Kanauji of Kanpur: A brief overview

Abstract

Hindi, in its totality, refers to a dialect continuum spoken mainly across northern India. This continuum is usually divided into two forms: Eastern and Western Hindi. Eastern Hindi is mainly made up of Awadhi, Chhattisgarhi and Bagheli dialects, while Western Hindi consists of Hindostani, Banagru, Braj Bhaka, Bundeli and Kanauji dialects.

After Linguistic survey of India (1894-1928) by George A. Grierson – there has been little or no work which specifically focuses on Kanauji. Trivedi (1993, 2005) and Mishra and Bali (2010, 2011) report some secondary data from Kanauji in their works, their focus of inquiry is not Kanauji though. Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2013) refers Kanauji as a language with very low identity.

This paper attempts to study the current sociolinguistic situation of Kanauji spoken in the Kanpur district of Uttar Pradesh (India). Some other goals of the paper are following: 1) to feel the pulse of language attitude, with reference to standard Hindi, of the people in Kanpur 2) to present basic linguistic information and 3) to direct attention of the other linguists to Kanauji, which unfortunately has not been the case so far despite of it being mother tongue of millions.

This study is result of eighteen days of a fieldtrip to Kanpur district and subsequent preparation of a small speech database of Kanauji. Importance of the work lies in the fact that no previous work, which specifically focuses on Kanauji, has been published so far. This is true at least in the open literature.

Key Words: Kanauji, Language Endangerment, Sociolinguistics, Tirhari, Varieties of Hindi
1. Introduction

Kanauji\(^1\) (ISO 639-3 ‘bjj’, written in Devnagri script as कन्नौजी and pronounced as /kən.nɔ.ʤi/) is a lesser known and a minimally documented dialect\(^2\) of Hindi. It takes its name from town of Kanauj – the historic and one of the most ancient cities of ancient India. As a matter of fact the language is not merely confined to district/town of Kanauj however. Kanauj is home to rich archeological and cultural heritage sites. History of Kanauj is believed to run as long as to the time of \textit{Mahabharata}\(^3\). The ancient name of this place is Kanyakubja or Mahodya (see Balmiki Ramayana, Mahabharata and Puran) later name kanyakubja was changed as Kannauj, present name of the District.

In the legendary work ‘Linguistic Survey of India’ by George A. Grierson, Kanauji is classified under Western Hindi dialects together with four other dialects, namely, Hindostani, Banagru, Braj Bhaka and Bundeli (Grierson 1916). Grieson considers Kanauji merely as a form of Braj\(^4\) Bhakha and defines its area as east central Doab\(^5\) and country to its north. Apart from referring it as a dialect of Western Hindi, in history or literary genre of Hindi language (see Manuel 1989), there are a few census related and other survey reports which have used the term ‘Kanauji’ to refer to the Kanauji speaking population and not the dialect itself. According to Ethnologue (2013), presently Kanauji is, in various forms, spoken in Kanpur, Farrukhabad, Etawah, Hardoi, Shahjahanpur, Pilibhit, Mainpuri and Auraiya districts of Uttar Pradesh. However, the variety spoken in the district of Kanauj and Farrukhabad is referred as standard one. Kanauji usually is divided into three forms: Kanauji Proper (standard Kanauaji), Tirhari and Transitional Kanauji (Lewis et.al. 2013). Kanauji is spoken by more than six million people in total.

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\(^1\) Kanauji has been also spelled as Kannauji, Kanaoji or Kannoji by some authors and some scholars. Pankaj Dwivedi, one of the authors, is a native speaker of Kanauji spoken in Kanpur.

\(^2\) Use of the term dialect here is only for the linguistic purpose, i.e., a linguistic variety. It does not allow for any sociolinguistic connotations such as standard language vs. dialect.

\(^3\) Mahabharata/\textit{məhəbərətə}/ is one of most important classical epics of Hindus. Its exact historical period is unclear. However, many historians date it as early as 10 century BCE, the Iron Age. Ramayana (balmiki ramajana) and Purans (pürans) are also very significant religious scriptures in Hinduism.

\(^4\) Alternative spelling for Braj is Brij. Both spellings are duly accepted by several scholars.

\(^5\) Doab, in Hindi, refers to plains of Ganga River. The term has been used by several authors including by George A. Grierson in Linguistic Survey of India’
2. Kanpur: A linguistic demography

The term Kanpur usually is used to refer to Kanpur Nagar\(^6\) (coordinates 26° 27′ 36″ N, 80° 19′ 48″ E) and Kanpur Dehat\(^7\) (26° 20′ 39.48″ N, 79° 58′ 1.85″ E) together. It is the biggest city of the state of Uttar Pradesh and makes the main centre of commercial and industrial services. Kanpur Nagar (urban Kanpur) comprises of three subdistricts: Kanpur; Bilhaur and Ghatampur, whereas Kanpur Dehat is made of five subdistricts: Akbarpur; Bhogani; Derapur; Rasulabad and Sikandara. According to the 2011 census report the total population of the Kanpur (both Nagar and Dehat) is estimated to be 6368043. A summary of the demographic information is presented in Table 1.

