A Descriptive Study of Standard Dialect and Western Dialect of Odia Language in Terms of Linguistic Items

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ABSTRACT

Language is a unique blessing to human beings. Human beings are bestowed with the faculty of language from very primitive age. Language makes human beings social and in a society human beings communicate with the help of language. Odia is one among the constitutionally approved language of India. Odisha is situated in the eastern part of India. Presently, this state has thirty districts. Odisha is bound to the north by the state Jharkhand, to the northeast by the state West Bengal, to the east by the Bay- of- Bengal, to the south by the state Andhra Pradesh, and to the west by the state Chhattisgarh. The languages used by the neighboring states have a lot of influence on Odia language. In this present study a modest attempt has been made to high light the differences between Standard Odia and Western Odia dialects. Various linguistic items used by the western Odia dialect users have marked differences compared to the standard Odia. The study has been done to delve into the phonological, morphological, semantic and syntactic features of both Standard Odia and Western Odia. Secondly, for ease of understanding some amount of discussion has been made on the existing literature on language and its variety in general. As spoken form is the primary form of any language, data have been collected from the informants' conversation for analysis.

KEYWORDS: phonological, morphological, syntactic, dialect, semantic

INRODUCTION

One of the most important human characteristics is the capacity to communicate with each other through language. It is a medium for human beings to carry out social functions and the fact is that humans use it to express themselves and to talk about the environment. Human beings acquire language not to know about the language but to know and talk about the world. It is a set of symbols, each symbol conveying ideas or information. Linguist Noam Chomsky considered a language to be a set (finite or infinite) of sentences, each finite in length and constructed out of finite set of elements. (Chomsky, Noam. Syntactic Structures 1957:13)

It is a means by which human beings communicate with each other to share their ideas, emotions and feelings. Language is a form of communication that differs radically from the forms used by other species. According to famous linguist Sapir language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of voluntarily produced symbols. (Sapir, E. Language 1921:8)

Species other than human beings also communicate by sounds, gestures, touch and chemical emissions, but the meaning of these signals is fixed and their use is limited to the immediate situations. Human language in comparison to other forms of communication consists of fixed signals and learned symbols; but their meaning is not fixed. They are very flexible and give rise to different meanings according to context. Human language is unique because of its flexibility and adaptability (Robins.1964:14, 1971:13 as cited in Lyons, John. Language and Linguistics: An Introduction 1981:6). These criteria of human language create a difference and become special over the other means of communication.

Varieties of Language

Human language can be seen as a river. A river flows and acquires different features from its different surroundings; language also acquires a lot of features as it is being used by different people from different regions. Language is not fixed. It is often changeable, so, language has a lot of varieties. Human beings throughout the world don't share only one language. If language is seen as a phenomenon and the different manifestation of the languages are called as varieties, then language can be compared with dance as a whole and its different varieties are like classical and rock dances. In this manner we can say that English is a variety of human language so is French and African.

The differences and changing of language are seen through different linguistic items. When it is told that one language is different from another language or one language has different varieties. A variety of language can be defined as a set of linguistic items with similar social distribution. (Hudson, R.A. Sociolinguistics 2003:22)

The speech of a person depends on a variety of factors including the knowledge of the relevant rules governing the speech. Human language is highly rule governed. (Lyons, John. Language and Linguistics: An Introduction 1981:21).

These rules vary from society to society. Such rules are called as norms. Each language consists of different items and norms. These items are called as linguistic items or commonly called as language items. For any language or varieties of a language these items and norms are considered as its identification. The different linguistic items are: Phonological items, Lexical items, Syntactic items and Semantic items.

Language and Dialect

Varieties of a language are seen due to differences in speech of users. Human beings live in group or community. A speech community is a community based on a language. In a speech community the members share the same language features. Gradual changes in the speech habits of the members of a speech community occur because of reasons like caste, profession, and acquaintances with neighboring speech community. It is not always so easy to find out any general definition for each variety of a language which will distinguish one variety from the other, or criteria for delimiting one variety from the other. These varieties are broadly termed as standard language and dialect of a language.

Very often the standard language is referred as the language and its varieties are dialects. It is not a simple job to consider one variety of a language as standard language and the others as dialect. The concept of standard language and dialect is originated from Greek culture because of the existence of a number of clearly distinct written varieties in use in Classical Greece each associated with different area and used for a different kind of literature. David Crystal defines dialect as a regional or social distinctive variety of a language identified by a particular set of words and grammatical structures. (Crystal, David. A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics 1991: 92)

The dialects are usually associated with a distinctive pronunciation based on different features like accent, and use of the vowels and even different vocabulary for the same idea. A dialect can be seen as a specific form of a given language, spoken in a certain locality or geographical area showing sufficient difference from the standard or literary form of that language as to pronunciation, grammatical construction and idiomatic use of words to be considered as a distinct entity, yet not sufficiently distinct from other dialects of the language to be regarded as a different language.(Pei and Gaynor as cited in Vershney. R.L 1995:297)

Regional dialects are the varieties that exist within a language according to difference in use of the linguistic items because of the geographical distance. When a speech community comes in contact with another speech community which is geographically nearer; the language of the other speech community influences the language use and brings about a change in the former.

