

## ASSESSING THE IMPLICATIONS OF LINGUISTIC RELATIVITY IN MAITHILI SPEAKERS (A PRELIMINARY PERCEPTION STUDY)

SANJAY KUMAR JHA

Director (Liberal Arts) and Professor (Linguistics), Amity University Gurgaon, Haryana, India

### ABSTRACT

The objective of this preliminary perception study is to lay the foundation of assessing the implication of relativity hypothesis with respect to Maithili, an Indo-Aryan language spoken in Nepal and India. The linguistic relativity hypothesis also known as Sapir and Whorf hypothesis in the field of sociolinguistics believes that *people of different languages think differently*. Despite facing vigorous attacks from the Universalists, especially the followers of Noam Chomsky in the recent years, the notion of relativity takes a centrestage in many linguistic debates worldwide. Going in favour of the hypothesis, this study delves into eliciting perceptions of twenty one (21) respondents (convenience samples) from Maithil community of North India to see whether Maithili shows idiosyncratic linguistic features and influence the thought patterns and worldviews of Maithils distinctly or not. The findings show that Maithili, due to its distinctive linguistic features, also shows Maithils have a unique thought pattern not only in terms of its lexicon and grammar but also in terms of its socio-cultural values.

**KEYWORDS:** Linguistic Relativity, Lexicon & Maithili Speaker