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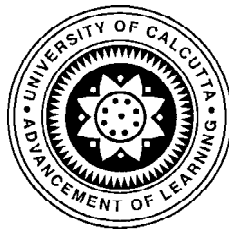
Department of Linguistics
UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA

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EDITED BY
Abhijit Majumdar

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Department of Linguistics
UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA

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Editor's Note

On behalf of the Department of Linguistics and the Editorial board of this volume, I feel honoured to present the current volume (No. 25) of this Bulletin. It goes without saying that sharing global knowledge and experience is the highest and honest aspiration for any Post-Graduate Department of an academic institution like the University of Calcutta. Our Department, being the oldest one in Asia and having a long history of glorious tradition, remains always committed to fostering a culture of intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, and innovative research. The present issue of the Bulletin is an outcome of the passion and commitment of our colleagues and the research fellows of the department. The contributors in this issue not only showcase the department's academic excellence but also demonstrate their dedication to advancing knowledge and understanding in the specific discipline. We congratulate our young research fellows for contributing all-around thought-provoking papers in this volume. Out of the seven contributions, the first three are from the Research Fellows of the Department. We feel happy to note that two of the Guest faculties who joined from other reputed academic institutions also expressed willingness in contributing their valuable papers in this Bulletin. A brief sketch of the content of the articles in this issue may be presented here in brief.

The paper by *Atreyi Gupta* attempts to discuss the definition of anti-language on the continuum of 'language' based on its usage and tries to establish that a secret language used by burglars and pickpockets may have a word-stock with a different connotative meaning serving a specific and specialized purpose.

Debalina Pal has made a serious effort in the domain of interactional sociolinguistic study with particular reference to the representation of sales interaction in the film *Mahanagar* (1963), directed by Satyajit Ray. The study adopts *Conversational analysis* as the primary analytical method for investigating the implications of politeness strategies in the organization of task-oriented sales interaction.

Kuntala Ghosh Dastidar aims in her paper to explore different structural as well as associated semantic parameters of echo-reduplication or echo-constructions across different language families in India.

Dr. Kanak Kanti Bera, a Guest Professor in our department,

contributed his paper on acoustic phonetics. His paper reports the results of an empirical investigation into the acoustic variation of Bodo vowels across the varieties used in specific districts of Assam.

Dr. Samir Karmakar, a Guest Professor in our department and currently the director of the School of Languages and Linguistics at Jadavpur University, has presented a thought-provoking paper on Vācyā (voice) in reference to Bangla. He explores two fundamental questions: first, how Vācyā is morpho-syntactically expressed in Bangla, and second, how underlying communicative intentions influence it. The author skillfully integrates the concept of pragmatics while explaining the grammatical ideas expressed in Bangla. The rest of the contributors are the faculties of the Department.

Dr. Aditi Ghosh designed her paper in an interactive style to focus on a serious sociological theme of language planning. The paper highlights some significant issues on corpus and status planning, problems of standardization, and specifically, the history and development of language planning.

The paper by *Dr. Abhijit Majumdar* aims to present a taxonomy of refusal strategies in Bangla following Beebe *et al* (1990), which may be employed in analyzing the performance of refusal as a speech act from the socio-pragmatic perspective.

Finally, I offer my sincerest thanks to our Head of the department, Prof Aditi Ghosh, who allowed me to edit this issue. Despite her administrative hazards and profound crisis in personal life, she gave me a constant support and courage to publish this volume. My earnest thanks also go to Prof Sunandan Kumar Sen. We are also grateful to our contributors, reviewers, and the editorial team for their tireless efforts. A note of appreciation to our wonderful research scholars for their sincerity and hard work.

I also like to express my gratitude to the chief patron of the Bulletin, Professor (Dr.) Santa Datta (De), Hon'ble Vice Chancellor and the Registrar, Prof. Debasis Das, for their constant inspiration and support. I express my heartfelt thanks to Mr. Jyotirmoy Rudra, Mr. Soumen Mukherjee and the dedicated staffs of Pioneer Traders for their genuine cooperation in printing this volume.

Abhijit Majumdar

25.05.25

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Anti-Language: A Discussion Based on Usages by Pick-pockets and Burglars of West Bengal

Atreyi Gupta

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Abstract :

M.A.K. Halliday (1976) defines “anti-language” as the language used by members living within an “anti-society” within the confines of what is generally understood as a ‘society’. This “anti-society” has members living in the fringes of society, encompassing a variety of sub-cultures. For the purpose of this paper, these members are considered as ones who though have a secondary source of income but draw their main source of income through unfair means, often at the cost of innocent lives. Based on these premises, this paper attempts to discuss the definition of “anti-language” on the continuum of “language” based on its usage and disambiguate from terms such as argot, cant, jargon, slang by drawing examples from the code language or secret language used by pick-pockets and burglars of West Bengal. The paper further tries to establish that though such “counter-languages” (Green, 2014, p 5) may be spoken mostly while carrying out criminal acts, it can be treated as similar to ‘professional codes’. This article also tries to establish that such a secret language may have words with a different meaning serving a specific, specialized purpose as opposed to the ones existing in common parlance.

Keywords: *anti-language, anti-society, secret language, pick-pockets, burglars, West Bengal.*

Introduction

Language has always performed different functions, one of which is maintaining secrecy, with the dual purpose of exclusion of “outsiders” and inclusion of “insiders”/“members”. This particular function of language forms the base for discussion in this paper, which attempts to disambiguate from terms such as argot, cant, jargon, slang based on the usage and purpose of words, drawing examples from the code or secret language used by pick-pockets and burglars of West Bengal, especially around Kolkata.

Argot, cant, jargon and slang have often in the past been interchangeably used with the connotation of derogation or disparagement being called as “vulgar tongue”, “thieves’ cant”, “akothyo bhASA”, etc. in the vast history of literature¹. This disparagement or derogation can be extended to include the speakers of such a language variation as who may be considered as vagabonds, the urban poor, uneducated or those that have no formal education etc. making the definition restrictive.

Aim

The aim of this paper is to establish the following.

- (i) To define that “anti-language” lies on the continuum of “language” based on the understanding that it is used by a certain group, namely, the “anti-socials” as a ‘professional code’.
- (ii) To disambiguate “anti-language” from the derogatory, disparaging and insulting tones wrongly associated with the alternative terms such as cant, argot, slang, “vulgar tongue”, etc.
- (iii) The users of the “anti-language” are not necessarily poor, uneducated or have no formal education and this language is borne out of a need to maintain secrecy.

Method

The data for this paper was collected through two methods and are discussed below.

Anti-Language:

- (i) By interviewing police officers and criminals/ex-criminals at police stations and/or headquarters such as Bhowanipore Police Station, Watch Section and Burglary Section, Lal Bazar Police Headquarters, Kolkata Police SB Office and Biddhannagar Police Headquarters between 2015 and 2019. All interviews were not recorded as in written form except one as the criminal informants did not give permission for the same.

The logic behind such disagreement is simple—the information is secretive, breaking the unsaid but strong understanding of maintaining secrecy (by the “anti-socials”) that is pivotal to carry out acts that are deemed/labelled ‘criminal’ by the law and unfair by citizens. Such information becoming a part of the ‘mainstream’ language users forces users of the “anti-language” to innovate/fashion new words to reclaim the aspect of secrecy.

It must be noted that these interviews form the primary source of data.

- (ii) The secondary source of data was collected through various newspaper articles, academic articles, past researches on the same or associated topic by researchers as Bhakti Prasad Mallik, M.A.K Halliday, Asif Agha, Ajit Roy, *et al.*

Background

For the purpose of this paper, it is important to understand the difference between a society and a sub-society. A society, with its members, would have hierarchies based on socio-economic classes. A sub-society is a smaller “social” construct (ensconced within a “society”), with its own set of rules and hierarchy consisting of members that earn a living through unfair means or criminal activities, often at the risk of life of the experiencer/mark/victim. This ‘sub-society’ can be called “anti-society”² (Halliday, 1976) as opposed to our general understanding of a ‘society’. The members of this society would be termed as “anti-socials” then and they would have a hierarchy, based upon the type of “skill” they would

be utilising to conduct criminal activities. The language they would speak to carry out afore-mentioned criminal activities would be an “anti-language” (Halliday, 1976), spoken with the main motive or purpose of maintaining secrecy, thereby facilitating an in-group/out-group distinction between an “anti-social” and a “social” member, respectively.

Through past research of Bhattacharya (2004) and through police as well as criminal/“anti-social” informant interviews conducted by the researcher, most “anti-socials”, especially pick-pockets, it was found that they have another source of income through professions sanctioned by “society” such as a vegetable vendor, cobbler, cane furniture maker, etc. though their main source of income are through criminal activities. One can say their main ‘profession’ is criminal activity and as they are members of the ‘society’ as well as the “anti-society”.

For the purpose of this paper, we look into two divisions of the criminal class in West Bengal, especially around Kolkata, namely:

- (i) Pick-pockets³, and
- (ii) Burglars⁴.

Data

This section is divided into two parts:

- (i) a discussion on the socio-economic class the “anti-socials” belong to, and
- (ii) a discussion on the words or vocabulary specifically used by the two “anti-social” classes discussed, above.

One has to keep in mind that the data and/or information collected through interviews with “anti-social” and police informants are not quantitative in nature but qualitative. The interviews were conducted in police stations—Bhowanipore Police Station and Kolkata Police SB Office or police headquarters at Biddhannagar Police Headquarters and in the Burglary and Watch departments, Lal Bazar, Kolkata. The basic understanding and substantiating the collected data are verified through two different sources,

Anti-Language:

- (i) primary sources such as, first-hand accounts or interviews from (a) “anti-social” informants and (b) police officers, and
- (ii) secondary sources such as, news articles, other published researches, etc.

Socio-Economic Classes of the “Anti-Socials”

The criminal categories that have been specifically chosen for the study always function in groups. There is a designated leader or “sordAr” who plans the operation. He acts as the ring leader and the major share or ‘cut’ of each haul goes to him or her. The leader, in most cases, may not participate in the actual criminal activity. The other members of the group or the actual executors of the crime, are divided according to the work they are designated to do. The work assigned to them is based on their specialised training they have received. The main reasons behind such work distribution are two-fold:

- (i) distracting the targets while the crime is being committed, and
- (ii) successful completion of the crime.

These executors, depending upon the work they are designated or have expertise in, get the rest of the ‘cut’ divided amongst them. For example, in a group of pick-pockets, has one “mistrI” or the main pickpocket, who cuts the purse and two or more members who carry a bag (in which the stolen items are hidden away) and/or distract the ‘mark’. The “mistrI” gets a higher share of the stolen amount or proceedings from selling said stolen items as his/her work is the one with the highest risk of being caught.

Through different interviews, it was established that there were instances where members of the “anti-society” may have been part of the middle class ‘society’ before becoming a part of the anti-society. In some instances, the “sordAr” had such a high income from the crimes, he was able to maintain a certain lifestyle, being a steady member of the urban high to high middle class⁵, providing for his family and being able to afford convent education for his children in Darjeeling. There also have been instances where the “mistrI” or the other executors have become part of the urban high or high middle class by buying and/or owning multiple properties in Kolkata.

As discussed in the previous sections, the “anti-socials” function within the boundaries of an “anti-society”. The membership to this anti-society is secretive, recommendation and skill-based. This “anti-society” is ensconced within the society. To the members of the society, the dual membership is unknown. Their awareness is only that of the membership to the society.

It must be noted that the primariness or secondariness of the professions are subjective to the membership to a society or an anti-society. For the “socials”, the secondary source (for the “anti-socials”) of income is the primary source of income for the “anti-socials”, as the “socials” are unaware of any other “social” identities and sources of income. Herein, the concept of in-group/out-group identities are applied. For the discourse of this paper, the income sources must be termed from the perspective of the “anti-socials”. The primary source of income is the higher paying source of income and is the one acquired through unfair means, through membership to the “anti-social” group. The secondary source of income is the lower paying source and acquired through fair means, through membership to “social” groups.

The primary source of income as evidenced through interviews has shown to be an absurdly higher paying one than the secondary source. The daily income can range upto 30 thousand rupees to one lakh, depending on the share each member gets and the value of the stolen items. The secondary source is where the “anti-social” has a “social” identity and earns through fair means of being a fruit seller or a vegetable seller or a cobbler or a cane furniture maker, etc.

