



# DLA

## NEWS

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SEPTEMBER 2018

A MONTHLY OF DRAVIDIAN LINGUISTICS ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

## KALAINJAR MU. KARUNANIDHI'S DEMISE: A GREAT LOSS TO DLA AND ISDL

The office-bearers and members of the Dravidian Linguistics Association were very much grieved when they heard the news that Kalainjar Mu. Karunanidhi, the former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, breathed his last on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2018.

Besides being a shrewd politician, Kalainjar was a great master of Tamil oratory, playwright, scriptwriter for films, short-story writer and poet.

He was known widely for his deep interest in classical Tamil. He could get the official recognition of Tamil as a classical language, which later paved the way for other Dravidian languages to get the tag. His passionate interest for *Cilappatikaram* of the Chera Prince Ilango Adigal resulted in the establishment of a permanent memorial for it at the site of the ancient Poompuhar harbour town. In spite of being a busy politician, he could find time to write a popular commentary on *Tirukkural* (*Kuraloviyam*) and a lucid explanation on *Tolkappiyam* (*Tolkappiyappoonga*) including the grammar part of it.

Kalainjar Karunanidhi's interest in language, literature and culture was evidenced by his constant government support to DLA and ISDL through his Education Minister Prof. K. Anbazhagan, the classmate of Prof. V.I. Subramoniam. He also honoured Prof. V.I. Subramoniam by conferring the *Murasoli Award* on him for his contributions to Dravidian studies. It is no doubt that his passing away is a great loss to the promotion of linguistic, literary and cultural activities of Dravidian people in general and the Tamils in particular.

DLA and ISDL have lost a strong supporter due to the passing away of this great connoisseur of art and literature and a statesman. The members of the Dravidian Linguistics Association and International School of Dravidian Linguistics express their heartfelt condolences to the members of his family and to all those who are interested in Tamil language and Dravidian studies.

*Krishnaswamy Nachimuthu*

### CONTENTS

<i>Kalainjar Mu. Karunanidhi's Demise</i>	1
<i>47<sup>th</sup> AICDL &amp; International Symposium</i>	2
<i>46<sup>th</sup> AICDL &amp; ISLELT – Report</i>	2
<i>47<sup>th</sup> AICDL &amp; ISLE: Report on Discussions with Vice-Chancellor</i>	3
<i>Some Remarks on the Tamil Trill</i>	3
<i>Workshop on Pragmatics</i>	5
<i>DLA Life-Member List</i>	5
<i>New Publication of ISDL</i>	6
<i>ISDL Research Forum</i>	6
<i>New Life-members</i>	6

## 47<sup>th</sup> ALL INDIA CONFERENCE OF DRAVIDIAN LINGUISTS & INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON LANGUAGE ENDANGERMENT

20-22 June 2019

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF KARNATAKA  
GULBARGA

The 47<sup>th</sup> All India Conference of Dravidian Linguists and International Symposium on Language Endangerment will be held in Gulbarga under the auspices of the Central University of Karnataka. The Chief Patron for the same is the Vice-Chancellor Prof. H.M. Maheshwaraiah, a well-known linguist and folklorist.

The registration fee for the conference is as follows: Delegates from India and other SAARC countries Rs. 3000/-, (2) For Ph.D. Researchers with Fellowships Rs. 2000/- and (3) Rs. 1500/- for life-members of Dravidian Linguistics Association and students without fellowship. The registration fee for delegates from other countries is US\$ 300/-.

The intended delegates, especially those from foreign countries, may please plan their travel programmes sufficiently early.

## 46<sup>TH</sup> ALL INDIA CONFERENCE OF DRAVIDIAN LINGUISTS & INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON LINGUISTIC ECOLOGY AND LANGUAGE TECHNOLOGY

(21-23 June 2018, Jadavpur University, Kolkata)

### REPORT

(Continued from the last issue)

The second day of the conference (22.6.2018) commenced at 10.30 a.m. with Prof. K. Nagamma Reddy Memorial Lecture. Dr. Sonia Sahoo, Associate Professor, Department of English, Jadavpur University chaired the session. The chairperson gave a brief introduction on Prof. Nagamma Reddy, highlighting her contributions in the field of linguistics with special emphasis on Instrumental Phonetics.

