IJL VOL (18) 2025 ISSN 0974-3421

INTERDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL OF LINGUISTICS

(A Peer-Reviewed Refereed Journal)

Editor

Musavir Ahmed

Department of Linguistics

University of Kashmir

Srinagar, J&K, India-190006

Contents

	Page No.
Musavir Ahmed Editor's Note	**i-vii**
1.Anita Pandey and Cynthia Chasteen Virtually Left behind during the COVID-19 School Shutdown: A Study of U.S. Based English Language Learners' Learning Loss	**1-44**
2. Kimiaki Tokumaru Syllables and Reflex Circuit: The Missing Link between Animal Calls and Digital Language	**45-68**
3. Niladri Sekhar Dash Issues in Developing a Comparable Corpus for Indian Languages as a Key Linguistic Resource for Cross-Linguistic Research and Applications	**69-82**
4. Nazir Ahmad Dhar Outline of Linguistic Studies of Kashmiri Language	**83-90**
5. Konchok Tashi From Ladakhi to Bhoti: Sociolinguistic and Political Dimensions of a Changing Language Identity in Ladakh	**91-108**
6. Jegmet Sangyas and Sonam Joldan Language and its Politics in Indian Trans-Himalaya: Beyond Bhoti Versus Ladakhi	**109-130**
7. Garima Dalal Creating Interactive English Language Learning Using LLM in Higher Education	**131- 138**
8. Suaad Muhammad, Nisar Ahmad Koka and Sheeba Hassan Learning Outcomes of Saudi Students using Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Foreign Language (FL) Proficiency Development	**139-162**
9. Javed Ahmad, Mohsin Razza Khan and Basim Hamdan Ibrahim Kana'an Efficacy of AI-Powered Adaptive Learning Systems in Enhancing Grammar Acquisition for Arab Learners of English: An Empirical Study	**163- 170**
10. Javaid Aziz Bhat Negotiating Intimacy and Distance: Pronominal Variation across Kinship Domains in Kashmiri	**171-184**
11. Siddharth Sanket and Vadthya Kishore Agreement in Khortha	**185-202**

12. Niloy Chakraborty A Sketch of Tense, Aspect and Modality in Bongcher	**203-218**
13. Aqib Majeed and Sabia Rafiq Nominal Inflection and Case Alignment in Bhadarwahi: A Descriptive Study	**219- 228**
14. Vijay Bernard and Arpana Between Languages, beyond Voices: Examining the Languages, beyond Voices: Examining the Role of Code-Switching as Tool for Silencing Women through Appraisal Theory in "A Thousand Splendid Suns	**229- 240**
15. Saima Jan, Bushra and Aabida Zahoor Romantic Tales in Pakhtoon Tradition: A Comparative study of *Adam Khan-Durkhanai* and *Momin Khan-Sherino*	**241-250**
16. Sayantani Banerjee, Moachiba Jamir, Greeshma Joseph and Zahid Bashir Verum and Exceptive Constructions in some Indian Languages	**251-264**

Editor's Note

It is a pleasure to present the 18th volume of *Interdisciplinary Journal of Linguistics* (IJL) published by the Department of Linguistics, University of Kashmir. The volume has 16 papers by researchers from foreign and Indian universities, discussing a wide range of issues. The contributions reflect upon diverse areas including the description and documentation of under-documented and endangered languages, questions of language and identity, language and politics, language and technology, language and gender and the socio-pragmatics of modes of addresses and politeness. The papers in this volume endorse the continuing relevance of linguistics to some of the most demanding concerns of our times including Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the disruptions brought about by COVID-19 pandemic.

