

Diachrony of select linguistic features in New Indo-Aryan

The main objective of the present paper is to give a historical account of areal trends with respect to 3 typological features in a few early as well as modern varieties of New Indo-Aryan (NIA).

According to Peterson (2017) the distribution of 28 features in 29 languages belonging to Indo-Aryan (IA), Dravidian and Munda gives us a solid basis for assuming the division of eastern and western IA into two distinct structural groups. Despite its clear synchronic bias such approach is now also being applied to historical aspects of SA languages (Ivani et al. 2021) not resorting to the notion of a linguistic area (e.g. Emeneau 1956; Masica 1976; Masica 2001). This however brings further implications to verify features attested in contemporary tongues in older varieties spoken once in the region for which we have reliable written records (cf. Masica 2001; Peterson 2017).

In the pilot study we have focused on a few early NIA varieties from India and Nepal which include Rajasthani, Awadhi, Braj and Dakkhini and Kumaoni (a sample of 10000 words for each) supplemented by the data from early Nepali as well as Maithili and modern varieties of all these languages and recent data from Kalderash Romani. The data have been partly annotated (cf. Jaworski 2015) and features primarily analyzed in the Peterson's sample have been verified and their diachronic development and distributional patterns have been checked.

Here we present only three features that have been selected and analyzed diachronically: differential object marking (DOM), gender and classifiers. Preliminary results show that:

- a) DOM which in NIA operates along the parameters of animacy and definiteness (e.g. Aissen 2003) shows significant dialectal variation in this respect (cf. Author 2014; Montaut 2018); these two parameters underwent different developments in the languages investigated. E.g., DOM first operated along the lines of animacy and definiteness in Rajasthani (15/16th c.), Braj and Dakkhini (ca. 17th c.), Awadhi (cf. Saksenā 1971 [1937]) and Pahari (presumably ca. 18th c.; cf. Wallace 1981). The spreading of marked O's into the perfective domain is attested in Rajasthani (beginning of 17th/18th c.; Khokhlova 1992; 1995; cf. also Khokhlova 2006), in Braj (ca. 16/17th c.) and Dakkhini (17th c.), and only very recently in Pahari.
- b) gender appears to be quite stable, although we do see certain fluctuations e.g. in Pahari, where in contemporary Nepali we find a feminine/non-feminine (F/NF) distinction but an M/F-distinction in Kumaoni and Garhwali. Similarly, in Awadhi it is still preserved today (Saksena 1971 [1937]) while in Bengali gender has virtually disappeared entirely.
- c) classifiers is an assumed contact induced phenomenon, now restricted in IA to Magadhan languages (cf. Barz 1985) but they are also found in Awadhi and Nepali. In early Awadhi no classifiers are found. They are attested in early Nepali inscriptions (14th century) but not present in the adjacent Kumaoni (cf. Chalise 2015). Presumably there are traces of classifiers' system in modern Kalderash Romani (Osion 2018) which still requires further research.

Word count: 497

References

Aissen, J. 2003. Differential object marking: iconicity vs. economy. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 21. 435–483.

Barz R.K. and Diller A.V.N. 1985. Classifiers and standardization: some South and South-East Asian comparisons. In D. Bradley (ed.), *Papers in South-East Asian linguistics No. 9: Language policy, language planning and sociolinguistics in South-East Asia*, 155-184. Pacific Linguistics, A-67, 1985.

- Chalise, B. 2015. Nepāli avyaya, [Nepali indeclinables]. Kathmandu: Unique Educational Publishers.
- Emeneau, M.B. 1956. India as a linguistic area. *Language* 32: 3-16.
- Ivani, J., N. Paudyal & J. Peterson. 2021. A house divided? Evidence for the East-West Indo-Aryan divide and its significance for the study of northern South Asia. *Journal of South Asian Languages and Linguistics*, 7/2: 235-274.
- Jaworski, R. 2015. IATagger. <http://rjawor.vm.wmi.amu.edu.pl/tagging/>
- Khokhlova, L.V. 1992. Trends in the development of ergativity in New Indo-Aryan. *Osmania Papers in Linguistics* 18: 71-98.
- Khokhlova, L.V. 1995. The Development of Patient-Oriented Constructions in Late Western NIA Languages. *Osmania Papers in Linguistics* 21, 15–51.
- Khokhlova, L.V. 2006. Sintaktičeskaja evolucija zapadnyh novoindijskich jazykov v 15-20 v. [Syntactic evolution of Western New Indo-Aryan languages in 15-20 c.]. In Dybo et al. (eds.), *Aspekty komparativistiki* [Aspects of comparative studies]. 151-186. Moskva: Rossijskij Gosudarstvennyj Gumanitarnyj Universitet (Orientalia et Classica: Trudy Instituta Vostočnyh Kultur i Antičnosti: Vypusk VIII).
- Masica, C.P. 1976. Defining a linguistic area: South Asia. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Masica, C.P. 2001. The definition and significance of linguistic areas: methods, pitfalls, and possibilities (with special reference to the validity of South Asia as a linguistic area). In: R. Singh, P. Bhaskararao and K.V. Subbarao (eds.), *The yearbook of South Asian languages and linguistics 2001. Tokyo symposium on South Asian languages: Contact, convergence and typology*. New Delhi: Sage. 205–267.
- Montaut, A. 2018. The rise of differential object marking in Hindi and related languages. In I.A. Seržant & A. Witzlack-Makarevich (eds.), *Diachrony of Differential Argument Marking*, 281-313. Language Science Press.
- Oslon, M. 2018. Jazyk kotljarov-moldovaja. Grammatika kjeldjerarskogo dialekta cyganskogo jazyka v russkojazyčnom okruženii. [The language of cauldron-makers of Moldova. The grammar of the Kelderashi dialect of the Romani language in Russian surrounding]. Moskva: Jask Publishing house. Institute of Slavic Studies, Russian Academy of Science.
- Peterson, J. 2017. Fitting the pieces together – Towards a linguistic prehistory of eastern- central South Asia (and beyond). *Journal of South Asian Languages and Linguistics* 4(2). 211–257.
- Saksena, B. 1971 [1937]. *Evolution of Early Awadhi*. Delhi-Patna-Varanasi: Motilal Banarsidass
- Wallace, W.D. 1981. The evolution of ergative syntax in Nepali. *Studies in the Linguistic Sciences* 12: 147–211
- Author. 2014.