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Podcasts in Kanauji: Assisting language teaching and revitalization

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Podcasts are a unique media that have been used in Indigenous and endangered language communities in the form of Indigenous radio podcasts, instructional websites, or tools to aid classroom instruction. A podcast called *Rituals of Kanauji* speakers was created in Kanauji, a low-resource Indian language variety. Using this case study in Kanauji, I aim to examine the usage of podcasts for outside classroom instruction in low-resource and lesser-studied languages. Thus, this study highlights the uniqueness of podcasting for language revitalization, as podcasts can be created and consumed anytime and anywhere. For low-resource languages, there can be three kinds: podcasts for teaching language, those for cultural expression and general awareness, and those for entertainment purposes. The paper also describes their pros and cons as well as directions for creating a podcast, to help native speakers and linguists in their future documentary projects. Remote data collection of audio recordings was done via WhatsApp for making this podcast. The performance statistics from *Kanauji's* podcast demonstrate that it has helped promote the language and brought pride and prestige to native speakers. Finally, I conclude that podcasts break the norm and help in language reclamation.

1. Introduction

Kanauji is a low-resource variety of Western Hindi presently spoken in Kanpur, Farrukhabad, Etawah, Hardoi, Shahjahanpur, Pilibhit, Mainpuri, and Auraiya districts of Uttar Pradesh by about 9.5 million people (Eberhard et al. 2022). Dwivedi & Kar (2016: 110) make some observations regarding the negative attitudes of native speakers of Kanauji of Kanpur toward their mother tongue. They claim that people are unaware of speaking a variety called ‘Kanauji’ and consider their language to be a different type of Hindi. No schools teach Kanauji, and there are no books, dictionaries, newspapers, or audiovisual materials available in the language. The older generation knows some folk songs of Kanauji, but they do not promote its use as much as Hindi or English among children (Dwivedi & Kar 2016: 110). Youth even feel ashamed to use this language in public. It remains sparsely documented and understudied. Providing a series of audio or video language podcasts developed by a linguist or community member can be a huge step forward in promoting and empowering the language.

§2 gives a literature review of the larger pool of media and technology that have been used for supporting minority and Indigenous languages. §3 discusses how podcasts have been used for language development in some Indigenous and low-resource language communities. §4 elaborates on the usage of podcasts in pedagogy and its advantages and disadvantages. §5 provides directions for creating a podcast for a minority or low-resource language. §6 describes the process of podcast creation in the case of Kanauji. The conclusion follows in §7.

2. New media for language learning and revitalization

The use of media and technology in minority language development and revitalization has been a trend for the last few decades. As a demonstration of this, Cassels (2019) gives examples of Indigenous language use in “new media.” *New media* refer to interactive computer-native media in which users are active content producers (Logan 2010). New-media platforms, such as Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, create new domains for language use. Cru (2018: 7) points out that the representation of languages in new media exhibits a ‘participatory nature’ as it becomes a common site of interaction between content producers and consumers online. Moreover, Galla (2009) says that online resources are easy to use, convenient, and cost-effective, making web technologies the new frontier of language learning and language revitalization.

YouTube is one such platform that has contributed to the presence of Indigenous languages online. For instance, music videos of Indigenous languages are posted on YouTube. Cru (2018) analyzes two Indigenous-language rap music videos – one in Yucatec Maya, an Indigenous Mexican language, and one in Mapudungun, an Indigenous language spoken in Chile – and claims that “sociolinguistic features make rap a particularly productive genre for language revitalization” (3). This study highlights the important role YouTube plays in providing an online space for Indigenous language communities and reversing negative language attitudes.

Another popular platform is [IndigenousTweets.com](https://indigenoustweets.com).¹ It scans Twitter for tweets in Indigenous and minority languages and posts statistics about each language’s presence and use (Keegan et al. 2015). This website helps to track the change in number of Indigenous language users online. The Twitter account going by “Indigenous Word of the Day”² features words that appear for several Indigenous languages and that are related to political, cultural, and everyday issues (Cassels 2019: 27–28).

Mylonas (2017: 277) argues that social media pages function as digital, peer-produced archives that preserve language use in written or audiovisual form. Archives comprise a language’s analog or digital materials, which are essential to the long-term preservation and revitalization of the language. However, tangible documentary materials, such as notebooks, CDs, and audiocassettes, tend to be less delicate and long-lasting than digital materials.

Several Indigenous language communities have started adopting technology-based language learning to support language revitalization (Besacier et al. 2013; Hermes & King 2013). Wagner (2017: 149) examines several Algonquian websites: facilitative, collaborative, and instructional websites as language-learning resources. Her study found that these

¹ This website was founded by Kevin Scannell in March 2011 at St. Louis University, United States. (Accessed 2023-09-19.)

² (<https://twitter.com/indigenouseword1>) (Accessed 2023-09-19.)

websites expand and recontextualize language use and raise its status.

Cotter (2001: 304) describes how radio channels like *Raidió na Gaeltachta* and *Raidió na Life* have been broadcast in Ireland for the past thirty years to preserve and promote the Irish language. *Raidió na Life* gives Irish speakers a place to use their native language (as presenters) even when the background music is in English (Cotter 2001: 307). As another example of radio media, many Indigenous communities in Brazil use analog and digital radio for broadcasting stories, songs, and conversations in their languages. However, various factors impede the development of Indigenous radio in Brazil. One of the challenges is getting a radio license for under-resourced communities. In light of these barriers, the presence of Indigenous radio in Brazil is an admirable achievement. Using a language on modern technologies such as radio media, social media, and new media, enhances the status of any language, as it proves that it can be adjusted to modern life. Moreover, it attracts younger speakers to the language, aiding in its revitalization and long-term maintenance.

