

Prof. Udaya Narayana Singh

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A major linguist, translator, lexicographer & creative writer, Udaya Narayana Singh was born in Kolkata in a bilingual family. He grew up speaking and learning in Maithili (from Father and family) and Bangla (from Mother). At present, Singh is the Dean, Faculty of Arts and Chair-Professor, Amity Centre for Linguistic Studies (ACLiS), Amity University Haryana in Gurgaon. Before Joining Amity, Singh occupied a Professorial Chair, Rabindra Bhavana (June 11, 2009 to August 19, 2010 and again June 16, 2012 to Nov 30, 2016) in Visva-Bharati. He was also the first Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Visva-Bharati between Aug 20, 2010 and June 15, 2012, during which time, he had also functioned as the Director (I/C), Rabindra Bhavana (March 2010, June 2011 and again January 2012 until mid-April 2012. Singh was the third regular Director of Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Ministry of HRD at the level of Joint Secretary, Govt of India from Dec 2000 to June 10, 2009.

Singh has an Honors in Linguistics from the Sanskrit College, University of Calcutta 1969-1972, Master's in Linguistics at the University of Delhi 1972-74 (Uggersain Memorial Gold Medal), a semester at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA (with Linguistic Society of America Fellowship) in 1978, and a Ph.D. degree in Linguistics (in Syntax and Semantics) in 1979; University of Delhi.

As a litterateur, Singh is known to be a major poet, playwright, essayist and editor in Maithili and Bangla; Also writes in English and Hindi. Total Number of Books published: 60 with 29 authored, 22 edited, and 9 translated volumes. His translation of Tagore's 'The Original Gitanjali' from Bangla into English, published from Andorra is worth mentioning. In addition, Singh has authored over 200 research papers in Literary Theory, Sociology of Language and Linguistics, and edited about 18 books.

Singh had the distinction of being the Chief Editor of Indian Linguistics, 1988-1990, Editor (with P.P.Giridhar as Co-Editor) of *Translation Today*, and a Visiting Professor at the IAS-Shimla (1989), besides being the Series Editor of eight books under Language and Development (LAD) under Sage India, and the General Editor of Longman-CIIL Series of eleven Bilingual Dictionaries. He has also been a member on the editorial board of these two prestigious journals – *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*, published by the Taylor & Francis. (<http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rmmd20/current>) and *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, Sweden (<http://www.immi.se/intercultural>).

Singh received the Sahitya Akademi Award 2017 for Maithili poetry – for his book 'Jahalak Diary', Sir Ganganath Jha Memorial Award, 2016 for his contribution to Maithili Literature, the Jyotirishwar Sanman 2016 for life-time contribution to Maithili theatre, the 2014-Kalaingar Porkizhi Award by BAPASI, Chennai (Book-Sellers & Publishers' Association of South India) for his book *Munnilai Orumai*, the Suniti Kumar Chatterji National Lectureship for 2016 from the Asiatic Society, Kolkata as well as Mithila Vibhuti Sanman 2007 and the Keertinarayan Mishra Award (Chetana Samiti) for his play 'No entry: Maa Pravisha', 2009.

Singh has supervised as Director or Consultant several major research projects on Language Movement (funded by MSU & Centre for Social Studies), NLP (DoE), Digital Documentation (SASNET & SIDA, Sweden), Machine Translation (MC&IT), and Linguistic Data Consortium in Indian Languages (LDC-IL) - MHRD. Besides the above, he was the Chief of the National Translation Mission (NTM) specially approved by the Prime Minister of India, and also the Chief Consultant of the Microsoft's Validation Project for Vista; Director, NSOU-CIIL Joint Project on Bangla Online, 2002-04 and Director, CIIL-SAG (Ministry of Defence) Spoken Corpora and Contemporary Corpora Projects in Hindi, Bangla and Manipuri, 2005-07. In addition, he had conceived of and executed the Bhasha Mandakini Project under which 560 films were made

on Bangla, Tamil and Kannada language, literature, and culture. At Visva-Bharati, he directed the biggest Humanities & Social Sciences project – CFEL, or the Centre for Endangered Languages Project of the UGC.

