Language and Grammar

Chapter 5

SOUTH ASIAN LANGUAGE FAMILIES
- Indo-Aryan Languages
- Iranian Languages
- Nuristani Languages
- Dravidian Languages
- Austro-Asiatic Languages
- Tibeto-Burman Languages
- Unclassified / Language Isolate

Languages of India and neighbouring countries
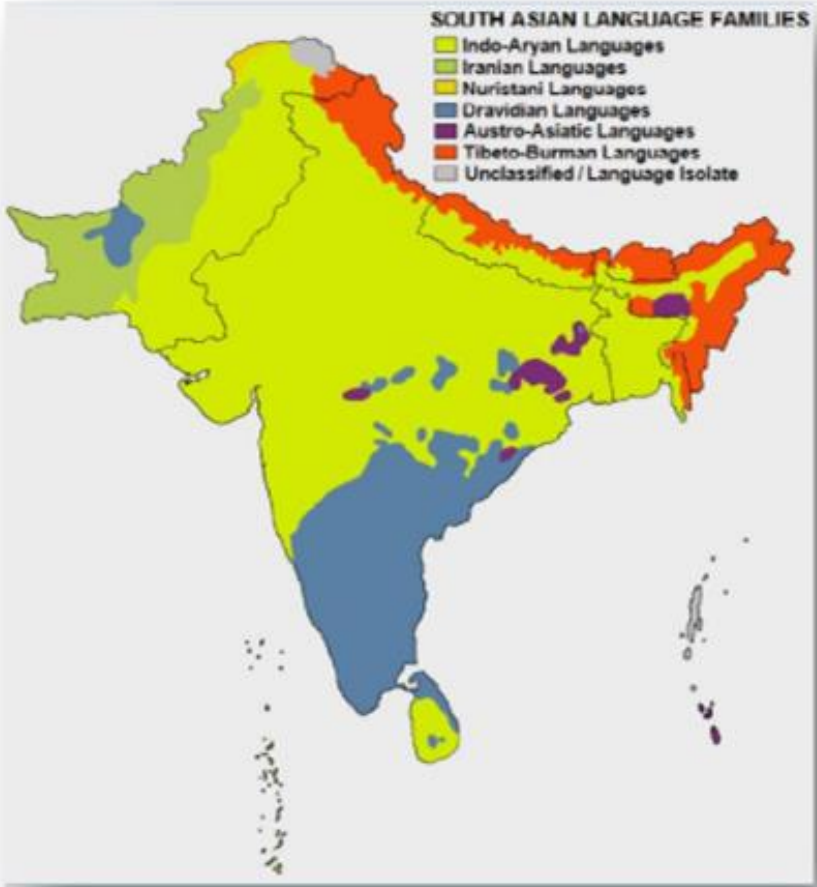
Languages in india

Indian languages may be grouped into two major language families; the Indo-Aryan(mainly in the northern of India) and Dravidian(mainly towards the southern part of India.

Different scripts used in india

Brahmi	ㅐ	☐	∧	D	ᕃ	?	♪	⟩	ᒋ	?	☉	◯	⊥	+	♂	⅃	४	⊥	I	↑	?	৬	๒	ல	ᒉ	ᗺ	ᛞ	Ɛ	⅄	ᑕ
Bengali	অ	ব	গ	ধ	ড		ত	দ	ড		থ	ঠ	য	ক	চ	ল	ম	ন	ণ	শ		ন	ক	স	খ	ছ	র	য	ড	ঢ
Devanagari	अ	ब	ग	ध	ठ		ष	द	ड		थ	ठ	य	क	च	ल	म	ण	ण	ष		प	फ	स	ख	छ	र	ष	त	ट
Tamil	அ	ப	க	த	ட		வ	த	ட		த	ட	ய	க	ச	ல	ம	ந	ண			ப	ப		க	ச	ர		த	ட
Kannada	ಅ	ಬ	ಗ	ಧ	ಡ		ದ	ದ	ಡ		ಥ	ಠ	ಯ	ಕ	ಚ	ಲ	ಮ	ನ	ಣ	ಶ		ಪ	ಫ	ಸ	ಖ	ಛ	ರ	ಷ	ತ	ಟ
Telugu	అ	ఒ	గ	ధ	ఢ		ద	ద	డ		థ	ఠ	య	క	చ	ల	మ	న	ణ	శ		ప	ఫ	స	ఖ	ఛ	ర	ష	త	ట
IAST	a	ba	ga	dha	ḍha		va	da	ḍa		tha	ṭha	ya	ka	ca	la	ma	na	ṇa	śa		pa	pha	sa	kha	cha	ra	ṣa	ta	ṭa