Odia Language and its Scope

Odisha is situated in the eastern part of India. Presently, this state has thirty districts.

The neighboring states are Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh. The language used by the people of these states are Hindi (not in pure form and Telugu) Odisha is mostly inhabited by Hindu, but there are also significant amount of people, belonging to other religions like Muslims, Christians, and Buddhists. Apart from these Odisha is largely populated by tribal people. The state is famous for its rich cultural heritage. Mainly the people of Odisha speak Odia. Odia is an Eastern Indo-Aryan language that is primarily spoken in the Indian state of Odisha. It is included in the eighth schedule of Indian constitution and recognized as the official languages of Odisha. Though Odia language is considered as an Indo-Aryan language primarily it is an amalgamation of Dravidian and Austro- Asiatic language. The different types of language spoken by largely populated tribal people of Odisha come under this Austro- Asiatic language. According to Pandit Nilakantha Das in the vein of Odia language the blood of Dravidian language and Austro-Asiatic language is flowing. (Mohaptra,B.P Prachalita Odia Bhasa ra eka Byakarana 2007:1) The language spoken by the people of the central zone of Odisha has a lot of similarity with the written form of Odia language. In addition to this the language spoken by this area has gained the political recognition as the standard language, more prestige is attached to it. In the other three parts of Odisha mainly in Western Odisha, the spoken languages have a lot of differences in the level of phonology, morphology, vocabulary, syntax and semantics in comparison to Standard Odia. Taking these differences in to account linguists Dr Bijoy Prasad Mohaptra considered the western variety as the regional dialect of Odisha.

Standard Dialect of Odia

Standard Odia popularly called as Odia is mainly spoken by the people of costal area of Odisha. It is used in the districts Kurdha, Puri, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Jajpur, Dhenkanal and most parts of Angul.

Odia letters can be divided into two types -letters standing for vowel sounds and letters for consonant sounds. The vowels can be divided into short and long vowels. The longness of the vowels is represented by a '-' mark at the top of the phoneme in the transcription for this present work. When the vowels are phonetically long, they may be in contrast with their shorter counter parts and the meaning is changed. Some examples are given below.

pilā (boy)   pīlā (Drank)
mara (die)   māra (Mother's)

All most all the vowels of Odia language undergo with the process of nasalisation. Nasalised vowel in Odia is the only co articulated phoneme. Nasalisation is shown with a ˜ mark at the top of the nasalised vowel.

Nasalisation of vowel sounds of a word brings about a change in the meaning of the word.

baśa(Sit)   bãśa- (whole family)
peca(Screw)   pẽca- (Trick)

Odia words can be divided into three different sections according to their origin-tatsama,(similar to Sanskrit language) tadbhaba(derived from Sanskrit language) and indigenous. They are divided into different categories like noun, adjective, verbs, pronoun, preposition, article, and so on.

Odia words which accommodate gender, number and case markers is called as a noun. Noun can be singular or plural. In Odia there is no specific marker for singular nouns. Articles like ṭi, ṭā, ṭe can come with the singular noun. The plural markers are māne,guḍāe/guḍie. Generally, māne is used with animate nouns and guḍāe or guḍie is used with inanimate nouns to make the nouns plural. In colloquial speech māne is substituted only with –e. Further, guḍie or guḍāe can come with the animate nouns but, it shows the carelessness of the speaker towards the nouns.

pilāṭi(Sing.) A boy

,pilā māne(Pl.) Boys

bahi (Sing.) A book

bahi guḍāe/guḍie (pl)

pile (Pl.)(Colq.) Boys

e pilā māne bhala-These boys are good.

e pilā guḍā dusta- These boys are naughty. (Carelessness, no love for the boys)

Odia nouns can be pluralized by adding numeral like goṭe, jaṇe,duiṭā,tiniṭā etc before the noun. When numerals are added to the nouns they cannot take the article.

pilā ṭi jāuci- A boy is going.

pilā jaṇe jāuci- One boy is going.

*pilā jaṇe ṭi jāuchi

*Mark at the beginning of the sentence indicates ungrammatical sentence.

Another way of making the noun plural is to repeat the noun or to repeat the adjective of the noun.

se gā˜ gā˜ re jaṇā (He is known in villages.)
mote baḍabaḍa seo dia Give me big apples.)

