

National Seminar on
“India as a Linguistic Area: Exploring
Shared Features Across Language Families
(ILAESFALF-2025)”
and a workshop on
‘Writing Grammars’

4-6 March, 2025



Centre for Linguistics
SLL&CS, Jawaharlal Nehru University,
New Delhi- 110067.

in collaboration with



Central Institute of Indian Languages
(CIIL), Mysuru, Bengaluru, India

&



ALS Indigenous Languages, The Asian Literary
Society, ALSphere Foundation, India



INTRODUCTION

The Centre for Linguistics, SLL&CS, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India will organise a two day national seminar on “India as a Linguistic Area: Exploring Shared Features Across Language Families” on 4th and 5th March, 2025 and a workshop on ‘Writing Grammars’ on 6th March, 2025 in collaboration with CIIL, Mysuru, Bengaluru and ALS Indigenous Languages, The Asian Literary Society, ALSphere Foundation. This two-day seminar and one day workshop will be an initiative towards exploring India as a linguistic area, language contact, linguistic convergence and divergence, Areal Linguistics, Language maintenance and shift, language variation and change, Languages and dialects in contact, Linguistic diversity and language harmony, Typological features, Intangible cultural heritages, common and shared linguistic expressions and discourse structure of Indian languages.

In addition to various paper and poster presentations, there will be two panel discussions and plenary talks on the related theme and the seminar will end with a workshop on ‘Writing Grammars’.




CONCEPT NOTE

‘Linguistics area’ as defined by M.B. Emeneau (1956), “an area which includes languages belonging to more than one family but showing traits in common which are found not to belong to other members of (at least) one of the families”. It is a geographically contiguous area characterised by the existence of common linguistic features shared by genetically non-related languages. It is not necessary to have a bundle of isoglosses to define an area as a ‘linguistic area’. Areal linguists like Emeneau (1965, 1980), Ramanujan and Masica (1969), Winter (1973), Masica (1976), Abbi (1985) and Abbi and Mishra (1988) have taken one particular linguistic trait as a diagnostic trait to identify a ‘linguistic area’. Thus a single areal isogloss may be considered the minimum defining feature. On the basis of a single isogloss or a bundle of isoglosses a ‘linguistic area’ may be defined ‘weak’ or ‘strong’ (Campbell, Kaufman and Smith-Stark 1986:532). However, understanding ‘India as a Linguistic Area’ is a manifestation of the linguistic reality of India in terms of areal diffusion or convergence linguistics, contact and shift of languages, spatial pressures rather than genealogical affiliations (Khubchandani 1991), waves of mutual influence rather than a tree model (Matisoff 1978), population movements (La Polla 2001), language contact and shift of languages.




INDIA AS A LINGUISTIC AREA

Indian linguistic area is characterised by common linguistic traits such as retroflex sounds, SOV word order, absence of prepositions, morphological reduplication (expressives), echo formations, reduplicated verbal adverbs, explicator compound verbs, use of converbs, oblique marked subjects, morphological causatives among many others. Apart from areal features, there are also those features that identify a micro-area as for example Nasalisation, Aspiration, Relative-correlative in Northern India, Gender agreement in Western India, Quotative verb 'say' as complementiser in Southern and Northeastern India etc. India, a multilingual nation with diverse ethnic and linguistic communities, represents six distinct language families spread over a large region and spoken by more than 1.3 billion speakers. Typologically distinct languages of India add to the diversity scene. While Indo-Aryan is highly inflecting, Dravidian is both agglutinative and inflecting, Austro-Asiatic language is highly polysynthetic and incorporating, and Tibeto-Burman is analytic. Great Andamanese is agglutinative and the only head-marking language. The Austronesian languages consisting of Onge and Jarawa are also agglutinative in nature. In the present scenario of linguistic diffusion such compartments can no longer be ascribed to (Abbi 2012).



ILAESFALF-2025

Notwithstanding the diversity, many phonological, structural, and lexical features are common across these languages. We see the diffusion of linguistic items along with cultural values, ideas, beliefs, and practices transmitted from one segment of society to another in a certain pattern. According to Weinreich (1952), "language contact can result in such far reaching changes that the affected language assumes a different structural shape". Language is a rich source of information on the human past, complementary to the archaeological and genetic records but 'language as history' has always been dominated by the concept of language families; linguistic areas have always remained in a very poor relation. The family wise classification of languages and finding their shared features is not only the objectives of this seminar, here the efforts will be made to reconstruct the historical linguistics and cultural processes that led to India as a Linguistic Area. The rich diversity in Northeast India, a reservoir of five language families shows the emergence of Nagamese, an Assamese-lexifier creole language in Nagaland, Dakkhini in the Deccan region of India, Sadri in Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Orissa and Bihar and also existence of Hindi-based creole in Arunachal Pradesh as a lingua franca. The preponderance of the Indo-Aryan languages in North East and other parts of India led to the assimilation of lexical borrowing and morpho-syntactic features to North Eastern languages and vice versa. The surviving Tai Kadai language (i.e., Tai Khamti) shows distinct typological features of an isolating language in combination with Tibeto-Burman and Indo-Aryan features owing to areal convergence and cultural expression.




