

Abstract

Contact-Induced Change: A study of Grammatical Case in Garhwali

In this study, I present a descriptive account of four types of changes in Grammatical Case that can be synchronically attested in Garhwali, a Central Pahari Indo-Aryan language spoken in India, due to contact with Hindi, the official language of India. These changes are:

- (i) Gradual decline in the use of the ‘first layer’ (Masica 1991) Genitive Case to the Hindi-style [Oblique Case + Postposition]:

| | Genitive Case | | Oblique Case + Postposition | |
|-----|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 01. | nənɔ: g ^h ɔr | nənɔ: g ^h ɔr | nənə-kɔ g ^h ɔr | nənɔ-kɔ g ^h ɔr |
| | boy.SG.GEN house.MSG | girl.SG.GEN house.MSG | boy.OBL-GEN house.MSG | girl.OBL-GEN house.MSG |
| | ‘The boy’s house’ | ‘The girl’s house’ | ‘The boy’s house’ | ‘The girl’s house’ |

- (ii) Loss of Case stacking/Semantic Case:

In certain contexts, more than one case-marking postposition can be ‘stacked’ on a DP in Garhwali:

| | | | | | | |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------|---------|------|-------|-------------------|-----------------|
| 02. | ḍ ^h arama | kɔ | geŋɔ | par | ḍjek ^h | εε ¹ |
| | mountain-side.LOC | GEN.MSG | star | there | see.IMP | come.PERF |
| | “Look, the star of the mountainside has appeared.” | | | | | |

Hindi doesn’t allow more than one case postposition following a single nominal. Due to intensive contact and teaching of Hindi prescriptive grammar at school, younger Garhwali speakers tend to use only one postposition (the syntactic one) in such contexts.

- (iii) To avoid the existing syncretism and for better distinguishability, younger speakers tend to use the borrowed Hindi /se/ Instrumental case postposition instead of the existing /nə/ which also acts as the ergative marker in Garhwali. This results in case postposition alternation i.e. co-existence of both the original and the borrowed element.

- (iv) Semantic Changes in the use of Locative /ma/- Due to contact with Hindi, the Garhwali locative marker /ma/ which had larger semantic field seems to have been gradually restricted to the purely locative function.

| | | | | | | | |
|-----|-----------------|---------|----------|---|-----------------|---------|----------|
| 03. | min | ram-ma | boli | → | min | ram-t̃ɛ | boli |
| | 1.ERG | Ram-LOC | say.PERF | | 1.ERG | Ram-ACC | say.PERF |
| | ‘I told Ram...’ | | | | ‘I told Ram...’ | | |

References:

Masica, C. P. 1991. *The Indo-Aryan Languages*. Cambridge University Press.

¹ This sentence is taken from a Garhwali folk song sung by Narendra Singh Negi.