Odia nouns can be divided into categories like small-big (khaṭa-khaṭiā) and male-female (guru-gurumā). Some markers are used to get the smaller as well as feminine counterpart of the nouns. Apart from the use of markers with the nouns, different words are used to refer to the male –female distinctions (ajā- āi) (maternal grandfather-grandmother).Odia gender is only limited to the level of words. It has no syntactic implications like Hindi language.

In a sentence pronouns stand for the noun. Like noun, pronouns can be singular or plural. The pronouns can be broadly divided into two categories-pronouns referring to person and pronoun referring to objects. Pronouns referring to object are ehā, eiṭhi, eiṭi, seiṭhi, seiṭi, tāhā etc. Pronouns referring to object can be further divided into pronouns referring to near objects and pronouns referring to distance objects.

ehā mo kalama (This is my pen.)
seiṭi/tāhā mo kalama (That is my pen.)

Pronouns are pluralized by adding māne, guḍi and guḍā to them as in case of nouns. The rules for pluralisation are the same as for nouns. Pronouns āpaṇa, tumbhe, tumbhe are honorific pronoun. Apart from the above pronouns other pronouns like the relative pronoun and the correlative, the reflexive pronoun, the interrogative pronouns, the remote demonstrative and the proximate demonstrative pronouns are widely used in Odia language.

Case Markers in Odia

Case in Odia refers to the relationship of different words or phrases with the verb in a sentence. In Odia language there are seven types of cases having different functions. The case is established by using some markers, commonly called as case markers. The case markers are similar with the prepositions of English.

1st *kartā kāraka* (Nominative Case)
Singular No case marker
    Plural-*e,-māne-guḍie,/-guḍāe, - guḍika/guḍāka*
2nd *karma kāraka* (Accusative Case)
Singular-*ku*
    Plural-*nku*
3rd *karaṇa kāraka* (Instrumental Case)–*dwārā,-re*
4th *sampradāna kāraka*(Dative Case)
Singular *ku.k*ū,*ki,k*t
Plural-*nku,-nki*
5th *apādāna kāraka* (Abalative Case)-*ru -re*
When the subject is alive or with pronoun –*re* can't be used alone in ablative case so-*ṭhā /-ṭhi* is used.
6th *sambadha pada* (Address)No marker is used
7th *ādhikaraṇa kāraka* (Locative Case)-*re,-e* (*kaḷādhikaraṇa* (Time) and *stānādhikaraṇa* (Place)

Some Syntactic Features of Odia Language

A sentence in Odia is generally constructed by following the word order Subject, Object and Verb (S-O-V). Verbs agree with their subjects in person and numbers. Sentences can appear without the subject and also without verbs.
rāma bhāta khāe (Sub-Obj-Verb) (Ram) (rice) eat)

Odia Verbs

Odia verbs can be divided into two categories depending on their construction-finite and non-finite. Finite verb gives a sense and completes the sentence. Finite verb agrees with the person and number of the subject. So, any change in the person and number of the subject brings about a change in the verb. It also carries the tense. On the other hand non-finite verb neither agrees to the person and number of the subject nor carries the tense. Odia non -finite verbs are subject independent.

Hari bahi paḍhuachi.(Sub+Obj+FV)

(Hari is reading book.)

pilā mane bahi paḍhuachanti (Sub+Obj+FV)

(Boys are reading book.)

Hari bahi paḍhilā (past –V)

(Hari read book)

pilāmāne bahi paḍhile (past -verb)

(Boys read book.)

hari paḍhu paḍhu soigalā

(Sub+NFV+FV-past)

Hari slept during reading.

pilā māne paḍhupaḍhu soigale(Sub+NFV+FV-past)

Boys slept during reading.

Odia verbs are constructed by adding markers of tense, number and person to the root.

paḍhuachi- paḍh+u+ach+i (Root+Asp+Tense+Aggr.)

The non-finite past participle is formed by adding the suffix –i to the verb stem. A series of past participles, one followed by another also occurs in Odia, as seen below. Such formations are referred to as serial verb constructions.

has (root)+i= hasi

se hasi hasi kāndi pakeilā

(Sub+Serial Verb+FV-past)

He cried while laughing.

Causative verbs in Odia are formed by adding –a to verb roots:
pi(drink)-a (cause to drink)
,ji-a (live)(cause to live)

Western Dialect of Odia
The language spoken by the western part of Odisha is considered as the Western dialect of Odia. This dialect covers a very large area of western Odisha. Western Odia dialect is spoken by one third of the population of Odisha. This dialect is popularly known as Sambalpuri Language This variety of Odia is used by the people of the districts- Sambalpur, Kalahandi, Nuapada, Bolangiri, Subarnpur, Boudh, Deogarh,Jharsuguda, Sundargarh and Athamalik sub-division of the district Angul.