Given that podcasts are exciting new media that have become increasingly popular compared to the less-popular radio in India, teaching language via podcasts might have promising advantages. Admittedly, radio has several benefits besides the ones mentioned earlier. Danos & Turin (2021) explain that one can listen to the radio anywhere and anytime, and it allows multitasking. *Podcasting*, which refers to the creation and distribution of podcasts over the Internet for playback on mobile phones or computers, also provides these same benefits, but at a lower cost, as they can be created by community linguists or by collaborating with a linguist. In contrast, radio programs are produced and broadcast only after obtaining a radio license from the government and entail a higher financial burden, making podcasts in comparison less cumbersome and cost-effective.

3. Usage of podcasts in Indigenous and low-resource language communities

Podcasts are relatively new media and have been used by only a few Indigenous and endangered language communities. Today, users can access the radio, podcasts, and other media on their cell phones via streaming, podcasting, and other download services. Some Brazilian Indigenous radio stations have created podcasts and uploaded them on podcasting apps such as Spotify and SoundCloud for further reach (Ferreira & Turin 2021).

One successful Brazilian radio program is *Rede Wayuri*, which streams an Indigenous-focused audio podcast via Spotify and SoundCloud.³ Its episodes are on average 15–35 minutes long. Its content focuses on cultural themes, news, and other issues pertaining to and of interest to Indigenous communities. This podcast is primarily aired in Portuguese, Brazil's dominant language. However, it is also converted into multiple Indigenous languages and shared with even the most remote and isolated Indigenous communities. It has its own webpage and has been made public to Indigenous communities through WhatsApp, flash drives, and sound cars⁴ (Ferreira & Turin 2021: 14).

Another noteworthy Indigenous podcast in Brazil is *Copiô Parente*. This podcast is streamed in Portuguese and can be easily accessed on YouTube and the podcasting apps SoundCloud and Spotify. This podcast airs weekly and discusses politics, news, and governmental issues that affect the Indigenous communities of Brazil. Publicity for the podcast is spread through the social media platforms YouTube and WhatsApp, and podcast episodes are shared with several Indigenous communities via WhatsApp. The viewership of this podcast numbers into the hundreds on YouTube (Ferreira & Turin 2021: 15).

Te Huia (2019) explores the use of podcasts for second-language learning among the speakers of te reo Māori. The study is an example of using podcast technology to assist language learning in the classroom. Podcasts in Māori were developed, and their impact on beginner- and intermediate-level language learners was assessed over twenty-four weeks. The study's results indicate that everyday speech in the podcast was indirectly linked to improved language use among learners.

Additionally, the use of podcasts for language instruction has been done on an instructional website for Western Abena-

³ On Soundcloud, it is known as *Podcast Wayuri*, and on Spotify as *Audio Wayuri*.

⁴ Sound cars are vehicles that drive around neighborhoods while loudly blaring content on their custom loudspeakers.

ki.⁵ The website hosts a podcast whose episodes are in Western Abenaki. A transcript and translation supplement each episode. Besides language instruction material, each episode also features traditional music, phone calls, stories, and several entertaining video clips. These video clips serve the purposes of both instruction and entertainment (Wagner 2017: 147).

4. Podcasts for teaching low-resource languages

Developments in podcasting can benefit language learning immensely (Kukulka-Hulme 2006). Podcasting has many similarities with mobile learning in that it “can be spontaneous, personal, informal, contextual, portable, ubiquitous (available every day) and pervasive (so integrated with daily activities that it is hardly noticed)” (Kukulka-Hulme 2005: 2).

Podcasts have been used to aid classroom instruction in places like Osaka Jogakuin College in Japan and Duke University in North Carolina (McCarty 2005). Spanish students at Duke University were provided with iPods that included custom-made language-learning materials such as audio recordings of texts, pronunciation samples, audio exercises, and oral feedback (Rosell-Aguilar 2007). Podcasts are an informal digital source for learning with authentic language materials. According to Rosell-Aguilar (2007), podcasts offer free access to information about a language’s history, culture, and politics, along with its vocabulary and grammatical structures. These materials act as sources of information about language usage and assist potential learners in learning the language (Ryan 1997). Therefore, a podcast in a low-resource language can be especially useful for promoting and popularizing the language even outside the native-language speech community. Given these benefits, it is crucial to broadcast these podcasts on various public platforms for a wider reach. Figure 1 shows Rosell-Aguilar’s (2007) taxonomy of uses for podcasting in language learning.

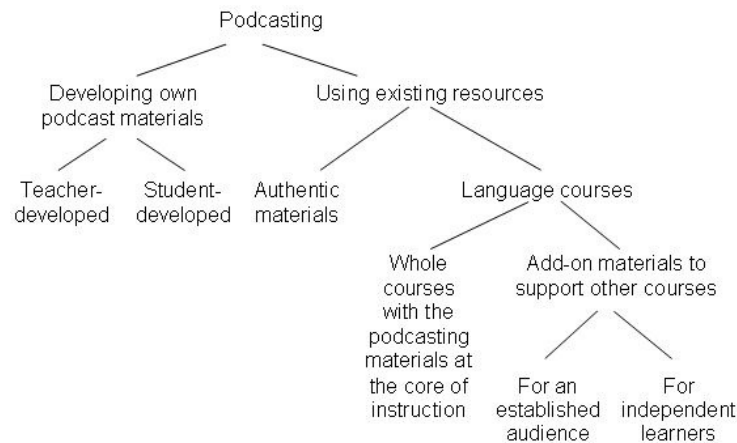


Figure 1. Taxonomy of uses of podcasting for language learning (Rosell-Aguilar 2007: 476, Fig. 2)

