

Society for Endangered and Lesser-Known Languages (SEL)

Annual Report - 2024-2025

Message from the President

It gives me great pleasure to present the Annual Report of the Society for Endangered and Lesser-Known Languages (SEL) for the year 2024-2025. During the year under review, the Society continued its committed efforts towards the documentation, preservation, and revitalization of endangered and lesser-known languages through conferences, training programmes, lecture series, and publications. The active participation of scholars, young researchers, and collaborators from across the country reflects the growing engagement with issues of linguistic diversity and sustainability.

I sincerely thank our patrons, office bearers, members, partner institutions, and well-wishers for their continued support and cooperation. I am confident that the initiatives undertaken in 2024-2025 will further strengthen SEL's mission and contribute meaningfully to the preservation of our rich linguistic heritage.

Kavita Rastogi

Hon. President SEL

Introduction

The Society for Endangered and Lesser-Known Languages (SEL), established in 2011 and formally registered in 2015, continued its dedicated efforts towards the documentation, preservation, and revitalization of endangered and lesser-known languages during the year 2024-2025. Guided by its core objectives, the Society functioned as an active platform for scholars, researchers, educators, and language community members to engage in meaningful academic dialogue and collaborative initiatives.

The year 2024-2025 was marked by a wide range of academic activities, including international conferences, training programmes, workshops, lecture series, and publications, with a strong emphasis on capacity building and the involvement of young researchers. Through these initiatives, SEL reaffirmed its commitment to ethical language documentation, community-oriented research, and the promotion of linguistic diversity, contributing steadily to the broader discourse on language endangerment and revitalization.

Objectives of SEL

SEL continued to work towards the following objectives during the reporting period:

- Maintenance and revitalization of endangered and lesser-known language varieties
- Preparation of grammars and dictionaries of threatened and poorly documented languages

- Development of pedagogical materials for at-risk language communities
- Awareness creation among language communities regarding their linguistic heritage
- Social, cultural, and economic development of language communities
- Strengthening language documentation and preservation skills through trainings, workshops, and lectures
- Providing scholarly platforms through seminars, conferences, and the Society's journal

3. Office Bearers (2024- 2025)

- **Honorary President:** Prof. Kavita Rastogi
- **Honorary Vice President:** Dr. Madri Kakoti
- **Honorary Secretary:** Dr. Vishnu Kumar Singh
- **Joint Secretary:** Devanshi Kumar
- **Treasurer:** Hemant Kumar
- **Financial Consultant:** Apurva Kumar
- **Legal Consultant:** Aakriti Agarwal
- **Consultant:** Gaurav Mehrotra
- **Media Consultant:** Nishant Rastogi
- **Social Worker:** Richa Bhardwaj

Patrons: Padma Shri Prof. Anvita Abbi and Prof. Panchanan Mohanty

Membership Status

- **Total Members:** 234
- **New Members enrolled in 2024-2025:** 34

The steady growth in membership reflects increasing interest among scholars and students in the field of language documentation and revitalization.

Academic and Outreach Activities

International Mother Tongue Day 22nd Feb 2024

Prof. Udaya Narayana Singh, currently the Chair-Professor and Dean of the Faculty of Arts at Amity University Haryana, delivered a lecture on International Mother Tongue Day. He emphasized the rich multilingual landscape of India, noting that translation and retelling help bridge the cultural and temporal gaps among different communities.

On 1st March 2024 a lecture was delivered by Dr Sushree Sangita where she discussed the multilingual educational approach implemented at the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences in Bhubaneswar, which she and her colleagues developed.

Annual Conference- ELKL-12 (6th –7th March 2024)

The 12th International Conference on Endangered and Lesser-Known Languages (ELKL-12) was organized by the Department of Linguistics, University of Kashmir, Srinagar, in collaboration with CIIL, Mysuru. The conference included keynote and plenary lectures and wide participation from across Indian universities.

Workshops and Capacity Building

- Research Paper Writing Workshop (6th May 2024) conducted by Dr Shivani Nag, Delhi University.
- Research Methodology Workshop (23rd & 24th May 2024) conducted by Dr Dripta Piplani and Dr Bornini, IIT Kharagpur.
- Data elicitation and management training for NEHU, Shillong students by SEL team



Four-day training programme for non-linguist language workers at Bhopal (1st -4th August 2024) by SEL team

FOR SEL By SEL-2024

Organized by SEL in the month of May this series provided a platform for **new members** to present their research. **Four researchers presented** their work on different Indian languages, language attitudes, and endangered languages, and received **expert feedback**.

Invited lecture -23rd August 2024

Prof. Madhumita Barbora, in her invited lecture, observed that *“Exploring Northeast India is not merely a journey through geography, but a profound engagement with the essence of human diversity.”* She highlighted that Northeast India represents a vibrant mosaic of cultures,

languages, and traditions shaped by centuries of interaction as well as relative isolation. With more than 200 ethnic communities, the region stands as a testimony to harmonious coexistence amidst rich linguistic and cultural plurality.

Training on Data Elicitation and Management (9th January 2025)

Dr. Madri Kakoti conducted a three-hour interactive online training programme on data elicitation and management for postgraduate students and faculty of Deccan College, Pune, and The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda. The session covered informant selection, elicitation techniques, data handling, file naming conventions, and data transfer protocols. A hands-on activity enabled participants to practically apply the concepts learned.

International Mother Tongue Day (22nd February 2025)

On the occasion of International Mother Tongue Day, Dr. Mahendra Kumar Mishra delivered a lecture titled "*Social Construction of Curriculum: Case of Chhattisgarh.*" The talk emphasized culturally inclusive education, the role of community knowledge in curriculum development, and the challenges of multilingual classrooms. The lecture advocated a democratic and socially responsive educational framework.

National Indigenous Languages Day (31st March 2025)

Dr. Pooja Saxena delivered a lecture on "*Kuchbandhiya Word Collection: Process and Challenges.*" Drawing from her field experience, she discussed methods of lexical documentation, cross-verification with informants, and challenges such as dialectal variation, lack of written records, and language shift. The lecture highlighted the importance of preserving the linguistic and cultural heritage of the *Kuchbandhiya* community.

Publications (2024-2025)

- **Vaak Manthan**, Vol. 9, Issue I
- **Vaak Manthan**, Vol. 9, Issue II

Editors- Prof. K. Srikumar & Dr Bishakha

Financial Overview

The audited statement of accounts for the financial year 2024-2025 has been prepared and audited separately. The Society maintained financial transparency and prudence while supporting academic programmes, trainings, and publications.

Conclusion and Future Outlook

The year 2024-2025 was a period of consolidation and expansion for SEL, marked by active scholarly engagement, strong participation of young researchers, and meaningful community-oriented initiatives. In the coming year, SEL aims to further strengthen its documentation

programmes, expand training initiatives, and deepen collaborations with academic institutions and language communities.

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