THEME FOR PAPERS

We wish for a high degree of participant involvement and encourage critical enquiry and debate related to Indian Linguistic Area, shared linguistic features across language families, cultural heritages and common linguistic expressions of Indian languages. The seminar will entice language experts, researchers and policy makers in this three day event to throw light on multidisciplinary themes: ranging from the core areas of linguistics to India as a linguistic area, language contact, linguistic convergence and divergence, Areal Linguistics, Language maintenance and shift, language variation and change, Languages and dialects in contact, Linguistic diversity and language harmony, Typological features, Intangible cultural heritages and common linguistic expressions of Indian languages, Discourse markers, Multilingual Education (MLE), Translanguaging and Second language teaching, Language policy and planning, Stylistics and literary studies, Varieties of English, Historical linguistics, Language technology, Translation, Applied linguistics, Linguistic innovation and borrowing and structure of lesser known languages etc.

ABSTRACT GUIDELINES

Prospective authors are invited to submit their original abstracts/papers for oral and poster presentation in the above mentioned areas. The abstract should be limited to 500 words excluding references typed in MS Word/PDF, Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, single spacing with one inch margins on all sides. The abstract must be anonymous, it must not include the name of the authors, affiliations, designations etc. The authors must indicate their choice for oral or poster presentations.



RULES & GUIDELINES

Only one single authored or joined authored abstract will be considered for the peer reviewed process. The seminar and the workshop will be on the offline mode, however, a few abstracts/papers may be selected for online presentation. The participants may mark their choice for online/offline mode of presentation. The change of mode will not be entertained later. Best oral and paper presentations shall be awarded. The abstracts and other queries should be sent to the following email id: <ilaesfalf2025@gmail.com>. After sending the abstracts/papers it is mandatory to fill the required details in the Google form. The link is given below;

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScxfzqqG1TICam_PToqnIrse_cRMZrIDqVfOyY_DB3v_Oprvg/viewform?usp=sharing

Registration Fee and Accommodation

The interested participants and paper/poster presenters must register before the last date. Only the registered participants who successfully attended the seminar will be given certificates. The organisers will not provide any accommodation or TA/DA to the participants. Registration fee does not include accommodation charges and it is same for online and offline mode of participants. Only the selected participants can join in the workshop. The interested participants must send an email expressing their interest to participate in the workshop. A separate certificate for the workshop will be issued to the participants after the successful completion of the programme.

Registration Fees (Seminar&Workshop)

I. Graduate/Post Graduate Student	INR 1000.00	Mode of payment: Online Transfer Details JNU Sponsored Seminar & Conference A/c. Savings Account No- 35404650496 State Bank of India, IFSC-SBIN0010441, JNU New Campus, New Delhi-110067, MICR-110002428.
II. Research scholar (MPhil /PhD)/ Independent Researcher	INR 1500.00	
III. Professor/ Academician	INR 2000.00	
IV. Corporate, Industry, Media personal etc.	INR 3000.00	
V. Foreign Nationals	INR 4000.00	

ADVISORY COMMITTEE & RESOURCE PERSONS

Coordinators:

Dr. Hari Madhab Ray (Convener), Centre for Linguistics, SLL&CS, Jawaharlal Nehru University
Dr. Sujoy Sarkar, CIIL, Mysuru, Bengaluru
Dr. Bishakha Das, ALS Indigenous Languages

Organising Committee

Prof. Pauthang Haokip, Dr. Gopal Parihar, Dr. Varthya Kishore, Mr. Manoj Krishnan, Dr. Bishakha Das, Dr. Sujoy Sarkar, Dr. Hari Madhab Ray

Chief Patrons:

Prof. Santishree Dhulipudi Pandit, Vice Chancellor, JNU
Prof. Shailendra Mohan, Director, CIIL Mysuru, Bengaluru

Contact

Email Id- <ilaesfalf2025@gmail.com>

Mob- +91-7355278319/ 9910159313/ 9910872102

Website: www.jnu.ac.in,

<https://sites.google.com/view/ilaesfalf2025/>

Venue:

Centre for Linguistics, SLL&CS,
Jawaharlal Nehru University, New
Delhi-110067, India.

Prof. Anvita Abbi, Former Prof. JNU

Prof. Shailendra Mohan, Director, CIIL

Prof. Pramod Kr. Pandey, Former Prof. JNU

Prof. Awadesh Kr. Mishra, Former Prof. EFLU, Hyderabad

Prof. Ayesha Kidwai, JNU

Prof. Tanmoy Bhattacharya, DU

Prof. Pradeep Kumar Das, JNU

Prof. Kavita Rastogi, Former Prof. LU, Lucknow

Prof. Pauthang Haokip, JNU

Dr. Hari Madhab Ray, JNU

Dr. Bishakha Das, ALSIL

Dr. Arup Kumar Nath, TU, Assam

Dr. Sweta Sinha, IIT, Patna

Dr. Barnali Chetia, IIIT, Vadodara

Dr. Arunima Das, GC, DU

Dr. Bidisha Som, IIT, Guwahati

Dr. Smita Joseph, EFLU, Hyderabad

Dr. Paroma Sanyal, IIT, Delhi

IMPORTANT DATES

Last Date of Submission of Abstract: February 10, 2025

Notification of acceptance of Abstract: February 16, 2025

Last date of registration: February 25, 2025