To be able to live without raising alarm within the society, the primary income is never or rarely flaunted. This is true for the lower-ranking “anti-socials” such as “mistrIs” or other executors. The “sordArs” as discussed above, can flaunt the same as they may have higher “social” and secondary source of income that can support their claim of membership to high or high middle class without raising any alarm or suspicion.

Interviewing criminal and police informants resulted in the understanding that most criminals, especially, pickpockets have basic, formal education. Some have studied up to Class 7 or Class 8. They

Anti-Language:

have chosen the criminal ‘profession’ for varied reasons, absentee parents, a drug habit to be sustained, quick and easy source of income, disinterest towards formal education, etc.

As seen from the discussion above, what is displayed for the society by the “anti-socials” fall under the definitions or patterns of “social” class markers, namely education, wealth, ownership of property, etc. The “anti-socials” chosen for this study, therefore comply or follow the rules of the “society”. This is reflected in terms of education, “social” markers such as clothes, vehicles, property, living quarters, locality chosen for habitation, their secondary profession, etc. Therefore, when defining and/or identifying the socio-economic class of the “anti-socials”, the parameters used are that of the “society”.

Vocabulary Used by the “Anti-Socials”

A table below provides examples of words that are part of the “anti-language” with the same representing a different meaning in “language”. For the purpose of this paper, “anti-language” is the specialised, secretive, restrictive language or a vocabulary set with specialised, secretive meanings. “Language” is a natural language spoken by the members of the “society”.

The mother tongue or first language or the language in which the “anti-social” has maximum fluency has to be considered as the matrix language and the specialised words used, to be considered as the embedded language (Auer & Muhamedova, 2005). The rules of grammar are that of the matrix language which is a natural language. The purpose of such a language is to maintain secrecy (Blom & Gumperz, 2001, p 102-126).

The first language or mother-tongue of the anti-socials who were interviewed was Bengali or Urdu as reported to the interviewer during the interviews. Most anti-socials, as reported by the criminal and substantiated by police informants, are from the high/middle high/middle class “society”. The matrix language may vary between Hindi or Bengali, depending on the area that the crime is taking place in. This is mostly applicable for the pickpockets. Therefore, the matrix language would be an unmarked one that would be based on the demographics of the area.

Therefore, if the pickpocket operates within a particular area such as Burrabazar, Hindi would be an unmarked choice, considering the large number of business owners working in the area are Marwari and Hindi works as a link language for them and the customers. If the pickpockets are operating on particular bus routes, Bengali may be the unmarked matrix language choice. These choices are based on the primary function of maintaining secrecy or unmarkedness.

For a burglar, the use of spoken language would be far more limited or restrictive as opposed to the pickpockets based on each group's unique "job profile". A burglar can plan/conduct the crime in far more secrecy or with limited communication as opposed to a pickpocket. A pickpocket almost always operate in crowded places where, spoken language though limited, is still important and maintaining unmarkedness and secrecy becomes paramount.

The examples from primary and secondary data sources are furnished below:

Anti-language Word	Meaning in "anti-language"	Meaning in "language"	Type of data	Used by the type of criminal
cAbi	Quarter piece of blade used for cutting purses	key	Primary data	Pick-pockets
DAktAr	police	doctor	Primary data	Pick-pockets
dhur	Mark/victim	Exclamation (Bengali) Stupid person (Hindi)	Primary data/ Secondary data	Pick-pockets
engineer	Main burglars	A person who designs/builds /maintains building, machine, etc.	Primary data	Burglars

Anti-Language:

Anti-language Word	Meaning in “anti-language”	Meaning in “language”	Type of data	Used by the type of criminal
gAmchA	Housebreaking implement	Towel/wash-cloth (Bengali)	Primary data	Burglars
mistrI	1. Main pick-pocket who cuts the purse/bag 2. One who designs the false key to break into a house for burglary	labourer	Primary data	1. Pick-pockets 2. Burglars
pAtA /pattA	Quarter piece of razor blade used for cutting purses	Leaf/playing card	Primary data	Pick-pockets
seAnA	An expert burglar	smart	Primary data	Burglars
suto/sutA	Chain/necklace	String/thread	Primary data	Pick-pockets
tAS	Quarter piece of blade used for cutting purses	Playing card	Primary data	Pick-pockets

Upon comparing the meanings of the different words furnished in the above table, one can see that the meanings in “anti-language” are used in an extended semantic sense of the meanings than that which exist in common parlance.

For example, ‘cAbi’ meaning ‘key’ in Bengali or Hindi or ‘tAS’ meaning ‘playing card’ in Bengali or Hindi denote a quarter piece of a blade stored generally under the tongue of the pick-pocket used

as an instrument for cutting pockets/bags in anti-language. A thin necklace is called 'suto' or 'sutA' by pick-pockets which in Bengali or Hindi mean 'thread'. 'pattA' or 'pAtA' means money for a pick-pocket though in Bengali or Hindi it denotes 'leaf'.

Each word has a specific, specialized purpose when used as a part of "anti-language". Each word is a part of a 'professional code' or sociolect with no sense of negative connotation that 'akothya bhAsA' or slang, argot, cant, jargon has when these words are interchangeably used in a derogatory or disparaging manner.

Such words as a part of an "anti-language" is used in polite society/"society" while the "anti-socials" are pursuing their main profession as opposed to the common belief that such a language is commonly used to insult or meant for derogation. The main motive of such usages is to maintain secrecy such that the marks/victims are not aware of the "anti-social's" intentions.

When the listener of an "anti-language" is a member of "society", they may mis-catalogue it as a variety of a "language". The mis-cataloguing is because the words are similar as those in "language". It must be noted that "anti-language" is used for a limited time and often in unobtrusive ways in order to avoid suspicion or curiosity.

Most intra-group interactions for pick-pockets, while committing a crime, are limited. Most interactions are limited to gestures or body language. The circumstances under which the crime is conducted is distracting for the mark, with existing distractions in the form of crowd, noise, motion, monetary transactions (buying bus/train tickets) and movement. Additional distraction is provided by the other executors and the "mistrI" by physically pushing the mark around, creating an environment of mock 'fights' as a distraction.

For burglars, "anti-language" is far more infrequently used than pick-pockets as there is a higher level of secrecy involved. To avoid detection, spoken language is limited to when it is absolutely necessary. Similar to pick-pockets, intra-group communication is mostly restricted to body language and gestures. The *modus operandi* is to maintain as much silence as possible.

Anti-Language:

For both the classes of “anti-socials” considered for this paper, the use of “anti-language” is momentary and limited.

Considering the factors under which such an “anti-language” is employed, the time-restrictive nature of its use, mis-cataloguing, distractions, the rules of grammar used, it can be placed within the continuum of a “language”.

Conclusion

It is evident through the discussions above that that members of the “anti-society” are ensconced within the society. They follow patterns that fit the “social” markers for defining classes. Therefore, it is established that “anti-socials” are educated to a limited extent, have wealth, live in certain locales, etc. This defies or opposes the definition that “anti-socials” are poor or uneducated, lowly or vagabonds.

The purpose with which “anti-language” is used has specificity, that is maintaining secrecy. It can be catalogued as a ‘professional code’ with no intent of conveying derogation, insult or disparagement. The “anti-language” employs the rules of a “language”, wherein the words with extended, specific, secretive meanings exist as an embedded language within the framework of the matrix “language”. It can then be identified as a communication variety existing within the continuum of “language”, following the rules of a natural language.

In summary, “anti-language” can be identified as a separate, disparagement-free, insult-free or derogation-free, professional code used by members of a secret, “anti-social” society that bears no prejudices associated with the general understandings of ‘akothya bhAsA’ or slang, argot, cant, jargon. The users of the “anti-language” display the markers used for identifying “social” class and can be defined as high or high middle class members.

End Notes

- 1 Refer to discussions in works of Green (2014), etc.
- 2 Anti-society” is not used in a negative connotation but as Halliday (1976) had defined it, saying that such a society existed as a form of resistance. But such a society would also simultaneously, parallelly, exist within the structures of ‘society’ with the “anti-socials”.
- 3 Pick-pockets can be defined as those (almost always) functioning as a group of two or more, with one main cutpurse and two others to distract the mark/victim, cutting purses, lifting wallets, jewellery, watches, mobile phones etc. by cutting purses with a razor blade or simply lifting the items and transferring it to a different bag.
- 4 Burglars can be defined as those operating in groups of two or more who break into a household to steal items after surveying and verifying the viability of the targeted household.
- 5 Vakulabharanam (2010) defined the urban elite as owners, managers and professionals. The “sordArs” can fall under this category based on the job profile they have within the “anti-society”.

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An Interactional Sociolinguistic Study of Sales Talk from Satyajit Ray's *Mahanagar*

Debalina Pal

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Abstract :

The present paper attempts an interactional sociolinguistic study of a conversation between a sales representative and her potential client, where the former participant is affiliated with an institution (such as an industrial concern or a trading enterprise) and displays discernible orientation towards the pre-determined task of generating the client's positive interest in the product or service being offered. With particular reference to representations of sales interaction in the film Mahanagar ('The Big City', dir. Satyajit Ray, 1963), the study aims to explore the significant ways in which initiation of an agenda-specific topic is closely related to the issue of social 'face' (Goffman 1967) of the participants engaged in conversation. Given the difference in social status and the reward-obligation relation between the two participant categories, initiating topics aligned with the salesperson's agenda is normatively characterised as an intrusion upon the addressee's negative face wants, requiring adequate reparative measures. This study adopts Conversation Analysis as the primary analytic method to investigate the implementation of 'politeness strategies' (Brown & Levinson, 1987) in the organisation of task-oriented topic talk during sales interaction.

Keywords: *topic talk, politeness strategies, face, task-orientation*

Introduction

The present paper attempts an interactional sociolinguistic study of a conversation between a sales representative and potential client, where at least one of the participants is affiliated to an institution (such as an industrial concern or a trading enterprise) and displays discernible orientation towards the pre-determined task of generating the client's positive interest in the product or service being offered. With particular reference to representations of sales interaction in the film *Mahanagar* ('The Big City', dir. Satyajit Ray, 1963), it aims to explore the significant ways in which the initiation of an agenda-specific topic is closely related to the issue of social 'face' (cf. Goffman, 1967) of the participants engaged in conversation.

Objectives and Methodology

The primary objective of this paper is to study the ways in which mutually engaging topical conversation inter-relates with the ritualistic aspects of preserving the social selves of the participants. It also aims to analyse the sequencing strategies and other socio-linguistic resources implemented by the participants in the light of their relevance to the emergent need for alignment with the foregrounded social roles and the projected goal of the conversation. Using Conversation Analysis as the primary analytic method, it aims to investigate the implementation of 'politeness strategies' (Brown & Levinson, 1987) in the organisation of task-oriented topic talk during sales interaction. Additionally, this paper will also endeavour to analyse some of the structural and sequential methods of topic organisation in social interaction. The data utilised for the study has been phonetically transcribed following the conventions of the IPA. The conventions of Transcription developed by Gail Jefferson have also been implemented for representing structural aspects of the sequential pattern as well as relevant extra-linguistic and prosodic nuances like pause, intonation, laughter etc.

Theoretical Framework

I shall adopt Conversation Analysis (henceforth abbreviated as CA)

as the primary theoretical tool for the study. CA was conceptualized by Harvey Sacks (1974), along with his early collaborators Emanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson, primarily as a method to describe the sequential organisation of 'talk-in-interaction' (Schegloff, 1987) as it occurred in the course of daily lives and to reason for its normative implementation by the participants as a fundamental tool for managing social lives and relationships. CA studies argue that the organisational structures of conversation and/or 'talk-in-interaction' display orientation towards the relevant social context by actively building an interpretation of the same within the sequence itself. Thus each turn at talk produced by a participant serves as the context for the next turn to be produced by another participant, and each succeeding turn incorporates an understanding and interpretation of the previous turn. The cumulative process leads to the structured execution of a social action.

The sequential distribution of talk through turn-taking mechanism has been explored in the pioneering work of Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson who argued that "speech-exchange systems" are constrained by "the particular form of turn-taking system that operates on it" (1974, p. 696). Its universal features include normative preference for, a. the rule of one speaker speaking at a time and, b. for recurrent change in speakership. The orderliness and economy affected through turn-taking is best explicated in the implementation of 'adjacency pairs'. According to Schegloff, "...adjacency pairs consist of sequences which properly have the following features: 1. two utterance length, 2. adjacent positioning of component utterances, 3. different speakers producing each utterance." (1973, p. 295). The adjacency pair sequences exhibit "relatedness" (ibid, p. 295-296) and "close order sequential implicativeness" (ibid, p. 296) brought about by its basic rule of operation: "given the recognizable production of the first pair part [i.e., first of the two utterances], on its first possible completion its speaker should stop and a next speaker should start and produce a second pair part from the pair type of which the first is recognizably a member," (ibid, p. 296).

