



**The School of Humanities and
Social Sciences cordially invites
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Topic of the Lecture :

"Have you ever heard this sentence before?"

Speaker :

Probal Dasgupta

Former Professor and Head

Linguistic Research Unit

Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata

Date and Time:

5 October 2023 at 6 pm

Google Meet link:

<https://meet.google.com/zqj-pche-xif>

A Summary of the Lecture

We often run into new words and have to look them up. But nobody ever says, "I've never heard that sentence before". We assume that sentences are always newly composed, except in some well-defined contexts where we suspend this expectation. As academics or students, we have to address the issue of plagiarism, and we know that ChatGPT has changed the game on that front. But we don't often try to understand what goes on in the production and recognition of newly composed, original, sentences. This question lies at the poorly understood place where linguistics meets literary studies. Let us take a look at this shadowy realm.

About the Speaker

Probal Dasgupta works on Syntax, Morphology, Sociolinguistics, Esperanto Studies and Literary Theory. He read Linguistics and Pali for his undergraduate studies at Sanskrit College in Kolkata and pursued his higher education in Linguistics at Deccan College Postgraduate and Research Institute in Pune. He received his Ph.D. from New York University (1980) for a thesis on Bangla generative syntax. He has taught Linguistics at New York, Melbourne, Kolkata, Pune, and Hyderabad. He retired from the Linguistic Research Unit at the Indian Statistical Institute in Kolkata as Professor and Head.

In his early professional years as a linguist, Prof. Dasgupta worked mostly in the field of Syntax. His book *Projective Syntax: Theory and Applications* (1989) is built around a syntactic core. He has co-developed a new approach to Linguistics called Substantivism and has published a book on the subject, *After Etymology: Towards a Substantivist Linguistics* (with Alan Ford and Rajendra Singh, 2000). His other book-length publications include *Kathaar kriyakarmo* (in Bangla, 1987), *Primico* (Esperanto translations from Tagore's poetry, 1977), and *The Otherness of English: India's Auntie Tongue Syndrome*, 1993). He is an Honorary Member of the Linguistic Society of America, the president of the Akademio de Esperanto, and the former president of the Universal Esperanto Association. Prof. Dasgupta was among the four recipients of the West Bengal government's Vidyasagar-Dinamoyee Puraskar (award) in 2021.