Prof. Krishna Bhattacharya, former Professor, Department of Linguistics, Calcutta University and UGC

Emeritus Fellow delivered Prof. Nagamma Reddy Memorial Lecture *Diphthongs in Modern Languages: A Historical Perspective*. She explained the distinctive phonetic characteristics of diphthongs. She cited the report that out of the total 2549 vowel segments found in these languages, only 83 were diphthongal. Referring to ancient Indian phonetic literatures, both *Atharva-Pratishakhyā* and *Vajasaneyi Pratishakhyā*, the speaker opines that “although diphthongs are combinations of vowels, they are treated as single letters”. That means the ancient phoneticians were very much aware of the status of diphthongs as single entity. However, in *Paniniya Śikṣā* or in *Tolkappiyam*, a diphthong is treated as double sound called *dvivarna* consisting of two sounds i.e., as *sandhyakshara*.

Prof. Krishna Bhattacharya has stated that diphthongs are present in most of the modern Indian languages. She cites the diphthongs of some major Indian languages with special emphasis on the Indo-Aryan languages and also, in a limited way, makes a probe on the diphthongs of Dravidian, Munda and Tibeto-Burman languages.

Prof. Nagamma Reddy Endowment Lecture was concluded by about 11.30 a.m.

The next endowment lecture was Prof. Karunasindhu Das Memorial Lecture which started with Prof. M. Rama, the ex-Director, International School of Dravidian Linguistics in the chair. The Chairman told that Prof. Karunasindhu Das, former Vice-Chancellor, Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata was an internationally reputed scholar of Sanskrit grammar both in Paninian and non-Paninian schools.

Prof. Ratna Basu, former Professor of Sanskrit, University of Kolkata delivered Prof. Karunasindhu Das Memorial Lecture. Prof. Ratna Basu is a well-known scholar in Advaita Vedānta, Panini school of Vyākaraṇa, Manuscriptology, Indian Palaeography and Indian Linguistics. She played an important role in documentation and conservation of manuscripts from various parts of West Bengal. Prof. Ratna Basu's lecture was on *Sanskrit Syntax and Semantics: Some Observations*. At the outset, she gave an overview of the concerned literatures. Observing the idiomatic application of Sanskrit language texts, she explained certain basic principles of sentential structure.

Prof. Ratna Basu has given an exhaustive description on the Sanskrit primary and secondary suffixes of different types of Sanskrit grammatical categories. She

**Latest Publications:** FOLK PLAYS AND DANCES OF KERALA, M.D. Raghavan (G.K. Panikkar [Ed.]), 2018, PB, Demy 1/8, Pp. xvi + 104. DERRIDA'S CONCEPT OF WORD AND MEANING: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE SEMANTIC THEORIES OF SAUSSURE, ĀNANDAVARDHANĀCĀRYA AND A.R. RAJARAJAVARMA, D. Benjamin, 2018, PB, Demy 1/8, pp. xvi + 64, Rs. 140/- (US \$ 14/-). STRUCTURAL DESCRIPTION OF KASARAGOD TULU, M. Rama, 2017, PB, Demy 1/8, pp. xiv + 406, Rs. 550/- (US\$ 55/-). KĒRAḷA BHĀṢĀ VIJÑĀNĪYAM, K. Godavarma (T. Madhava Menon [Tr.]), 2017, PB, Demy 1/8, pp. xxxvi + 201, Rs. 300/- (US\$ 30/-).

has also explained the various types of syntactic constructions and their semantic implications with suitable illustrations.

Prof. Ratna Basu in her lecture has explained the wide range of semantic innovations observed in Sanskrit language. She points out that while translating Sanskrit texts, the wide range of meaning and the varied types of suffixes can be brought out, which is a need to be borne in mind.