\(^6\) ‘Kanpur Nagar’ refers to an area of Kanpur district. The term literary translates into ‘Kanpur City’. However, Kanpur Nagar, unlike the name suggests, does have villages and rural areas.

\(^7\) Kanpur Dehat refers an area of Kanpur District. The term literary translates into ‘Kanpur village’. However, Kanpur Dehat, unlike the name suggests, does have city like towns.
Table 1: Demographic summary of district Kanpur

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District Name</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Sex Ratio</th>
<th>Density</th>
<th>Child Population</th>
<th>Literacy Rate: M/ F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kanpur Nagar</td>
<td>1795092</td>
<td>852</td>
<td>1449</td>
<td>484529</td>
<td>85.27/76.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanpur Dehat</td>
<td>4572951</td>
<td>862</td>
<td>594</td>
<td>243919</td>
<td>85.07/68.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: http://www.censusindia.gov.in)

Kanauji of Kanpur is surrounded by at least four different dialects of Hindi. To the east of Kanpur, there is district of Unao, wherein a variety of Awadhi is spoken; whereas, in order from north to west lie Hardoi, Kannauj and Auraiya respectively. In each of these places Kanauji is spoken; however, the variety spoken in Kannauj is considered to be the standard. To the south-east of Kanpur, between the plains of the River Ganga and Yamuna is situated the district of Fatehpur of which northern region and language is influenced with "Awadhi" while the southern part shows effect of the "Bundeli". District of Hamirpur and Jalaun lie respectively to the south and south-west of the Kanpur. The linguistic variety spoken in Hamirpur and Jalaun is Tirhari – the language of the river bank (Grierson 1916). These both places are heavily affected with mixed effects of Bundeli and Bagheli. Tirhari of Hamirpur also carries the considerable touch of the Eastern Hindi.

3. Earlier works

Kanauji has only little amount of literature to its credit and that too is available only in broken form; some amount of folk literature and folk songs are found and preserved by the people in form of local oral literary traditions, however (Trivedi 1997). The main reason for this ignorance could be the supremacy of languages like Braj and Awadhi as established languages of literary creativeness. Supremacy of Braj and Awadhi is mainly due to religious and historical beliefs of people. Different religions and Godly incarnations have left deep impact on the Indian society and its literature. Most of the literary works in the middle age were meant for praise of the Gods, king, incarnations or religions. And the two most important incarnations of Lord Vishnu, Krishna and Rama, belong to Mathura (believed to be birth place of
Kanauji had been overshadowed by its more powerful neighbor Braj Bhakha. Most of the authors (of Kanauji language area) were Muslims and they wrote in Arabic and Persian. Among Hindu and Muslims authors writing in a vernacular, i.e., Kanauji, was not favorable. He further mentions the name of mid 17th century authors, from Tikampur/Tikawanpur town of Kanpur district, such as Chintamani Tripathi, Matiram Tripathi, Bhushan Tripathi and Nilkanth Tripathi (see Keay 1933; Upadhyaya 1934). These all were brothers and together they have voluminous work to their credit. All these brothers were patronized as poets in courts of many Mughal and Hindu Kings such as Shah Jahan, Aurangzeb, Shiv Raj of Sitara, Chhatrasal of Panna, etc. In His book titled ‘A history of Hindi literature’, Keay (1933) writes “Chintamani Tripathi (ʧɪntəmənɪ tripaθhi) was regarded as one of the great authorities on the subject of composition. Among his works are Chhand Bichar (ʧʰən bɪʧər), a treatise on prosody, Kavya Vivek (kawjə vɪvek), Kavikul Kalptaru (kavɪkʊl kəltəʁə), and Kavya Prakash (kawjə prəkəʃ). He was also author on Ramayana (raməjənə) in Kavitta (kəvɪtə) and other metres.” Other brothers, especially Bhushan, also excelled in their writings and invited laurels from all across the region for their work on different aspects of literacy creativeness (Nayyar 2012). These all works, however, were mainly composed either in Hindi or Urdu and not in Kanauji.