4.1 Podcasts for low-resource languages

The effectiveness of podcasts as a teaching medium for low-resource and Indigenous communities has not been fully explored to date. One exception is the te reo Māori podcasts (Te Huia 2019), a second language acquisition (SLA) pilot study, but it does not exhaustively explore the use of podcasts for language learning within the classroom. There have not been many studies that have looked at using podcasts outside the classroom for teaching low-resource languages to adults except the article by Wagner (2017) on Western Abenaki. However, examples of such podcasts do exist beyond academic

⁵ (<http://westernabenaki.com/radio.php>) (Accessed 2023-09-19.)

literature, such as *Radyo an Gernewegva* for Cornish⁶ and *Culturev* for Cherokee⁷ representing minoritized/endangered languages. These podcasts fall in the categories of entertainment podcasts, as they allow music, and general-awareness podcasts, which discuss the culture, news, and issues surrounding a particular language community.

In light of these examples, I propose that creating podcasts for low-resource communities can be of three major types: a) podcasts for teaching language, b) podcasts for cultural expression and general awareness, and c) podcasts for entertainment.

4.1.1 Podcasts for teaching language

Podcasts for teaching language involve language courses or content to aid in learning the language's grammar. They are a mobile technology that can act as virtual classrooms (Felix 2003). The course materials should be designed to aid classroom instruction for children in low-resource communities. These can include grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation exercises, oral feedback, and so forth. Such podcasts should have language episodes that build on the previous lessons; hence, they should be listened to progressively. An instance of such a podcast is the te reo Māori podcasts used by second-language learners in the classroom (Te Huia 2019).

These types of podcasts can be designed for not only school-aged children and college-attending youth but also independent learners who wish to learn a low-resource language but are not enrolled in any courses (Rosell-Aguilar 2007). Moore & Hennessy (2006) also point this out, stating that podcasts can bridge the gap between older and younger learners.

4.1.2 Podcasts for cultural expression and general awareness

These kinds of podcasts spread awareness about general issues. They disseminate information on health, sanitation, education, climate, news, cultural themes, and so on – in other words, information that pertains to the endangered or Indigenous language communities. Often, they use authentic content by the native speakers of the target language, who may share oral literature like poetry, folklore, and songs. An example is the previously mentioned Indigenous Brazilian podcasts whose hosts discuss the news, politics, cultural themes, and other issues concerning the Indigenous communities of Brazil (Ferreira & Turin 2021). Podcasts can also be created to talk about language endangerment issues in general. An example of such a podcast is *Endangered Languages in India*,⁸ which features discussions about language documentation, endangerment, and revitalization issues.

4.1.3 Podcasts for entertainment

The initial uses of podcasting technology were limited to language teaching and general knowledge. Nowadays, there has been a rise in fiction and nonfiction podcasts that incorporate the art of storytelling as an audio drama. Serialized stories and continuous narratives from different moods, genres, and styles may be used in fiction podcasts. The primary objective of such podcasts is entertainment. Similar fiction podcasts can be created in low-resource languages, such as Kanauji, which can provide entertainment for native speakers as well as foster learning and interest in the language.

⁶ (<https://anradyo.com>) (Accessed 2023-02-03.)

⁷ (<https://www.cherokee.org/cherokee-voices-cherokee-sounds>).(Accessed 2023-02-03.)

⁸ (<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/endangered-languages-in-india/id1515963541>) (Accessed 2022-06-22.)

4.2 Advantages and pitfalls of podcast teaching

There are numerous advantages to using podcasts for teaching low-resource languages. Many low-resource language communities have no language-learning resources at all. Podcasts can appeal to younger native speakers and encourage them to learn their language. They also enable self-paced learning and multitasking, which are absent in traditional learning. Moreover, podcasts are classified as low-cost media, as the cost of producing podcasts is much lower than doing so for traditional media like books. Ferreira & Turin (2021: 8) point out that Brazilians use smartphones, smart televisions, tablets, and computers (desktops and laptops) more than radio hardware, which can be considered old and obsolete. Low-resource communities do not have sufficient resources for creating radio broadcasts as it is a much more cumbersome task than creating podcasts for language teaching. As previously mentioned, podcasts are portable, easy to use, and easy to access (Clark & Walsh 2006), which further reinforces Galla's (2009) point that given these advantages, online language-learning resources are the new frontiers of language revitalization.

Another advantage of audio podcasts is that they employ the hearing channel instead of a reading mode. Since spoken language requires no orthography, an endangered language community that lacks an orthography might benefit significantly from them. Secondly, hearing is instinctual for non-deaf speakers of spoken languages as opposed to reading, which must be taught. The audio channel of podcasting might be a useful resource for people with illiteracy or reading disabilities such as dyslexia and dysgraphia (Clark & Walsh 2006). However, podcasts can be a less-accessible option for deaf people, people with auditory disorders, and those who prefer reading to listening. And unfortunately, transcripts do not offer equivalent access as they flatten the interactional dynamics of a hearing medium (Figueroa 2022: 2–3).

That being said, people from outside the target language community can also access podcasts. They can be made available to working people who cannot fit language classes into their schedules. Podcasts can be listened to anytime and anywhere as they are not broadcast at a particular timeslot like the radio. This makes them an even better option for language learning as people can learn the language of their choice and on their own time. Further adding to the convenience and accessibility of podcasts, they can be downloaded on podcasting platforms so that listeners can later listen to episodes, even without Internet access. Thus, learning a language via podcasts affords self-paced learning unlike via the radio.

