

# **Verb agreement in Darai and Majhi in Areal- typological context**

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# Languages in Nepal

- More than 123 languages are spoken in Nepal
- Indo-Aryan, Tibeto-Burman, a Dravidian language, an Austro-Asiatic language, and Kusunda, a language isolate
- **Darai, Majhi** (including **Bote**, and some data from **Danuwar**), and some features from **Maithili** and **Rajbanshi** for areal comparison
- Conclusions

# Speakers (census 2011)

- Bote (8,766)
- **Darai (11,767)**
- Danuwar (45,821)
- **Majhi (24,422)**
- Rajbanshi (1,22,214)
- Maithili (30,92,530)
- Nepali (11826952)
- Most of them share typological features of eastern Indo-Aryan languages.
- Total population in Nepal (26,494,504).

# Pronominal possessive suffixes

- Pronominal possessive suffixes (PPS) are attached to possessed nouns (they are ‘head-marked’).
- They share pronominal possessive suffixes to mark the head nouns to show the possession
- These suffixes occur optionally
- This is as an areal feature of some languages spoken in this geographical area.

# Genitive phrases

- (1)    dulha-**k**                      mor-lə  
         husband-**3SG.POSS**        die-PST  
         ‘Her husband died.’ (IMM.UN.001) [**Darai**]
- (2)    ukhrə dulha                      mor-lə  
         his    husband-**∅**              die-PST  
         ‘Her husband died.’ [**Darai**]

The pronominal possessive suffixes are attached to all kinds of possessed items, viz. kinship terms, and all kinds of possession in Darai.

# Genitive phrases

(3) hokrə bhae-**k**

his younger brother-**3SG.POSS**

‘His brother’ [**Majhi**]

(4) hokrə bhae-**khjan**

his younger brother-**3SG.POSS.PL**

‘His brothers’ [**Majhi**]

- The pronominal possessive suffixes are attached only to kinship terms in Majhi. They occur optionally.
- The forms of the pronominal possessive suffixes are similar in these languages

# Pronominal possessive suffixes

	Singular			3/PL
	1st	2nd	3rd	
Bote	-m	-r	-k	-
Danuwar	-m	-r	-k	-
<b>Darai</b>	-m	-r	-k	-
<b>Majhi</b>	-m	-r	-k	-khjan
Maithili	-	-	-	-
Rajbanshi	-	-	-	-
Nepali	-	-	-	-

# Ergativity

- Darai and Majhi are similar in marking ergativity
- Split ergativity based on nominal hierarchy
- While the first and 2<sup>nd</sup> person do not take ergativity, the rest of the NPs including the third person pronouns code the ergative markers in the transitive clauses
- This is present in three languages (viz. Bote, Darai, and Majhi)



# Verb agreement

- **Single agreement**

(1) Person, number, gender and honorificity

(2) Agreement with the dative-marked subject

(3) Verbs also agree with genitive modifier of the NP rather than with the head nouns

- **Double agreement**

(4) Verb agrees not only with the subject, but also with the Object. Both subject and object are coded in the verbs

# Two sets of agreement Suffixes (Darai)

	Darai	
	Set 1 (Nom, Erg)	Set 2 (Dat, Gen)
1sg	-m	-m
1pl	-hĩ	-∅
2sg	-s	-r
2sg,h	-u	-u
2pl	-həsəb	-həsəb
3sg	-i	-k
2sg,h	-t	-kan
3pl	-kan(səb)	-kan(səb)

# Verb agreement [Darai]

(5) *məi dzəitəm*

*məi*    **dza-tə-m**

I        go-NPST-**1SG**

'I go.'

(6) *toi dzəitəs*

*toi*    **dza-tə-s**

you    go-NPST-**2SG**

'You (SG) go.'

(7) *tohe dzəitahau*

*tohe*        **dza-ta-hau**

you.H        go-NPST-**2SG.H**

'You (SG.H) go.'

