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WORLD ANTHROPOLOGY CONGRESS-2023

BHUBANESWAR, INDIA | 9-14 AUGUST 2023

CTD: 04CS- CULTURAL-SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS, SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND SOCIAL DYNAMICS

SUB-DOMAIN: 2. EDUCATION AND LITERACY

PANEL TITLE: MULTILINGUAL GLOSSARIES FOR SUBJECT-SPECIFIC TECHNICAL TERMS

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ABSTRACT

The fields of mathematics, computer science, botany, zoology, physics, chemistry etc., have an extensive array of words that are used to denote specific concepts. Most of these words are based on Greek and Latin, and ultimately have cognate root words in Sanskrit. These words, while essential to their respective subjects, may be hard to grasp for non-native English speakers especially for the indigenous speakers, and may present difficulties in translation into Indian languages. However, modern education in India is increasingly reliant on conveying technical concepts to students, study participants, resource persons, and holders of traditional knowledge in their mother tongues, to facilitate teaching and research. Lengthy explanations of unknown terms could be avoided, if the corresponding terms were to be available in several indigenous languages, for ready reference. The discussion would revolve around subject-specific glossaries to enrich STEM education, containing technical terms and their brief explanations, in Hindi, Odia, Santali, Ho, Kuvi, Didayi & Bonda corresponding to English glossaries. The entirety would be compiled as a cross-referenced master document, enabling the teacher, social worker, or researcher to readily find a word in a relevant Indian language. This would facilitate conversation and hasten comprehension between the user of the glossary and the interlocutor. To learn, how to build such a glossary, the project shall enlist the help of bilingual/multilingual subject experts and resource persons and focus on identifying the English/ Latin root of the term being translated; convert it to a Sanskrit root and use it to create a corresponding word in Hindi and Odia. These words would then be used to arrive at Santali, Ho, Kuvi, Didayi & Bonda root words, and build appropriate vocabulary conveying a sense of the original technical term.

Keywords: Endangered languages, multilingual education, STEM

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