According to Figueroa (2022: 2), knowledge dissemination over new media breaks down financial and psychological barriers. Many journals do not allow open access to peer-reviewed articles; thus, one has to bear an added financial burden to buy these articles. Furthermore, peer-reviewed articles might be restricted to a particular scientific audience. On the other hand, podcast episodes and RSS feeds are freely available, eliminating the financial paywall. In addition, podcasts are relatively cheap to start, requiring at minimum the cost of some audiovisual equipment. Psychological barriers are also easily overcome by podcast media, as an audio medium can capture phonetic nuances such as tone, register, and emotions, unlike a written medium such as scientific articles.

Additional barriers include the overrepresentation of White people in academia and the often esoteric academic language used in publications (Figueroa 2022: 2–3). This discourages participation and limits the scope of non-White ways of knowing (Kimmerer 2013). Podcasts can be created and consumed by nonacademic people and community linguists, thus allowing much greater participation. As demonstrated, new media are a valuable tool for expanding the domains of a language from traditional activities to modern life and for enhancing the status of that language (Cotter 2001: 307).

It should be mentioned there are certain disadvantages to using podcasts for teaching a low-resource language. For one, it might be a barrier for an audience that is technologically challenged (Menziez 2005). This may apply to older adult learners or audiences of low-resource communities who might face more technical challenges in podcast use.

5. Directions for creating a podcast for low-resource languages

This section outlines the method and process of creating a podcast in a low-resource language based on my experience creating the Kanauji podcast. A podcast can be created by an individual native speaker, a group of native speakers, a linguist, or anyone who is familiar with the language and can navigate through the technical knowledge of working with podcast media. Nowadays, there are podcasting mobile applications, such as Alitu, Podbean, Speaker Studio, and Anchor, which can help one create their podcast. Using these applications could save the creator from buying expensive audiovi-

sual recording fieldwork equipment.

Podcast creation is a complex process that requires planning and execution involving multiple steps.⁹ The following steps should be followed for creating a podcast for a low-resource language:

Step 1: Planning the podcast

The preliminary step for creating a podcast is to plan. This step involves considerations regarding the type and audience of the podcast. One should also decide on the podcast's theme as well as episode length and frequency. In the case of a podcast for a low-resource language, the audience will likely be the community members of that language and anybody else interested in learning the language. The type of podcast can be educational, to aid in teaching this language in a classroom setting or enrich the education of adult speakers. Such podcasts might involve grammar and vocabulary lessons, tests, and exercises, like the *te reo Māori* podcasts (Te Huia 2019). Another type of podcast that can be used is the general-awareness podcast, to spread knowledge about the news, general topics, and sociopolitical issues relevant to these communities, similar to the Brazilian radio podcasts mentioned earlier (Ferreira & Turin 2021). Finally, one may consider creating a podcast for entertainment, to include stories, folk songs, drama, and poetry in the low-resource language, like the Western Abenaki podcast (Wagner 2017). The topic, duration, and frequency of episodes will depend on the type and audience of the podcast. It also depends on the decision of the individual or group involved in creating the podcast.

Step 2: Collecting recordings

A podcast is a multimodal medium with audio and/or video episodes. Therefore, an essential requirement for creating a podcast for a low-resource language is to gather audio recordings of that language. With the permission of the informants, audio recordings can be made via simple mobile recording applications such as Voice Recorder and Smart Recorder. The fieldwork can be done either in person or remotely. Traditional fieldwork will involve the researcher meeting the informant face-to-face and recording language data. Remote fieldwork, on the other hand, would involve platforms like Zoom, YouTube, or WhatsApp (Williams et al. 2021).

When the linguist doesn't know the language, one useful method to collect narratives involving particular linguistic features or cultural knowledge is to ask consultants to record stories, folk songs, narratives, and poems. Another approach can be to give the speakers conversational questionnaires, or scripted narratives (written or verbal) in their second language (François 2019: 156), which can aid them in making a similar recording in their native language. The consultants may consider using these conversational scripts as templates for designing a dialogue or narrative in their native language. They can also translate these and use them for making recordings in their language. Note that if community linguists or native-speaker linguists are involved in data collection, there is no need for conversational scripts.

Step 3: Editing, uploading, and publishing the recordings

Before uploading them to the chosen podcast platform, it is imperative to edit the recordings to filter out any unwanted noise segments or voice distractions and to improve their audio quality in general. Various editing software, like Audacity and Alitu,¹⁰ is available online for this purpose. However, one can even depend on the editing features of the respective podcasting application. The collected recordings should then be uploaded to the chosen podcasting application as a series of episodes. Each episode should have a title and a short description that fit into the podcast's theme. If the recordings are in a low-resource or minority language, it will be beneficial to supplement them with translations in another recording. The translation language can be either English, to appeal to a global audience, or another contact language

⁹ The following blog article explains how to start a podcast: <http://www.buzzsprout.com/how-to-make-a-podcast> (accessed 2020-12-18).

¹⁰ *The Podcast Host* has published the "best podcast editing software for podcasters of all levels": <https://www.thepodcasthost.com/editing-production/best-podcast-editing-software/> (accessed 2023-02-02).

that will aid the audience in understanding the content of the recording. Once all the recordings have been uploaded, they should be published. Publishing means the recordings are now freely accessible online.

Step 4: Designing the podcast trailer and cover

It is crucial to create a podcast trailer, a small recording describing the podcast's theme. It will aid potential listeners to know what the podcast is about so they can decide whether they want to invest their time in listening to the podcast. A podcast cover picture can be any copyright-free or public-domain picture downloaded from the Web or created using Photoshop or GIMP. A language-related podcast can consider the following types of pictures as their cover art: a classroom, books, students, scripts, cultural themes, and so forth. The choice of cover art is solely up to the creator. Good cover art can make the podcast much more attractive to substantially increase its audience.