- **These agreement suffixes appear only in the non-past tense. They do not appear in the past tense.**

# Person, number, honorificity (Majhi)

	Nom, Erg	<i>beg</i> 'run' NPST		<i>beg</i> 'run' PST
1sg	-ũ	beg-tsh-ũ	-ãĩ/-ai	beg-n-ãĩ (ai)
1pl	-e	beg-tsh-e	-e	beg-l-e
2sg	-əs	beg-tsh-əs	-əi	beg-l-əi
2sg,h	-ə	beg-tsh-ə	-ə	beg-l-ə
2pl	-ə:	beg-tsh-ə:	-ə:	beg-l-ə:
3sg	-əi	beg-tsh-əi	-e	beg-l-e
3pl	-ət	beg-tsh-ət	-a	beg-l-a

# Verb agreement [Majhi]

(8) *tui begtshəs*

tui beg-tsh-əs

you run-NPST-2SG

‘You run.’

(9) *tora begtshə*

tora beg-tsh-ə

you run-NPST-2SG.HON

‘You (HON) run.’

(10) *hoi begtshəi*

hoi beg-tsh-əi

he run-NPST-3SG

‘He runs.’

# Gender

- Gender agreement is attested in these languages, but has restricted use.
- Gender is coded in the verb in some TAM forms, such as prospective form, perfective form, and honorific past tense. Note that the gender agreement is absent in the non-past tense in **Darai**.
- The gender distinction is seen in Majhi in adjectives, classifiers and certain verb forms, viz. in perfect aspect, past tense and prospective form.

# Prominent internal possessor

- Unlike in the nominative and ergative subject, the **possessor of the subject triggers the verb agreement**
- This is seen with ‘possessives’ in which verb agrees with ‘a part of complex noun phrases which is not the lexical head’ (Corbett 2006:61).
- The verb agrees not with the head nouns but with the modifier (i.e. possessor).

# Prominent internal possessor (Majhi)

- (11) *morə dzjan bātstshəi*  
mũi-rə **dzjan** bāts-tsh-əi  
I-GEN life live-PST-1SG.POSS  
‘My **life** is safe (lit. my life lives).’
- (12) *torə dzjan bātstshjas*  
tui-rə **dzjan** bāts-tsh-jas  
you-GEN life live-PST-2SG.POSS  
‘Your **life** is safe (lit. your life lives).’
- (13) *hokrə dzjan bātstshi*  
hoi-rə **dzjan** bāts-tsh-i  
he-GEN life live-NPST-3SG.POSS  
His **life** is safe (lit. your life lives).’



# Prominent internal possessor (Darai)

(14) *u merə dadzu həkxim*

u **məi-rə** dadzu həkhi-m

he I-[OBL]GEN **brother** be.NPST-1SG.POSS

'He is my elder brother.' (KAQ.SLD.122)

(15) *u terə dadzu həkhir*

u **toi-rə** dadzu həkhi-r

he you-[OBL]GEN **brother** be.NPST-2SG.POSS

'He is my elder brother. '

(16) *u ukhrə dadzu həkhik*

u **u-rə** dadzu həkhi-k

he he-[OBL]GEN **brother** be.NPST-3SG.POSS

'He is his elder brother.'

# Agreement with dative, and genitive modifier of subject [Majhi]

	Dative		Genitive	
	npst	pst	pst	npst
<b>1sg</b>	-tsh-əi	-l-e	-tsh-əi	-
<b>1pl</b>	-tsh-əi	-l-e	-tsh-əi	-
<b>2sg</b>	-tsh-jas	-l-jas	-tsh-jas	-khjan
<b>2sg,h</b>	-tsh-ja	-l-ja	-tsh-ja	-
<b>2pl</b>	-tsh-ja	-l-ja	-tsh-ja	-
<b>3sg</b>	-tsh-i	-əl-te	-tsh-i (ik)	-
<b>2sg,h</b>	-tsh-i	-əl-te	-tsh-i(ik)	-
<b>3pl</b>	-tsh-jak	-l-jak	-tsh-jak	-

# Dative subject

- The dative-marked subjects are the ‘experiencer’ subjects (Masica 1991:346). They often include physical sensations, psychological states, need, and obligation among others.
- The dative nominal does not exhibit some of the properties typically associated with the grammatical subject. For instance, the verb does not agree with it (Verma and Mohanan 1990:2-3).
- However, these languages show that the verbs also agree with the dative subject, and also have a set of affixes that appear with dative subjects contrasting with the affixes that appear with nominative, or ergative subjects.