[To be continued]

R.R. Thampuran

### **47<sup>th</sup> AICDL & INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON LANGUAGE ENDANGERMENT Report on the Discussions with the Vice-Chancellor**

Prof. Naduvattom Gopalakrishnan (Director, International School of Dravidian Linguistics and Dean, Dravidian Linguistics Association of India), Prof. G.K. Panikkar (Former Director, ISDL and Founder-Member, DLA) and Prof. N. Bhaktavatsala Reddy (Former Vice-President of DLA) met the Vice-Chancellor Prof. H.M. Maheshwaraiah on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2018 at his residence and on 14<sup>th</sup> August at the Vice-Chancellor's Office in connection with the conduct of the 47<sup>th</sup> All India Conference of Dravidian Linguists.

Being a reputed linguist and folklorist and also a former Secretary of the Dravidian Linguistics Association, the Vice-Chancellor has taken personal interest in the matter. He treated the DLA representatives as the Vice-Chancellor's personal guests and he himself took us to the guest-houses, hostels etc., where accommodation to the delegates can be provided and to the conference halls and departments where meetings and classes can be conducted. We are convinced that there will not be any problem with regard to providing food, accommodation and transportation facilities for the delegates. So also, the campus is quite beautiful so as to have a pleasant stay for the delegates. Our official meeting with the Vice-Chancellor was on 14<sup>th</sup> August in which the Vice-Chancellor has informed us that in the meeting of the Executive Committee of the University on 13<sup>th</sup> August, our request was placed and the Committee gave the approval for sponsoring the 47<sup>th</sup> AICDL and International Symposium by the Central University of Karnataka.

The following decisions were taken in our meeting with the Vice-Chancellor:

- (1) The date of the conference will be 20-22 June 2019.
- (2) Along with the 47<sup>th</sup> AICDL, an International Symposium on *Language Endangerment* will also be organized.

(3) As per our request, the Vice-Chancellor Prof. H.M. Maheshwaraiah has agreed to be the Patron of the 47<sup>th</sup> AICDL and the International Symposium on Language Endangerment and also agreed to constitute an Organizing Committee for the same.

(4) The Vice-Chancellor will nominate a suitable person as the Organizing Secretary of the 47<sup>th</sup> AICDL and International Symposium on Language Endangerment.

(5) The registration fee may be fixed as in the previous conference.

On behalf of the Dravidian Linguistics Association and the International School of Dravidian Linguistics, we express our thanks to the Vice-Chancellor for the warm welcome extended to the ISDL and DLA representatives and for his keen interest shown in organizing the 47<sup>th</sup> AICDL and International Symposium on *Language Endangerment* as a mega event.

G.K. Panikkar

### **SOME REMARKS ON THE TAMIL TRILL**

(Continued from the last issue)

The free occurrence in Tamil of short sonorants after long vowels<sup>1</sup> and geminated sonorants after short vowels is also supported by a process of augmentation (Vijayakrishnan 2007, Srinivas 2016:99), whereby oft-used monosyllabic nouns become disyllabic. Crucially, the final sonorant in the monosyllable undergoes gemination during di-syllabification if the preceding vowel is short (5b) and remains single if it is long (5a).

#### **(5) Noun Augmentation in Tamil**

a. Singleton sonorant	b. Geminated sonorant
i. <i>ma:n</i> → <i>ma:n̩</i> 'deer'	i. <i>pon</i> → <i>pon.n̩</i> 'gold'
ii. <i>tu:ŋ</i> → <i>tu:ŋ̩</i> 'pillar'	ii. <i>puŋ</i> → <i>puŋ.ŋ̩</i> 'wound'
iii. <i>va:l</i> → <i>va:l̩</i> 'tail'	iii. <i>pal</i> → <i>pal.l̩</i> 'tooth'
iv. <i>te:l</i> → <i>te:l̩</i> 'scorpion'	iv. <i>je/</i> → <i>je.l̩</i> 'a kind of grain'
v. <i>pa:j</i> → <i>pa:j̩</i> 'mat'	v. <i>paj̩</i> 'bag'

Assuming that sonorant geminates are moraic in Tamil offers a straightforward explanation for the occurrence of singleton sonorants and the

