

RESEARCH REPORTS

Language Decay: Challenges in Intergenerational Transmission of Dhivehi

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ABSTRACT *This study explores the gradual decline of the Dhivehi language and the challenges of transmitting it effectively to the next generation. Drawing from scholarly perspectives on language death and sociolinguistic change, particularly the works of UNESCO, Fishman, and Labov, the research situates the case of Dhivehi within global patterns of linguistic decay. The paper investigates whether Dhivehi is undergoing a shift towards obsolescence due to increasing influence from dominant foreign languages, particularly English. Using an exploratory qualitative approach, the study analyses naturally occurring speech data from 11 publicly available videos featuring speakers representing a range of age groups, from children to the elderly. By transcribing and examining these samples, the research identifies patterns of code-switching and code-mixing, highlighting the degree to which Dhivehi is being sidelined in daily conversation, especially among the younger population.*

The findings reveal that while older speakers tend to maintain clearer use of Dhivehi, younger speakers, especially children, frequently alternate between English and Dhivehi, or default entirely to English. This indicates not only a weakening of linguistic transmission but also indicate an inadequacy in the availability and usage of appropriate Dhivehi vocabulary for everyday modern life. The study also notes limitations in institutional and societal efforts to elevate the status of Dhivehi. Contributing factors include the dominance of English in media, education, and technology, and the perceived prestige associated with foreign language use.

The findings have implications for stronger language planning, public awareness campaigns, and integration of Dhivehi into contemporary domains to ensure intergenerational transmission and cultural continuity. This suggests a pressing need for institutional and societal initiatives to revitalize and elevate the status of Dhivehi, particularly in response to the growing dominance and perceived prestige of English in media, education, and digital communication.

Keywords: *Language promotion, Language status and prestige, Language vitality, Language endangerment, Language shift*

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلٰى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ، اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلٰى اٰلِ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ

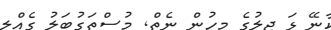
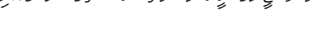
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Figure 1. The number of languages (2004, p. 765-767) in the world (in millions)

Language	Number of languages
Indo-European languages	450
African languages	250
Asian languages	250
Native American languages	150
Oceanic languages	100
European languages	100
Other languages	100
Total	1000

Figure 2. The number of languages (1991, p. 1991) in the world (in millions)

Language	Number of languages
Viable language	450
Viable but small language	250
Endangered language	100
Total	800

2014-2015-2016-2017-2018-2019-2020-2021-2022-2023-2024-2025-2026-2027-2028-2029-2030-2031-2032-2033-2034-2035-2036-2037-2038-2039-2040-2041-2042-2043-2044-2045-2046-2047-2048-2049-2050-2051-2052-2053-2054-2055-2056-2057-2058-2059-2060-2061-2062-2063-2064-2065-2066-2067-2068-2069-2070-2071-2072-2073-2074-2075-2076-2077-2078-2079-2080-2081-2082-2083-2084-2085-2086-2087-2088-2089-2090-2091-2092-2093-2094-2095-2096-2097-2098-2099-2100-2101-2102-2103-2104-2105-2106-2107-2108-2109-2110-2111-2112-2113-2114-2115-2116-2117-2118-2119-2120-2121-2122-2123-2124-2125-2126-2127-2128-2129-2130-2131-2132-2133-2134-2135-2136-2137-2138-2139-2140-2141-2142-2143-2144-2145-2146-2147-2148-2149-2150-2151-2152-2153-2154-2155-2156-2157-2158-2159-2160-2161-2162-2163-2164-2165-2166-2167-2168-2169-2170-2171-2172-2173-2174-2175-2176-2177-2178-2179-2180-2181-2182-2183-2184-2185-2186-2187-2188-2189-2190-2191-2192-2193-2194-2195-2196-2197-2198-2199-2200-2201-2202-2203-2204-2205-2206-2207-2208-2209-2210-2211-2212-2213-2214-2215-2216-2217-2218-2219-2220-2221-2222-2223-2224-2225-2226-2227-2228-2229-2230-2231-2232-2233-2234-2235-2236-2237-2238-2239-2240-2241-2242-2243-2244-2245-2246-2247-2248-2249-2250-2251-2252-2253-2254-2255-2256-2257-2258-2259-2260-2261-2262-2263-2264-2265-2266-2267-2268-2269-2270-2271-2272-2273-2274-2275-2276-2277-2278-2279-2280-2281-2282-2283-2284-2285-2286-2287-2288-2289-2290-2291-2292-2293-2294-2295-2296-2297-2298-2299-2300-2301-2302-2303-2304-2305-2306-2307-2308-2309-2310-2311-2312-2313-2314-2315-2316-2317-2318-2319-2320-2321-2322-2323-2324-2325-2326-2327-2328-2329-2330-2331-2332-2333-2334-2335-2336-2337-2338-2339-2340-2341-2342-2343-2344-2345-2346-2347-2348-2349-2350-2351-2352-2353-2354-2355-2356-2357-2358-2359-2360-2361-2362-2363-2364-2365-2366-2367-2368-2369-2370-2371-2372-2373-2374-2375-2376-2377-2378-2379-2380-2381-2382-2383-2384-2385-2386-2387-2388-2389-2390-2391-2392-2393-2394-2395-2396-2397-2398-2399-2400-2401-2402-2403-2404-2405-2406-2407-2408-2409-2410-2411-2412-2413-2414-2415-2416-2417-2418-2419-2420-2421-2422-2423-2424-2425-2426-2427-2428-2429-2430-2431-2432-2433-2434-2435-2436-2437-2438-2439-2440-2441-2442-2443-2444-2445-2446-2447-2448-2449-2450-2451-2452-2453-2454-2455-2456-2457-2458-2459-2460-2461-2462-2463-2464-2465-2466-2467-2468-2469-2470-2471-2472-2473-2474-2475-2476-2477-2478-2479-2480-2481-2482-2483-2484-2485-2486-2487-2488-2489-2490-2491-2492-2493-2494-2495-2496-2497-2498-2499-2500-2501-2502-2503-2504-2505-2506-2507-2508-2509-2510-2511-2512-2513-2514-2515-2516-2517-2518-2519-2520-2521-2522-2523-2524-2525-2526-2527-2528-2529-2530-2531-2532-2533-2534-2535-2536-2537-2538-2539-2540-2541-2542-2543-2544-2545-2546-2547-2548-2549-2550-2551-2552-2553-2554-2555-2556-2557-2558-2559-2560-2561-2562-2563-2564-2565-2566-2567-2568-2569-2570-2571-2572-2573-2574-2575-2576-2577-2578-2579-2580-2581-2582-2583-2584-2585-2586-2587-2588-2589-2590-2591-2592-2593-2594-2595-2596-2597-2598-2599-2600-2601-2602-2603-2604-2605-2606-2607-2608-2609-2610-2611-2612-2613-2614-2615-2616-2617-2618-2619-2620-2621-2622-2623-2624-2625-2626-2627-2628-2629-2630-2631-2632-2633-2634-2635-2636-2637-2638-2639-2640-2641-2642-2643-2644-2645-2646-2647-2648-2649-2650-2651-2652-2653-2654-2655-2656-2657-2658-2659-2660-2661-2662-2663-2664-2665-2666-2667-2668-2669-2670-2671-2672-2673-2674-2675-2676-2677-2678-2679-2680-2681-2682-2683-2684-2685-2686-2687-2688-2689-2690-2691-2692-2693-2694-2695-2696-2697-2698-2699-2700-2701-2702-2703-2704-2705-2706-2707-2708-2709-2710-2711-2712-2713-2714-2715-2716-2717-2718-2719-2720-2721-2722-2723-2724-2725-2726-2727-2728-2729-2730-2731-2732-2733-2734-2735-2736-2737-2738-2739-2740-2741-2742-2743-2744-2745-2746-2747-2748-2749-2750-2751-2752-2753-2754-2755-2756-2757-2758-2759-2760-2761-2762-2763-2764-2765-2766-2767-2768-2769-2770-2771-2772-2773-2774-2775-2776-2777-2778-2779-2780-2781-2782-2783-2784-2785-2786-2787-2788-2789-2790-2791-2792-2793-2794-2795-2796-2797-2798-2799-2800-2801-2802-2803-2804-2805-2806-2807-2808-2809-2810-2811-2812-2813-2814-2815-2816-2817-2818-2819-2820-2821-2822-2823-2824-2825-2826-2827-2828-2829-2830-2831-2

