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## Towards a typology of focus in Munda languages.

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Munda languages represent the westernmost branch of the Austroasiatic language phylum spoken primarily in the Indian states of Jharkhand and Odisha but also found in significant numbers in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhatisgarh and West Bengal, as well as largely in diaspora in Assam and a few other states, in addition to Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh. Syntactically verb-final and morphologically agglutinative or polysynthetic, with many polysyllabic words, and representing a peripheral subtype of the South Asian areal complex (shared with Kiranti of the Trans-Himalayan (Tibeto-Burman) phylum and the isolate language Burushaski), Munda languages are typologically quite distinct from the majority of related Austroasiatic languages that constitute core members of the Mainland Southeast Asian areal group, with sesquisyllabic or even monosyllabic words, verb-medial (rarely verb-initial) structure syntactically, with limited derivational morphology and very little inflectional morphology.

Munda languages make use of a range of formal devices to encode focus. This includes prosodic features, morphological elements (focal clitics like =*ge* in Mundari or =*na* in Sora) and syntactic processes (non-SOV syntax). In this paper we examine the systems of focus marking in two distantly related languages of the Munda family, viz., Mundari of the Kherwarian branch and Sora of the Sora-Gorum subgroup of Munda (Sidwell 2015: 206); any attested cognate processes or structures likely reflect a feature of proto-Munda—the only node that unites these two rather distantly related languages. In this paper we describe the systems of focus in these two languages individually and compare the two. All data come from the authors' field notes and findings are substantiated with instrumental analysis of speech data.

**References:** • Sidwell, Paul (2015). Austroasiatic Classification. In M. Jenny and P. Sidwell (eds.) *The Handbook of Austroasiatic Languages*. Brill: Leiden/Boston, 144-220.