After Standard Odia this dialect has some written documents. It is considered as a regional dialect of Odia. Now- a-days movement to declare this language as Kosli language is gaining momentum. In this section some of the peculiarities of this dialect in terms of the linguistic items will be discussed.

Phonological features of Western Dialect
In Standard Odia, generally the words end with a vowel sound, but in this dialect that final vowel sound is absent like Hindi language which has enormous effect on this dialect.

WO- bhāt-bh+ā+t+ ø
SO- bhāta- bh+ā+ta
SO- ghara-gh+ra
WO- ghar-gh+r+ø

Changing of /ŋ/ and /ḷ/ sounds to /n/ and /l/ respectively is a regular feature in this dialect.
baṇa   ban
phaḷa   phal
paṇi   paen
kaḷa   kal

In this dialect initiall /i/ sound is changed to/ e/
eṭhāre   iṭhāre
aekar   ikara

Lengthening of Vowel Sound
This process is a unique and regular feature of Western dialect. Vowel sounds when appear in between to consonant sounds take their longer counterpart.
pāṇi   paen
chāri   caer
rasi   raes

Nasalization of Vowels
Nasalization is a regular feature in Western Dialect. All the vowels of this dialect undergo this process. The nasalization of the vowels brings changes in the meaning. Some examples are given below
a   a˜
aṭā   a˜ṭā
ā   ā˜
bāṭa   bā˜ṭa
i   ĩ
sikā   si~kā
e   ẽ
jue   juẽ
o   o˜
oṭha   o˜ṭha

In western dialect /o/sound is changed to /u/in the initial position.
/o/   /u/
goṭe   guṭe
gobara   gubara
koḷi   kuḷi

Morphological Features of Western Dialect
In Western Odia Dialect some typical markers are used to carry out different functions. These are quite different from the markers used in the Standard Odia.

➤ bo is used to address someone. It is used at the end of a sentence.

    tumehẽ khāli tᴏkel tᴏula heica bo

    (Only girls are assembled)

➤ je is used as the question marker.

    dekha ma kenta anra ki mai je

    Check whether male or female.

➤ he is used as comparative marker.

    tume he ga˜njiā kā˜n bhāgabat arth karb

ṭā and ṭe as plural markers:
In Western Odia dialect -ṭā is used as the plural marker when the number is two or more and -te is used in case the number is one.

halāiṭe jāuce (one servant)
duiṭā haliā jāuce(two servants are going)
tinṭā haliā jāuche(three servants are going)
Tense markers:
In Western Odia dialect five different tense markers are found.

Present	Root	Tense	Agreement
mui˜karẽ	kar	ø	ẽ
Past			
mui˜karlin	kar	l	in
Future			
muin karmi	kar	m	in
Habitual			
muin˜karsi	kar	s	i
Hypothetical			
muin kartin	kar	ta	i

Negation in Western Dialect

In Western Dialect there are three negative markers. They are 'nāĩ', 'na', and'ni'. 'nāin' is the full negative marker and the other two are the contracted negative markers. nāi~' can come both in the initial position and in the medial position of a verb. Contracted negative form cannot come in the simple form of a verb. They can come in the progressive and perfective form of the verb and they come in the medial position only.

Use of 'nāin'

Hari nāin karuthila Initial position

Hari karu nāin thila Medial position

na and ni can be used in contracted progressive form and ni can be used in simple form of the verb hari karu nathihā
hari karu nithilā ,
hari ni karẽ

na and ni cannot be used with the simple form of the verb
➢ hari na karẽ
➢ hari ni karẽ
➢ denotes that these sentences are not accepted in the western dialect.

CONCLUSIONS

Language differs from persons to person, social groups to groups and from region to region. Odia is no exception. This language has also a lot of differences at different linguistics levels. The western Odia carries marked difference from Standard Odia in terms of phonology, morphology, semantics and syntax. It has a rich system of vocabulary. Western Odia does not only possess marked difference from Standard Odia. It also has differences within the same dialect. The Western Odia has also considerable amount of written documents. The people of Western Odisha are demanding to declare Western Odia as a separate language as Kosali language. Now it is high time to carry out more detailed scientific study on different aspects of Western Odia in comparison to Standard Odia and the other varieties of Odia such as Northern and Southern varieties.

Abbreviations used Aggr- Agreement Asp- Aspect, Aux- Auxiliary, Collq- Colloquial, FV- Finite verb, NFV- Nonfinite verb Pl- Plural, Sing- Singular, SO- Standard Odia WO- Western Odia

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