The impact of the pandemic on human life was unprecedented. It laid bare the fragilities and vulnerabilities of people, societies and their institutions. People died, societies went still and institutions crumbled. The hospitals, probably the only hope against the disease, were literally on verge of collapse. Businesses closed, jobs disappeared, and populations lost their financial security. The seemingly robust interdependence of people across the globe turned out to be so fragile that factories shut down in one country, shelves went empty in another. Months of isolation and lockdown took a real toll on social structures: social inequalities around income, healthcare, housing, education, and who gets help and who does not, became more pronounced. The people who had the least lost the most. Governments and institutions were left improvising, trying to respond to a crisis never conceived before. Education was no exception to the onslaught of the pandemic. Schooling and schools came to grinding halt and people had to get accustomed to the conception of remote learning, hitherto unknown to many. The shift to online learning-teaching wasn't an easy one as it didn't concern education only but rather it involved a whole lot of things, not accessible to many: internet, digital tools and above all the educational and linguistic competencies of parents and guardians.

The paper by Anita Pandey and Cynthia Chasteen takes up the question of real accessibility to online education during Covid-19 with specific focus on English Language Learner (ELL) families in the US. Using a comparative mixed-methods approach, the authors look closely at how three very different school districts in Nevada, Missouri, and Maryland communicated with ELL parents and guardians once classrooms closed in spring 2020. The research draws on two kinds of evidence: a three-part pilot survey that captures firsthand accounts from ELL students, their families, and the educators and administrators who work with them, and a close reading of the actual communications like emails, website updates, social media posts which these districts sent out between March and May 2020, analysed through a cultural competency framework developed by one of the authors. The study has come up with some stark revelations. Across all three districts, there was no real evidence of a considered, sustained plan to engage ELL

families specifically, no consistent multilingual outreach, and no personalized resources – nothing beyond messaging designed for a general English-speaking audience. The real concern has been about whether ELL students were able to learn during the lockdown, and whether their families felt informed and supported at all. By highlighting parent and student opinions together with the schools' own communications, this paper offers a substantiated and practical look at the lacunas and the shortcomings and what schools, educators, and policymakers might do in times of crises.

The complex nature of human language allows it to have enormous vocabulary and the ability to combine units into new meanings, unlike any other form of communication. Kimiaki Tokumaru in his detailed paper argues that human language began evolving like a digital system during the Late Pleistocene era. With increasing control over tools, hominins formed accommodative bonds with the plants and animals around them. As they learned to control fire and sought refuge in caves during glacial periods, these groups grew increasingly eusocial, using vocal calls to signal threats. According to the author, a pivotal moment came around Toba super volcano eruption roughly 74,000 years ago, when the resulting winter coincided with the emergence of click consonants and the first acts of naming objects in the world. With the passage of time, as the larynx descended in the throat, humans gained the ability to produce vowels, string together syllables, and eventually began constructing complete sentences which as per the author is the real starting point in language's digital evolution. Syllables in this scheme were significant as they acted discrete as well as divisible units and allowed vocabulary expansion and grammatical structure possible. Writing systems followed around 5,000 years ago, and binary code emerged in the mid-1900s, each step transforming spoken sounds into forms that could persist and be manipulated. Perceived in this manner, the authors assert that language's development fits naturally within the Complex Dynamic Systems theory as an instance of digital-style evolution. The author upholds that language is the end product of roughly four billion years of evolution, during which humans were pushed to move beyond basic reflexes and tribal instinct toward a more thoughtful, truth-seeking form of intelligence.

Comparing large scale data of two languages on criteria like subject matter, genre, text type, and time frame without being prejudicial towards any of the languages involved can be significant and beneficial for a multilingual country like India. Niladri Shekhar Dash in his paper has underscored the potential uses of comparable corpora (CC) in the development of language technology in India. The author begins by introducing a functional description of a CC and moves through the different forms such corpora can take, reviews its current status in India and presents the case for why Indian languages need this significant resource. The paper provides a workable framework for developing a CC and concludes by proposing tangible ways such corpora could serve linguistics and language technology in India. These provide the foundation for development of multilingual

resources like bilingual dictionaries, fixed expressions, matching grammatical structures, databases of translation equivalents, and comparative grammar, etc. The paper suggests that CC holds particular promise when built around related language pairs, since shared ancestry, structural similarity, and common writing systems among many Indian languages would make alignment, processing, and analysis considerably more manageable. With deepening impact of AI, large language models, and machine learning worldwide, CC in India could become a significant resource, both for building multilingual assistive technologies and for enabling comparative studies among languages that are structurally, historically, or geographically related. To realize this potential, the author calls for a harmonized, nationwide effort to build these corpora and put them to use across linguistic and technological research, with the aim of filing the gaps that separate India's many languages.