A newly created podcast can be publicized by creating its own webpage and by sharing it on social media platforms like YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter. This can be done by posting the episode as a Facebook post or creating a tweet that features the URL of the original location of the podcast. One can also convert the audio into a YouTube video for increased publicity.

6. Developing a podcast in Kanauji: *Rituals of Kanauji speakers*

Kanauji is a variety of Western Hindi with its own identity and culture. Native speakers of Kanauji celebrate festivals that are particular to their community as well as those celebrated by other communities in Uttar Pradesh. Such festivals include Devutthana Ekadashi, Govardhan Pooja, Nag Panchami (Gudiya), and Chhath Pooja. Each of these festivals has a religious Hindu significance and is celebrated in a very ritualistic manner.

Devutthana Ekadashi is a religious Hindu festival that marks the eleventh lunar day in the Hindu month of Kartika. The term *Devutthana* literally means 'to wake up the lord'. It is believed that the Hindu god Lord Vishnu wakes up on this day after four months of sleep. Therefore, devotees feast and offer prayers to Lord Vishnu on this day.¹¹ It is also a tradition to perform a marriage ritual between Lord Shaligram (or Hindu Lord Shiva) and tulsī (a holy plant in the Hindu religion) on this day.¹²

Govardhan Pooja, also known as *Annakut*, is a Hindu festival in which devotees worship Lord Govardhan (Lord Krishna) by offering prayers and a large amount of vegetarian food as a symbol of gratitude.¹³ This festival is celebrated four days after Diwali (a Hindu festival) in the states of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar. According to Hindu mythology, Lord Krishna lifted Govardhan Hill on this day. Hence, in this festival, hillocks are made out of cow dung and then decorated with flowers.¹⁴

Nag Panchami, also known as Gudiya, is celebrated on the fifth day of the lunar month of Shravana, according to the Hindu calendar. On this day, snakes such as cobras and *nagas* are worshipped by offering them sweets, milk, flowers, and so forth.¹⁵ Chhath Pooja is celebrated on the sixth day of the month of Kartika, as per the Hindu calendar.¹⁶ On this day, prayers are offered to Lord Sun and festival-goers take dips in the holy water of Ganga. It is celebrated in the Indian states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and some parts of Nepal.

¹¹ (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prabodhini_Ekadashi) (Accessed 2023-01-20.)

¹² Devutthana Ekadashi: An auspicious day in the Hindu culture (<https://www.mypandit.com/festivals/ekadashi/devutthana-ekadashi/>) (accessed 2023-02-03)

¹³ (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Govardhan_Puja) (Accessed 2023-01-02.)

¹⁴ Govardhan pooja (<https://festivals.iloveindia.com/diwali/govardhan-puja.html>) (accessed 2023-02-03)

¹⁵ (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naga_Panchami) (Accessed 2023-01-05.)

¹⁶ (<http://www.chhath.org/>) (Accessed 2023-01-15.)

Rituals of Kanauji speakers explores these festivals through conversations between two Kanauji native speakers. This podcast focuses on cultural themes: festivals celebrated by the Kanauji speakers of Uttar Pradesh. It is not focused on teaching the language, but regardless, this is a step toward revitalizing the language by making the language visible to a global audience.

6.1 Preparing the podcasts

The entire method of creating this podcast is based on remote fieldwork via mobile contact with informants. During the 2019 pandemic, remote language documentation fieldwork was done via online platforms such as WhatsApp, Google Drive, and Zoom (Williams et al. 2021). Remote data collection typically uses new media and technology to gather, transfer, and collect data unlike traditional data collection. However, not enough attempts have been made to use remote fieldwork methods for making podcasts, making this Kanauji podcast a step in that direction.

The format of a conversational questionnaire was used, in which the native speakers read the conversations in a contact language (Hindi in this case) and then render the translation in Kanauji, their native language (François 2019: 156). Conversational scripts were prepared in Hindi and sent to the informants via WhatsApp. Including the language community in developing these resources spreads awareness about the podcast and makes language learning a communal experience (Wagner 2017: 148).

Providing native speakers with a realistic written context in their second language gave them ideas for constructing a dialogue on that topic in their native language. It was difficult to ask native speakers to have impromptu conversations on any particular topic. The informants, native Kanauji speakers, were then requested to translate these scripts into Kanauji and record them on their mobile phones, using a mobile recording app. Afterward, they were to send these audio recordings back to the researcher via WhatsApp. The low network requirement and easy accessibility of WhatsApp for Kanauji speakers made it an essential tool for transferring data over mobile devices. Recordings were short, at an average duration of 1–3 minutes each.

Later, the researcher uploaded these recordings on the podcasting application Anchor to create the podcast. Each audio recording was uploaded as different episodes of the podcast. Each episode was supplemented with a translated English version recorded by the researcher and her friend. Therefore, the primary language of the podcast is Kanauji; however, English translations are given so that it caters to a global audience who may not understand Kanauji. A short podcast trailer introduces Kanauji and describes the podcast's contents, giving an overview of the podcast. The podcast trailer is supported by catchy background music to make it more attractive. There are four episodes in total:

Episode 1: "Nag panchami and Guriya"

Episode 2: "Chatth pooja"

Episode 3: "Devutthana Ekadashi"

Episode 4: "Govardhan pooja"