India's languages use a number of scripts, though only about 30 of the 1,600 languages are written down. Some of the major scripts used in Indian languages,including inscriptions, are Brahmi, Kharoshthi, Sharada, Devanagari, Dravida, Old Tamil,Perso-Arabic.

Three features of the Indian definition of language

(i) It is primarily speech. Consider our words for language: bhāṣā, vāk, vāṇī, bolī etc. All assert that language is speech (writing is secondary as it represents speech).

(ii) It is the means of thought — thinking is not possible without language.

(iii) It constructs for each of us things, experiences, emotions and ideas by naming them. With these we know things that are not present physically. Someone utters the word 'cow' and we see in our mind the picture of a particular animal and can describe it at length.

THE FOUR OF THE SIX VEDANGAS THAT DEAL WITH LANGUAGE

Śikṣā (phonetics)

Vyākaraṇa(grammar)

Nirukta (etymology)

Chanda (prosody)

Śikṣā (Phonetics)

- Phonetics, the science of speech-sounds, developed in response to the need to preserve and articulate accurately the Vedic hymns (mantras) in the oral tradition.

- Defines the characteristics of letters

- Explains the causes of the form of a letter – Sthāna, karaṇa prayatna

- Describes the process of the pronouncing letters

- Explains the subtle details of the actions involved in pronunciation

Śikṣā

1. Places of Articulation

- kaṇṭhya: velar

- tālavya: palatal

- mūrdhanya: retroflex

- dantya: dental

- oṣṭhya: labial
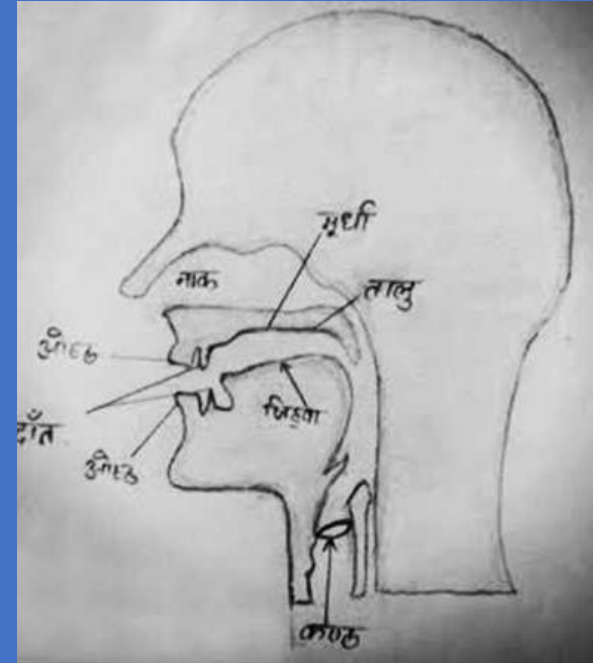
Śikṣā
Places of articulation

स्थानम्	वर्णाः	सूत्रम्
कण्ठः	अ आ अ३ क् ख् ग् घ् ङ् ा: ह्	अकुहविसर्जनीयाः कण्ठ्याः
तालु	इ ई इ३ च् छ् ज् झ् ञ् य श	इचुयशास्तालव्याः
मूर्धा	ऋ ॠ ऋ३ ट् ठ् ड् ढ् ण र् ष्	ऋटुरषा मूर्धन्याः
दन्ताः	ऌ ॡ३ त् थ् द् ध् न ल स	ऌतुलसा दन्त्याः
ओष्ठौ	उ ऊ उ३ प् फ् ब् भ म् (उपध्मानीयः)	उपूपध्मानीया ओष्ठ्याः
नासिका	ा ं (अनुस्वारः) कँ खँ गँ घँ	अनुस्वारयमा नासिक्याः

Places of articulation contd...