For the large projects designed and supervised, also look at:

- The *National Translation Mission* (or, *NTM*) at www.ntm.org.in
- The *National Testing Service* (or, *NTS*), and at www.ciil.miles.net & www.nts.net
- The *Linguistic Data Consortium for Indian Languages* (or, *LDC-IL*) at www.ldcil.org
- Besides the *Centre of Excellence in Classical Tamil* (*CECT* as described in www.ciil-classicaltamil.org), which has now flowered into a new institution – called the *CICT* at Chennai.
- *Rabindra Chitravali* – an anthology of Tagore painting in four volumes – published in May 2011 by Visva-Bharati & Pratikshan
- *Kalanukramik Rabindra Rachanabali* – a new project sanctioned by the Ministry of Culture.
- Appointed the Chair of the *PRSG for Development of Shallow Parser Tools ' Tools for 12 Indian Languages* (*SPT-IL*) – a project of the Ministry of C & IT, Government of India.
- Chair and National Coordinator, CFEL Projects in Nine Central Universities, UGC, 2014-16.
- Co-PI, *Mediating Multilingualism: An Indo-Scottish Initiative*, a joint project between Amity University Haryana and University of Highlands & Islands, UK

Singh has supervised 20 doctoral dissertation and 24 M.Phil. level research work in Applied Linguistics, Translation Studies, ELT, Child Bilingualism, Lexicography and Literary Theory.

Singh has visited and lectured in Andorra, Australia, Bangladesh, Caribbean Islands, China, France, German Democratic Republic (GDR), Germany (unified), Iceland, Italy, Japan, Mauritius, Nepal, Pakistan, Russia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, U.K. & USA, and received several grants and honors. He led the Indian cultural delegation to China during 2007-08, a member of Indian delegation to Italy (April-May 1999) and to Trinidad & Tobago; and was a Poet-Invitee at the Frankfurt Book fair (2006) when India was the Guest of Honour, and also at the London Book Fair 2009 – ‘India Through Fresh Eyes’; A member of the Delegation of the Ministry of Culture to UNESCO, Paris (April 2011) and Dhaka, Bangladesh (May 2011). He was a member of Indian delegation to UNESCO (Paris), France and USA during 2010-12 and to Russia, Thailand and China again in 2013.

Singh’s **latest book-length publications** include *Translation as Growth: Towards a theory of Language Development* (2010; Longman-Pearson), *Sahityer Bhasha: Bhashar Sahitya* (2010; Anushtup, Kolkata), and *Esecho Eso Rat* (2011; Sahaj Path, Kolkata), besides an edited volume with Lesley Farrell & Ram Ashish Giri, titled *English Language Education in South Asia: From Policy to Perspectives* (2011; Cambridge University Press, Foundation Books Series), besides a series of **six bilingual dictionaries from English into Indian languages – Hindi, Oriya, Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada and Bengali, published by Longman-NTM-CIIL jointly in 2012**. His books also include a collection of ghost stories written for children in Bangla – *Bhut Chaturdashi* (2012; Karigar, Kolkata) and a translated anthology of poems from Maithili into Bengali, titled *Dhvase Jay Shanti-Stup* (2013; Sahitya Akademi, Kolkata), *Diglossia in Bangladesh and language planning*. (1983, Jointly Maniruzzaman, *A Bibliography of Bengali Linguistics*. Mysore : CIIL (1987), *Language Development and Planning: A Pluralistic Paradigm*. Shimla: IAS (1992), *India Writes: A Story of Multilingual and Pluricultural Society*. New Delhi: National Book Trust (2006), *Languages and Cultures on the Margin: Guidelines for Fieldwork on Endangered Languages*. Centre for Endangered Languages, Visva-Bharati(2019, with Rajib Chakraborty, Bidisha Bhattacharjee & Arimardan Kumar Tripathy), *The Other India: View From Below*. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi (2022, Jtly with Rajarshi Singh, *Sukumar Sen – A Great Chronicler of Time* (Makers of Indian Literature Series). New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi (2023), and *Antigone Ekavingshat*, a play in Maithili (Prabhakar Prakashan, 2023).