**MAPPILA DIALECT OF MALABAR**, G.K. Panikkar, 2017, HB, Demy 1/8, pp. xlii + 534, Rs. 750/- (US\$ 75/-). **THOUGHTS ON DRAVIDIAN LINGUISTICS**, G.K. Panikkar (Ed.), 2017, PB, Demy 1/8, pp. 312, Rs. 450/- (US\$ 45/-). **EŽUTTACCAN AND HIS AGE**, Chelmat Achyuta Menon, 2017, PB, Demy 1/8, pp. xvi + 198, Rs. 250/- (US\$ 25/-). **INDO-ARYAN LOAN-WORDS IN MALAYĀLAM**, K. Godavarma, 2017, PB, Demy 1/8, pp. xii + 252, Rs. 300/- (US\$ 30/-).

absence of geminated ones after long vowels in the language. Given that long vowels are bimoraic (Hayes 1989), a geminated sonorant that follows a long vowel would make any long-vowelled syllable trimoraic in Tamil. Trimoraic syllables are undesirable from a prosodic perspective (Srinivas 2016:87), however, and Tamil arguably precludes the formation of such syllables by disallowing sequences where a geminated sonorant follows a long vowel. Singleton sonorants freely follow long vowels, because, being non-moraic, they cannot make a long-vowelled syllable trimoraic.

The expectation that follows the foregoing discussion is that [r] should also not occur after long vowels in Tamil because it is arguably moraic because of its length and would, therefore, make a long-vowelled syllable trimoraic. The trill does occur after long vowels, however, and in a number of unrelated words; either exclusively contained in the long-vowelled syllable (6a-e), or straddling that syllable and the following one (6f-h). This strongly suggests that [r] is non-moraic.

#### (6) V:r Sequences in Tamil

- |                      |                            |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| a. /a:r/.ka:.d̪i     | 'name of a place'          |
| b. /e:r/.pa:.d̪i     | 'arrangement'              |
| c. n/a:r/.pa.d̪i     | 'forty'                    |
| d. m/e:r/.k̪i        | 'north'                    |
| e. p/a:r/.ka.d̪al    | 'the abode of Lord Vishnu' |
| ( < pa:l + ka.d̪al ) | (literally: Sea of Milk)'  |
| f. a:./r̪i/          | 'six, river'               |
| g. va.ra.l/a:r̪i/    | 'history'                  |
| h. ta.ga.r̪/a:r̪i/   | 'dispute, fracas'          |

The suggestion that the Tamil trill is non-moraic is interesting precisely because it makes [r] a loner in a landscape where the other long consonants of its kind (i.e. sonorants) are moraic. This is an important typological point, for it shows that even the conjunction of high sonority and length in a segment does not always manifest as a mora in a language.

Moving on from length and moras, the next section of this paper examines how an underlying sequence of two trills comes out as [tr], rather than as

[rr], in Tamil. Independently endorsed maximality restrictions on the Tamil onset and coda will be seen to explain the transformation of the first trill into [t].

#### 3. /rr/ → [tr]

The Tamil script is a type of syllabary (Gnanadesikan 2008) where the first consonant-vowel sequence of a syllable is represented by a single symbol and the post-vowel is represented by another. It therefore gives clues as to how individual words are pronounced in the language. The word spelt as 'கத்தி' (*katti*), for example, is pronounced [க: ka] [த: t̪] [தி : ti] i.e. [kat.ti] in the language. On the other hand, the word which is spelt 'ஊற்று' is pronounced [ஊ: u:] [ற் : t̪] [று : ri] i.e. [u:t̪.ri], while the expected pronunciation is [ஊ : u:] [ற் : r̪] [று : ri] i.e. [u:r̪.ri].

The nub of the matter is that even when two trills are spelled in succession, as in 'ற்று', only the second of them is rendered as [r], while the first is pronounced as a voiceless retroflex stop [t̪]. Putting this in phonological terms, an underlying sequence of two trills surfaces in Tamil as [tr], rather than as [rr], which is the expected surface form. As to why this happens, the syllabic phonology of Tamil gives a good part of the answer.