स्थानम्	वर्णाः	सूत्रम्
कण्ठतालु	ए ऐ	एदैतौ कण्ठ्यतालव्यौ
कण्ठोष्ठम्	ओ औ	ओदौतौ कण्ठ्योष्ट्यौ
दन्तोष्ठम्	व्	वकारो दन्त्योष्ठ्यः
नासिका + वर्गस्थानम्	ङ् ञ् ण् न् म्	ङञणनमाः स्वस्थाननासिकस्थानाः

<u>Śikṣā</u>

आभ्यन्तर-प्रयत्नाः (Type of contact)

प्रयत्नः	वर्णाः
स्पृष्टम्	क् ख् ग् घ् ङ् च् छ् ज् झ् ञ् ट् ठ् ड् ढ् ण् त् थ् द् ध् न् प् फ् ब् भ् म्
ईषत्स्पृष्टम्	य् र् ल् व्
विवृतम्	अ आ अ३ इ ई इ३ उ ऊ उ३ ऋ ॠ ऋ३ ए ए३ ऐ ऐ३ ओ ओ३ औ औ३
ईषद्विवृतम्	श् ष् स् ह्
संवृतम्	अ

Śikṣā

बाह्यप्रयत्नाः

प्रयत्नाः	वर्णाः
विवारः श्वासः अघोषः	क् ख् च् छ् ट् ठ् त् थ् प् फ् श् ष् स्
संवारः नादः घोषः	ग् घ् ङ् ज् झ् ञ् ड् ढ् ण् द् ध् न् ब् भ् म् य् र् ल् व् ह्
अल्पप्राणः	क् ग् ङ् च् ज् ञ् ट् ड् ण् त् द् ण् प् ब् म् य् र् ल् व्
महाप्राणः	ख् घ् छ् झ् ङ् ढ् द् घ् ब् भ्
उदात्तः	स्वराणाम् एते प्रयत्नाः
अनुदात्तः	
स्वरितः	

Mahesvara Sutrani

Śivasūtra/Maheshwara Sutra is believed to have originated from Śiva's dance.

Śiva, the Lord of Dance, with a view to bless the sages Sanaka and so on, played on His ḍamarū [double-sided drum] fourteen times, from which emerged the following fourteen sūtras.

Nirukta (Etymology)

Nirukta is the science of study of the meaning of words used in texts. It was composed by Yāska (9th century BCE). It is a commentary on Nighaṇṭu, a classified list of Vedic words compiled by Yāska himself. The text is composed in the form of a discussion.

Vyākaraṇa (Grammar)

The tradition holds that there was a long tradition of grammatical thinking before Pāṇini. Pāṇini (7th century BCE) in the Aṣṭādhyāyī refers to the works of ten grammarians such as Āpiśali, Kāśyapa, Gārgya and others. Eighty-five grammarians before Pāṇini are known to us by name.

Pāṇini's Aṣṭādhyāyī is a grammar of both the spoken language (laukikī) and the compositional language (vaidikī). It is composed in the sūtra (abbreviated and exact) style and contains around 4,000 sūtras. As these sūtras are arranged into eight chapters, hence the text is called Aṣṭādhyāyī (aṣṭa-adhyāyī, 'eight chapters').

Chandas (Prosody)

The Vedas are also India's first literary compositions and the Vedic seers are the first poets. A major portion of the Vedic compositions is metrical. So the science of prosody also developed in India in very early times. In oral traditions, prosody also helps to maintain the text as it is. A change occurring in a versified text in course of time can be easily traced as it disturbs the rhythm (flow) of the text. Sage Piṅgala, supposed to be a contemporary of Pāṇini, had composed a prosody text called Piṅgala-sūtra or Chanda-sūtra.