Theoretical developments on the subject of topic organisation in

conversation have focused on studying the ways in which the close ordering feature of adjacency pairs are exploited by the co-participants for generating continuous, mutually collaborative stretches of on-topic talk. For instance, Schegloff & Sacks (1973) observe that for multiple reasons, participants may prefer to get their mentionables mentioned by fitting the same into the flow of conversation (p. 78). Rather than explicitly nominating a topic at the beginning of a conversation, they prefer to wait for the natural occurrence of a relevant utterance. When the same occurs, in the form of a question for instance, it is functionally treated as the first part of a QA (Question and Answer) adjacency pair and the desired mentionable is then fitted in as a sequentially implicated and relevant second pair part of that adjacency pair. More proactive approaches to topical conversation have also been observed to utilise the closely ordered organisation of adjacency pairs for eliciting preferred responses. Schegloff (2007) analyses the implementation of QA adjacency pairs as topic-proffering sequence, wherein the first pair part is observed to proffer or propose a possible topic for conversation, while the second pair part minimally constitutes of a yes/no response. The response registered in the latter slot usually signifies the recipient's acceptance or rejection, besides functioning as the context for the occurrence of slots constituting further expansion. Schegloff further distinguishes the topic proffering approach from other methods such as "disjunctive new topic starts" and "step-by-step topic shifts". Apart from multiple instances of topic proffering yielding diverse sequential results with respect to organisation of topic-talk, the data chosen for the present study also registers evidences of new topic starts, either at the conversational opening or following the boundary of a previous topic-sequence. It is therefore pertinent to briefly discuss theories concerning disjunctive topic initiation and its sequential possibilities. Button and Casey's (1988-1989) extensive work in the concerned domain registers three types of boundaried topical initiation and movement: "topic initial elicitor sequence", "itemized news enquiry" and "news announcement". While the first category is implemented to invite an addressee for proposing a newsworthy topic for conversation, the

other two are used to unilaterally nominate topics while the addressee is preferably expected to topicalise the same through conditionally relevant responses. The authors further emphasise the need for collaborative engagement by the co-participants for effective progress and execution of all the three types of sequences. These methods of topic organisation will be further considered for detailed elaboration and discussion in relation to the chosen data in the analysis section.

Discussions on the structural aspects of topic organisation in conversation would however remain incomplete without considering the social context in which such conversation takes place as well as the social implications of a movement such as topic-initiation. The Politeness Theory, developed by Penelope Brown and Stephen C. Levinson (1987) on the basis of Erving Goffman's (1955, 1967) socio-psychological notion of 'face', argues that participants in communication regularly devise a range of linguistic strategies, cumulatively known as 'face work', to prevent damage to each other's face as far as possible. The severity of consequence following such damage is measured in terms of social factors like the degree of social power or influence exercised by the speaker and/or addressee, as well as the social distance between the participants, and the strategies are adopted accordingly. The relevance of this theory may be further illustrated with reference to the data chosen for analysis. The data selected for the present study concerns cinematic representation of the interaction between a sales representative and her potential client. They are previously unacquainted with each other, unequally positioned in the social hierarchy, and are therefore likely to share a formal relationship. In the given context the two categories of participants are further correlated through a reward-obligation nexus that places considerably higher value on the social self of the client than that of the sales person. The sales person is therefore under a greater obligation to implement politeness strategies in order to preserve the client's social 'face' and mitigate the damage that he or she may have inadvertently caused by intruding upon the client's personal space for the purpose of selling a certain product.

Analysis

In this section I shall endeavour to apply the previously introduced concepts regarding topic organisation in order to analyse the chosen data under four broad categories, namely, Pre-Topical Sequence, Topic Initial Elicitor Sequence, Topic Proferring Sequences and Topic Change.

Pre-Topical or Opening Sequence

Emanuel Schegloff (1986) devoted one of his early papers on telephonic conversations to the study of the range of social actions which are ‘routinely’ achieved in and through the interactional openings. The excerpt chosen for the present analysis exemplifies some of the actions noted by Schegloff, with the addition of certain discernible aspects that underscore the reward-obligation nexus between the engaging participants.

Excerpt 1

A: Arati, the salesperson; L: Lady of the house, her potential client
Arati is waiting in the sitting area. The Lady of the house approaches.

1. A: nəmoʃkar
Greetings.
2. L: ((returns the gesture))
3. A: apnake ɔʃomɔe ekʈu ‘birokoto korlam.
I disturbed you at an odd hour
4. L: ↑na:↑,
no
5. apnakei to ami ɔnekkho:n –
It is I who made you wait for long
6. L: boʃun.
sit

Arati opens the conversation and utilises the first turn as a politeness strategy to mitigate the ‘face threatening act’ (henceforth abbreviated as FTA) she has already committed by intruding upon

the addressee's domestic space uninvited at an hour when she might have been resting or otherwise engaged. The turn constructional unit (TCU) is prefaced by a formal token of greeting (line 1) that both signifies the social distance and displays the speaker's reverent stance towards the addressee. It is followed by an assertive claim of ownership (line 3) for the act already committed: discernible stress on the first syllable of the word 'birokto' (meaning 'to disturb') underscores the gravity of the 'fault' committed while falling terminal intonation displays the speaker's appeal for truce as well as her openness to further response on the matter. The lady responds with a note of apology (lines 4-5) for her delay in coming down to meet Arati. She speaks just enough to convey the intended sense and leaves the first utterance unfinished to move onto a formal invitation (line 6) for Arati to be seated. This turn is significant on multiple grounds: firstly, her utterance functions as positive acknowledgement and thereby marks the success of Arati's face work, besides executing some 'face work' of its own. The apology syntactically echoes Arati's assertive formation with the distinction of being prefaced by a negative marker; these two aspects are combined to convey the sense that Arati is no longer being held to account and that her FTA has been nullified through the FTA simultaneously committed by the speaker herself. Secondly, this display of attention to Arati's face want acts as a social leveler, indicating the amicable social terms on which the two participants are likely to operate during the interaction. While Arati's professional identity as a sales representative along with her pre-mediated agenda for initiating the interaction does determine the sequential and topical organisation, the lady's response nonetheless opens the floor for her to parley as a fellow woman of the society. Moreover, by inviting Arati to take her seat, the speaker displays her willingness to socially engage with her; the invitation therefore promises the speaker's attention and co-operation in making conversation on mutually acceptable topics. The fact that Arati uses the very next turn to proffer a topic for conversation and that she is rewarded with a relevant response, proves this point. The opening sequence thus executes significant foundational work.

Topic Initial Elicitor Sequence

Button and Casey (1984) define the Topic Initial Elicitor Sequence as a typically three-turn sequence initiated with the kind of topic-initiating utterance that invites the addressee to elect a possible candidate for topical talk. It is preferably followed by the presentation of a newsworthy topic which is then “topicalized” in the third turn by the initiator of the sequence. The authors further emphasise the collaborative nature of this method of topic-initiation as well as its particular effectiveness at specific junctures of conversation, namely, at the openings, closings, and following boundaries of preceding topic sequences. The following analysis applies this formulation to examine the extent to which the sales representative Arati is able to follow up the topic initial elicitor with a topical talk which is ideally both collaborative and aligned with the pre-determined professional goal.

Excerpt 2

A: Arati, the salesperson; L: Lady of the house, her potential client

1. L: ki bæpar bolun to?
what is the matter
2. A: (2.0) ((speaks while looking inside her bag))
3. ami ækta farmer tɔrop^h t^heke astʃi.
I am coming on behalf of a firm
4. A: amader ækta meʃi:n- =
we have a machine
5. L: =meʃi:nʃ?
machine?
6. ɪlɛktrikəl naki?
is it electrical?
7. A: na ↑na:ʃ?
no, no
8. ((offers L an advertising booklet))
9. L: ((accepts the booklet and begins to read it))
10. (5.0) ↑o:ʃ,
oh

11. ¹nɪtɪŋ ¹meɪʃn;
 knitting machine
12. ¹to:bu bʱalo.
 that's better
 ((A few turns in the conversation have been left out))
13. A: e apni ¹ha:tei toiri korte parben.
 it is manual
14. æktə pulobʱar apni;
 one pullover you can
15. (.) æk gʱɔntə deɾ gʱɔntə moddʱe ¹bunte parben.
 knit within one or one and half hour.

The topic initial elicitor, produced by the lady (line 1) is designed as a question, and thus functions as the first pair part of a QA adjacency pair. By sequential implication, the utterance offers the sales representative a befitting spot in the sequential order to incorporate the desired mentionable. Arati makes suitable use of this opportunity by revealing her identity and the purpose of the visit in response (lines 2-4). Even before she is interrupted by the lady with a follow-up query (line 5), she has already placed the two most important tokens of information: one, that she represents a firm (meaning 'a company' or 'a commercial institution') and two, that she has come to talk about a machine that the said 'firm' has produced. The lady's query, latched on to Arati's previous utterance, functions as a topicaliser structured around the subject of 'machine'. The topicaliser constitutes the third turn in the three-part formation of a topic initial elicitor sequence (as per Button and Casey, 1984) and in this particular case, it serves to express the speaker's apprehension regarding the possible 'electrical' character of the said 'machine', also thereby sequentially implicating clarification on the raised issue. In response (lines 7-8), Arati prefaces the second pair part with a firm negative to allay her apprehension. She follows up by offering the advertising booklet for the lady's perusal. This move is exemplary in its execution of multiple social functions: it adds a visual dimension to Arati's efforts for incorporating desired

mentionables into the flow of the conversation; the visual aide proves to be an extremely useful resource for engaging the attention of the lady and in generating mutually sustained talk on the subject of the said machine. Moreover, this move significantly economises on the verbal task of description and explanation, reduces the possibilities of misapprehension in course of the turn-by-turn progress of the interaction and simultaneously increases the possibility of getting the message across with accuracy and desired effect. The point is proven by the lady's first spoken turn (lines 10-12) after receiving the booklet. Upon receiving the booklet, she focuses her attention on its perusal and appears convinced. She expresses her relief on learning from the booklet that Arati has been referring to a relatively harmless, technologically simplistic knitting machine. Thus, once the lady's doubts are effectively put to rest, Arati utilises the succeeding turns to enlist the benefits of the product (lines 13-15) in order to further engage and convince her potential client about its usefulness. This extract thus displays some of the ways in which topic initial elicitor can lead to collaboratively sustained on-topic conversation. The analysis has also attempted to elaborate on one of the key aspects of the sequential order through which such conversation may progress: namely, the interactional method of structuring goal-oriented topic talk by fitting in desired mentionables at sequentially and semantically relevant junctures. This method corresponds with Schegloff and Sacks' observations regarding the topic-talk structure wherein the conversationalists prefer to get their "mentionables mentioned" by utilizing "the local organisation of utterances in course of the conversation". (1973, p.78).

Topic Proffering Sequences

According to Emanuel Schegloff (2007), topic proffering utilises the closely-ordered and sequentially implicative character of QA adjacency pairs to launch topic talk. "With topic proffer", the author observes, "a speaker proposes a particular topic... [and thus] makes it available to recipient to embrace or reject, to 'buy into' or decline" (pp.169-170). Two more characteristic features of this method are

of particular significance to the current discussion. Firstly, it creates a sequential order wherein a preferred utterance is rewarded with an expanded response and/or extended talk on the proposed topic, and secondly, it is mostly useful for launching conversation on recipient-oriented topics, matters which primarily concern the recipient and are largely partly of his/her subjective domain and/or sphere of knowledge. The recipient therefore holds the primary authority and responsibility to 'topicalise' such matters. The present analysis will study the effectiveness and sequential consequences of topic proffering under two subcategories: A. topic-proffering by the sales representative, and B. topic-proffering by the potential client. Under the first category, I shall endeavour to study the efficacy of implementing the topic-proffering method in generating mutually engaging goal-oriented interaction. Additionally, and in extension of Maynard and Zimmerman's (1984) views regarding the ritual need "to protect the 'selves' of involved parties" (pp. 301-302) while initiating topic talk between previously unacquainted persons, it is also hereby pertinent to study if and how this method contributes to the process of mitigating the possibilities of committing FTA particularly while inviting potential clients to share relevant personal /biographical information deemed necessary/useful for achieving the desired end.