The coda in Tamil accommodates a maximum of two segments, as pointed out in section 1. The onset on the other hand accommodates only one segment, and this constraint is evidenced by the division of all (attested) triconsonant clusters as [CC<sub>coda</sub>|C<sub>onset</sub>], in keeping with the principles of sonority sequencing (Clements 1990) and the absence of word-initial clusters in Tamil words, particularly those native to the language.

Two trills that find themselves between two vowels therefore have no more than three segmental slots (two in the coda and one in the onset) to occupy. Each [r] requires two slots, however, because the trill is long. There is thus a classic conflict between the number of segmental slots available in a syllable and the number of slots the melodies needs (Srinivas 2016:97-100). Tamil

resolves the conflict by making the first trill [ʈ], which presumably occupies only one segmental slot, allowing the second trill to reign over the remaining two.

A voiceless stop is necessary to replace the first [r], which would occupy the coda, because voiced stops generally do not take the coda-position in Tamil. Among the voiceless stops, the fact that retroflex [ʈ] is chosen could suggest that the Tamil [r] is probably retroflex as well. Beyond that the reasons for the choice of [ʈ] as the substitute for [r] seem obscure at best. All the same, the takeaway is that the sequence [ʈr] fits perfectly, while [rr] would not, into the three segments of space available between a syllable coda and a following onset in Tamil.<sup>2</sup>

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This paper has shown how the trill [r] occupies a unique place in the phonology of Tamil. On the one hand, it is long, like sonorant geminates are, but unlike them, it is non-moraic; a fact which may be of vital typological importance. Additionally, the paper has also explained the surface appearance of underlying /rr/ as [ʈr] in terms of the quantitative ceilings that govern the onset and coda positions of Tamil syllables.

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*Honour of K. A. Jayaseelan*, Ed. by Joseph Bayer, Tanmoy Bhattacharya & M.T. Hany Babu, 237-248. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

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<sup>1</sup> Short sonorants also occur after short vowels but these are not relevant to the discussion at hand.

<sup>2</sup> This in turn raises other questions concerning the syllabification of the material associated with the three segmental slots. For example, if [ʈ] and the first part of [r] occupied the bi-segmental coda and the second part thereof the monosegmental onset, the syllable containing [ʈr] would end in rising sonority, which goes against the cross-linguistic fact that syllables, especially word-medial ones, typically end in falling sonority (Clements 1990). This problem can be sidestepped by associating both the segmental slots occupied by [ʈr] with the onset, but such a problem is too context-specific and is decidedly at odds with the general monosegmental ceiling on Tamil onsets.

Srinivas S. & Ramesh Krishnamoorthy

#### WORKSHOP IN PRAGMATICS

Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar

21-28 October 2018

The International Pragmatics Association in collaboration with IIT, Gandhinagar is organizing a week-long workshop in Pragmatics. Research scholars and faculty members who are interested in *Learning Aspects of Discourse Analysis* are encouraged to apply. The theme of this year's edition is *The Pragmatics of Political Discourse and Other Forms of Language Use in the Public Sphere*. To apply, please send your CV along with a brief note on how this workshop will be useful to you, to [pragmatics.inindia@gmail.com](mailto:pragmatics.inindia@gmail.com). Applicants are requested to send a writing sample to aid the selection process. The workshop is limited to 25 participants. The last date for application is **20 September 2018**. The registration fee is Rs. 4000/-. The registration includes accommodation and meals. Participants will have to make their own travel arrangements.

S.A. Shanavas

#### DLA LIFE-MEMBER LIST

(In the Chronological Order)

The Dravidian Linguistics Association of India was formed after the First All India Conference of Dravidian Linguists held under the auspices of the University of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram. This Association became a registered body on 13<sup>th</sup> August 1971.

The Dravidian Linguistics Association of India could develop to the present position only due to the interest shown by the scholars and young researchers in becoming the life-members of the DLA. Their academic support and

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[ijdlisdl@gmail.com](mailto:ijdlisdl@gmail.com)

the membership registration fee were the basic assets through which the Dravidian Linguistics Association could grow as one of the topmost academic organizations in India and abroad.