From the perspective of linguistics, the credit of being the first modern work on Kanauji can be given to ‘A Grammar of Modern Hindi’ by S. H. Kellog, originally published in the year 1876 by Mission Press, Allahabad, India. However, his work focuses on Hindi; it discusses Kanauji as a dialect of Hindi and lists a few examples explaining its morphology and phonology Thereafter, some other works (see Tiwari 1960; Jaiswal 1962; Saksena 1971; Beams 1974; Hopper 1977; Shapiro 1989; Hook 1991; Masica 1993 and Kachru 2006 ), which mainly focused on Standard Hindi, i.e., Khari Boli, or some other eastern or western variety of Hindi also gave some attention to Kanauji. Most of these works very briefly discuss areal distribution and position of Kanauji with reference to Standard Hindi or, Eastern or Western Hindi varieties. None of these works paid any closer linguistic attention to Kanauji. In contrast, many of the other Eastern and Western varieties of Hindi other than Kanauji received considerable attention of the linguists despite of the fact some of them were smaller than Kanauji in terms of their area and speaking population.

Till date the first major work on Indian languages including Kanauji is Linguistic Survey of India conducted by George A. Grierson during 1894 -1928. There have been few other works too but most of them either focused on it either as supportive material while discussing literary works of the languages like Hindi, Awadhi and Bundeli (see Trivedi 1997, 2005), or works on NLP applications (see Mishra and Bali 2010, 2011; Kulshresht, Singh and Sharma 2012; Kulshreshtha and Mathur 2012). Works on NLP applications focused mainly on Hindi spoken in lord Krishna and language spoken there is Braj) and Ayodhya (believed to be the birth place of lord Rama and language spoken there is Awadhi), respectively.
Kanauji speaking region and not precisely on Kanauji. Among these works, many are not available as they were locally (in terms of application, circulation, readership and scope) published and now have become too old to bring any commercial gains and therefore extinct. In fact, many such local publication houses themselves have been shut down due to the lack of commercial interests. OpenLibrary.org and The Library of Congress Online Catalogue\textsuperscript{9} together search for few works\textsuperscript{10} on Kanauji given ‘Kanauji, Kanauji literature or Folk literature in Kanauji’ key words.

4. Verbal repertoire of Kanpur

On the one hand, Kanpur is a well-known industrial and educational hub of the state of Uttar Pradesh as well as of India since a long time; it also maintains a significant stake in small and large scale business houses and agriculture, on the other. As a result, people from all corners of India have been frequently visiting this region. A good population from other towns, cities and states has also permanently settled here and thereby has enriched the city’s verbal repertoire. Though, major population speaks either Hindi or Kanauji, or both; people speaking Punjabi, Bengali, Marathi, Urdu, Tamil, Oriya, etc. and other dialects of Hindi such as Braj, Awadhi, Bihari, Bhojpuri, Bagheli Bundeli, etc. are found in large numbers, therefore (Chaturvedi 2015). Apart from these Indian languages and dialects, urban population of Kanpur possesses good knowledge of English for the very fact that most of schools offer English language as a compulsory subject on all levels of their curriculum. Apart from the state governed Uttar Pradesh Madhyamik Shiksha Parishad (a state board for secondary and higher secondary school education), two of the most popular board for school education are Indian Council of School Education (ICSE) and Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), where medium of instruction is primarily in English language. Medium of instruction in colleges, universities, technical institutes, research organizations, etc. is primarily English. Some institutes, colleges and universities also offer minor and major courses in foreign languages such as French, German, Chinese, Spanish, etc. and hence, people having good knowledge of these languages can easily be found. Usage of English and other foreign languages is usually indicative of upper class, higher educational and professional status, stronger socio-economic status, etc.

\textsuperscript{9} The Library of Congress Online Catalog is the largest library in the world. It has millions of books, recordings, photographs, maps and manuscripts in its collections.

Chaturvedi (2015) reports that usage of these languages and dialects in the repertoire of Kanpur can mainly be indicated in three directions: 1) in completely different situations, 2) in situations where more than one language is knowingly used and 3) code-mixed language situation. With such a rich confluence of languages in one place, instance code mixing and code-switching are common and inevitable among the people in day to day life. However, long and wide-spread presence of these languages had given rise to what is popularly referred as ‘Kanpuria Hindi’. Kanpuria Hindi has its base to standard Hindi but words are used from Hindi, English and other Indian languages and dialects. However, major percentage of these words is from Kanauji and other Hindi dialects such as Awadhi, Bhojpuri, Bihari, Bagheli and Bundeli than completely different languages like Tamil. Kanpuria Hindi is a very popular medium of networking/peer talk among school/college going students and other young fellows. While its usage is wide spread in everyday communication, people mostly use it during informal conversations. Standard Hindi or English (or Hinglish) is preferred in written and formal mode of communication.