Under the second category, it will be argued that, given the institutionalised thrust on goal orientation, the success or effectiveness of the topical talk lies in the concerned salesperson's ability to fit the desired 'mentionable' into the flow of conversation generated as a result of their client's topic-proffering efforts.

Topic Proffering by Sales Representative

The Pre-Topical or Opening Sequence illustrated the 'gatekeeping' and foundational tasks achieved through interactional opening. The following instance of a topic proffering sequence involving Arati and the Lady yields the positive results of the opening routine which opened the floor for the two participants to converse as fellow social beings.

Excerpt 3

A: Arati, the salesperson; L: Lady of the house, her potential client;

1. A: ((looks at her side))
2. (3.0) eʈa:
is this
3. (.) ápnar toiri ↑ka:dʒ↑=
your handiwork
4. L: =o ↑ʃe:,
oh that
5. ʒnekkal a:ʎger;
is from a long time ago
6. ækhon ar biʃeʃ ki↑tʃhu:↑ -
now I can't manage to make anything as such
7. L: ki bæper bolun to?
what is the matter

Arati initiates turn (lines 2-3) by drawing the lady's attention to the decorative item put on display beside the seat and asks whether it is her handiwork. Her proffered topic has a distinctive recipient orientation as it falls under the lady's subjective domain. The query, besides, sequentially implicating a yes/no response, also upholds the recipient's exclusive authority on the suggested subject matter. The lady responds (lines 4-6) by citing the item's ancientness and her present lack of time to indulge in such hobbies, thereby providing an indirect affirmation. The evident modesty in her response also signifies acknowledgment of the positive value that Arati has placed on her 'self' by noticing the said item and guessing about her creative ability. This partially expanded response thus marks the success of Arati's topic-proffering efforts, as it stretches beyond the minimal yes/no marker and includes ancillary information spontaneously shared by the speaker. Concerning the goal-oriented nature of the interaction, it may be observed that this brief exchange reveals significant pieces of biographical information (regarding the lady's creative inclination and present lack of time) which are directly aligned with the subject of knitting machine. Therefore both

social ritual (namely implementation of politeness strategy or ‘facework’) and business orientation are intricately interwoven in this instance of topic-proffering by the sales representative Arati.

Topic Proffering by the Potential Client

The following excerpt displays the continuation of Arati’s interaction with her potential client, the lady of the house. She continues to peruse the advertising booklet with sustained focus, and proffers sub-topics related to the main subject of knitting machine for further discussion and/or clarification.

Excerpt 4

A: Arati, the salesperson; L: Lady of the house, her potential client

1. L: ete nana rɔkom,
with this machine, various
2. pætəno hɔe budʒhi?
patterns can also be knit I think
3. A: hǎ: .
yes
4. kitʃ^{hu} pætərn,
some patterns
5. apni oi: ; (.) ((indicates with raised finger))
you
6. ʃeʃer diktae paben.
may find towards the end of the booklet
7. L: ((follows cue. turns to the last pages))
8. L: (2.0) o?
oh
9. hǎ: ↑hǎ::↑,
right right
10. (2.0) kɔto ↑da:m↑?
how much does it cost
11. A: ((smiles, lowers her gaze, then gradually looks up as she is speaking))

12. damer dʒonne apni bʰabben na : ;
please do not worry about the price
13. o apnar katʃʰe ʰkitʃʰui nɔe.
to you it's simply nothing
14. (1.0) ami bɔrontʃo ar ækɖin e.ʰʃe:ʰ,
rather shall I come another day
15. ækta ʰdɪmɔnstreɪʃən die dʒa:i?
for demonstration
16. ((inclines head to one side))

The lady initiates turn (lines 1-2) to elicit Arati's views on knitting patterns with the help of the machine. The TCU is structured as a question that sequentially implicates a yes/no response, thereby functioning simultaneously as the first pair part of a QA adjacency pair as well as a topic proffer. Arati prefaces her response (lines 3-6) with an affirmation, thereby completing the pair-type, and then goes on to expand on the subject. Once again she utilises the booklet for further illustration and directs her addressee to the portion of the booklet where she may find the information she is looking for. The lady follows her cue and appears satisfied (lines 7-9) with the information thus presented to her. This exchange therefore offers an instance of effective topic proffering that leads to expanded talk on the proffered topic, which moreover falls in line with the pre-determined goal of the conversation.

The lady utilises the same turn to close the on-going topical sequence (by expressing her satisfaction with the information regarding patterns) and proffer a related sub-topic for elaboration in course of the succeeding turns. This time, she asks Arati (line 10) the price of knitting machine. Though perfectly aligned with the buying and selling ritual, the raised issue is a sensitive one. For, the product comes with a relatively high price tag, and though Arati has followed the advice of her boss in choosing an affluent household for selling it, she still runs the risk of intimidating her seemingly interested customer by bluntly quoting the price. Although a topic proffer technically provides the recipient with the option to decline

or pass over the subject, it must be noted that Arati, as the sales representative, is normatively obliged to satisfy the relevant queries of her potential customer, and cannot therefore avail herself of the said option. She elects to speak on the subject with moderate expansion (lines 12-13) to display her enthusiasm and interest in responding to the lady but also manages to avoid quoting the exact figure or even hinting that the product may be expensive. Structurally she incorporates the term 'daam' (meaning 'price') and composes the first part of her TCU as a semantically and sequentially befitting response to the initiated query; but instead of providing conclusive details, she uses a politeness strategy to imply that the price is negligible to her affluent status and superior buying power. The utterance upholds the value attached to the addressee's social image and thus avoids the damage that could have been caused by a flat rejection of the proposed topic, while also circumventing the need to respond directly on the subject. This move also brings the contentious topic to a closure, and Arati switches to another correlated topic, the details of which will be discussed under the category of Topic Change.

Topic Change

Maynard (1980) observes that topic change is initiated and collaboratively achieved by the participants primarily in order to sustain the flow of on-topic conversation. Topics that are likely to generate mutually sustainable interaction are therefore raised and topicalised in the consecutive turns. According to Maynard, topic changes mostly occur at the sequential junctures where the previous topic talk is about to reach an end, or when a previously raised topic has failed to produce a considerable stretch of interaction. Such failure is moreover signaled by the occurrence of abrupt, sequentially dispreferred pauses and minimal response from the recipient that is inimical to further exchange on a particular topic. For the present context of institutional interaction however, one needs to factor in the need for goal-orientation, in order to understand the participants' decision to change topic as well as their collaborative manner of sustaining a particular trajectory of topic talk.

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The reason behind Arati's decision to close off the previous discussion on the subject of the price of the knitting machine has been previously elaborated under the sub-section titled "Topic Proferring by the Potential Client". The following excerpt displays the topic change and the interactional effort actively undertaken by Arati to sustain talk on the initiated topic despite 'offstage' summons for her recipient's attention.

Excerpt 5

A: Arati, the salesperson; L: Lady of the house, her potential client;
C: child heard in the background.

1. A: (1.0) ami bɔrɒntʃo ar ækdin e.ʃje:ʃ,
instead shall I come another day
2. æktə ˈdɪmɒnstreɪʃən di dʒa:i?
for demonstration
3. ((inclines head to one side))
4. (2.0) pause in conversation
5. C: ((heard in the background))
6. ↑ma: !
mother
7. niki amar kɔtha ʃuntʃhe na:↑? =
niki is not listening to me
8. ((L raises her head and looks up in response))
9. A: =ʃamner budhbar ↑di:n↑?
how about coming Wednesday
10. érɔkom ʃomɔe?
same time as today?
11. L: atʃha!
okay
12. mane: (.) tʰik dʒiniʃta ˈna dekʃle:ʃ-
I mean without seeing the thing
13. ((returns the booklet to A))
14. A: (3.0) tʰik á:tʃhe,
it's okay

15. ámi budʰbar |dini aʃbo.
I shall come on Wednesday itself
16. ((L stands up signalling termination of conversation.
17. A follows the cue and stands up along with L while
simultaneously arranging her bag.))
18. L: ami agey dʒiniʃtar (.) ʎa:m ʃune↑tʃi:↑,
I have heard it's name before
19. kintu ʎidʒe tʃokhe kəkhono dekhini.
but I have never seen it with my own eyes

After closing the previous topic-sequence (lines 12-15 of the Excerpt analysed under 4.3.2), Arati utilises the same turn to shift to a related sub-topic (lines 1-2) of fixing another appointment for 'demonstration'. Both the change in topic and its continuity with the central theme are signaled by the use of the conjunctive phrase "baroncho" (Bengali word meaning 'instead'). But before the lady can respond to her suggestion, she is summoned by one of her children (lines 6-7) who is present offstage. Thus two competing summons have now been placed on her person and she ought to decide which one to attend first in the succeeding turn at talk. Arati however takes advantage of being physically nearer to the lady and intervenes within the short pause with follow-up questions (lines 9-10) about the next meeting. This method of persuasion, together with the lady's positive response (line 11) and enthusiastic inputs (lines 18-19) on the central theme, sustains the flow of interaction on the elected topic. This exercise, moreover catalyses a positive outcome for the entire interaction. Hence it may be argued that this excerpt unfolds the significant way in which the choice of a particular subject matter and the sequential pattern of topicalisation shape the outcome of a task-oriented interaction. Such an ending is remarkable from the aspect of business discourse as it signifies Arati's success as a business-woman: although functionally she is at the receiving end while the lady holds the reward (namely the promise of another appointment and eventually a purchase of the knitting machine), Arati has hereby succeeded in convincing her potential client that latter stands to benefit or gain something from this social encounter.

Conclusion

The above discussion has been an attempt to study topic-in-action, that is, some aspects of the patterned ways in which topicality is achieved by the co-participants in interaction. Analysis of the sequential organisation of topics within sales talk further yielded insights about the multi-dimensional character of talk-in-interaction where utterances are mobilised to serve multiple socio-linguistic functions.

Appendix: Glossary of Transcript Symbols

Serial No.	Symbol	Uses
1.	[	Overlapping talk: Left square brackets indicate the onset of two overlapping utterances.
2.	]	Overlapping talk: Right square brackets indicate the end of two overlapping utterances.
3.	=	Latching: Equal signs, one placed at the end of one line and the other placed at the beginning of the next indicate lack of pause or gap between two turns.
4.	(.)	A dot in parentheses indicates a micro-pause, ordinarily silence less than 0.2 seconds.
5.	(0.0)	Numbers in parentheses represent time elapsed in silence. It is measured in seconds. For example, (1.5) would indicate a gap of 1.5 seconds.
6.	.	Indicates gradually rising intonation
7.	?	Indicates terminally raised intonation
8.	—	Underscore indicates levelled intonation
9.	!	Indicates animated intonation, often rise-fall.
10.	-	A hyphen after a word or part of a word indicates a hesitation or cut-off mid-flow.
11.	:	Colon indicates prolongation of the preceding sound. The more colons, the longer the stretching.

Serial No.	Symbol	Uses
12.	><	Talk delivered at a faster rate than surrounding talk is transcribed within angles brackets pointing outwards. >><< indicates much faster talk.
13.	<>	Talk delivered at a slower rate than the surrounding talk is transcribed within angles brackets pointing inwards.<<>> indicates even slower talk.
14.	↑ ↑	Indicates a notably higher shift in pitch for the text between the upward arrows.
15.	↓ ↓	Indicates a notably lower shift in pitch for the text between the downward arrows.
16.	h	Indicates audible out-breath. Multiple 'h' indicates longer length of out-breath.
17.	.h	Indicates audible in-breath. Multiple .h indicates longer in-breath.
18.	(())	Text within double parentheses represent additional comments on non-verbal behaviour or descriptions of any other activity related to the ongoing interaction.

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A Linguistic Study on Echo Reduplication: An Areal Feature of South-Asian Linguistic Area.

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Abstract :

Echo Reduplication (henceforth ER), a subtype of Reduplication, is one of the common traits or 'areal features' shared by almost every language of South-Asian linguistic area. There duplicated structures formed by this ER, termed as Echo Constructions (EC), exhibit some similarities as well as differences in terms of their phonological and morphological mechanisms. ECs mainly belong to the spoken variety of Indian vernaculars and play a significant role in modifying the semantic component of the communication. This paper aims to investigate different structural as well as associated semantic parameters of ER or ECs across different language families of India.