# Dative [Darai]

- (17) *merəke ris uṭhilem*  
məi-ke            ris            uṭhi-le-**m**  
I-[OBL]DAT    anger            stand-PST-**1SG**  
'I was angry.'
- (18) *terəke ris uṭhiler*  
toi-ke            ris            uṭhi-le-**r**  
you-[OBL]DAT anger            stand-PST-**2SG**  
'You were angry.'
- (19) *teurake ris uṭhileu*  
tohe-ke            ris            uṭhi-le-**u**  
you.H-[OBL]DAT anger            stand-PST-**2SG.H**  
'You (H) were angry.'

# Dative [Majhi]

- (20) *milai bhok lagle*  
mũi-lai bhok lag-l-e  
I-DAT hunger feel-PST-1SG.DAT  
'I was hungry.'
- (21) *tuilai bhok lagljas*  
tui-lai bhok lag-l-jas  
you-DAT hunger feel-PST-2SG.DAT  
'You were hungry.'
- (22) *hja tshagrilai pãts sæ pærælte*  
hja tshagri-lai pãts sæ pær-əl-te  
thisgoat-DAT five hundred cost-PST-3SG.DAT  
'This goat cost five hundred rupees.'

# Double agreement (Darai)

- Darai maximally allows two arguments in the transitive and ditransitive verbs.
- Coding of object in transitive verb is not consistent and is an irregular phenomenon in the discourse data.
- The subject agreement suffixes appear before the object agreement suffixes in the verbs (slot)
- Details phenomenon based on fairly large corpus is yet to investigate.

# Double agreement [Darai]

(23) *məi ukhrə bhat dehalmik*

məi u-ke bhat de-hal-**mi-k**

I he-[OBL]DAT rice give-PST-**1SG.SUB-3SG.OBJ**

‘I gave him rice.’

(24) *məi terake bhat dehalmiu*

məi toi-ke bhat de-hal-**mi-u**

I you-[OBL]DAT rice give-PST-**1SG.SUB-2SG.H.OBJ**

‘I gave you (hon) rice.’

(25) *toi uk<sup>h</sup>rake ʔaŋgi detasik*

toi u-ke ʔaŋgi de-ta-**si-k**

you he-[OBL]DAT axe give-NPST-**2SG.SUB-3SG.OBJ**

‘You gave him an axe.’

# Transitive, ditransitive (Darai)

		Object agreement								
		1SG	1PL	2SG	2SG.H	2PL	3SG	3SG.H	3PL	3PL.H
Subject agreement	1SG	-	-	-mi-r/s	-mi-u	Only S marked	-mi-k	-mi-kan	Only S marked	-mi-kan-səb
	1PL	-	-	Only S marked			-hi-k	-hi-kan		-hi-kan-səb
	2SG	Only S marked		-	-	-	-si-k	-si-kan		-si-kan-səb
	2SG.H	Only S marked		-	-	-	-u-k	-u-kan		-u-kan-səb
	2PL	Only S marked		-	-	-	Only S marked			Only S marked
	3SG	Only S marked		-ir/s	-u	Only S marked	-ik	-ikan		-ikan-səb
	3PL	Only S marked		-ir/s	-u-səb	marked	-ik	-ikan		-ikan-səb



# Double agreement (Majhi)

- Majhi also maximally allows two arguments in the transitive and ditransitive verbs.
- The double agreement is regular in Majhi.

# Double agreement [Majhi]

- (24) *muĩ tshoḍarilai dzal dinin*  
muĩ tshoḍari-lai dzal di-n-in  
I son-DAT net give-PST-1SG.SUB.3SG.OBJ  
'I gave a net to my son.'
- (25) *muĩ tshoḍarillai dzal dilai*  
muĩ tshoḍari-l-lai dzal di-l-ai  
I son-PL-DAT net give-PST-1SG.SUB.3PL.OBJ  
'I gave a net to my sons.'
- (26) *hoinin beṭaklai balalte*  
hoi-nin beṭa-k-lai bal-l-te  
he-ERG son-POSS.3SG-DAT call-PST-3SG.SUB.3SG.OBJ  
'He called his son.'