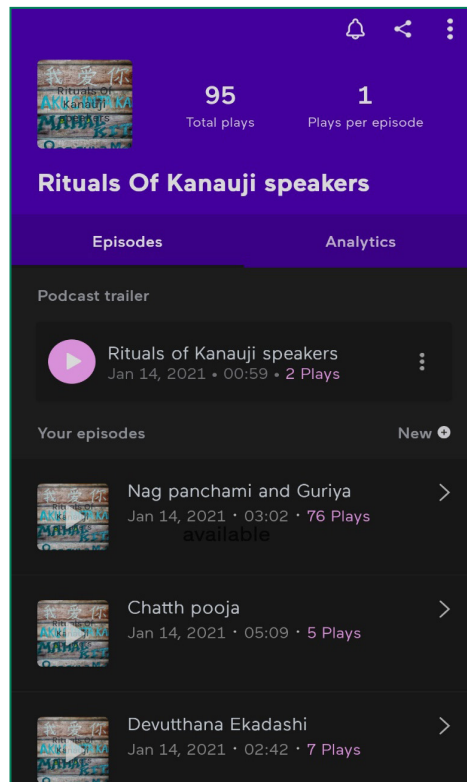


Figure 2. *Rituals of Kanauji speakers* podcast (screenshot of Anchor app on August 31, 2022)

6.2 Results of the podcast

The analytics section of the Anchor application gives a clear picture of the usage and performance of the podcast. *Rituals of Kanauji speakers* was created on January 7, 2021, and had ninety-five plays by August 31, 2022. The first episode, “Nag panchami and Guriya,” is the most popular with seventy-six plays, followed by “Devutthana Ekadashi” (sixty-seven plays), “Chatth pooja” (five plays), and “Govardhan pooja” (four plays). The trailer of the podcast has been played only two times. About 57% of the listeners are male, and 43% are female. Listeners of the podcast come from Germany, the United States, India, the United Kingdom, Spain, and Australia. This demonstrates that the podcast has gotten attention in India and different parts of the world. The geographic distribution of the audience is shown in Table 1:

Table 1. Geographic distribution of audience

Country	Percentages
Germany	44
United States	37
India	15
United Kingdom	2
Spain	1

This podcast has been most popular among those in their early twenties (age: 18–22 years) and least popular among those in their late twenties to early thirties (age: 28–34 years). It has also been listened to by some older adults (age: 45–59 years). The audience demographics (by age group) are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Audience distribution based on age

Age	Percentages
0–17	0
18–22	57
23–27	0
28–34	14
35–44	0
45–59	29
60+	0

This podcast has been accessed on web browsers more than any other podcasting application. The distribution of plays on podcast-hosting platforms and applications is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Distribution of plays on podcast-hosting platforms

Podcast-hosting platforms	Percentages
Web browser	60
Overcast	10
Spotify	7
Anchor	6
Apple podcasts	2
Google podcasts	2
Other	13

Two excerpts from the transcripts used in podcast episodes 3 and 4 are provided to demonstrate the dialogue between the speakers. Episode 3 is a conversation between two native Kanauji speakers, Ankit and Akansha, who are discussing the Devutthana Ekadashi ritual. In episode 4, two Kanauji speakers, Rohan and Rahul, discuss the ritual associated with Govardhan Pooja.

Episode 3, “Devutthana Ekadashi”¹⁷

Ankit: *akanfa i devutthana ekadashi-ke din ka hot*
 Akansha this Devutthana Ekadashi-GEN day what happen.HAB.3MSG
he?
 be.PRS.3SG
 ‘What do you know about the festival of Devutthana Ekadashi?’

Akansha: *ankit evo tjo har laksmi mata-ke jat ma*
 Ankit this festival Lakshmi mother-GEN memory in
manava jat he aur shaligram-ki
 celebrate.PFV.3MSG go.HAB.3MSG be.PRS.3SG and Shaligram-GEN.FSG
shadi karai jat he.
 marriage do.CAUS.FSG go.HAB.3MSG be.PRS.3SG
 ‘This festival is celebrated in the worship of Goddess Lakshmi as per Hindu mythology. During this, the tulasi plant is wed to the Shaligram, which is a form of God Shiva.’

Ankit: *i puja kaise ki jat he?*
 this prayer how do.PFV.3FSG go.HAB.3FSG be.PRS.3SG
 ‘How is the worshipping done?’

Akansha: *i puja ma ghar saf kin jat he.*
 this prayer in home clean do.PFV.3SG go.HAB.3MSG be.PRS.3SG
akhe bad vishnu bhagvan-ke pav agan ma banaje
 3SG.POSS.GEN after Vishnu god-GEN legs balcony in make.PFV.PL
jat he.
 go.HAB.3PL be.PRS.PL
 ‘During this pooja, the home is cleaned; after that, the feet of Lord Vishnu are drawn in the courtyard.’

¹⁷ The Leipzig glossing abbreviations are used in these scripts. Other abbreviations I use are as follows: CPM = conjunctive particle marker, EMP = emphatic, HAB = habitual, and HON = honorific.

Ankit: əkhe baḍ əvɾ ka hoṭ hɛ?
 3SG.POSS.GEN after and what happen.HAB.3MSG be.PRS.3SG
 ‘What else is done at this festival?’

Akansha: phəl, miṭhai, gənnə aḍi čəḍhava jaṭ hɛ
 fruit sweet sugarcane etc. offer.PFV.3MSG go.HAB.3MSG be.PRS.3SG
 əvɾ ḍija jəlava jaṭ hɛ
 and lamp burn.PFV.3MSG go.HAB.3MSG be.PRS.3SG
 ‘Fruits, sweets, sugarcane, etc. are offered to Goddess Lakshmi in the form of *prasad*. A small *diya* is also lit near the *tulsi* plant during this time.’

Ankit: kəb je puja kin jaṭi hɛ?
 when this prayer do.PFV.3SG go.HAB.3MSG be.PRS.3SG
 ‘At what time is this pooja worship done?’