Keywords: *areal features, linguistic area, echo reduplication, echo phoneme, echo syllable .*

1. Introduction

The concept of 'linguistic area' has been defined and described by many eminent scholars like Franz Boas (1920), Nikolai Trubetzkoy (1928), M.B. Emeneau (1956), Masica (1976) and many others. Trubetzkoy (1928) has coined the term 'Sprachbund' to establish the notion of 'linguistic area'. According to him, the 'Sprachbund' is a group of languages that represents structural commonalities (in terms of syntax, morphological mechanism) and contains a large number of cultural vocabulary. Though these languages may have some apparent similarities in their sound systems, but they do not have any kind of systematic sound correspondences (which are generally found in genetically related languages) or similarities in the phonological composition of their morphological units and they have no basic lexical items. The languages belonging to a 'Sprachbund' share these common features due to their geographical proximity rather than inheritance from a common ancestor. Trubetzkoy's definition of 'Sprachbund' leads us to the concept of 'linguistic area.' However, Emeneau defines 'linguistic area' as "an area which includes languages belonging to more than one family but showing traits in common which are found not to belong too ther members of [at least] one of the families." (Emeneau, 1956, p.16). So, abridging these distinct definitions, it can be said that 'linguistic area' is a geographical area with multiple languages (belonging to same as well as different language families) sharing some common phonological, morphological or syntactic traits. These common traits are not genealogically inherited. The geographical proximity and constant contact between these languages invoke borrowing or diffusion of these structural traits from their neighboring languages. These diffused or converging structural features are called 'areal features' which establish a particular geographical area as a 'linguistic area'.

India has been identified as a 'linguistic area' and studied by scholars like Emeneau (1956), Masica (1976) and many others. This linguistic area is known as 'South-Asian linguistic area' which comprises languages primarily belonging to four or five different language families: Indo-Aryan, Austro-Asiatic, Tibeto-Burman,

Dravidian and Andamanese. The languages of these different families, often called Indo-Aryan and Non-Indo-Aryan languages, in spite of being genetically unrelated, share some common traits or 'areal features' (such as retroflexion, compound verbs, dative subject constructions etc.) as a result of their geographical proximity: Reduplication is one of them.

Reduplication is a productive morphological process of Indian languages. Montaut's (2008) opines that the process of Reduplication (or repetition) of an entity modifies its relation (such as the relationship between a noun and its predicate, or the relation of an adjective with its noun etc.) with one or many of the other constituents of a syntactic structure. Reduplication can be of many types. Abbi (1992) has classified Reduplication on the basis of phonological and morphological properties. Phonologically, Reduplication is of two types: Complete (Bangla *choTo choTo* 'small small', Bodo *undwi undwi* 'small small') and Partial Reduplication (Bangla *khata-Tata* 'copy etc.', Kannada *pustakam-gistakam* 'book etc.') and morphologically it is also of two types: Morphological (Bangla *kicirmicir* 'chirping', Meitei *khe khe* 'laughing sound') and Lexical Reduplication (Bangla *bolte-bolte* 'while saying', Bangla *hat-Tat* 'hand etc.', Hindi *nacte nacte* 'while dancing', Hindi *sa:ma:n-va:ma:n* 'luggage etc.').

Reduplication along with its subtypes represents a common core morphological feature of all Indian languages. Echo Reduplication (ER) is one of such subtypes of Reduplication which plays a significant role in the linguistic structure of Indian languages. This subtype of Reduplication can be found almost in every Indian languages irrespective of their typological as well as genealogical differences. The resultant of ER can be termed as Echo Construction (EC). EC is mostly found in the spoken variety of Indian vernaculars and more commonly occurs in colloquial or informal contexts.

2. Definition of ER

ER is a Partial and as well as a Lexical Reduplication. It is Partial in the sense that generally the initial phoneme (consonant or vowel) or the initial syllable of the base word (which is a lexical item of a

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particular language: noun, verb, adjective etc.) gets replaced by a distinct phoneme or distinct syllable and the remaining part of the base word gets copied without any modification resulting in the formation of echoed part. The phoneme or syllable that replaces the base word's initial phoneme (consonant or vowel) can be termed as 'Echo Phoneme' or 'Echo Syllable'. However, this 'Echo Phoneme/Syllable' may vary from language to language but each language seems to have a particular or more or less rigid 'Echo Phoneme/Syllable'. Stearide (1988) has described this rigidity or specification of Echo Phoneme/Syllable' in terms of segment insertion or pre-specification of a set of distinctive features which the Echo Phoneme/Syllable consists of. She opined that at first base word is completely reduplicated then the insertion of some specific segments or prespecified distinctive features causes its phonological modification, hence ER is a combination of Complete Reduplication and segment insertion and can be considered as a 'Modified Partial Reduplication', or more precisely, 'Prespecified Reduplication'. This partially reduplicated structure or echoed part then gets tagged (suffixes or in some cases prefixed) to the base word and as a result an EC is formed.

ER is a Lexical Reduplication, because the linguistic unit that undergoes ER is a lexical item belonging to a particular grammatical category. Besides that the resultant of this process, viz. EC can be analyzed into its constituent parts, unlike Morphological Reduplication which refers to "minimally meaningful and segmentally indivisible morphemes, which are constituted of iterated syllables" (Abbi, 1992, p.12). Hence, an EC is constituted out of two partially identical or similar phonological units. Abbi (2018) has termed the components of an EC as Reduplicant (refers to the base word) and Reduplicator (refers to the echoed/copied part).

However, if Montaut's (2008) notational system¹ is taken into consideration then these Reduplicant and Reduplicator can be represented as R and R' as respectively, hence an EC = R-R'. This copied part, viz. Reduplicator or R' functionally resembles a bound morpheme as it has no independent occurrence and meaning as well. But whenever it gets tagged to the base word (which is indeed a free morpheme with independent occurrence and meaning),

viz. Reduplicant or R, it adds the sense of ‘et. cetera’, ‘and so on’ to the meaning of that Reduplicant.

Some examples² of ECs from different Indian languages have been enumerated below--

Examples:

1. Bangla	<i>cokh</i>	—	<i>Tokh</i>	
	R	—	R'	‘eye etc.’
2. Hindi	<i>na:c</i>	—	<i>va:c</i>	
	R	—	R'	‘dance etc.’
3. Marathi	<i>kholi</i>	—	<i>bili</i> ³	
	R	—	R'	‘room etc.’
4. Kannada	<i>huDuga</i>	—	<i>giDuga</i>	
	R	—	R'	‘boy etc.’
5. Tamil	<i>paRavai</i>	—	<i>kiRavai</i>	
	R	—	R'	‘bird etc.’
6. Santhali	<i>baha</i>	—	<i>Taha</i>	
	R	—	R'	‘flower etc.’

3. Phonological Structures of EC

ECs are formed mostly by the alternation of the Reduplicant’s initial phoneme (consonant or vowel) or initial syllable with an Echo Phoneme/Syllable. That is to say, Indian languages follow different phonological processes in order to form ECs as in some languages ECs are formed by the alternation of Reduplicant’s (viz. R’s) initial phoneme (consonant or vowel) whereas in some other languages they get formed by the alternation of the R’s initial syllable. The phonological processes involved in the ER are schematized below—

(a) *Alternation of the initial phoneme:*

- i. $CVX > CVX - C'VX$, here $CVX = R$ and $C'VX = R'$, $C' =$ Echo Phoneme, $X =$ copied part of the R, when R begins with a consonant.
- ii. $VX > VX - V'X$, here $VX = R$, $V'X = R'$, $V' =$ Echo Phoneme, $X =$ copied part of the R, when R begins with a vowel .

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Other than rule (ii) another process can be witnessed in some Indian languages where R begins with a vowel: Echo Phoneme gets inserted instead of vowel replacement. In other words, the syllabic nucleus of the R originally does not have any onset, but after undergoing ER the nucleus gets preceded by an onset. This process can be formulated as–

- iii. $VX > VX - CVX$, here $VX = R$, $CVX = R'$, C = Echo phoneme and R begins with a vowel.

(b) *Alternation of the initial syllable:*

- $CVX > CVX - C'V'X$, here $CVX = R$ and $C'V'X = R'$, $C'V' =$ Echo Syllable, X = copied part of the R.

These (a) and (b) are the most common process followed by the Indian languages in order to form ECs. Other than these two, there is one more process involved in the formation of ECs which is the alternation of the nucleus of the R's initial syllable. This process can be schematized as –

(c) *Alternation of the nucleus of the initial syllable:*

- $CVX > CVX - CV'X$, here $CVX = R$, $CV'X = R'$, V' = Echo Phoneme, X = copied part of the R.

Rule (c) has some similarities with rule a.(ii) where 'alternation of the vowel' also takes place. The only difference is that in a.(ii), the vowel or the nucleus does not have any onset while in (c) the nucleus is preceded by a onset.

It has been mentioned earlier that Indian languages have a fixed Echo Phoneme/Syllable. Although these languages may not necessarily have a unique Echo Phoneme/Syllable as the same phoneme/syllable can also function as Echo Phoneme/Syllable in other languages. It is important to note that an Indian language may never have an ample number of Echo Phoneme/Syllable and a common stock of Echo Phonemes/Syllables is available for both Indo-Aryan and Non Indo-Aryan languages (viz. Tibeto-Burman, Austro-Asiatic and Dravidian). As a result of this, some Indian languages exhibit similarities in terms of Echo Phoneme/Syllable while some other show differences: for instances Indo-Aryan languages like Bangla prefers /T/ as its Echo Phoneme, though /ph/

or /S/ can also function as its Echo Phoneme, Assamese has /s/ or /T/, Odia has /ph/, Maithili has /t/ or /T/, Hindi and Kashmiri have /v/, Punjabi has /S/ which is also found in some Hindi ECs, Tibeto-Burman languages like Apatani, Miri have /s/, Austro-Asiatic languages like Santhali, Lodha have /T/ and Juang has /p/ as their Echo Phoneme.

On the other hand Indo-Aryan languages like Marathi, Konkani have a fixed Echo Syllable /bi/ while Dravidian languages like Kannada and Telugu have gi/gi: and Tamil and Malayalam have ki/ki:⁴ as their Echo Syllable.

It can be concluded from this above discussion that the distribution of these Echo Phonemes/Syllables does not correspond to the language typology. That is to say languages belonging to the same language family may or may not share the same Echo Phoneme/Syllable. On the other hand languages belonging to different language families may share the same Echo Phoneme/Syllable. For instances, Bangla, Assamese and Maithili, being Eastern Indo-Aryan languages, have the same Echo Phoneme /T/ which is an apical consonant, but Santhali, in spite of being an Austro-Asiatic language, has the same Echo Phoneme. Punjabi, a North-Western Indo-Aryan language, has a sibilant as its Echo Phoneme, viz. /S/ which is also found in Hindi, a Central Indo-Aryan language while Tibeto-Burman languages like Apatani, Miri also have a sibilant phoneme as their Echo Phoneme, viz. /s/. This sibilant phoneme /s/ can also be found in Assamese, an Eastern Indo-Aryan language.

However, these languages can also have similarities as well as differences in terms of the phonological process involved in the formation of EC. For example: Indo-Aryan languages like Bangla, Assamese, Odia, Hindi, Punjabi, Austro-Asiatic languages like Santhali, Munda, Ho and Tibeto-Burman languages like Bodo, Kuki etc. mostly follow the rule a.(i) and a.(iii) (Trivedi, 1990), whereas Dravidian languages like Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam etc. mostly follow rule (b). Punjabi, a North-Western Indo-Aryan language, abundantly follows rule (c) in order to form ECs. Now, from this above discussion it can be assumed that Dravidian languages strictly differ from Indo-Aryan and other Non-Indo-

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Aryan languages on the basis of the phonological mechanism of EC. But this distinction seems not be defined very sharply as some Southern Indo- Aryan languages like Marathi, Konkani etc. follow rule (b). The deviation of Marathi and Konkani from the common phonological pattern of EC found in most of the Indo-Aryan languages, viz. rule a.(i), can be considered as an evidence of the influence of Dravidian languages on these Indo-Aryan languages due to close contact.

Different phonological processes along with different Echo Phoneme/Syllable involved in the formation of EC in different Indian languages are presented in the following table:

Phonological Rule Schema	Phonological Mechanism/Rule	Examples
a.(i) CVX > CVX – C'VX	Initial phoneme (consonant) alternation.	Bangla <i>pukur–Tukur</i> 'pond etc.', Assamese <i>phul–sul</i> 'flower etc.', Odia <i>gaRi–phaRi</i> 'car etc.', Maithili <i>ghora–tora</i> 'horse etc.', Hindi <i>ciThThi:–viThThi:</i> 'letter etc.', Santhali <i>bOkOp–TOkOp</i> 'brother etc.'
a.(ii) VX > VX – V'X	Initial phoneme (vowel) alternation.,	Lodha <i>nok–Tok</i> 'man etc.' Bodo <i>gidit–sidity</i> 'big etc.' Punjabi <i>akkha: M–ukkhha: M'</i> 'eyes etc.'

