

CIL Phonetic Reader Series-5

TRIPURI
PHONETIC READER

PUSHPA KARAPURKAR

CENTRAL INSTITUTE OF INDIAN LANGUAGES
MYSORE-6

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PHONETIC READER SERIES-2

TRIPURI PHONETIC READER

Editors
H. S. BILGIRI
E. ANNAMALAI

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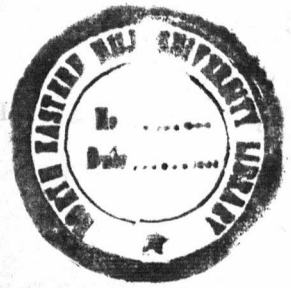
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Foreword

The Central Institute of Indian Languages was set up on the 17th July, 1969 with a view to assisting and co-ordinating the development of Indian Languages. The Institute was charged with the responsibility of serving as a nucleus to bring together all the research and literary out-put from the various linguistic streams to a common head and narrowing the gap between basic research and developmental research in the fields of languages and linguistics in India.

The Institute and its four regional centres are thus engaged in research and teaching which lead to the publication of a wide-ranging variety of materials. Preparation of materials designed for teaching learning at different levels and suited to specific needs is one of the major areas of interest of the Institute. Basic research relating to the acquisition of language and study of language in its manifold psycho-social relations constitute another broad range of its interest. The publications will include materials produced by the members of the staff of the Central Institute of Indian Languages and its Regional Language Centres and associated scholars from Universities and Institutions, both Indian and Foreign.

The Central Institute of Indian Languages has initiated the Phonetic Reader Series in Indian languages with a view to presenting the range of phonetic variation obtaining in this sub-continent and demonstrating the closeness of languages on the basis of phonetic patterning. These Readers are biased towards learning the sound systems of languages. Thus it is hoped that this series will be of interest to both scholars who are interested in Phonetic studies and practical learners of languages who wish to make a beginning in their language study.

The Central Institute of Indian Languages undertook to study Tripuri in response to a request made by the State Government. Dr. (Miss) Pushpa KARAPURKAR, who was deputed to Tripura for this purpose, has prepared a Phonetic Reader, a descriptive grammar and a volume of folktales. The grammar and folktales will be published shortly by the Institute along with instructional material designed for beginning levels. If these materials help solving the problems in the State and help in understanding the people speaking the language, then our efforts will have been amply rewarded.

Central Institute of Indian Languages

Manasagangothri, Mysore-6

10th October 1972

D. P. PATTANAYAK

Director

Preface

About six percent of the population of India is tribal. There have been three views about how best they can be drawn into the mainstream of our national life. One obvious way is not to draw them at all and leave them alone and preserve their culture and traditions intact as museum pieces. The other extreme view has been to sort of drown them in the mainstream and completely assimilate them. The third view is to see that the best in their traditions and cultures that is consistent with modern life is preserved and they are integrated so that they maintain their individuality and at the same time participate in and benefit by the modern developments.

It is also the considered view of all the people that matter that these tribals should be integrated with the regional population amidst whom they live. This can be done only when they are approached through their own mothertongues. It is also obvious that it is impracticable to use their mothertongues throughout their education. Their mothertongues are to be used so that they can effectively be integrated into the regional population. This does not mean that they should forsake their mothertongues, but only means that they should gain native like fluency in their respective regional languages as early as possible. It is for this purpose that their languages have to be scientifically studied and grammatical sketches and vocabularies have to be prepared. The scripts of the regional languages have to be adopted for writing their languages. Primers and textbooks have to be prepared.

To do all this the expertise of the linguists of the country should be placed at the disposal of persons interested in the

education of tribals. Administrators who come in frequent contact with the tribals have to learn to speak fluently the tribal language in question. Learning a language implies an acquisition of a good pronunciation. Firstly, the learner must acquire the capacity to recognise readily without any error the various speech sounds occurring in the language he is learning. Secondly, he must acquire the capacity to produce them with the help of his own vocal organs. Thirdly, he must acquire the capacity to produce the individual speech sounds he has learnt in sequences. In addition to these three skills, which may be sufficient to gain a reasonable pronunciation, the learner, depending on his needs, has to get a mastery over the orthography of the language he is learning. This involves developing automatic associations between written forms and speech sounds.

The Phonetic Readers in this series have been designed with the above points in view. They are mainly intended to meet the needs of administrators who have to learn the language in question.

Each Reader consists of a brief exposition about the organs of speech and their functions. It also introduces some technical terms. Then each speech sound is described in detail giving the movements of the vocal organs. Each description is rounded off by the technical term for that sound. A brief phonemic statement which meaningfully groups the sounds described in the preceding sections is also appended. A statement about the correspondances between the phonemes of the language and the letters used to write them comes at the end. In this section suggestions for improvements in the existing orthography are made. In the case of languages which have not yet been written, suggestions for adopting the script of the regional language are made.

It may be too much to claim that these Readers are perfect. There are lacunae still to be filled up. The most conspicuous of these is the lack of information on intonation. Suggestions for

improvement are welcome and will be incorporated in the subsequent edition. Of the two editors, the first checked the data, and provided the format and read the manuscript in the early stages and the second read it at the later stages.

