

ABSTRACT

In the area of language documentation, indigenous and minor languages that have a large number of speakers are often neglected along with their folklore. This thesis sheds light on one such language, Mahasui, and its folklore to underscore the importance of documenting languages that seem to have a healthy number of speakers but have a fragile intergenerational cultural transmission. To this end, this thesis aims to document, transcribe, and analyse the collected folklore to understand and preserve the Mahasui language and culture. The documentation includes a language vitality survey of Mahasui and fieldwork-based audio-video recordings of proverbs, riddles, folktales, and folksongs. Thereafter, the Mahasui folklore is analysed, supported by a decolonial insider's lens of the researcher's own positionality and relationality as a Mahasui speaking community member and theories of realia (Permyakov, 1979; Basgoz, 1993) and context (Amos, 1972, 2020; Oring, 2019; Bronner & Mieder, 2019), shedding light on the language, culture, and identity of the Mahasui speakers. This research has led to the emic study of Mahasui folklore, resulting in a categorisation of the Mahasui folklore and insight into the folklore's contribution to the indigenous knowledge on social dynamics, emotional expressions, culture, tradition, and sustainable outlook and practices.

Keywords: language vitality, Mahasui, language documentation, folklore documentation, endangered languages, indigenous knowledge