Language has never been an apolitical entity. Language not only holds social and cultural distinctiveness but also has political significance for most societies. The paper by Konchok Tashi and another by Jegmet Sangyas and Sonam Joldan have deliberated on politics over the nomenclature of the language spoken in the Union Territory (UT) of Ladakh. Ladakhi is spoken by commoners in several districts of Ladakh UT and the name reflects the geography, ethnic identity and regional belonging of people inhabiting the former Ladakh kingdom. Both the studies have delved deep into the social, cultural, educational and political consequences of renaming Ladakhi as Bhoti in the Union Territory of Ladakh. For many communities, language labels act as symbols of identity, and legitimacy and potentially shape decisions on lower order evaluations like schooling of children to broader assessments like political mobilization. According to the author, Bourdieu's notion of symbolic capital can help explain the dynamics at play in Ladakh; calling the language Bhoti draws prestige from Tibetan religious and literary tradition, while Ladakhi derives its authority from a sense of place and historical distinctiveness rooted in the region itself. The term Bhoti, also referred to as Bodhi, began receiving attention in cultural and political conversations in Ladakh during 1970s. The word is a derivative of Sanskrit *"Bhot-desha"*, loosely meaning Tibet, and refers to the family of Tibetic languages spoken across regions which have received Tibetan religious and cultural influence. Its adoption by a section of populace in Ladakh is thought to be motivated by the objective of having constitutional recognition for Tibetic languages in the Eighth Schedule. Supporters of Bhoti maintain that the term offers a unifying linguistic identity for several culturally connected communities spread across a wide geographic area and thereby consolidating the case for both cultural protection and government recognition. However, there are opposing voices who view the move aimed at robbing Ladakhi of its local and regional colour as well as reducing the diversity within it. Besides, there are speakers of languages like Purgi and Balti who do not want their languages to be identified under the label Bhoti. The rising

popularity of Bhoti hasn't, however, resolved the issue. While Bhoti could serve as a suitable umbrella term for region's political profile, it overshadows the distinct local status of Ladakhi. The strain and the associated concern between stressing a collective regional identity and protecting something local and distinctive continues to be at the core of the ongoing debate over how language spoken by the people of Ladakh should be named and comprehended.

The penetration of AI in human life has just begun and its potential, without exaggeration, can't be less than revolutionary. In higher education, AI is already being treated as a significant force which has greatly reduced faculty and administrative load and provides personalized adaptive learning support to students. Surveys undertaken in recent years have confirmed that majority of students as well as faculty in several countries now use AI and AI based teaching-learning resources. In the domain of second and foreign language teaching and learning, AI based tools are increasingly utilized to have personalized instruction, provide real-time problem-solving, and get individualized automated feedback. The volume has three papers which have addressed the role of AI in second and foreign language teaching-learning. The paper by Garima Dalal has reflected upon functioning of a Linguistic Empowerment Cell (LEC), established in Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi in 2011 and how AI driven Large Language Models (LLM) could be utilized to enhance the efficiency of the cell. The cell was established for students who had to shift to English from their previous education received in any of the vernaculars with the aim that such students are not left behind because of little or no proficiency in English language. Garima Dalal has made a case for adoption of AI in the cell for creating customizable listening exercises with multiple accents, simulated conversation practice, adaptive reading materials commensurate to student proficiency, and brainstorming and paraphrasing support for writing development. On a positive side, AI can facilitate learning, however preventing its misuse should be given equal attention and as such a multi-pronged approach needs to be developed for ethical use of AI and preventing its misuse in learning environments. The author concludes with the suggestion that the institutions of higher education in India should develop language centres like LEC in tune with the recommendations of New Education Policy 2020, which emphasizes multilingual education and AI should be introduced in these centres through a well thought-out and workable plan suited to Indian context.