In Kanpuria Hindi, scale of code-mixing and code-switching varies depending on the urban vs. rural class, educated vs. not-so-educated/illiterate class, class belonging to higher socio-economic background vs. class belonging to lower socio-economic background, etc. While, the former makes more mixing from the established language such as Punjabi, Bengali and Marathi, later mix more from the other dialects of Hindi. It is because people who have migrated from other states are financially sound and involved in different kinds of businesses or work in better profile jobs. However, people speaking Kanauji or some variety of the neighboring Hindi dialects form a major percentage of low-profile workers or other lower classes. As a result, their Hindi borrow heavily from these dialects. We can also call these two forms as Urban Kanpuria Hindi and Rural Kanpuria Hindi. Rural Kanpuria Hindi mostly borrows heavily from Kanauji on lexical, morphological and syntactic levels. People speaking Urban Kanpuria Hindi may shift to Rural Kanpuria Hindi for a better bargain during street shopping or to show solidarity with them. In contrast, people speaking Rural Kanpuria Hindi may shift to Urban Kanpuria Hindi while eating in restaurants, speaking to some public servants like postman, policeman, doctors, etc. This shift of variety can also be exchanged to make fun of their own linguistic group or others.

5. Present situation of Kanauji of Kanpur

As discussed in the previous sections, due to such a heavy confluence of about a dozen languages and dialects, and English in the Kanpur, position of Kanauji, in its original form and as a native dialect of the people, has been significantly challenged. Situation of Kanauji is grave and complicated both in the urban and rural areas of the Kanpur district. While in the urban areas Kanauji has almost been replaced with Kanpuria Hindi and to a certain extent, with Standard Hindi; in rural areas of Kanpur, Kanauji still functions as a mode of communication.
However, with the fast spread of education and urbanization, youths and children prefer speaking in Standard Hindi.

Lewis, Simons & Fennig (see Ethnologue 2013) report that despite of being mother tongue of millions, Kanauji has very low identity with no official status or proposed preservation plans. Ethnologue (2013) places Kanauji within the cloud of all living languages but in the category 6b-7 of the EGIDS\(^{11}\) scale, which reads that language in question is in trouble and intergenerational transmission of the language is in the process of being broken.

Figure 2: Yellow dot represents position of Kanauji on EDGIS Scale

![Figure 2: Yellow dot represents position of Kanauji on EDGIS Scale](source-image-url)

(Source: Ethnologue, 2013)

Despite the ‘troubled’ situation, the child-bearing generation still uses the language. Hence, it is possible that revitalization efforts could restore transmission of the language. However, the scale of the given stage of endangerment may be true about Kanauji in general, but not in a particular location. Endangerment scale may move at least one place backward (i.e., EDGIS 6a) or to forward (i.e., EDGIS 7) depending on the other sociolinguistic factors such as connectivity, education, economics, language attitude, migration, industrial development etc. Such – I believe – is the the case with Kanauji of Kanpur. It has moved one at least place forward, i.e., EDGIS-7, to the EDGIS scale. Moving one step further on EDGIS scale will imply that language in the question is on the verge of extinction and will not be restored as form of communication. It requires to be documented before it dies without a record.

\(^{11}\) Ethnologue reports vitality of the languages of the world by using the Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale or EGIDS and Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) (see Lewis and Simons, 2010 and Fishman’s, 1991 respectively).
6. Sociolinguistic fieldwork and data collection:

During our fieldtrip to 15 villages\textsuperscript{12} of the Kanauji speaking Kanpur Nagar region to collect speech samples\textsuperscript{13} for one of our other research projects, we surveyed among 80 informants to feel the pulse of the people regarding their attitude of towards the use of Kanauji. The relevant details are listed below:

Table 2: Summary of the surveyed area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Bilingualism (Tirhari-Hindi)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14-25 years</td>
<td>10\textsuperscript{th}-undergraduate</td>
<td>Hindi-Kanauji unavoidably mixed. Hindi is highly dominant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14-25 years</td>
<td>10\textsuperscript{th}-undergraduate</td>
<td>Hindi-Kanauji unavoidably mixed. Hindi is highly dominant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30-45 years</td>
<td>Illiterate to undergraduate</td>
<td>Kanaauji is little dominant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50-65 years</td>
<td>Mostly Illiterate</td>
<td>Kanaauji is more dominant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3: A snapshot from Google map of the surveyed area

\textsuperscript{12} These fifteen villages in order of visit are: 1) Gadhewa Mohasinpur, 2) Jamu, 3) Ramaipur, 4) Shahpur Majhawan, 5) Jagdishpur, 6) Majhwan, 7) ArajiMajhwan, 8) Kulhaul, 9) Hardauli, 10) Kale ka Purwa, 11) Kundauli, 12) Kaji Khera, 13) Behta Gambhirpur, 14) Rajapur, 15) Bhukhnahi

\textsuperscript{13} We collected speech samples using two channels simultaneously: first, by Olympus LS-100 96kHz/24 PCM linear recorder which is outfitted with two built-in 90° stereo condenser microphones, second using Sony Digital Flash Voice Recorder -ICD-PX312.
Based on the responses of the informants, following observations regarding language attitude of the people are made.

