



**Universiteit
Leiden**
The Netherlands

Book review : R. Singh (ed.), The yearbook of South Asian languages and linguistics 2002

Kulikov, L.I.

Citation

Kulikov, L. I. (2007). Book review : R. Singh (ed.), The yearbook of South Asian languages and linguistics 2002. *Language*, 83, 467-468. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/16472>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

License: [Leiden University Non-exclusive license](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/16472>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

The contents are divided into four parts. Part A, 'Invited contributions', opens with a useful sociolinguistic survey by R. K. AGNIHOTRI (11–25). It draws attention to the main theoretical problems that linguists and sociologists encounter in India. An important theoretical contribution by ALICE DAVISON, 'Agreement features and projections of tense and aspect' (27–57), investigates the difference in agreement systems between standard Hindi/Urdu and one of the eastern Hindi dialects/languages, Kurmali. In contrast to Hindi/Urdu, the Kurmali verb may have more than one agreement morpheme, each referring to different antecedents, some of which may be non-nominatives, as in *okar_i gilaas-t_i bhāāg-l-e_i-t_i* 'his_i (genitive) glass_j (direct case) broke'. The author notes the typologically relevant division between Indo-Aryan languages with a single agreement antecedent (Hindi/Urdu, Punjabi, Kashmiri, Sindhi, Gujarati, Marathi, and Nepali) and those with multiple agreement markers, which occur only on tense, not on aspect, forms (Oriya, Bengali, Assamese, Maithili, Magahi, Bhojpuri, and Kurmali). Importantly, most of the type 1 languages show split ergativity, with ergative subject marking in transitive perfective clauses, while type 2 languages either have no ergative marking at all (Oriya, Bengali, Maithili, Magahi) or exhibit the ergative pattern in all tenses (Kurmali, Shine, and Assamese).

RICHARD JANDA and BRIAN D. JOSEPH ('Sanskrit as she has been misanalyzed prosodically', 59–90) demonstrate the insufficiency of modern approaches such as feature geometry and optimality theory to several phenomena of Sanskrit phonology related to (de)aspiration. These are Grassmann's law (deaspiration in successive syllables: $C^h \dots C^h \rightarrow C \dots C^h$), aspiration throwback of the type *budh-~ bhot-syati* 's/he will wake up; perceive, notice' (not 's/he will know', as incorrectly translated by the authors), and Bartholomae's law ($C^hC \rightarrow CC^h$). The authors argue that 'the key to understanding these aspiration phenomena lies in treating them as morphological in character, even if they manipulate some elements of sound structure' (77).

Part B, 'Open submissions', begins with JOHN PETERSON's exemplary paper 'The Nepali converbs: A holistic approach' (93–133), which offers a comprehensive classification and description of Nepali converbs (also called 'conjunctive participles'), primarily along the parameters and features outlined in the seminal paper by V. P. Nedjalkov ('Some typological parameters of converbs', *Converbs in cross-linguistic perspective: Structure and meaning of adverbial verb forms—Adverbial participles, gerunds*, ed. by Martin Haspelmath and Ekkehard König, 97–136, Berlin: Mouton, 1995). Part B also contains 'Three levels of lexical codification' by ANITA RAVANAM (135–55) (focusing on the issue of which words can be considered difficult) and 'Syntax learnability:

The yearbook of South Asian languages and linguistics 2002. Ed. by RAJENDRA SINGH. New Delhi: Sage, 2002. Pp. 278. ISBN 076199694X. \$106 (Hb).

This is the fifth volume of the yearbook and the last one from Sage Publications; from 2003 onwards, the publication has been taken over by Mouton de Gruyter.

The problem that won't go away' by ANJUM P. SALEEMI (157–76). GHANSHYAM SHARMA (177–98) makes an attempt to capture the modal meanings of the subjunctive in Hindi using the formal apparatus of modal logics.

Part C includes very useful surveys of studies on South Asian languages in Europe (John Peterson) and India (PROBAL DASGUPTA), as well as five book reviews.

Part D, 'Dialogue', contains three short notes: 'Minimal look-ahead' (253–61) by TANMOY BHATTACHARYA, a response to Anjum Saleemi's paper by TERESA SATTERFIELD (263–68), and 'Against Afghanistanism: A note on the morphology of Indian English' by RAJENDRA SINGH (269–73).

As with the previous yearbooks, this volume offers a good collection of high quality articles, surveys, and reviews that will be useful reading for all those interested in Indian linguistics, as well as for general linguists, sociolinguists, and typologists. [LEONID KULIKOV, *Leiden University*.]