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R. M. Joshi, C. McBride

Handbook of Literacy in Akshara Orthography

- Offers a systemic and coherent overview of recent research findings and orientation on akshara, an hitherto underexplored orthography
- Contains contributions by well-known researchers
- Covers languages spoken by approximately one third of the world's population

This volume examines the unique characteristics of akshara orthography and how they may affect literacy development and problems along with the implications for assessment and instruction. Even though akshara orthography is used by more than a billion people, there is an urgent need for a systematic attempt to bring the features, research findings, and future directions of akshara together in a coherent volume. We hope that this volume will bridge that gap. Akshara is used in several Indic languages, each calling it by a slightly different name, for example 'aksharamu', in Telugu, 'akshara' in Kannada, and 'akshar' in Hindi. It is the Bhrami-derived orthography used across much of the Indian subcontinent. There is a growing body of research on the psycholinguistic underpinnings of learning to read akshara, and the emerging perspective is that akshara, even though classified as alphasyllabaries, abugida, and semi-syllabic writing systems, is neither alphabetic nor syllabic. Rather, akshara orthography is unique and deserves to be a separate classification and needs further investigation relating to literacy acquisition in akshara. The chapters in this volume, written by leading authors in the field, will inform the reader of the current research on akshara in a coherent and systematic way.

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