His edited volumes include: **[ESSAYS] 1987c. *Perspectives in Language Planning***. (1987, Jointly ed., with R.N.Srivastava) 186 pp. Calcutta : Mithila Darshan. 2nd edn with introductory essay. Calcutta: Mithila Darshan, *Suniti Kumar Chatterji A Centenary Tribute*. (1997, Jointly ed., with Shivarama Padikkal), Sahitya Akademi, *Papers in Applied Linguistics I: Festschrift in Honour of Professor O.N.Koul*. CIIL, Mysore (2000), *Papers in Applied Linguistics II: Saptati Felicitation Volume for Professor D.P.Pattanayak*. CIIL, Mysore (2001), *Culturation: Essays in Honour of Jawaharlal Handoo*. CIIL, Mysore (2001), *Language, Society and Culture (ZICR: Visitations to 21st Century Realities: Part Proceedings of a Seminar, 2004*, Ed. With N.H.Itagi & S.K.Singh). CIIL, Mysore, *Kabitaar bhaaSaa*. (2012, Jointly ed., with Anjan Sen) 148 pp. Calcutta: Bangiya Sahitya Samsad. *Vachana: 2500 Vachana poems translated from Kannada to Maithili by 11 poets*. (2017) Bangalore: Basava Samithi.

He has delivered many prestigious Invited Lectures at:

- Lectures at the World Congress of Linguistics with a Permanent International Committee of Linguistics Fellowship, Humboldt University, Berlin (East, GDR-East Germany, 1985;
- Univ of Chittagong, Bangladesh, 1980 with additional lectures at Khulna and Sylhet;
- Delivered lectures as Visiting Professor, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, 1989;
- Delivered lectures at the universities of Venice, Naples and Rome as a member of Indian delegation in Italy, 1999;
- Special lecture at the Asian Institute, Islamabad; January, 1999;
- Plenary Lecture at the 7th Himalayan Languages Symposium, Uppsala; Sweden, 2001;
- Visiting Faculty, University of Uppsala for SASNET-SIDA Project on Himachal Pradesh languages, Sweden; 2003;
- Plenary Talk, Inaugural Seminar, Asia Research Institute, Singapore; 2003;
- Lecture at the International Seminar on Central Peripheries, Peripheral Centers, University of Saarbrücken, Germany; 2004;
- UNESCO Lecture, Bangkok, Thailand; 2005;
- Delegation to Mahatma Gandhi Institute, Moka, Mauritius to lecture and sign MoU between CIIL and MGI, 2006;
- Poet-Invitee, Frankfurt Book Fair, Frankfurt, Germany, 2006 with readings in lectures in four Cities;
- Leader of Indian Delegation of Writers, China (To Beijing, Xi'an and Shanghai); September 2007
- Delegation to the National Institute of Language Education and Training, (NILET), Colombo, Sri Lanka to sign MoU, 2007;
- Prof. S.K.Chatterji Memorial lectures; Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi; October 2008;
- 5th Gargi Gupta Memorial Lecture at the French Embassy Information Centre & Bharatiya Anuvad Parishad, Delhi, 12th Nov 12, 2009;
- Plenary Lecture, 18th European Conference on South Asian Studies, University of Lund, Sweden, 2005;
- Inaugural Plenary, 14th World Pragmatics Congress, University of Goteborg, Sweden, 2008;
- Special lecture at the United Nations on the occasion of International Year of Languages, December 2008;
- Language Resource Centre at MGI, Mauritius, 2008;
- Lectures on Translation at the London Book Fair, 2009;
- Delegation to Kathmandu for South Asian University Meeting, Nepal, 2009;
- Tagore Memorial Lecture at IIT, Kharagpur in December 2009;
- Prof. Shantibhai Desai Memorial Lecture at Kuvempu University, Shimoga, April 2011;
- Invited lectures, Institute of Post-Colonial Studies, Melbourne, Australia, 2011
- Special Lecture at the Joint Bangladesh-India Tagore 150 Celebrations, Dhaka, May 2011;
- Inauguration Invited Lecture at the Smithsonian Institution, Washington May, 2011;