# Transitive, ditransitive (Majhi)

Objects →		1SG	1PL	2SG	2PL	3SG	3PL
Subjects ↓							
1SG	PST	-	-	-n-ai	-l-ai	-n-in	-l-ai
	NPST	-	-	-tsh-û/-s-û	-tsh-jă	-tsh-in	-tsh-ai
1PL	PST	-	-	-le			
	NPST	-	-	-tsh-e	-tsh-jă	-tsh-e	-s-ai/-tsh-ai
2SG	PST	-l-əi		-	-	-əl-si	-l-khən
	NPST	-tsh-əs		-	-	-tsh-is	-tsh-əs
2PL	PST	-l-ə		-	-	-l-ək	-l-khən
	NPST	-tsh-ə					
3SG	PST	-l-e		-l-jas	-l-ja	-l-te	-l-jak
	NPST	-tsh-əi		-tsh-jas	-tsh-ja	-tsh-i	-tsh-jak
3PL	PST	-n-i/-l-a	-l-a	-l-jas	-l-ja	-n-i	-l-jak
	NPST	-tsh-ət		-tsh-jas	-tsh-ja	-tsh-in	-tsh-jak

# Majhi affixes (appearing both in past and non-past tense)

(26)

SUFFIXES	SUBJECTS	OBJECTS
-in	1SG	→ 3SG
-ai	1SG	→ 3PL
-jas	3SG	→ 2SG
-ja	3SG	→ 2PL
-jak	3SG	→ 3PL
-jas	3PL	→ 2SG
-ja	3PL	→ 2PL
-jak	3PL	→ 3PL

# Double agreement [Danuwar]

The verb agreement in Danuwar is still not available, but it seems that the double agreement is found in the following examples.

- (27) *muĩ torani kulhar demer*  
muĩ tora-ni kulhar de-me-r  
I you-[OBL]DAT axe give.PST-1SG.SUB-2SG.OBJ  
'I gave you the axe.'
- (28) *muĩ ukrani kulhar demer*  
muĩ u-ni kulhar de-me-k  
I he-[OBL]DAT axe give.PST-1SG.SUB-3SG.OBJ  
'I gave him the axe.'

# Double agreement

- The double agreement common in ‘Rai-Kiranti’ group of Tibeto-Burman and some Munda languages.
- This is also a feature attested in Darai and Majhi, and also many of the Indo-Aryan languages, such as Maithili, and Rajbanshi in Nepal and also attested in some Indo-Aryan languages spoken in Bihar and Jharkhand, such as Kurmali, Bajjika, Magahi, etc.
- It seems that Danuwar also shares this feature, but the verb agreement in Danuwar in full is not available

# Broader context

- Munda has a different type of polypersonal marking than in Indo-Aryan and Tibeto-Burman.
- There is a crucial difference between two groups of languages [*Indo-Aryan and Munda*] in terms of order of agreement morphemes or clitics (Bhattacharya 2018:67).
- ...multiple agreement is found in agreement in CMP [Central Magadhan languages] whereas cliticization in Munda languages (Bhattacharya 2018:67).
- Bajjika (Kashyap 2012), Magahi (Verma 1991), and Kurmali spoken in the neighbouring areas in India is also characterized this feature.

# Conclusions

- The double agreement found in these languages goes beyond the genetically related languages
- The Indo-Aryan and Tibeto-Burman languages, and some Munda languages also share this feature
- Language contact and agreement can be an interesting topic to explore
- Based on the information discussed above, these Indo-Aryan languages (spoken in Nepal) have similarities in verb agreement.



# Summary

	Pron. Poss. suffix	Erg	Person Number Gen, hon	Pron Internal possessor	Dative subject	Double agree.
<b>Bote</b>	+	+	+	-	-	-
<b>Danuwar</b>	+	+	+	?	?	+
<b>Darai</b>	+	+	+	+	+	+
<b>Majhi</b>	+	+	+	+	+	+
<b>Maithili</b>	-	-	+	+	+	+
<b>Rajbanshi</b>	-	-	+	+	+	+
<b>Nepali</b>	-	+	+	-	-	-

# Map 1: Linguistic Context in Nepal



# Further research

- The languages spoken to the west of the Darai speaking area do not have features (pronominal possessive suffixes, dative-subject agreement, agreement with genitive modifier, and double agreement).
- Is the double agreement in these languages because of its contact with other languages, or is an areal feature developed independently?
- The features are areally attested in these lesser-studied languages
- We need more field work on the lesser-described languages to find out its historical development

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