remained independent.

Struggle for recognition of Konkani by Central Sahitya Academy

The Central Sahitya Akademi recognized the languages rich in literature among the languages of India and Rajashraya gave them recognition. Since the 1950s, there was a demand that Konkani should be awarded by the Central Sahitya Akademi. A linguist, Sunita Kumar Chatterjee, who knew the real wealth of Konkani that had been torn apart, worked tirelessly for the revival of Konkani. Even during the recognition of Kasi-Nepali languages in 1973, Chatterjee reinvigorated the divided Konkani leaders and made them gain their due status. Unfortunately, the Marathi and Sanskrit language scholars at the Central Sahitya Academy cornered Chatterjee's scholarly recommendations that Konkani should be recognized by the Central Sahitya Academy. On this occasion, Sasikala Kakodkar, leader of Maharashtrian Gomantaka Party, who was the chief minister of Goa, also stood up for the Marathi sect.

It was inevitable that the Konkani movement groups that had grown up in Goa, Mumbai, Kerala, Mangalore etc. would re-organize the movement against the Marathiists and for the rightful status of Konkani. All India Konkani Parishad, G.S.B. Youth Council (Ernakulam) Rakno Newspaper (Mangalore) Goa Konkani Language Board, Konkani Writers Conference etc. Konkani is an independent language with a rich literary heritage. Of course, they made a unanimous demand that it should be recognized by the Central Sahitya Akademi. Renowned Gandhian Rabindra Kelekara

The Marathas were adamant that Konkani should never acquire an independent status. So he campaigned against Konkani even though there was no other legitimate reason. However, his fight was lost. On 26 February 1975, the General Assembly of the Central Sahitya Akademi recognized Konkani as an independent language in its list.

Tikkata to become Goa's state language Konkani

The success of the movement and the recognition of Konkani by the Central Sahitya Akademi for the independent status of Goa raised a natural desire among the Konkani to bring their struggle to an orderly end. Leaders like Ravindra Kelekar, Uday Bembro, Chandrakanta Keni, Nagesh Karmali, Babli Naik, Luisino Fellerio, Monwenth Dakruz put forward three multifaceted demands to the people, 1) Goa to get a state status. 2) Konkani will become the state language of Goa. 3) Konkani should be added to the eighth article of the constitution and become the national language. Those were the three demands. An organization called 'Konkni Parjacho Awaaz' (Cry of Konkani Citizen) was formed to fight continuously for these demands. On 10-9-1985, the Awaj organization submitted its list of demands to the government. They threatened to go on a fast unto death from December 1, 1985 if their three demands were not granted before November 1985. But the political developments of that time prevented the Rajiv Gandhi government from taking any action in this regard. From 17-01-1986 to 24-3-1996 a series of fasts were held by Konkani lovers. On December 19, 1986, Gani Jailsingh was to participate in the celebrations of the silver anniversary of Goa Mukti. But the Awaaz Sangathan has called for all Konkani lovers to boycott the show saying that the central government has done injustice to the Konkani language. On 18 December 1986, the protest against the massive Konkani rally took the form of unrest and eventually six young men were martyred for Konkani. The sacrifice of those six martyrs namely Joan Fernandes, Kajetan Dias,

Mathew Gracious, Inacio Fernandes, Jocum Pereira, Ordin Fernandes inspired the struggle of the Konkani. The demand for the statehood of Goa, which has Konkani as the state language, spread from village to village. Konkani outside Goa also became supporters of this movement.

The Konkani Perjecho Awaaz organization brought together various political parties, cultural-literary organizations and guided the systematic struggle. Again the Marathas hindered the growth of Konkani. His argument was that if Konkani was made the state language, the cultural support for Marathi would decline, thereby weakening Marathi. The Karnataka government, which had to exert particular pressure on Maharashtra and Marathi, played the role of a supporter in the struggle of the Konkani.

Damodar Mawjo, Shri N. Sivasdas, Doj Wilfred D'Souza, Tomazzino Cardozo, Dilip Borkar, Prakash Thali, M. Bharat Nayak such leaders organized the people and led the Konkani Revolution. The 'Gomantaka Hindu Ekta Sangathan' joined with the Awaz Sangathan and led to the expansion of the revolution. On 4-2-1987 the Goa Legislative Assembly approved Konkani as the official language of Goa and Marathi as the co-official language of the province. But this compromise cannot be called a real victory for Konkani. The Awaz

organization did not stop its struggle. On 30-5-1987, Goa was declared as the 25th state of the Union of India as a result of the persistence of this struggle and the death of thousands of people. Konkani became the royal language of Goa. There, Konkani, which had been tottering for centuries like a slave to a foreign language, got the power of the elephant.