As a token of acknowledgement and also as valuable information from a historical perspective, it is decided to publish the list of life-members in the serial order of their membership registration.

Name and Address	Amount	Date of Joining
<b>Shri. K.P. Ramunni Menon</b> Sivapuri, Tauk Road, Calicut-1	₹ 200	1.9.1971
<b>Prof. M.M. Bhat</b> Chairman and Chief Editor Kannada Dictionary Sahitya Parishat, Chamarajapet, Bangalore	₹ 200	1.9.1971
<b>Prof. V.I. Subramoniam</b> Hon. Director, International School of Dravidian Linguistics, Trivandrum-586	₹ 200	6.10.1971
<b>Dr. V. Veera Swamy</b> Department of Compilation Tamil University, Tanjavur-613001	₹ 200	23.11.1971
<b>Dr. A. Damodharan</b> South Asia Institute, 69, Heidelberg, ImNenher munfel-13, West Germany	₹ 200	7.12.1971
<b>Dr. P. Somasekharan Nair</b> Department of Linguistics, University of Kerala, Kariavattom, Trivandrum	₹ 200	7.12.1971
<b>Dr. B. Gopinathan Nair</b> Greenview, D Lane, Chalakuzhi Road, Pattom, Trivandrum-4	₹ 200	7.12.1971
<b>Dr. G.K. Panikkar</b> Poonuthura, Anupama Nagar, Pongummoodu, Trivandrum-695011	₹ 200	7.12.1971
<b>Dr. K. Mahadeva Sastri</b> 60, Singarvachan Street, Triplicane, Madras-600005	₹ 200	22.12.1971
<b>Ian R. Smith</b> Linguistics, 561 Ross, York University, North York, ONT, M 3 J IP3, Canada	352.44	23.12.1971
<b>Dr. V.R. Prabhodhachandran Nair</b> "Prasadam", Planchery Lane, Vallakkadavu P.O., Trivandrum-008	₹ 200	29.12.1971

Name and Address	Amount	Date of Joining
<b>Smt. G. Lalithambika</b> Government Sanskrit College, Trivandrum	₹ 200	4.1.1972
<b>Dr. M. Israel</b> 18, Prasad Road, Narimedu, Madurai-2	₹ 200	14.1.1972
<b>Dr. R. Shanmugham</b> Department of Linguistics, Madurai University, Madurai-2	₹ 200	14.1.1972
<b>Dr. Edward Williams</b> Department of Linguistics, Annamalai University, Annamalai Nagar, Tamil Nadu- 608002	₹ 200	29.2.1972
<b>Shri. P.E.D. Namboodiri</b> Alanellur, Palghat-601	₹ 200	9.6.1972
<b>Dr. T.B. Venugopala Panicker</b> "Vaani", Farooq College Route, Farooq College P.O., Kozhikode - 673 632	₹ 200	7.2.1972

[To be continued]

## NEW PUBLICATION OF ISDL

### MALAYALAM A DESCRIPTIVE OUTLINE

Ravi Sankar S. Nair

2018. PB. Demy 1/8. Pp. 146. Rs. 240/- (US\$ 24/-)

### ISDL RESEARCH FORUM

#### LIST OF PAPERS PRESENTED IN AUGUST 2018

1.8.2018: *The Reconstruction of Malayalam Phonemes based on the Data available from the Early Foreign Notes on Kerala (Part II)*

Prof. Naduvattom Gopalakrishnan

8.8.2018: *Muslim Teyyam - Its Significance in the Culture of Kerala*

Prof. Padmakumari

### NEW LIFE-MEMBERS OF DLA (August 2018)

1. **Ms. Projita Giri** (Membership No. 1340/2018)  
V-Habra, Station Road, North 24 Parganas - 743 263, West Bengal

2. **Mr. Pijush Kanti Gayen** (Membership No. 1341/2018)  
School of Languages and Linguistics, Jadavpur University, 188,  
Raja, S.C. Malik Road, Jadavpur, Kolkata - 700 032, West Bengal

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