The other two studies have investigated how AI-based tools affect English language learning among Saudi Arabian students, focusing on their impact on vocabulary building, speaking fluency, listening and grammatical skills. The one by Suaad Muhammad Saeed Alqahtani, Nisar Ahmad Koka and Sheeba Hassan has involved a methodological approach involving numerical and descriptive analysis. The findings reveal that AI technologies boost vocabulary retention and listening comprehension. The paper suggests that while AI can meaningfully assist language acquisition, the best results come from combining these

tools with conventional teaching methods. The study concludes that although AI can handle varied linguistic input effectively, human involvement remains essential to successful language teaching. The results align with broader research in the field, endorsing that personalized, tech-driven instruction strengthens particular language skills. The study stresses that since AI cannot replicate the interactive, culturally responsive nature of in-person instruction, as such AI use in language classrooms should be carefully constrained and paired with human teaching and monitoring.

On a similar note, the other study by Javed Ahmad, Mohsin Razza Khan and Basim Hamdan Ibrahim Kana'an has investigated the impact of AI-based adaptive learning platform on grammatical accuracy in comparison to standard classroom teaching. Using a quasi-experimental methodology, researchers worked with 60 intermediate-level Arab ESL students split into two groups; the experimental group used AI platform, while the control received conventional instruction. Both groups took pre- and post-tests covering English tense structures. The study concludes that AI-enabled personalized learning can meaningfully help address the grammar difficulties Arab learners commonly face and recommends using such tools alongside traditional classroom instruction.

Pronominals in Indian language serve a variety of functions, besides their grammatical roles, unlike many European languages. Kashmiri is one such language where pronominals are employed to demonstrate respect, closeness and remoteness while conversing with various kind of kin and this is the subject matter of the paper by Javaid Aziz Bhat. The study is based on data collected from 240 participants of varying ages, genders, education levels, and rural/urban backgrounds. The strength of the study lies in its use of quantitative study of usage patterns together with a qualitative understanding informed by theories of politeness and language in social context. The results indicate a clear division between casual mundane pronominal forms and more formal and courteous ones. Speakers select a pronoun consciously for managing social relationships. The results indicate that blood relatives are addressed with informal pronouns most of the time signalling closeness and emotional familiarity, while in-laws and other marriage-based relations demand more formal address reflecting a greater emphasis on courtesy and social consideration. These patterns also shift depending on who is speaking; younger people and those from rural areas tend to use more casual forms, while speakers who are middle-aged, more educated or based in urban areas prioritize more formal options.

A short paper by Siddharth Sanket and Vadthya Kishore examines grammatical agreement in Kortha specifically focusing on the variety called Ramghariya Kortha. Kortha is a language spoken in the Jharkhand state of India and Ramghariya Kortha is spoken in Ramgarh district of the state. The linguistic census of India classifies Kortha, with more than 8 million speakers, as a dialect of Hindi. Despite such a huge number of speakers, some scholars consider it endangered. One

structural difference of Khortha with Hindi is that the former has been reported to rely on a single agreement system, whereas Hindi operates with a dual one. Secondly, unlike Hindi, Khortha has no grammatical gender system at all. Agreement in the language can surface either on the main verb itself or on auxiliary elements. By portraying the structural dissimilarities between Khortha and Hindi, the authors have presented a case for its status as independent language, rather than being a dialect of Hindi.

The paper by Niloy Chakraborty offers a description of the functioning of tense, aspect, mood, and modality in Bongcher, an under-documented Tibeto-Burman language from the Kuki-Chin branch, spoken by the Bongcher community in Tripura. Drawing on field data, the author has reported that Bongcher has three tenses, present, past, and future, which however often blur in practice, and speakers must rely more on contextual time words (like "yesterday" or "tomorrow") than on verb endings. Among Tibeto-Burman languages, strict tense marking tends to matter less than the real/unreal (realis/irrealis) distinction, and consequently the author argues that aspect, not tense, better explains how Bongcher expresses time. Besides, the author suggests that Bongcher has five aspects, and three core moods of indicative, imperative, and hortative along with a range of modal constructions that function like a subjunctive. The study indicates that Bongcher has a rich system for expressing speaker attitudes and degrees of likelihood. Beyond its linguistic findings, the paper, according to the author, has a documentation function, helping preserve knowledge of an endangered language and contributing new data to comparative and typological studies.