Phonological Rule Schema	Phonological Mechanism/Rule	Examples
a.(iii) $VX > VX$ – CVX^5		Khariboli <i>a:g–u:g</i> ‘fire etc.’ Bangru <i>u:n–a:n</i> ‘wool etc.’
b. $CVX > CVX – C'V'X$	Initial syllable alternation.	Kannada <i>ba:gil–gi:gil</i> ‘door etc.’ Telugu <i>Dabbu–gibbu</i> ‘money etc.’ Tamil <i>puli–kili</i> ‘tiger etc.’ Malayalam <i>vellam–killam</i> ‘water etc.’ Marathi <i>ghoRa–biRa</i> ‘horse etc.’
c. $CVX > CVX – CV'X$	Alternation of the nucleus of the initial syllable.	Bangla <i>dag–dog</i> ‘stain etc.’ Hindi <i>Thi:k–Tha:k</i> ‘alright’ Punjabi <i>pen–pun</i> ‘pen etc.’

Bhojpuri, an Eastern Indo–Aryan language, follows none of these above mentioned rules to form EC. In this language a different phonological mechanism of EC has been noticed. Here, the initial consonant of the Reduplicant (R) gets dropped in the Reduplicator (R') and in some cases the vowel following the initial consonant gets replaced by a distinct vowel. Such processes can be formalized as–

- (i) $CVX > CVX – VX$, where $CVX = R$, $VX = R'$ and
- (ii) $CVX > CVX – V'X$, where $CVX = R$, $V'X = R'$

Some instances⁶ of Bhojpuri ECs are discussed below –

7.	Bhojpuri	<i>dudh</i>	–	<i>udh</i>	
		R	–	R'	‘milk etc.’
8.	Bhojpuri	<i>lal</i>	–	<i>ol</i>	
		R	–	R'	‘red etc.’
9.	Bhojpuri	<i>choT</i>	–	<i>oT</i>	
		R	–	R'	‘small etc.’
10.	Bhojpuri	<i>rog</i>	–	<i>og</i>	
		R	–	R'	‘disease etc.’

Here, example 7 represents the mechanism (i), while examples (8-10) represent the mechanism (ii).

4. Morphological Structure of EC

An EC is formed out of two components: Reduplicant (R) and Reduplicator (R') (Abbi, 2018). It has already been mentioned that, R' functions as a bound morpheme which gets attached to the R and brings about some semantic modifications. This R is a lexical element of a given language. R' is mostly suffixed to the R.

a. Suffixation of R' to R :

11.	Bangla	<i>bataS</i>	–	<i>Tatas</i>	
		R	–	R'	‘wind etc.’
12.	Telugu	<i>pani:</i>	–	<i>gini:</i>	
		R	–	R'	‘work etc.’
13.	Tamil	<i>kalle</i>	–	<i>kille</i>	
		R	–	R'	‘stone etc.’

b. Prefixation of R' to R

However, in some Indian languages R' gets prefixed to the R and such type of ECs are rare in comparison to the ECs where suffixation of R' to R takes place. In case of prefixation the EC would be represented as R'-R. For example–

14.	Bangla	<i>aS</i>	–	<i>paS</i>	
		R'	–	R	‘surroundings etc.’
15.	Hindi	<i>a:ju</i>	–	<i>ba:ju</i>	
		R'	–	R	‘besides etc.’

This type of EC represents another phonological pattern where the initial consonant gets dropped and the R' precedes the R, instead of following. Such mechanism can be schematized as–

CVX > VX – CVX, here VX = R' and CVX = R, X = copied part of the R.

This process can be considered as the opposite of process a(iii) whereby the Echo Phoneme, a consonant, is inserted in the initial position of R' while in this above mentioned process, the initial consonant of the R gets dropped.

ER is mostly applied to the R belonging to noun category. Although lexical items of other categories like verb, adjective, pronoun can also undergo ER. The ECs (R – R' or R' – R) formed by ER belongs to the same grammatical category to which its respective R belongs. That is to say, there is no change in grammatical category of the resultants of this morphological process. For example–

16. Bangla *chata* – *Tata*
R – R' 'umbrella etc.'
(R = noun, hence R-R' = noun)
17. Bangla *dekhe* – *Tekhe*
R – R' 'having seen etc.'
(R = verb + non-finite marker
= dekh+e, hence R-R' = verb)
18. Bangla *SOhoj* – *TOhoj*
R – R' 'easy etc.'
(R = adjective,
hence R-R' = adjective)
19. Hindi *phul* – *vul*
R – R' 'flower etc.'
(R = noun, hence R-R' = noun)
20. Hindi *dekha:* – *vekha:*
R – R' 'has seen etc.'
(R = verb + perfect + 3person
+ masculine = dekh + a:, hence
R – R' = verb)

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- | | | |
|-----|--------|--|
| 21. | Hindi | <i>sasta:</i> – <i>vasta:</i>
R – R' 'cheap etc.'
(R = adjective, hence
R-R' = adjective) |
| 22. | Telugu | <i>annam</i> – <i>ginnam</i>
R – R' 'rice etc.'
(R = noun, hence
R-R' = adjective) |
| 23. | Telugu | <i>navvu</i> – <i>givvu</i> ⁷
R – R' 'to laugh etc.'
(R = verb, hence
R-R' = verb) |
| 24. | Telugu | <i>va:Du</i> – <i>gi:Du</i>
R – R' 'he etc.'
(R = pronoun, hence
R-R' = pronoun) |
| 25. | Tamil | <i>muLLe</i> – <i>kiLLe</i>
R – R' 'thorn etc.'
(R = noun, hence R-R' = noun) |
| 26. | Tamil | <i>collu</i> – <i>killu</i>
R – R' 'to tell etc.'
(R = verb, hence R-R' = verb) |
| 27. | Tamil | <i>ave</i> – <i>kive</i>
R – R' 'he etc.'
(R = pronoun, hence
R-R' = pronoun) |

Pronouns and interrogative pronouns generally do not undergo ER in most of the Indian languages (like Bangla, Hindi, Assamese etc.). But pronouns and interrogative pronouns in Dravidian languages like Tamil, Telugu can undergo ER. Although, Kannada, in spite of being a Dravidian language, does not allow the ER of pronouns and demonstrative adjectives (Sridhar, 1990). For example–

28. Telugu *enduku* – *ginduku*
R – R' 'why etc.'
(R = interrogative pronoun, hence R–R' = interrogative pronoun)
29. Tamil *enna* – *kinna*
R – R' 'what etc.'
(R = interrogative pronoun, hence R–R' = interrogative pronoun)

The ER of pronouns and interrogative pronouns is an important feature of Telugu and Tamil which distinguish them from both Indo-Aryan and Dravidian (viz. Kannada) languages.

ER is a productive morphological process which can be applied to English loanwords too. For example–

30. Bangla *klas* – *Tas*
R – R' 'class etc.'
(R = English loanword class)
31. Punjabi *labh* – *Sabh*
R – R' 'love etc.'
(R = English loanwords love)
32. Tamil *ba:ssu* – *ki:ssu*
R – R' 'bus etc.'
(R = English loanword bus)
33. Telugu *bassu* – *gissu*
R – R' 'bus etc.'
(R = English loanword bus)

5. Semantic Implication of EC

The echoed part viz. R' prefixed or suffixed to the base word viz. R is semantically void. In other words, this component of an EC does not have meaning of its own, it acquires the status of a meaningful constituent once it gets attached to the R. This semantically void R' imports the sense of 'etc.', 'and so on', 'and the like' to the meaning of the R. In other words R' echoes the meaning of the R along with the echoing of its phonological structure. For example—

34.	Bangla	<i>jOl</i>	—	<i>TOl</i>	
		R	—	R'	'water etc.'
35.	Ho	<i>hon</i>	—	<i>pon</i>	
		R	—	R'	'son etc.'
36.	Kuni	<i>tin</i>	—	<i>min</i>	
		R	—	R'	'count etc.'
37.	Kannada	<i>ni:ru</i>	—	<i>gi:ru</i>	
		R	—	R'	'water etc.'

The semantic function of ECs has been studied by scholars like R.N. Tagore (1909), Prof. S.K. Chatterji (1939), Anvita Abbi (1994), Montaut (2008) and many others. Tagore has opined that ECs reflect the sense of 'indefiniteness' in Bangla whereas Prof. S.K. Chatterji, with reference to Bangla has proposed that the meaning of the R is extended by the affixation of R' to it. In Abbi's opinion ECs are additive in nature as they refer to the similar things or provide the 'semantic supplement' glossed by 'etc.' or 'and so on' to the meaning of the base word viz. R. It is worth mentioning that though R' adds the sense of 'etc.' or refers to the items similar to the R, the true interpretation of an EC (or R-R'/R'-R) depends on language use and the pragmatic factors (like context, relationship between the addressor and addressee etc.).

In other words, the prime semantic function of ECs is to refer to the total set of lexical items that may substitute the base word viz. R in the situation encountered in a particular utterance. Tiwary (1968) stated that "The lexical items referred to are thought of

constituting a lexical ‘field’. The range of the reference of course is conditioned by the scope of the lexical field to which the basic word belongs” (p.34). Hence, in the example 34, the Bangla EC *jOl – TOl* ‘water etc.’ refers to all the drinkable items (like cold drink, fruit juice and so on) that can substitute the base word viz. *jOl* ‘water’ in a certain context. Similarly in 35, Ho, EC *hon – pon* ‘son etc.’ refers to the substitutable lexical items (like daughter, other relatives etc.) It is important to note that the selection of the base word is not governed by any superordinate – subordinate relationship between the lexical items. That is to say, any of the referred lexical items can also play the role of a base word, a Bangla speaker can use *jus – Tus* ‘juice etc.’ instead of *jOl – TOl* ‘water etc.’ in a given context. The lexical items, represented by the EC, and the base word are on the same level (Tiwary,1968). For example–

- 38a. Bangla *amake ekTu jOl–TOl daW*
 I.ACC some water–R’ give.IMP.2P
 ‘Give me some water or anything to drink.’

Or

- 38b. Bangla *amake ekTu jus–Tus daW*
 I.ACC some juice–R’ give.IMP.2P
 ‘Give me some juice or anything to drink.’

In 38.a and 38.b, it may be the case that in a certain context, the speaker is tired or he/she has come from somewhere and is feeling thirsty, hence he/she asked the hearer to give him/her something to drink. The speaker can use any of the constructions 38.a or 38.b.

Nevertheless, in certain contexts an EC can be used as a ‘superordinate structure’ underlying certain subordinate structures (Abbi, 2018). For instances, in a given context native speakers of Bangla and Kannada may use Bangla *kagoj – Tagoj* ‘paper etc.’, Kannada *pennu–ginnu* ‘pen etc.’ respectively to represent the superordinate structure viz. ‘stationery items’. In such cases the meaning of the R is semantically extended. It has been mentioned earlier that Prof. S.K. Chatterji has pointed out this particular semantic function viz. ‘the extension of the meaning of the base word’ of ECs , with reference to Bangla data.

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Montaut (2008) has adopted the Culioli's (1990) concept of 'notion' or 'notional domain' and described the 'extension of the meaning of the base word' as the 'extension of the notion or notional domain'. According to this theory each word belongs to a 'notion or notional domain'. This notional domain has a center and a boundary which delimits its Interior (I) from its Exterior (E). For instance, the center of the notion of Bangla word *jOl* 'water' is typically water, which is really a water or what we can call water. So, when the speaker says–

39. Bangla *amake ekTu jOl daW*
 I.ACC some water give.IMP.2P
 'Give me some water.'

he/she, being very particular, wants water only. Hence, the viewpoint is centered. On the other hand, when the speaker forms constructions like 38.a, viz. Bangla *amake ekTu jOl–Tol daW* 'Give me some water or anything to drink' he/she, not being specific about the item, wants something that is not really water but compatible with its Interior, viz. I. Hence the viewpoint is de-centered. The 'notional domain' gets extended as it includes the neighboring notional domain or stay at the margin of the domain, viz. at the boundary, represented as I-E in order to refer to water and other drinkable items or other eatable items that can be offered to someone with water under certain circumstance.

