



CENTRAL INSTITUTE OF INDIAN LANGUAGES

53rd Foundation Day Lecture Series

Lecture 35

Friday, June 24, 2022 at 11:30 am IST

Language Endangerment and Documentation in India: Some Realities



Kakali Mukherjee

Kakali Mukherjee is former Assistant Registrar General, Office of the Registrar General of India (ORGI), Language Division, Kolkata. Her specialisations include Language Education, Language Documentation, Descriptive Linguistics and Geolinguistics. Under the post-Griersonian Linguistic Survey of India (LSI) Project of the Government of India, she coordinated in publishing the LSI volumes of Orissa state (LSI-Orissa), Sikkim State (Part I & II) [LSI-Sikkim], Rajasthan State (Part I) [LSI-Rajasthan] besides bringing out the descriptive grammars of Bhotia & Tibetan, Marwari Malpahariya, languages in LSI-Sikkim, LSI-Rajasthan, and LSI-Bihar. She was the key person in planning-designing-implementation of the operation of Mother Tongue Survey of India project of the Government of India and contributed to the consolidation of Grammars of the languages like Adi, Ao, Andamanese, Bishnupriya Manipuri, Bhateali, Bazzika, Korku, Kirati, Thado and others. She also contributed to the preparation and publication of the Language Census of India 2011.

Language endangerment is a real threat in today's society. Many languages are dying at a faster rate than before. As of now, there are 7000 plus living languages in the world. Many scholars have predicted that by the end of the 21st century, we may have just 700 languages. India, one of the major hotspots of the globe, is the homeland for nearly 1500 Mother Tongues (1369 rationalised and classified; 1474 unclassified as per the 2011 Census of India). Due to several reasons such as socio-political, economic, and administrative motivation, many mother tongues of India are becoming the victims of shifting to a dominant language of the region and gradual loss. This situation demands the preservation of these languages not only for language maintenance but also for promotion. Multi-modal documentation is one of the activities that can help us prevent such language loss and aid in revitalisation. Many researchers and institutions are involved in documenting the languages and cultures of India. In this talk, I will focus on language documentation based on decennial language census data that has multiple purposes in a multilingual setup. Drawing upon my experiences in the Language Division under the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Government of India, I will outline some of the issues and challenges involved in such documentation. I will also describe the tools and techniques used for such an important task, mainly in the Linguistic Survey of India and Mother Tongue Survey of India projects and others, and also emphasise the need to undertake such documentation.

Join us via Google Meet at <https://meet.google.com/ptv-ynus-otq>

LIVE Streaming on



YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/c/CIILMysore1>