The paper by Aqib Majeed and Sabiya Rafiq has presented grammatical description of nominal inflection and case alignment in Bhadarwahi, a Western Pahari language spoken by around 1,20,000 people in the Bhadarwah and Chinta valleys of Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district. The study finds that the two genders (masculine and feminine) and two number categories (singular and plural) in Bhadarwahi are expressed through vowel changes, suffixes, and in certain cases, by different root words. Feminine forms are typically derived from masculine ones by shifting a final vowel, changing honorific suffixes, or adding occupation-related endings. Pronouns in the language are sensitive not just to person and number but also to social honorificity. Speakers choose different pronoun forms depending on the respect level appropriate to the person being addressed. Bhadarwahi uses a split-ergative system; subjects are marked depending on both the verb's transitivity and its tense/aspect. In past or completed actions, the subjects of transitive verbs get special ergative marking, while subjects of intransitive verbs and objects remain unmarked. Despite extensive borrowing of vocabulary from neighbouring languages like Hindi, Dogri, and Kashmiri due to prolonged contact, the study concludes that Bhadarwahi has a distinct character, mutually unintelligible with these larger regional languages.

The paper by Vijay Bernard and Arpana explains how code-switching across English and Persian, Dari and Pashto in Khaled Hosseini's "A Thousand Splendid Suns" serves as a tool through which male characters express judgment, emotion, and control over women. The analysis uses Appraisal Theory to explain how language expresses attitudes, feelings and evaluations. The paper argues that code-switching in the novel actively participates in silencing and subordinating female characters, particularly Mariam and Laila. The term *"harami"* (illegitimate) is repeatedly used against a female character, branding her as socially deviant and justifying her exclusion. Another character is labelled as *"dehati"* (rural, unsophisticated) girl, invoking class-based contempt. Terms like *"nang – namoos"* (pride and honour) reflect how women's chastity is tied to family honour and moral policing. Exclamations like *"bas, chup ko"* (shut up), and *"wallah o billah"* reinforce male dominance through anger, dismissal, and implied threats of violence. The paper concludes that the consistent pattern of negative evaluation directed at women establishes how code-switching in the novel operates as a linguistic mechanism of patriarchal control.

The paper by Saima Jan, Bushra and Aabida Zahoor presents a comparative study of two significant Pashtoon romantic folktales, *Adam Khan and Durkhanai* and *Momin Khan and Sherino*. It examines their plot development, narrative structures, storytelling techniques, and major themes of love, honor, social obligation, sacrifice, and tragedy. Through comparative textual analysis, the study identifies similarities and differences in the two narratives. It highlights their shared cultural values alongside distinctive narrative strategies, demonstrating the richness, diversity, and continuity of the Pashtoon storytelling tradition. The paper also underscores the linguistic and cultural significance of these oral narratives as repositories of Pashtoon literary tradition, identity, and collective memory.

The paper by Sayantani Banerjee, Moachiba Jamir, Greeshma Joseph and Zahid Bashir Lone, offers a cross-linguistic survey of verum and exceptive marking in five Indian languages belonging to different language families. The authors underline that verum and exceptive marking should be considered from a function-to-form perspective rather than to take for granted that categories developed for English will have a one-to-one correspondence across languages. The discussion brings together data on particles, prosody, emphatic constructions, copular strategies and negative clauses and highlights the great diversity across the languages studied. The comparison is especially helpful when showing how discourse context affects the interpretation of both truth-related and exception-related expressions. The paper has explained a hitherto unexplored area, particularly in Indian languages. The results are preliminary, but they offer a useful empirical baseline for broader comparative work on discourse-semantic marking and the interplay of truth, exclusion, alternatives and context in genetically diverse languages.

Musavir Ahmed
Editor