

On-site Education of Practical Languages for Area Studies Report in 2011

—Hindi and Marathi, India, 24 Jul. 2011 - 4 Nov. 2011)—

Year of Enrollment: 2011

Graduate School of Asian and African Areas Studies

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On My Research Theme and Language Training (400 words)

My research theme is the political and social movements with regard to the influx of labourers from northern Indian states into Maharashtra. As the economic growth continues, more and more labourers from northern states of India are coming into Maharashtra in order to seek better job opportunities. They are now working in various occupations from driving rickshaw to administrative job. However, there are some regional political parties based on Maharashtra claiming that the job opportunities must be kept for Maharashtrians first. The most radical party is Maharashtra Navnirman Sena(MNS) which was established in 2006 by the politician, Raj Thackeray. It has 13 seats out of 288 seats in state assembly since 2009. It has support base mainly in the urban area of Maharashtra such as Mumbai, Thane and Nashik. The purpose of my research is to find out how the labourers coming into Maharashtra are making their daily life and how the people of Maharashtra are making relationship with those labourers under such a political situation. In order to conduct my research, I have to understand Hindi and Marathi languages because migrant workers mostly speak Hindi, national documents are often published in Hindi, Maharashtrian people speak Marathi in their daily life and regional political parties such as MNS are using Marathi in making their statements. For these reasons, I began to learn both languages in Pune city, Maharashtra.

I stayed in Pune city for 3 months. From Monday to Saturday, I had a private lesson of Hindi and Marathi for 2 and a half hours. Mrs. Bahulikar, my teacher, taught me both languages using the textbooks made for elementary school and junior high school students who are in the English medium school. Learning Hindi and Marathi simultaneously was actually not impossible, because there are a lot of similarities in vocabulary, script, pronunciation and some parts of grammar. Though I had a difficulty in switching between Hindi and Marathi, I managed to write two short essays in each language in the last day of our lesson. I came to be able to communicate with my host family, teacher, friends, rikshaw drivers and shopkeepers in Marathi and sometimes in Hindi.

Finally, I would like to thank all the people who supported me to learn these two languages through ITP program. From now on, I will brush up my language skill and proceed in my research.