Opposition to getting the status of national language included in the constitution

One great struggle left for the Konkanis was to enjoy inclusion of their mother tongue in Article VIII of the Constitution. It was his nickname for a long time. Akhil Bharatiya Konkani Parishad (1939), started under the leadership of Madhava Manjunath Shanubhagar, Rakno magazine started in the 1940s. Born and raised in the 1950s, Mitra magazine was founded in 1928 by T.B. DiCunha continued the freedom movement of Goa, the love shown by hundreds of Konkani writers for their mother tongue after Shenoy Gony Babra, Kelekar, Keni, Bendre, Sardesai, Maridas, V.J.P. Saldana, Chafra Dakosta, R.V. With that inspiration given by Sangrami Sadhabhimani Sahitya like Pandit, he pushed forward for the ultimate success of his language. The Congress party had caused pain to the Konkanis by favoring Marathi in the dispute of Konkani being the state language of Goa. It should lean towards the Konkanis to correct it and provide the natural justice to the Konkani people which has been due for decades.

The Konkani Language Board of Karnataka, the Konkani Language Board in Mumbai, the Awaz Sangathan of Goa, the Language Board all started a movement to include the Konkani language in Article 8 of the Constitution. Joachim Alva, Violet Alva, Margaret Alva, T.M.A.Pi. Leaders of Konkani origin like TA Pai, KK Pai, Oscar Fernandes etc. put pressure on the government agencies. Finally that auspicious day dawned. Despite many struggles, on August 20, 1992, as per the 71st Amendment to the Constitution, Konkani was added as the seventh clause of Article Eight of the Constitution of India. Even today the tradition of celebrating that day as 'Konkani Manyata Day' has grown.

Struggle for special opportunities for Konkanis in Karnataka

Konkani language should get proper status in Karnataka. In Karnataka, where about eight lakh Konkanis live, the demand for government support for Konkani gradually became stronger. Konkani literature in the Kannada script became richer in the post-Angelo Maffe era. The first Konkani newspaper 'Konkani Dirvem' was born and grew here. A new era in Konkani journalism began with the launch of 'Rakno'. Newspapers like Mitra, Kannik, Panchkadai etc. contributed to the development of Konkani in Karnataka. K. N. Rao Dandeli, Bolantoor Krishnadasa Prabhu, Swami Supriya, Mo. Sylvester Menezes, Luis Mascarenes, Jose Alvarez, AT Lobo, Basti Venkatesa Enay, B.V. The literary creations of Baliga, Sijayes Thakode, Sylvester D'Souza, Wilfi Rebimbus, VJP Saldana, Juje Rego etc. made Konkani a rich language in the Kannada region from before 1970s.

In February 1990, the demand for a Konkani Sahitya Academy in Karnataka arose for the first time at the All India Konkani Writers' Conference. Basti Vamana Shenay, Pavel Moras, Ronald Kulaso, Eric Ozerio and several leaders of the Konkani literary and cultural world started working together. Margaret Alva, Blasius M. Under the leadership of D'Souza, Kudpi Jagadisha Shenoy, Smt. Eunice Britto, Raghunath Shet, Cecil Govius, etc., Konkani organizations were built and nurtured in various parts of Karnataka. Henry Pinto, (Bangalore), Valli Wagga (Mysore), Aruna Ubhayankara, Shivaram Kamata (Kumata) have contributed immensely in this regard.

Paul Moras has done immense service in systematically growing the demand for Konkani Academy. All India Konkani Parishads held in Goa, Karwar, Kumatas raised their voice about this. Not only that, he also organized a panel of scholars to prepare a huge document on the service of Konkanis in Karnataka. The organizational skills displayed by Basti Vaman Shenay and Eric Ozario proved invaluable to Konkani on this occasion.

There is no doubt that the 'Bangalore Chalo' Jatha held in 1992 put a lot of pressure on the government. A document handed over by the Konkani leaders to the Governor Khurshid Alam Khan exposed the richness of Konkani to the government. By 1993, Veerappa Moily, who grew up in the Konkani environment, became the Chief Minister of Karnataka. Sanctioned state level literary academies for Tulu, Kodava and Konkani languages. A phase of Konkani's Yashoyatra in Karnataka was completed there. The Government of India and the Government of Karnataka provided all the extra security and shelter that the Konkani could afford. Since time immemorial there has been a demand to introduce Konkani in the education system. Mo. An elder named Raymond Mascarenhas made this demand in 1920. All the presidents of the academy have done their best in this regard. In 2007, Mr. Eric Ozario worked hard at Samaropadi to end all the obstacles in this regard. Finally on 13-3-2007 the Government of Karnataka issued an order allowing optional teaching of Konkani from class VI onwards.

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