

## THE WORLD VIEW OF IRULIGA TRIBE OF KARNATAKA

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### 1. Introduction

The 'world view' of indigenous people in perceiving and organizing a 'whole' into various 'parts' in hierarchical structure(s) is termed as the 'Ethnoscience' or 'Folk Taxonomy' or 'New Ethnography'<sup>1</sup>.

In this paper an attempt has been made by the investigators (viz., the authors of this paper) to project and highlight the 'world view of Iruliga Tribe<sup>2</sup> of Karnataka' as gleaned from the study of their body-part terminologies<sup>3</sup>. The terminologies were collected during the pilot survey in August 2019 from the Iruliga tribe who speak an indigenous mother tongue, besides Kannada in the taluks of Ramnagaram and Chennapatna, Karnataka.

### 2. The 'Fieldwork', the 'Field Centres' and the 'Data Elicitation'

The Iruliga tribe of Karnataka who speak an indigenous language of their own as the mother tongue are found to inhabit in five different hamlets in the taluks of Chennapatna and Ramnagaram as detailed below:

- a) Iruligaru Dhoddi / Bujari Dhoddi / Iruligaru Colony, Makali (Post) located one and half KMs away from Gangodi of Chennapatna Taluk (in 80 households);
- b) Iruligaru Dhoddi / Bujari Dhoddi / Iruligaru Colony, Erali Pakka, Kunt kallu Hobali, Ramnagaram Taluk (in 100 households);
- c) Iruligaru Dhoddi / Bujari Dhoddi / Iruligaru Colony, Ayjuru, Kempa Gowda Circle (nearby the Ramnagaram Bus Stand), Ramnagaram Town;
- d) Iruligaru Dhoddi / Bujari Dhoddi / Iruligaru Colony, Ramdevaru Betta ( about 4 KMs from the Ramnagaram Bus Stand), Ramnagaram Town; and
- e) Iruligaru Dhoddi / Bujari Dhoddi / Iruligaru Colony (about 5 KMs from the Ramnagaram Bus Stand), Ramnagaram Town.

### 3. A Brief Note on the Concept of WorldView

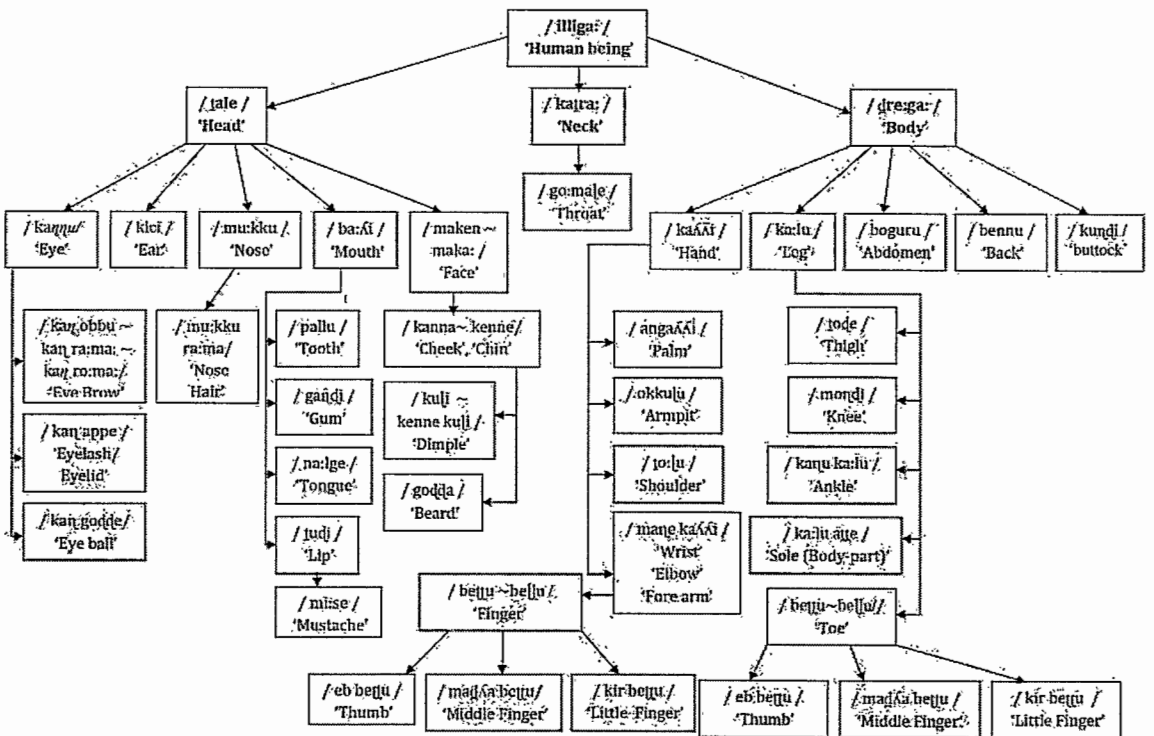
'The Culture Whole' of an ethnos is more than the sum of its parts. Its 'World View' constitutes more than the combination of domains and categories', proclaim the Ethnographers. Such a perception of culture and world view is based on the view of human being as a symbolizing, conceptualizing, meaning-seeking social animal, who

cannot live in an incoherent, disordered, meaningless world; and consequently, *the world view arises out of the human beings' quest for 'unity, underlying apparent diversity'; for 'simplicity, underlying apparent complexity'; for 'order, underlying apparent disorder'; and for 'regularity, underlying apparent anamoly'.*