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مَرَّوَحٌ 4. مَسْرُوحٌ زُحْرُومٌ

موضوع	تاریخ	وقت	مدرس	نمبر
1. اسلامی عقائد و اصول	13 مارچ	1:03	مدرس	1
2. اسلامی تاریخ و تمدن	7 مارچ	2:00	مدرس	2
3. اسلامی اخلاق و معاشرت	13 مارچ	2:17	مدرس	3
4. اسلامی فقہ و فرائض	17 مارچ	1:07	مدرس	4
5. اسلامی اقتصاد و معاشیات	30 مارچ	2:21	مدرس	5
6. اسلامی سیاست و حکومت	40 مارچ	3:09	مدرس	6
7. اسلامی معاشرت و تہذیب	30 مارچ	1:36	مدرس	7
8. اسلامی تعلیم و تربیت	20 مارچ	2:00	مدرس	8

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English Term	ދިވެހި ބަހުން	English Term	ދިވެހި ބަހުން
extinct	ވަނަ ދަރިވަރު ދެކެވަނަ	in-text reference	ދަތުރު ދަތުރު
mixing	މަދުކުރުން	systematically	ނިންމާ ނިންމާ
article	މަދުކުރުން	version	މަދުކުރުން
disclosure	މަދުކުރުން	endangered	މަދުކުރުން ދަތުރު ދަތުރު
standard Dhivehi	މަދުކުރުން	endangerment	މަދުކުރުން ދަތުރު ދަތުރު
editor	މަދުކުރުން	reflect	މަދުކުރުން
author	މަދުކުރުން	linguistic/linguist	މަދުކުރުން / ބަހުގެ ބަހުގެ
abstract	މަދުކުރުން	linguistics	މަދުކުރުން / ބަހުގެ ބަހުގެ
keyword	މަދުކުރުން	language change	މަދުކުރުން ބަހުގެ
foreign language	މަދުކުރުން	language death	މަދުކުރުން ބަހުގެ
viable	މަދުކުރުން	language mixing	މަދުކުރުން ބަހުގެ

English Term	فارسی اصطلاح	English Term	فارسی اصطلاح
transmit	فراوانی	language decay	ضعف زبان
decade	دهه	language shift	تغییر زبان
researcher	پژوهشگر	identity	هویت
vitality	توانمندی	in-text reference	ارجاع در متن
domains	حوزه‌ها	systematically	سیستماتیک
acknowledgement	تأیید	strategic	استراتژیک
purposive sample	نمونه هدفمند	script	نمایشنامه
ethnolinguistic	زبان‌شناختی	sociolinguistic	زبان‌شناختی اجتماعی
ethnolinguistics	زبان‌شناسی اجتماعی	sociolinguistics	زبان‌شناسی اجتماعی
diversity	تنوع	style	سبک