1. Most of the school or universities going students don’t even know the name Kanauji – they call it Hindi or type of Hindi, or Hindi of the uneducated people.

2. University students use Standard Hindi (i.e., Khari Boli) in intra- or intergroup communication. However, they speak in Kanauji-Hindi with their parents, older family members or grandparents. They sometimes use Kanauji to look down upon or to make fun of someone, or to act funny.

3. Some youths (mostly educated) admitted that despite of knowing Kanauji, they feel ashamed of using it in front of outsiders. It confirms the negative attitude of people towards Kanauji.

4. No school allows Kanauji as a medium of instruction in classes, even in the areas where Kanauji speaking population is quite large.

5. Informants aged between 10-35 years said they don’t use Kanauji if they go to see doctors, teachers, the village head, policemen etc. Old people said they use Kanauji and Hindi both in such situations. They also added that use of standard Hindi is more suitable in these kinds of situations however.

6. None of the informants knew of any work such as books, dictionaries, newspaper or some classical literature on Kanauji.

7. Old people know of and can sing folk songs but not the new generations. Youths and children consider these songs funny and consider these songs as “songs of uneducated people”.

8. Since parents see no economic, educational or other benefits, they don’t encourage the use of Kanauji among the children. They, however, emphasize upon the current usage of Standard Hindi and English.

These observations are also supported by the data that was elicited from another smaller group of the informants for our research project.

Below given is a piece from a conversation between a primary teacher (language consultant A) and a data collector (a linguist). The primary teacher started with requesting the data collector if he (data collator) could help him (primary teacher) to get a particular literary work from city and then the teacher went on informing data collector about the training he (primary teacher) was
undergoing in his school. An army man sitting nearby (language consultant B) also speaks a sentence in an agreement with teacher. A look into the conversation piece tells how he (the primary teacher) switches from Kanaui to Hindi and then vice versa. This recording tells us that the teacher does not even realize this shift and goes on talking in the same manner for around twenty minutes.

In this piece of conversation, every dialogue-sentence is first written in Devnagri Script (marked by DS). Thereafter, broad IPA transcription (marked by BT) of the spoken sentence is given. The transcription is annotated using slanted brackets <> with ISO 639-3 language codes, that is, ‘bjj’ for Kanaui, ‘hin’ for Hindi and ‘eng’ for English. Meaning of the sentence is given in the last.

Example:

Language consultant 1:

a) एत्ता काम करे जैव। एत्ती चन्द्रारी अपन देहे जैव।
<bjj>etta kam kare d3ew. etti t3f[3hari apon dehe d3ew <bjj> (DS)
please do this much favour to me. It will remind me of you (BT)
(M)

Data Collector:

b) मैं जिस दिन घर जाऊगा, उस दिन ढूढ़ के भेज दूंगा
<hin>me d3is din g3ar d3a3ga, us din d3f[3 ke b3h3d3 d3uga.<hin> (DS)
I will send it the day, I reach home. (BT)
(M)

Language consultant 1:

c) सात साल होइगे पढ़वत।
<bjj>sa5 sal hoge p3b3awat<bjj> (DS)
I have been teaching for seven years. (BT)
(M)

d) अभी जो ट्रेनिंग चल रही है उसमें जब ये चीज आई तो दिमाग हमारा चकरा गया।
<hin>ab3i d3o <eng>teenth <eng>d3l rahi he osme d3ab je t3f[3 ai to d3mag<brj>hamara <bjj> t3fska g3aja.<hin> (DS)
When I came across this thing in the current training, my mind went blank. (BT)
(M)

e) हेँ सासा का पढ़े वाला लरिका आयेय। नीतू का जानत है।
<bjj>he5i sasa ka p3cej wala l3rika aje. ni5u ka d3anat he. <bjj> (DS)
He (the trainer) comes from Sasa and knows the Neetu (BT)
(M)
So, a look to the above piece from an oral narration gives us a fair idea as to how people mix (code-switch and code-mix) Hindi and Kanauji during the communication. In above piece of narration, language consultant A starts his communication (a request) using a typical Kanauji sentence (statement a) spoken in Kanpur. In response to his request, data collector answers in Standard Hindi (statement b). However, the language consultant A goes on explaining background for his request in Kanauji (statement c) and then switching to Hindi (statement d) and this pattern again is repeated in sentence e and sentence f, respectively. While speaking in Hindi (statement d and statement f), he uses pronoun /hā/ and /tə/, which mean “I” and “then” respectively in Kanauji. In Hindi, the correct pronouns are /mā/ and /tā/ respectively for meaning “I ” and “then”. As language consultant A was going to say something in end of statement f (using Kanauji), he was cut short by language consultant B, who agrees with the explanation given by language consultant A (statement g) using Kanauji. This is shown by using three dots (…) after statement f. Elaborating further on the situation, language consultant A again speaks three more sentences in Hindi (statement h to j).