This extension of the notional domain or de-centered viewpoint represented by the EC results in another semantic function of such reduplicated structure viz. 'indefiniteness', pointed out by R.N. Tagore (1909). The speaker can use an EC in order to be non-specific about something or to hide something from the hearer, or he/she not being sure about something or someone can also use EC in a given context. As in 38.a and 38.b, the speaker not being specific or definite can use such ECs.

Besides, ECs, being an part of spoken variety of Indian vernaculars, mostly used in informal settings. Conventionally ECs seem to carry a pejorative tone. It has been noticed that ECs are mostly used in negative constructions to reflect the speaker's disapproval, anger or irritation regarding something represented by the R.

For example–

- 40a. Bangla *prem–Tem na kore paRaSuno kOro*
 love–R’ neg do.Nonf study do.IMP.2P

‘Don’t waste your time in relationship , concentrate on your study.’

In 40.a the EC *prem–Tem* ‘love etc.’ reflects speaker’s disapproval of the R which is love. This EC in such construction seems to represent the expressions like ‘and all this crap’ or ‘and everything’ as the speaker strictly wants the hearer not to get distracted from his/her study.

- 40b. Telugu *pani: le:du gini: le:du*
 work no R’ no
 ‘No work and the like.’

The Telugu EC in 40.b may reflect the speaker’s anger or irritation for not having job or for sitting idly. According to Parimalagantham (2009) such EC never occurs in an affirmative construction of Telugu. That is to say–

41. *Telugu *pani: undi gini: undi*
 work be R’ be
 ‘work and the like.’

One reason behind unacceptability or ungrammaticality of such construction may be that having a job or being active usually does not cause anger or irritation in someone. Hence such EC always occurs in a negative construction in a discontinuous manner (viz. *pani: le:dugini: le:du* instead of *pani: – gini: le:du*).

Conclusion

The aim of this paper is to represent a linguistic study on some common core structural as well as associated semantic properties of ECs of Indian languages belonging to Indo-Aryan, Austro-Asiatic, Tibeto-Burman and Dravidian language families. It has been noticed that these genealogically unrelated languages possess some similarities and differences as well in terms of the phonological mechanism of EC: that is to say, some instances in this paper show that languages belonging to same language family necessarily do not share same Echo Phoneme/Syllable and same phonological process

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to form EC whereas some languages belonging to distinct language families share same Echo Phoneme/Syllable and phonological process. This commonalities between genetically unrelated languages may be developed by the geographical contiguity and contact between these languages. In spite of having different phonological structures and mechanisms, all Indian languages exhibit one common feature of ECs, that is the syllabic balance between the Reduplicant (R) and the Reduplicator (R'). Besides, ECs share common semantic parameters across languages families. The prime semantic function of ECs in different Indian languages is to extend the meaning of the R by adding the sense of 'etc.' to its meaning or by denoting lexical items similar to or associated with it. EC, being a significant part of spoken variety of Indian vernaculars, reflects the speaker's attitudes towards the lexical item or concept represented by R and also towards his/her hearer. Therefore, it has a great impact on the semantic dimension of the communication. Although language use and pragmatic factors plays and important role to determine the true interpretation of an EC. These pragmatic factors may vary language to language and demand a more detailed study to get a grasp on the semantic function of ECs. Apart from this , a structural and semantic comparison between ECs and other types of reduplicated structures needs further research and investigation.

Modified Symbols

Ray *et al* (1966) & Mitra (2017)

O = Back mid-low vowel

a = Low central vowel

T D R = Retroflex stops & flaps S = Palato-alveolar sibilant

s = Dental sibilant

W = Back mid-high semivowel

M = indicates the nasalization of the preceding vowel

For Hindi, Punjabi and Dravidian languages:

a = Low Central unrounded short vowel

a: = Low central unrounded long vowel

i = High front unrounded short vowel

i: = High front unrounded long vowel

u = High back rounded short vowel

u: = High back rounded long vowel

Abbreviations:

ACC = Accusative

IMP = Imperative

neg = negative element

Non.f = Non finite

2P = Second person

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Endnotes

- 1 Annie Montaut (2008) has represented echo-words as F-F’. This notational system has been adopted here with some modification, viz. R-R’. The representation of EC as R-R’ is an attempt to implement Montaut’s notational system to Abbi’s concept of Reduplicant and Reduplicator
- 2 The data represented in this paper have been collected both from primary and secondary sources. For some Indo-Aryan languages like Bangla, Odia, Assamese, Hindi and Punjabi, data have been collected from primary sources. In case of Indo-Aryan languages like Marathi and Konkani, secondary data have been consulted for Austro-Asiatic and Tibeto Burman languages (other than few examples of Bodo). It solely depends on the secondary sources (earlier works of renowned scholars: G.M Trivedi, Anvita Abbi)

whereas for Dravidian languages both primary and secondary sources (earlier works of P. Bhaskararao, A.Parimalagantham) have been used.

- 3 (Apte, 1968)
 - 4 Copying of the length of the nucleus of the Reduplicant's initial syllable is a salient feature of Dravidian languages. That is to say, the length of the nucleus of the Echo Syllable depends on the length of its respective Reduplicant's nucleus of the initial syllable.
 - 5 This phonological process seems to be more frequent or common than process mentioned in a(ii) when the base word begins with a vowel.
 - 6 (Tiwary, 1968, 35).
 - 7 Examples (23–27) have been collected from Parimalagantham's PhD dissertation (2008).
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Dialectal Impact on Vowel Acoustics: Empirical evidences from the Assam Bodo varieties

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Abstract :

The paper reports the results of empirical investigation into the acoustic variations of Bodo vowels across the varieties used in the Barpeta, Baksa and Udalguri districts in Assam. From each of the varieties, twelve native speakers from each district were recorded. Statistical analysis of total 10800 vowel tokens, collected, normalised and processed confirmed dialectal impact on the acoustic structures of the six Bodo monophthongs in terms of vowel formants and duration. In the Udalguri variety, the high vowels are not significantly shorter than other vowels. In fact, in this Bodo variety all vowels are consistently longer than their counterparts in two other varieties. They also exhibit acoustic variations in formant structures. The /ə/ and the mid-vowels are lower than in the other varieties. Udalguri and Barpeta vowels show greater distinctiveness, as manifested through no evidence of any acoustic area overlap, where as such an overlap characterizes Baksa /u/ and /o/.

Keywords: *Bodo, vowels, acoustics, formants, duration, dialectic variations.*

The paper reports the acoustic differences in Bodo monophthongs across its varieties in the districts of Barpeta, Baksa and Udalguri in Assam. In a general sense, the study is motivated by the previous findings that confirmed dialectic variances in languages (Bergem 1994, Fox & Jacewicz 2009, and Escudero et al. 2009). More particularly, it derives even a stronger motivation from the empirical acoustic study of Choudhury & Mazumdar(2014)on two Bodo varieties in Assam.

Bodo, a member of the Sino-Tibetan language family under the Tibeto-Burman group, is spoken by 1.47 million speakers in India (mainly in the states of Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya and northern part of West Bengal)¹, and by 4,380 speakers from Jhapa district, Nepal and almost 14,000 people in Bangladesh. Bodo is a statutory tribal language in Assam, and the official language of the Bodoland Territorial Region².

There are several varieties of this thrust language Bodo in the state of Assam itself (not to talk about varieties Bodo outside Assam). Bhattacharya (1977), categorically discussed four dialect areas:

- (1) i. North-west area,
- ii. South-west area,
- iii. Central area, and
- iv. Southern Assam dialect area.

This present study picked up three Bodo dialects from different districts (i.e. Barpeta, Baksa and Udalguri) for investigation into dialect-specific differential acoustics. Out of them, Bhattacharya (ibid) touches upon, in his dialect classification, the Udalguri variety spoken in the Central Assam dialect area and the Baksa variety spoken in the North-West dialect area. But he did not mention clearly the form of Bodo spoken in the Barpeta area.

However, according to Basumatary (2005), there are chiefly three main dialects of Bodo:

- (2) a) Southern Bodo,
- b) Eastern Bodo, and
- c) Western Bodo.

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Among these three, the last one (i.e. Western Bodo) is considered to be the standard form of the language (Basumatary, 2005). In this sense, our chosen three varieties are non-standard ones, since all three belong to the Eastern Bodo dialect. Later, Sarmah *et al.* (2015) suggested that the geographical boundaries should not be much depended upon for classification of the dialectal varieties of Bodo. They mentioned three traditional language varieties, namely, Sanzari, Swnabari, Hazari.

However, the study aims at looking at three geographical areas and the possible dialectal variances in vowel acoustics. These three areas, Barpeta, Baksa and Udalguri districts have been marked by numbers in the following map:

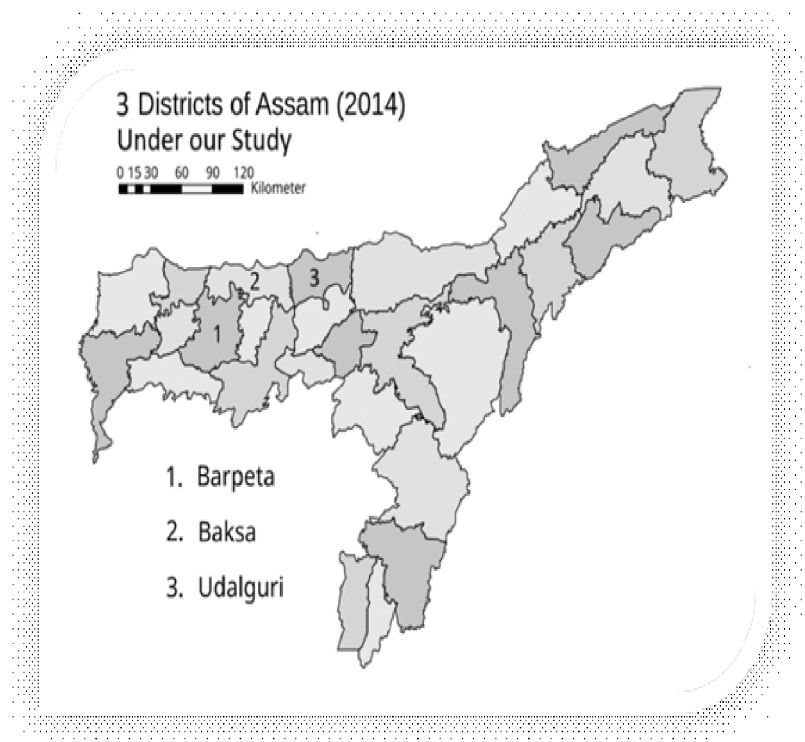


Figure 1: The three districts in Assam from where data were collected

These three varieties of Bodo spoken in three districts belong to the Eastern Bodo dialect (Basumatary 2005), and may share linguistic properties at different linguistic levels. The study is going to test the possible variations across these districts at the acoustic phonetic level. Before the empirical tests and the findings are reported, let us look at the differences in their socio-political, economic and religious structures and specifications:

Table 1: Some Socio-cultural facts of the three target districts in Assam

Districts	Population	Male-female Ratio	Major Religions	Other Major Languages	% of Bodo Speakers
Barpeta	1,693,622	1000:951	Islam-77.58% Hinduism-22.27%	Bengali (68.89%) Assamese (29.39%)	1.03%
Baksa	950,075	1000:967	Hinduism-81.74% Islam-15.20%	Assamese (38.34%) Bengali (17.69%)	36.33%
Udalguri	831,668	1000:966	Hinduism-73.64% Christianity 13.25% Islam-12.66%	Assamese (22.62%) Bengali (19.43%)	26.90%

A comparison among the three Bodo-speaking groups from these districts is graphically presented below:

Dialectal Impact on Vowel Acoustics:

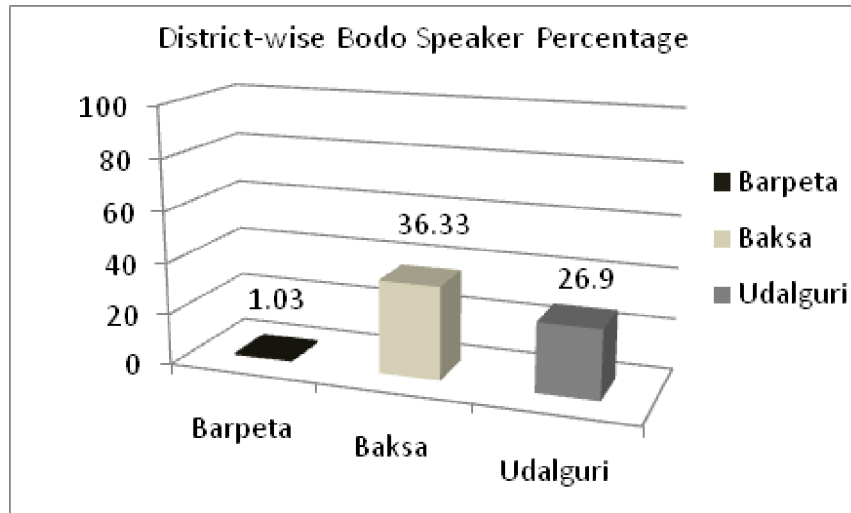


Figure 2: Percentage of Bodo speakers across the districts

Both the table and the figure show that, in the most populated, Muslim-dominated Barpeta, Bodo is by far a minor language, but in two other districts it is one of the major languages. But socio-economic factors also indicate that in terms of literacy and per capita income, Barpeta is significantly lagging behind:

Table 2: Educational and economic status of three districts in Assam

Districts	Literacy rate	Major Occupations	Per capita income (NDDP)
1 Barpeta	63.81%	Agriculture; Livestock rearing; Handicrafts.	Rs. 56,508 p.a.
2 Baksa	70.53%.	Agriculture; Fishery; Sericulture	Rs. 56,194 p.a.
3 Udalguri	66.60%	Agriculture; Animal Husbandry; Tea Estate jobs	Rs. 74,768 p.a.