Akansha: vrəṭ mā ghər-ke log bhəgvan-ki puja kərṭe
 fast in home-GEN people god-GEN.FSG prayer do.PFV.PL
 hɛ əkhe baḍ səbere sənkh bəjakər
 be.PRS.PL 3SG.POSS.GEN after morning conch shell play.CPM
 jəgao jaṭ hɛ.
 wakeup.PFV.3MSG go.HAB.3MSG be.PRS.3SG
 ‘At night, all the members of the household worship the Goddess Lakshmi. *Aarti* and *prasad* are also offered to the gods. In the morning, a conch shell is blown to wake up the gods.’

Ankit: jo bəhoṭ məjeḍar tjoħar hɛ əvɾ ka hoṭ
 this very funny festival be.PRS.3SG and what happen.HAB.3MSG
 hɛ i tjoħar mā?
 be.PRS.3SG this festival in
 ‘This looks like a very interesting festival. What else happens at this festival?’

Akansha: *əɪs mana jaʈ hɛ ki vɪʃnʊ-ka ʃənəm*
 like_this believe go.HAB.3MSG be.PRS.3SG that Vishnu-GEN.MSG birth

ʈʊlsɪ mā avəʈ hɛ
 Tulsi in come.HAB.MSG be.PRS.3SG

‘It is considered that Lord Vishnu’s incarnation enters the tulsi plant; hence, this plant is worshipped and is considered sacred. Along with that, the marriage of tulsi is done with the Shaligram, which is a form of Lord Shiva.’

Episode 4, “Govardhan pooja”

Rohan: *Rahol govərdhən puja-ke bare mā sone ho?*
 Rahul Govardhan prayer-GEN about in hear.PFV.3MSG be.PRS.3SG

ka ʈʊmhɾe gāo ja ghər mā govərdhən puja kəɪɪ
 what your village or home in Govardhan prayer do.PFV.3FSG

jaʈɪ hɛ?
 go.HAB.3FSG be.PRS.3SG

‘Have you heard about Govardhan Pooja? Is Govardhan Pooja celebrated in your village?’

Rahul: *hā Rohən, həmre ghər mā govərdhən puja ɖɪvali-ke*
 yes Rohan 1SG.POSS home in Govardhan prayer Diwali-GEN

baɖ mā mənɪɪ jaʈɪ hɛ.
 after in celebrate.HAB.FSG go.HAB.3FSG be.PRS.3SG

‘Yes, in my home there is a ritual of celebrating Govardhan Pooja the next day after Diwali.’

Rohan: *govərdhən puja mā kɛkhɪn puja kin*
 Govardhan prayer in who.OBL.GEN.FSG prayer do.PFV.3SG

jaʈɪ hɛ?
 go.HAB.3FSG be.PRS.3SG

‘Who is worshipped in Govardhan Pooja?’

Rahul: *i t̪ohar mā gəv maṭa-ki puja hoṭi*
 this festival in cow mother-GEN.FSG prayer happen.HAB.3FSG

hɛ gəv maṭa-ka ləkʃmi-ka avṭar
 be.PRS.3SG cow mother-GEN.MSG Lakshmi-GEN.MSG incarnation

manəṭ hɛ.
 believe.HAB.PL be.PRS.PL

‘In this festival, the cow is worshipped. The cow is considered an incarnation of the mother or Goddess Lakshmi as per Hindu mythology.’

Rohan: *jəh puja kəise kin jaṭi hɛ?*
 this prayer how do.PFV.3SG go.HAB.3FSG be.PRS.3SG
 ‘How is this pooja done?’

Rahul: *geva-ke gobər-se govərdhən bhəgvan bənaje*
 cow-GEN cowdung-ABL Govardhan god make.HON.3SG

jaṭ hɛ fir onki puja
 go.HAB.3MSG be.PRS.PL then 3PL.DIST.GEN.FSG prayer

hoṭi hɛ
 happen.HAB.3FSG be.PRS.3SG

‘Govardhan God is made from cow dung. Then, the same cow dung is used to make their disciples. Then, flowers and leaves are put on them, and they are worshipped.’

Rohan: *ka d̪əhi-d̪ud̪h čəḍhao jaṭ hɛ?*
 what curd-milk offer.PST.3MSG go.HAB.3MSG be.PRS.3SG
 ‘Do you give milk curd to the gods as well?’

Rahul: *govərdhən bhəgvan-ki murəṭ pər d̪ud̪h-d̪əhi*
 Govardhan god-GEN.FSG idol on milk-curd

čəḍhava jaṭ hɛ. əikhɛ baḍ bhəgvan
 offer.PST.3MSG go.HAB.3MSG be.PRS.3SG 3SG.DIST.GEN after god

pər fəl əʊr miṭha čəḍhava jaṭ hɛ.
 on fruit and sweet offer.PST.3MSG go.HAB.3MSG be.PRS.3SG

‘Yes, milk is offered to the idol made of cow dung. After that, milk and sweets are offered to the statue of the god of Govardhan.’

Rohan: *jəh puja ka t̪omhəʊ kəɾəṭ ho?*
 this prayer what 2SG.EMP do.PFV.2MSG be.PRS.2MSG

‘Do you also do this pooja?’

Rahul: *na, keʋəl həmre ɣhər m̃ əmma kəɾṭi hɛ̃*
 no only 1SG.POSS home in mother do.HAB.3FSG be.PRS.3SG

‘No, in my home only mom does this pooja.’

Rohan: *ka ɡəʊ-kɪ puja kin jaṭɪ hɛ?*
 what cow-GEN.FSG prayer do.PFV.3SG go.HAB.3FSG be.PRS.3SG

‘Is cow also worshipped in this pooja?’