- ICCR lecture, Moscow, Russian State University, Moscow; 2011
- ICCR Lecture, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand, 2011
- Member of Indian delegation in Paris and Chicago for establishment of Vivekananda Chair and Inauguration of Tagore's Original Painting Exhibition in February 2012;
- Keynote at the World Bengali Convention, Dhaka, Bangladesh on 19-21 February, 2012;
- Inaugural Lecture at the European Hindi Conference at the University of Valladolid, Spain and also in Casa de'la India, in March 2012;
- Plenary lecture in the International Forum for US Studies Conference at UIUC on 5-7 April, 2012;
- Inaugural Lecture at the 18th Himalayan Languages Symposium, BHU, Varanasi, 18-19th Oct 2012;
- Panel lecture at 'Samanvay': Bharatiya Bhasha Mahotsava organized by the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi (Nov 4-5, 2012);
- Inaugural lecture at 'Melbandhan Festival', Mumbai for Gujarati, Marathi, Hindi and Bengali Literature (Nov 25,2012);
- Panel Lecture at the Curtain Raiser Indo-Chinese Symposium on 100th Year of the First Asian Nobel Prize, Visva-Bharati-JNU-Beijing University, 19th Dec 2012;
- Silver Junilee Lecture for CALTS, University of Hyderabad, June 2013;
- Plenary Lecture at the International Conference on Tagore and Mo Yan, Tongji University, Shanghai, June 2013
- Keynote address: 'Language of Power: Power of Language'. International seminar on *Language and Power: Perspectives, Issues and Impact*; Special Center for Sanskrit Studies, J.N.U. in collaboration with University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, USA and Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore; April 6-7, 2013.
- Invited talk at Tongzi University, Shanghai, China: 'Culture-Nature Dichotomy and Double Articulation: Surviving the Information Age.' International Academic Conference on from Tagore to Mo Yan: The Universality of One Hundred Years of Oriental Culture; June 1-3, 2013.
- Invitation at the Europalia Festival by the Govt of Rumania, The Leuven Institute for Ireland in Europe, Belgium; Public Debate on Maitreyi Devi, Mircea Eliad and Tagore; Udaya Narayana Singh and Sorin Alexandrescu, mediated by Patrick Pasture, 25th November 2013.
- Masterclass lecture at the European Commission, Brussels: 'Tagore and Innovative Education';, Belgium; 26th Nov 2013.
- Talk on Tagore with Performance by Kaberi Chatterji at the sanctuary of Meritxell, Andorra: Tagore at Meritxell;; Nov 28, 2013.
- Invited Plenary Talk at the at Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira, Belur Math, Howrah, West Bengal; 'The linguistic landscape of Bangla as Swamiji was engaged in constructing,' National Seminar on 'Swami Vivekananda's Ideas and Our Times: A Retrospect on His 150th Birth Anniversary', 21-22 Feb 2014.
- Special Lecture at the Seminar on Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, Department of Linguistics, University of Calcutta: 'Suniti Kumar In Search of a Metaphor: On Policy, Perspectives and Pluralism'; March 6, 2014.
- Valedictory Lecture at the Seminar on "Multilingualism and the Literary Culture of India," Centre for Comparative Literature, UoH, & Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi at the School of Humanities' Auditorium, University of Hyderabad; 27-29 March 2014.
- Plenary Talk, University of Strassbourg (France) : Inauguration of the Chair of Sanskrit & Indian Civilization, 3-5th November 2016.
- *Special Lecture* at the CCSEAS International Conference on Lu Xun and Tagore, JNU & University of Delhi: "*Sanity and Insanity: The Concerns of Tagore and Lu Xun*"; Oct 2016.
- Extra-mural lecture at Amity University, Gurgaon: 'Tagore, Nature and Culture, Discovering the Roots of Gitanjali'; September 19, 2016.
- Plenary Talk at the First World Congress on Translation, CMT & University of Paris at Nanterre; May 2017.