Though it is true that certain features of pronunciation can only be learnt with the aid of a teacher, the utility of such Readers cannot be underestimated. It is hoped that these Readers will be useful to even persons other than those for whom they are intended.

H. S. BILIGIRI

E. ANNAMALAI

Acknowledgement

The present Phonetic Reader is mainly prepared for teaching Tripuri as second language that is, for those who do not speak Tripuri as their mother-tongue.

I express my sincere thanks to Dr. G. N. CHATTERJI, Director and Secretary, Education Department, Government of Tripura, Dr. HEMADATTA CHOWDHURY, Deputy Director, Education Department, Government of Tripura, who provided all the facilities during my field work. I also want to thank my two informants Mr. NOPHURAY DEBBARMA and Mrs. HIRUPRABHA DEVI DEBBARMA, who showed great patience while working with me and thank all the others who cooperated during my field work at Tripura.

My sincere thanks are also due to Dr. D. P. PATTANAYAK, Director, Central Institute of Indian Languages, for encouragement, Dr. H. S. BILIGIRI and Dr. E. ANNAMALAI for valuable suggestions.

I am also indebted to my colleagues Dr. R. MAHADEVAN for his help in proof reading and Mr. H. L. N. BHARATI who saw the book through the press and Mr. V. B. SATYAN, Proprietor, Kapila Power Press, Nanjangud, for neat printing.

PUSHPA KARAPURKAR

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Introduction

Tripuri is spoken by eleven different tribes residing in Tripura showing a little or more difference in their speech. These tribes are 1) Debbarma, 2) Noatia, 3) Jamatia, 4) Koloï, 5) Laitong, 6) Karpong, 7) Dalong, 8) Aiang, 9) Dahula, 10) Mosom, 11) Rupini, 12) Riang, 13) Muslung. They all call their language as *kək-bərək-ma* meaning 'language of men'.

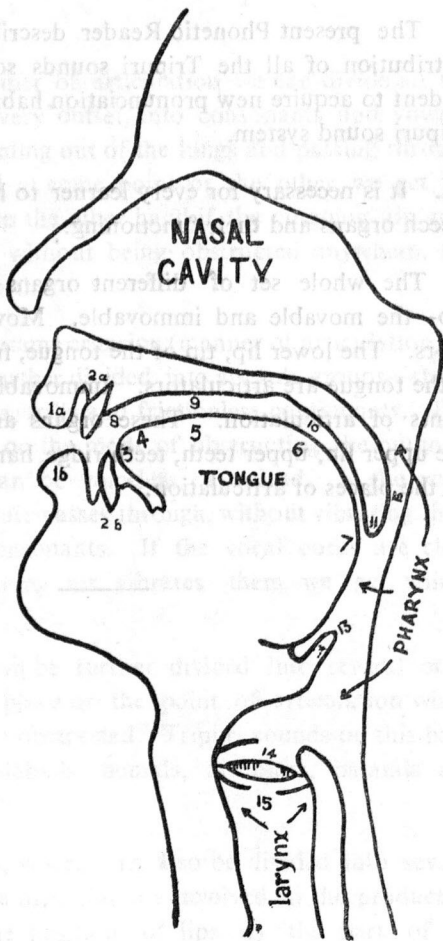
Tripuri belongs to Bodo subgroup of Tibeto-Burman family and shows a close affinity with the other languages of the same subgroup like Boro, Garo, Kachari etc.

The Debbarma dialect which was studied for the purpose is spoken by ruling class people. This dialect of Tripuri shows three variations - one that is spoken in the city of Agartala and other two in its north and south respectively. The main difference between the northern and southern speech lies in the fact that where northerners use /u/ the southerners use /i/, e.g., /ru/ - give - /ri/, /hun/ - say - /hin/.

Similarly, the Agartala dialect does not have an unrounded back vowel /ɯ/, which is present in both the other dialects. They replace /ɯ/ with /u/ in their speech, e.g., /tuɯk/, - /tuk/, /thuɯ/ - /thu/.

1. Description of Speech Organs

- 1a Upper lip
- 1b Lower lip
- 2a Upper teeth
- 2b Lower teeth
- 3 Tip of the tongue
- 4 Blade of the tongue
- 5 Front of the tongue
(also called middle or centre)
- 6 Back of the tongue
(also called dorsum)
- 7 Root of the tongue
- 8 Alveolar ridge
(also called teeth ridge)
- 9 Hard palate
- 10 Soft palate
(also called velum)
- 11 Uvula
- 12 Velic
- 13 Epiglottis
- 14 Glottis
- 15 Vocal cords



SAGITTAL SECTION OF SPEECH TRACT

1. Every person has some set speech habits which are in accordance with his own language. When he learns a new language he should adapt himself to the new sound system in two ways.

1. He should recognise all the sounds uttered and
2. He should be able to produce them.

The present Phonetic Reader describes the production and distribution of all the Tripuri sounds so as to help a Tripuri student to acquire new pronunciation habits and adapt himself to Tripuri sound system.

1.2. It is necessary for every learner to have basic knowledge of speech organs and their functioning.

The whole set of different organs can be classified into two—the movable and immovable. Movable are called articulators. The lower lip, tip of the tongue, front of the tongue, back of the tongue are articulators. Immovable organs are known as points of articulation. These organs are relatively stationary. The upper lip, upper teeth, teeth ridge, hard palate and soft palate are the places of articulation.