Rahul: *h̃, ɡəʋa-ka nəhao-ḍhoao jaṭ*
 yes cow-GEN.MSG wash.PFV.3MSG-clean.PFV.3MSG go.HAB.3MSG

hɛ. ɔke baḍ mala pəhɪnakər
 be.PRS.3SG 3SG.POSS.GEN after garland wear.CAUS.3MSG.CPM

əka ɣhi khəʋava jaṭ hɛ.
 3SG.DIST.ACC butter eat.CAUS.3MSG go.HAB.3MSG be.PRS.3SG

‘Yes, this pooja also involves the worship of cows. The cow is bathed in this pooja. After that, it is made to wear a garland, and it is fed with sweets.’

The Kanauji transcripts comprise some unique vocabulary regarding the Hindu religion and religious activities associated with rituals, which might otherwise be difficult to come across in everyday conversation with a Kanauji speaker. First of all, the names of these festivals – *ḍevuṭhəna ekaḍḍi* ‘Devutthana Ekadashi’ and *ɡovəɾḍhən puja* ‘Govardhan Pooja’ – are an important part of the ritual talk in Kanauji. The transcripts also highlight the names of gods such as *ləkṣmi* ‘Goddess Lakshmi’ and *viṣṇu* ‘God Vishnu’, who are important deities in Hindu religion and mythology. It also brings out other jargon related to religious activities among Hindus, such as *bhəɣʋan* ‘God’, *puja* ‘pooja’, *mala* ‘garland’, *sənkʰ* ‘conch shell’, and *vrəṭ* ‘fast’. Physical objects such as *mala* ‘garland’ and *sənkʰ* ‘conch shell’ are commonly used in the religious activities (prayers and rituals) of the Kanauji Hindu community. Furthermore, these transcripts also bring out other sacred objects in Hindu mythology, such as the *tulsi* (a sacred tree representing Goddess Tulsi), *ɡəʋ* ‘cow’ (the cow is considered a sacred animal among Hindus), and *ʃaligrām* ‘sacred stone representing Lord Shiva’. Therefore, we can observe ritual-specific jargon and vocabulary, which might not be easy to capture through natural conversation, being used in these podcasts; hence, conversational scripts enable unique ritual-specific vocabulary to be captured. It also shows how new media can promote the culture and ritualistic traditions of a low-resource language community, aiding in its language revitalization.

7. Conclusion

The Kanauji podcast represents a case study of language teaching via flexible technologies, particularly podcasting apps. Wagner (2017: 149) says that communities should initiate language teaching via mobile apps as they might go beyond online technologies. Language learning during one's free time makes podcast learning quite different from traditional classroom learning. Wagner (2017: 149) points out three features that make online language-learning resources unique: a) access, b) prestige, and c) sovereignty, which are all present in podcasting.

In terms of access, the rise of portable devices, such as phones and tablets, over computers has been observed in many Indigenous communities (Ka'ai et al. 2013). A similar situation exists in India, where radio hardware is almost obsolete these days, and smartphones and computers are in popular use. Smartphones, being cheaper and easy to use, are more accessible to members of low-resource communities such as Kanauji, where people generally belong to lower social classes and are not economically well off. These individuals typically hold jobs as laborers, service workers, vendors, and so forth. Many of them do not have the technological expertise to use laptops. Hence, podcasts available via mobile technology are an effective method for language learning in low-resource communities. Although members of low-resource communities may have accounts on popular social media sites such as YouTube, Facebook, or Twitter, they likely do not encounter their native language there. Also, note that low-resource communities are generally composed of individuals in a lower social class, an audience with less education who might not be proficient in using social media, except the youth and children. Using new media such as podcasts for disseminating information about and through the native language reinforces its prestige. Podcasts can also make an online space for the language community's political and social activism, promote its identity, and establish its sovereignty.

Podcasting might be one of the most advanced language revitalization and maintenance methods available today. Podcasts are also a kind of digital archive that stores language data long-term and makes it available to the public. In the case of *Rituals of Kanauji speakers*, the Kanauji community maintained their data sovereignty by consenting to the podcast audio recordings. Moreover, using modern technologies enables Kanauji speakers to collect their data without needing linguistic expertise or extra financial resources. Thus, native Kanauji speakers have more control over what they share with outsiders. It is, of course, necessary to get the informed consent of the participants before collecting data to make a podcast.

The statistics from the Kanauji podcast reveal that in just seventeen months, the podcast has been played about ninety-five times. It has been accessed via web browsers and other podcasting applications. It has attracted an audience from countries all over the world, demonstrating that the podcast has a global reach and is able to cross geographic and social borders. Spreading awareness of the language is a huge step forward in promoting language revitalization. Both men and women have shown an equal interest in listening to the Kanauji podcast. However, most of the listeners fall in the age range of 18–22 years, which signifies that young adults are especially attracted to the Kanauji podcast. Since intergenerational transmission is being disrupted in the Kanauji language (EGIDS 6b–7),¹⁸ it is imperative that the youth are attracted to learning their heritage language. Connecting this under-resourced language with modern technology may make it appealing to the youth. These outcomes show growing interest in Kanauji, which translates to an increase in the language's prestige and sovereignty. Creating and hosting a language resource in a sophisticated technology, like podcasts, also adds to the pride and prestige of the community in the form of symbolic capital.

Furthermore, podcasts not only aid in spreading knowledge and understanding about the low-resource language but also help to disperse old stereotypes and negative prejudices about such minority communities. According to prevalent ideologies, a lesser-used language and the people indexed by it are considered “inferior,” “backward,” or “unfit” for modernity (McEwan-Fujita 2003). However, the usage of electronic media such as podcasts will enable the practice of a lesser-used language to be recontextualized and refute prevalent ‘ideologies of contempt.’

¹⁸ This refers to the Ethnologue Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale, where a language at level 6b is labeled as “threatened” and at level 7 as “shifting”

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