

Nominal and Verbal Structures of Kisan Spoken in Odisha State

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ABSTRACT

Kisan, a mother tongue of Kisan tribesmen, included in the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes list, has been successively returned since 1961, is a Dravidian speech essentially spoken in Odisha state surrounded by the Indo-Aryan and Munda speech communities. They are primarily engaged in cultivation and also working as agricultural labourers. Among the Dravidian languages, its close cognate language is Kurukh/Oraon. Thus it comes under North Dravidian group of languages/mother tongues. Kisan mother tongue speakers are found overwhelmingly in the three districts of Odisha namely Sundargarh, Sambalpur and Jharsuguda as per the 2001 Census. Out of the total 1, 39, 428 Kisan mother tongue speakers, 91, 368 speakers speak Odia, 5, 899 speakers converse Hindi and 1, 857 speakers know English. Grierson opines that the ancestors of Kisan tribesmen might have belonged to Karnataka (Carnatic) and later on migrated to Odisha and Bihar and settled there as Oraon and Maler respectively. It discusses about various morphological features of the Kisan mother tongue. This description will give us a clear cut picture of present day morphological features of Kisan mother tongue which was essentially a Dravidian speech earlier but influenced by other speeches belonging to various families surrounded by them at present. Since this one is a preliminary research and mainly focusing on the structure of the speech, no comparative study with the neighbouring languages or other north Dravidian languages is made at this juncture. However, if such studies are carried out in future, they will highlight how much influence is noticed on this mother tongue by other speeches.