Language consultant A also uses words from English such as ‘training’, ‘basic’ and ‘all’ in different statements. However, these words are adapted to the phonological inventory of Kanauji.
and therefore their pronunciation gets changed accordingly. For example, in statement j the
phrase ‘all life’ is pronounced as /al# laɪp#/ in contrast to /ɔːl# laɪf/, as Kanauji lacks phoneme
and /ɔ/ and /f/. The word ‘training’ which occur in statement i and statement d is pronounced as
/trenɪŋ/ in place of /trenɪŋ/. Due to absence of phoneme /t/ in Kanauji, it is adapted to the nearest
phoneme /t/. Improper placement of stress also reduces the /eɪ/ into /e/.  

Due to this constant code-switching and code-mixing, this piece of conversation may sound odd
to native Kanauji speakers (who know primarily speak Kanauji) as well as Hindi speakers (who
primarily speak Hindi) both. During this narration, all language consistently (here two only)
consistently maintain Kanauji intonation, which can easily be recognized by a native speaker of
Hindi.

7. Comparative linguistic sketch of Kanauji and Hindi of Kanpur

Kanauji has a few written records in Devnagari (Trivedi 1997). Based on our 18 days of
fieldwork we collected words, sentences, free discourse samples, etc. from a range of domains
such as Basic wordlist, Demographic description, Cuisine, Family communication, Games,
Culture and Traditions, Flora and Fauna, Mythological stories, Daily life activities, Children
stories, Number systems, Free discourse, Minimal pairs, Representative sentences, Group
conversation, etc. A text and a speech database 14 were prepared based on these text-recorded
and audio recorded items. With the help of these databases, it was found that Kanauji of Kanpur
has 31 consonants and 10 native vowels and 1 foreign vowel ‘æ’15 in its Phonemic inventory. All
vowels have their respective nasalized counterpart vowels. In writing Kanauji exhibits the same
number and types of consonants as that of Standard Hindi. However, like it has happened with
other dialects of Hindi, many consonants are no more pronounced in Kanauji. Below is given a
tabular record of vowels, diphthongs and consonants in Kanauji of Kanpur.

Table 3A: Inventory of vowels in Kanauji of Kanpur

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vowels</th>
<th>i</th>
<th>ɪ</th>
<th>e</th>
<th>ɛ</th>
<th>a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nasalized vowels</td>
<td>ĩ</td>
<td>ĭ</td>
<td>ē</td>
<td>ĕ</td>
<td>ā</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14 Text database mainly consists of .doc and excel files, while speech database consists of wav files. Speech
database is broadly annotated using PRAAT software. A detailed discussion on the preparation or annotation of
these databases is beyond the scope of this a paper.
15 English words like ‘cat’, ‘bat’, ‘man’, ‘hat’, etc. are commonly understood and frequently used by Kanaui
speakers (even by uneducated ones). Somehow, most of them pronounce it with correct ‘æ’ vowel sound. This
inclusion of vowel sound could be due to far reaching impact of English media over Kanauji speakers.
Mishra and Bali (2010) list following diphthongs found in the Kanauji (on the right). However, which variety of Kanauji they are referring to is not clearly mentioned. Most probably, by Kanauji, they meant variety spoken in the district of Kanauj. Since, Kanpur being repertoire of different languages, majorly including varieties of Eastern and Western Hindi; The no. and type of the diphthongs that are found may show some variation. From the database we prepared, diphthongs found in the Kanauji of Kanpur are listed on the left.

| Vowels | ə | u | o | ɔ | ɛ | æ |
| Nasalized vowels | õ | ũ | ō | õ | õ | æ |

Table 3B: Diphthongs in Kanauji of Kanpur

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kanauji of Kanpur</th>
<th>Kanauji</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/əɪ/, /əʊ/, /ɔɪ/, /eɪ/, /eʊ/, /oɪ/, /ɔɪ/, /uɪ/, /ɪʊ/</td>
<td>/əɪ/ (æ), /əʊ/ (ɔ), /aɪ/ (æ), /aʊ/ (ɔ), /uɪ/, /uʊ/ /eɪ/, /eʊ/ (eʊ), /oɪ/ (oʊ), /e/ (jə), /æ/ (wa)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3C: Inventory of consonants in Kanauji of Kanpur

