

**REPORT ON THE 12TH HIMALAYAN LANGUAGES
SYMPOSIUM
and on the
27TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE
LINGUISTIC SOCIETY OF NEPAL
Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal,
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These two conferences were held conjointly at the CEDA Hall of Tribhuvan University on the outskirts of Kathmandu. The LSN conference has been held annually on the same dates for 27 years, and is expected to continue with these dates in the future. The conferences were convened by Prof Yogendra P. Yadava, Professor and Head of the Central Department of Linguistics, Tribhuvan University, with the assistance of a large number of colleagues and students; they were all most congenial, helpful and well-organized hosts. As part of the main conferences, there was a full-day workshop with twelve papers on computational linguistics of Nepali on the third day.

Sponsorship was provided by the American Center, ICIMOD, the University Grants Commission of Nepal and the Summer Institute of Linguistics, as well as several publishers; representatives of the main sponsoring organizations were present to receive thanks and express their hopes for the continued success of the LSN and HLS conference series, and of linguistic work in Nepal and the surrounding region. The inaugural speech was given by Prof Kamal Krishna Joshi, Chair of the University Grants Commission and former Vice-Chancellor of Tribhuvan University, who facilitated the establishment of the Central Department of Linguistics.

The keynote presentation was given by Dr Anju Saxena of Uppsala University on ergativity in Tibeto-Burman languages. All other sessions were parallel, with over seventy presentations. Participants came from nearly all countries in South Asia as well as Australia, China, Finland, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States, though naturally the majority were local Nepalese participants.

The most impressive aspect of the conferences was the large number of excellent presentations by postgraduate students of Tribhuvan University, who are working on a wide range of Indo-Aryan and Tibeto-Burman languages of Nepal, in many cases their own languages. This work has continued despite many years of political difficulties in Nepal, and will doubtless develop further with the recent settlement of these difficulties.

There were 29 presentations on a wide range of Tibeto-Burman languages of Nepal and elsewhere, fifteen on Nepali including twelve in the computational workshop, sixteen on other Indo-Aryan languages, six on various aspects of sociolinguistics of the Himalayan region, especially concerning language policy, and six on various other topics in linguistics.

Talks on the past and future of language policy in Nepal by Prof Ram Kumar Dahal and by Anju Khadka attracted an enthusiastic audience and vigorous discussion; a talk on the status of Nepali in India by Dr Samar Sinha was also enthusiastically discussed. There were also presentations on aspects of language policy in several other South Asian countries. The prize for the best presentation by a Tribhuvan University student went to Mr Govinda Bahadur Tumbahang for his talk on the Chhatthare Limbu verb, which also included a substantial preliminary on the sociolinguistic status of Chhatthare Limbu. Another talk which contributed to the debate on language policy for Nepal was the talk on the Kiranti languages by Lal-Shyakarelu Rapacha of the Research Institute for Kiratology.

The conference was further enhanced by the presence of a group of speakers of Raji, the Tibeto-Burman language of a hunter-gatherer group of western Nepal, for most of the second day.

Many excellent new publications from Nepal were available at the conference, including the long-established journal of the Linguistic