If a worldview is to make a sense out of experience and give it form, direction, and purpose, it cannot be fragmentary or incoherent. It must be more than the sum of its parts. It must be a unified whole that has a central theme where everything comes together. Accordingly, rather than as an admixture of diversified themes, the world view tends to develop the central unifying themes embodied in certain symbols that form the 'Dominant Symbols' / 'Core Symbols' / 'Key Symbols' in that culture.

#### 4. The Body-Part Terminologies attested in the Iruliga Language

The various body-part terminologies that have been attested in the Iruliga language of Karnataka are presented here in hierarchical structure(s) so as to portray the world view born out of this lexical semantic domain (as detailed in the schema of hierarchical structure of Body-Part Terminologies of Iruliga Tribe of Karnataka).



## Conclusion

The analysis of a culture's terminological systems will not reveal exhaustively the cognitive world of its members but could certainly tap the central portion of it. The principles by which people in a culture construe their world reveal how the native people separate the 'pertinent' from the 'impertinent'.

For instance, to the Iruliga tribal people, the lexeme for 'Hand' / kaʎʎi/ stands for the whole area from 'Finger Tips' to 'Shoulder' while the lexical item /maŋe kaʎʎi/ denotes the area inclusive of 'wrist', 'elbow', and 'fore arm'. In other words, in the Iruliga language, the lexical word / kaʎʎi / signifies the whole stretch of 'hand' to 'shoulder' whereas the lexeme /maŋe kaʎʎi/ denotes the whole stretch of 'wrist', 'elbow', and 'fore arm'. Contrary to these situations, both 'eyelash', and 'eyelid' are noted in the Iruliga language by a single lexeme /kaŋ appe/; In the same way, both 'cheek' and 'chin' are noted in Iruliga by a single utterance /kanne ~ kenne/. And thus, it goes without saying that the long stretch of body-parts (without boundary line) could be viewed differently by the native speakers of varied ethnic groups.(Unfortunately, the lexemes for 'Lungs', 'Intestines', 'Kidneys', 'Blood Vessels' were not elicited by these investigators during their short stay at the field centres concerned).

As and when we go on studying the other cognitive domains such as 'Kinship Terminology', 'Colour Terminology', 'Environmental Image', 'Metaphorical Extension of Meanings', 'Personal Names', the world view of the ethnic group concerned will be unravelled further and further.

(Interestingly, the 'internal organs' and certain external body- parts are enlisted in the 'Appendices' (Cf. Appendix-I & Appendix-II) <sup>5</sup>.

## Appendices

### Appendix -I

#### Certain Internal Organs identified in the Iruliga Language

/eɖe/	'heart'
/cicci/	'flesh'
/kabbu/	'bone'
/kibri/	'rib'
/naro:/	'nerve'
/buruɖe/	'skull'
/mu: e/	'brain'

## Appendix -II

### Miscellaneous External Body-Parts identified in the Iruliga Language

/caruma:/	'skin'
/uguru/	'nail (Finger/ Toe)'
/seṇḍo:tti/	'wrinkle (skin)'
/macca:/	'mole (skin)'

### Foot Notes

1. Out of the 4 different approaches of world view (viz., (i) Universal Categories, (ii) Intuitive Approach, (iii) Symbolic Analysis, and (iv) Ethnoscience /Folk Taxonomy/ New Ethnography, the study of body-parts terminologies comes under the purview of 'Ethnoscience' / 'Folk Taxonomy' / New Ethnography'.
2. It is believed that the ethnonym 'Iruliga' gets derived from the lexeme /er|a ka:ṅgu/, 'an indigenous tuber of Irula tribe' that forms their staple food; and it will not be out of context to mention that several Anthropologists are of the contention that 'Iruligaru', 'Bujari', 'Villi', 'Irular', 'Chenchu', 'Yenadhi' are other call names of Iruliga tribal people.
3. The 'Paronymy' (a sub-field of lexical semantics) deals with the 'Part-Whole Relations' that exist between the 'parts' and their related 'whole' in immediate hierarchical structure(s). Such studies of paronymy will certainly help to unravel the world view of indigenous people as far their ethnoscience/ folk taxonomic/new ethnographic cognitive perspective is concerned.
4. About 60 lexical items of Iruliga, pertaining to the body-parts were elicited by present investigators from Mrs.Sivalingamma (Aged 60+ years), W/o Mr.Nanjayya (Aged 65 years) of Iruligaru Dhoddi, Makali (Post), Chennapatna Taluk of Karnataka, during the accomplished task of Pilot Survey.
5. In a few exceptional cases such as /boguru/ 'abdomen' / 'stomach', both the external body-parts and the internal organs are designated by employing a single lexeme in Iruliga.

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### Colophon:

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