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plosives</th>
<th>16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nasal</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricative</td>
<td>2 (+4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affricates</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laterals</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-Vowels</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trill</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tap/Flap</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>31 (+4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Consonants written in bold and marked with asterisk are spoken by speakers who know Standard Hindi or Urdu other than Kanauji, which is very common in Kanpur. Otherwise, these consonants are absent in native phonemic inventory of Kanauji.
Kanauji is a CVC type language. Kanauji of Kanpur permits all four ‘CV’, ‘CVC’, ‘VC’ and ‘V’ types of syllables. Consonant clusters are not prominent; whenever a word having consonant cluster is borrowed, it is broken by epenthesis. A consonant + a semivowel (C+w/j) type of clusters are allowed in initial position to some extent. Clusters are more restricted in the coda position. Medial clusters in the words usually belong to two different adjacent syllables, i.e., Coda of the preceding syllable and Onset of the following one. An analysis of the basic words list containing 772 words that were collected during the fieldwork provides us with the following results:

Table 4: An analysis of basic word list of Kanauji of Kanpur

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total words</th>
<th>772</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Words with final clusters</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words with initial clusters</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words with medial clusters</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words with unbroken medial cluster</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words with no clusters</td>
<td>543</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Initial Consonant Clusters: rj, kw, kʰw, gw, gʰw, qj, tʃw, tʃw, ɗʃw, ɗw, tj, tʰw, tj, ɖw, dj, dʰw, dʃj, dw, dj, dʰw, nj, nw, pj, pʰw, pʰj, bj, bʰw, bʰj, lw, lj, sw, sj, hw, hj, kj, kʰj, kr, dʰr, pr, sr, br and (sl, bl, kl, tʃ, wy).

Note: Clusters in bold are found in the words which are borrowed from other languages such as Hindi and English and are in frequent use in Kanaauji of Kanpur.

Medial Consonant Clusters: b-b, d-dʰ, d-m, d-r, d-w, ɗs-ɗʃ, ɗsʰ-r, ɗʃ-r, ɗ-dʰ,d-d, pʰ-t, g-dʒ, g-g, g-gʰ, g-r, h-k, h-l, h-r, h-tʃ, h-s, k-k, k-l, k-m, k-n, k-tʃ, k-s, k-tʃ, k-w, l-d, l-l, l-m, l-n, l-r, l-s, l-w, m-b, m-b, m-k, m-l, m-m m-n, m-pʰ, m-s m-tʃ,m-tʃ, m-tʃ, n-d, n-ð, n-ð, n-dʒ, n-d, n-g, n-k, n-n, n-p, n-tʃ, n-ʃʃ, n-w, n-tʃ, pʰ-tʃ, p-p, p-r, p-s, r-b, r-d, r-d, r-ð, r-dʒ, r-g, tʰ-w, [ʃ], r-k, r-r, r-s, r-tʃ, r-w, r-tʃ, s-dʒ, s-k, s-m, s-n, s-r, s-s, s-t, t-b, tʰ-k, t-k, t-n, tʃ-k, tʃ-l, tʃ-r, tʃ-tʃ, tʃ-tʃ, tʃ-tʃ, tʃ-tʃ, tʃ-tʃ, tʃ-tʃ, tʃ-tʃ, tʃ-w, t-tʃ, t-tʃ, t-w

Final Consonant Clusters: dḍʰ, lh, nd, ndʒ, r, tʃtʃ, pp, ll, kk, mm, tʃ,
Some other examples regarding how Kanauji differs or is similar to Hindi are given as follows:

A. Kanauji of Kanpur does not distinguish between voiceless palatal sibilant consonant /ʃ/ and voiceless dental sibilant /s/. Usually, /s/ is preferred in all positions of the words (initial, medial or final).

**Examples:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hindi</th>
<th>/saːdi/ ‘plain’</th>
<th>/ʃaːdi/ ‘marriage’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kanauji</td>
<td>/saːdi/ ‘plain’</td>
<td>/saːdi/ ‘marriage’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Voiced dental sibilant /z/ and voiceless fricative /f/ is absent in consonant inventory of Kanauji of Kanpur and therefore it is usually pronounced as a voiced palatal affricate /dʒ/ and aspirated voiceless bilabial stop /pʰ/.

**Examples:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hindi</th>
<th>/saːf/ ‘clean’</th>
<th>/zəhəɾ/ ‘poison’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kanauji</td>
<td>/sapʰ/ ‘clean’</td>
<td>/dʒəhəɾ / ‘poison’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. There seems to be h-elision in many cases. Though h-elision primarily looks sporadic in nature yet it needs to be determined if there is some specific phonological environment for this phenomenon.

D. In some places semivowel /j/ and /w/ are replaced with voiced palatal affricate /dʒ/ and voiced bilabial stop /b/ respectively.

**Examples:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hindi</th>
<th>/somwar/ ‘Monday’</th>
<th>/jəmuna/ ‘river Yamuna’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kanauji</td>
<td>/sombar/ ‘Monday’</td>
<td>/dʒəmuna / ‘river Yamuna’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
E. **Rhotacism:** /l/ is replaced by /r/ in intervocalic and in final positions if preceded by a vowel. Like in many other languages, the rhotacism is sporadic and frequent exceptions are found.

**Examples:**

**Hindi**  
/hɔrɪjali/ ‘greenery’  
/baɖəl/ ‘cloud’

**Kanauji**  
/hɔrjari/ ‘greenery’  
/baɖər/ ‘cloud’

F. **Lexical Similarity:** According to Lewis, Simons and Fennig (2013), lexical similarity between Kanauji and Hindi is about 83%-94%. However, it is not clear which variety of the Kanauji is mentioned there. It is further claimed that 84%-97% similarity is found between all varieties of Kanauji, which seems to be true if influence of fast-spreading Hindi is ignored altogether and only native vocabulary is compared. A comparative list of ten words of Kanauji and Hindi are given below.

**Table 5:** Comparison between Hindi and Kanauji words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Hindi</th>
<th>Kanauji</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finger</td>
<td>ŋəli</td>
<td>ɣu.ri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye</td>
<td>ākʰ</td>
<td>ākʰi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>õɖəla</td>
<td>ůɖəɾ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twenty one</td>
<td>ɪkkis</td>
<td>ɪkəɾis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How</td>
<td>ɪkse</td>
<td>ɪkṣe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farms</td>
<td>kʰet</td>
<td>kʰet/kʰetwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen</td>
<td>ŋulha</td>
<td>ŋulh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peel</td>
<td>ŋʰɪlka</td>
<td>ŋʰɪkla/ bokla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gods</td>
<td>ɪdəta</td>
<td>ɪdəta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td>bjah</td>
<td>bjaw/bijaw</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. **Factors causing the decline of Kanauji in Kanpur**

Factors which are causing the decline of Kanauji are given as follows:
a) the district of Kanpur has been hub to industries and business for long time and in the last few decades it has emerged as one of the most important centers of education in the state of Uttar Pradesh and therefore people have shifted either Kanpuria Hindi or to standard Hindi for intergroup communication.

b) Medium of instruction in the schools, colleges and universities is standard Hindi or English in few cases, but not Kanauji. Hence, Kanauji don’t fully cater to the educational or professional needs of children and youths.

c) Standard Hindi is considered to be more prestigious.

d) Kanauji has little amount of written literature. And this literature is restricted merely as a name as as a part of History of Hindi language. Therefore, people may not find themselves attached with the language; Lack of written literature also it makes more prone for not to be included in the school books and curriculum.

e) Religion plays very important role in preserving a language or cultural (Fellman 1973). Kanauji has little religious grounding unlike Awadhi, a neighboring Eastern Hindi dialect. Awadhi connects itself to Hindu religion and enjoys more prestige than Kanauji and other dialects of Hindi.

9. Conclusion

State of Kanauj (and therefore Kanauji, too) has been a witness to one of the most prospective periods in the Indian history (see Tripathi 1989; Majumdar 1951, 1955; Smith 1908) and today due to socio-political reasons, its native language, that is, Kanauji lacks attention. Lack of attention to a dialect in comparison to other major official languages is a common habit among the bureaucratic policies across the world but not from side of the linguists, academicians, writers and language activists. Sadly enough, a close look at the Kanauji reveals that despite of being the mother tongue of six million people, it has been ignored by both groups alike. Ironically, tens of languages in India and hundreds of languages across the world, which are far smaller in terms of their area and speaking population, has been duly documented, promoted and worked upon. As a result some of these languages got not only saved from extinction but also promoted among community members and scholars.

Kanauji needs good documentation, reinvigoration and promotion efforts together by linguists, concerned officials and community members. There is also a dire need for creation of resources in Kanauji such as multipurpose speech and text corpora, language teaching materials, language technology application, etc. An active and positive role of print and electronic media can also help Kanauji regain its prestige and therefore help reclaim its speakers too.
However, presently lying in state of sheer indifference, Kanauji is being rapidly devoured by their neighboring languages and Standard Hindi, and heading to what may be called Major Languages Death (Khokhlova 2014). Therefore, there is an immediate need for documentation and promotion of Kanauji and all the forms of this language

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