Bodo is language with the six vowel inventory (Bhattacharya 1977, Basumatary 2005, Burling & Joseph 2007).

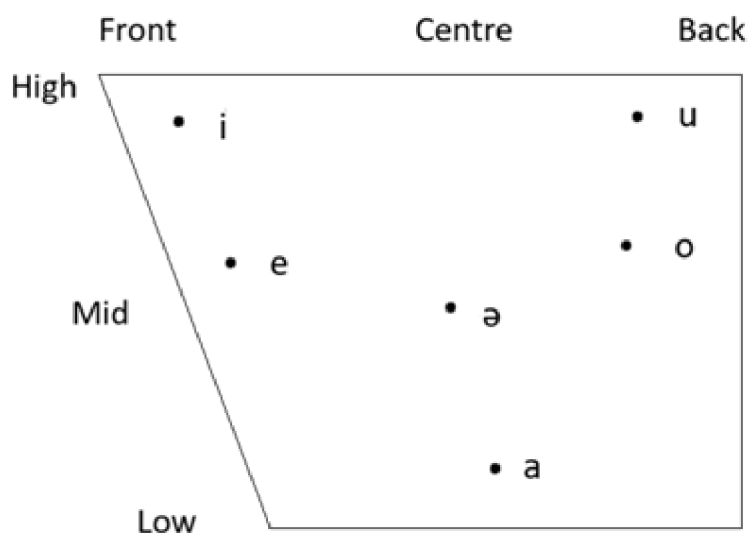


Figure 3: Six vowels in the Bodo inventory
(put on the hypothetical vowel plot)

The table below uses the minimal word pairs and their glosses to show six vowels in Bodo:

Table 3: Identification of Vowel phonemes in Bodo with the concept of contrastive (minimal) pairs

Bodo Vowels	Words embedding 6 Bodo vowels	Gloss
[i]	/zi/	‘tear’
[e]	/ze/	‘net’
[u]	/zu/	‘pack’
[o]	/zo/	‘together’
[ə]	/zə/	‘sting’
[a]	/za/	‘become’

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Though there is some consensus over the presence of 6 vowels in Bodo, available literature on its vowel system mentions three different vowels / $\bar{o}$ /, / $\bar{u}$ / and / $\bar{w}$ /. Bhattacharya (1977) described / $\bar{o}$ / as an unrounded vowel spreading from half-close to close, central to back and overlapping with / $\bar{u}$ / and / $\bar{o}$ /. Burling (2003) described / $\bar{m}$ / as a central vowel. Basumatary (2005) described / $\bar{w}$ / as a high, back, unrounded vowel. Choudhury & Mazumdar (2014) and Sarmah *et al.* (2015) incorporated / $\bar{a}$ / into the Bodo vowel inventory as a central, unrounded vowel, almost same as the schwa in British English. It is accepted in the present study to represent the Bodo vowel inventory.

Coming to methodology followed in our empirical study, let us introduce our speakers/informants (test subjects), materials, data collection (recording) and data processing (statistical documentation and annotation criteria).

i. Speakers

In order to find the acoustic characters of the Bodo vowels, many native speakers of the language from the three districts were tried in a number of recording sessions. However, finally a total of 36 native speakers of the languages (from each variety 6 male and 6 female = total 12 informants) were recorded. Informant distribution across Bodo varieties are like the following:

Table 4: Number of informants from the three varieties of Bodo

Sl.	Districts	♂ Male	♀ Female	Total no. of Speakers (accepted for statistical documentation)
1.	Barpeta	6	6	12
2.	Baksa	6	6	12
3.	Udalguri	6	6	12
Total				36

There were three different sets of subjects (informants) originally the permanent residents of these three districts, Barpeta, Baksa and

Udalguri districts in Assam. Each set of subjects comprises 12 speakers in total, 6 male and 6 female.). The informants/speakers were all young (in the age group, 25-35 years), and moderately educated (having completed 10th standard of school education at least). They were the people born and brought up in their respective native places, so that they would be the natural speakers of their respective Bodo variety. The informants were from different parts of their districts, but presently living in Guwahati for a few years. They were either the professionals engaged with some humble jobs in the city or their family members.

ii. Materials

All these three groups of speakers will be given some set of 60 sixty OOTB sentences (for each Bodo vowel, ten words embedded in sentences) with the monosyllabic (a few disyllabic) carrier words put in its sentence-medial position. The template would be/tara X bollo/ '*They told X*'. And this word-medial word X (in the Bodo syntax) would have the structures CV, CVC (rarely VC), CVC.CV and CV.CVC. In the syllables, onset and coda consonants are indiscriminately used for the sake of variable environments. The speakers were given these scripted sentences and requested to utter each sentence five times at least as normally as possible. For every test sentence, five best reiterations by the individual speaker were considered finally for statistical documentation. These utterances [$60 \times 5 \times (12+12+12) = 10,800$] would be taken as my data.

iii. Recording

Our recording job was completed within 2 months' time. Informants from three districts were recorded in nearly sound-proof rooms in and around Guwahati, Assam. Every care was taken so that no noise could creep in. The utterances produced with the help of a list of test sentences (Appendix-I) were directly recorded on the Tascam DR-100 MKII portable digital recorder and then transferred on to a branded Laptop (Dell Inspiron N4030). The speech tokens were thus collected and stored for further analysis in PRAAT Software (Boersma & Weenink 2010).

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iv. Statistical Documentation and Annotation Criteria

Using PRAAT Software (2010), segmentation of the vowels was done the way the following figure shows (Time measured in msec.) that displays the bandwidth, spectrogram and time scale. The segmentation was done to locate the vowels occurring in the words that occur in the middle of the sentences to avoid effect of intonation on the target words. The target word (mostly mono-syllabic, both light and heavy) was segmented in the second tier for the text grid (Figure 4).

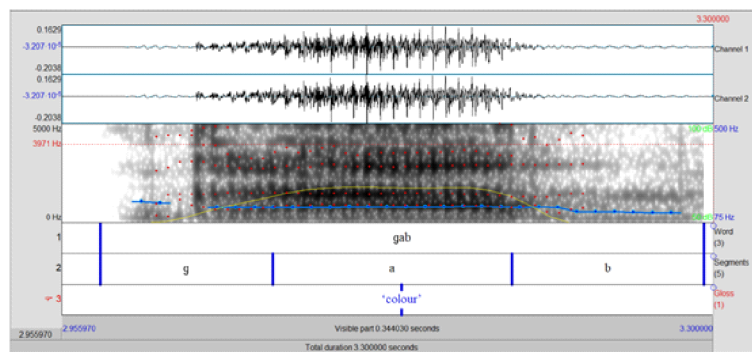


Figure 4: Segmentation done on PRAAT

Then, a script prepared by the investigator was run on PRAAT in order to get all the formant values and vowel duration in msec. (as shown above). Thus, all the 36 speakers' vowels are to be mapped in terms of formants and length. Once the values were stored in the Microsoft Office Excel file, the final results were derived at and vowel plots constructed with the help of the Excel graphics.

The Experiment-I was conducted with acoustics of Bodo monophthongs in three rounds, each round dealing with one language variety. In the first round, speech data were collected from the Barpeta speakers, and data reveal the following formant configurations for the vowels:

Table 5: Mean formant values (standard deviation in parenthesis) of Bodo vowels produced by the informants from Barpeta (6 male, 6 female)

	(Formants in Hertz)			(Formants in Mel)		
	F ₁	F ₂	F ₃	F ₁	F ₂	F ₃
/i/	277 (26)	2228 (256)	3362 (232)	224 (17)	888 (53)	1078 (32)
/e/	445 (66)	2002 (175)	2709 (273)	325 (36)	843 (38)	977 (45)
/u/	358 (68)	1094 (105)	2704 (311)	275 (38)	601 (35)	975 (51)
/o/	475 (73)	957 (113)	2633 (407)	341 (40)	554 (43)	962 (69)
/ə/	412 (72)	1552 (88)	2651 (163)	307 (41)	737 (35)	969 (38)
/a/	719 (108)	1428 (75)	2555 (203)	459 (37)	702 (32)	952 (49)

Average F₁ and F₂ values in the table above have helped us locate the monophthongs on the acoustic plot:

Dialectal Impact on Vowel Acoustics:

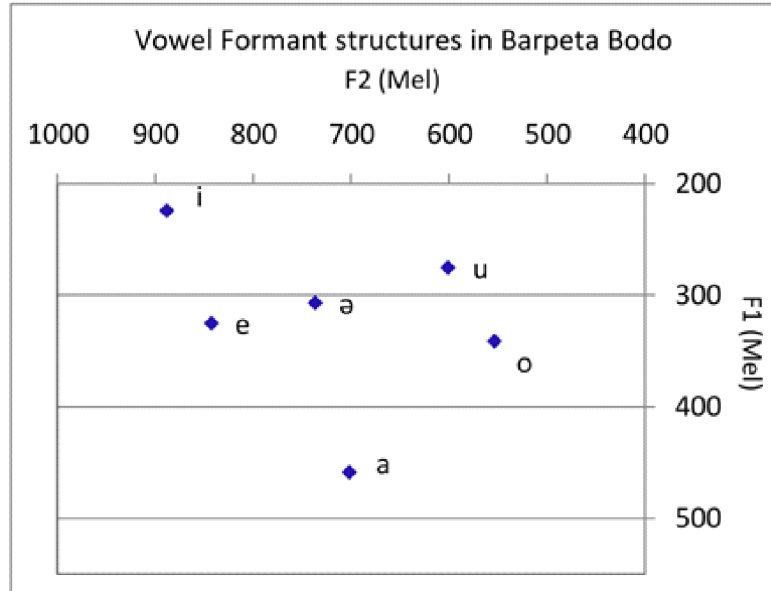


Figure 5: Acoustic locations of monophthongs in Barpeta variety of Bodo

The vowel /u/ here tends to move toward the frontal region. Another interesting point here is the vowel /ə/ that occupies the central part of the plane. But the plot shows that the schwa is bit uppish, thereby it being somewhat different from the English counterpart.

Now let us check the point about the vowel distinctiveness that can be measured through the intervocalic Euclidian distance.

Table 6: Euclidian Distance between vowels in the Barpeta variety (Mel values used)

	i	e	u	o	ə
e	110.57				
u	291.50	247.11			
o	353.90	289.44	81.02		
ə	172.31	107.52	139.71	186.13	
a	299.70	194.52	209.90	189.28	155.98

It shows that in Barpeta Bodo the largest Euclidian distance is

between /i/ and /o/ (that is, 353.90), whereas the smallest between /u/ and /o/ that is only 81.02.

In the second round, speech data collected from the Baksa speakers have yielded the following formant structures for the six vowels:

Table 7: Mean formant values (standard deviation in parenthesis) of Bodo vowels produced by the informants from Baksa (6 male, 6 female)

	(Formants in Hertz)			(Formants in Mel)		
	F ₁	F ₂	F ₃	F ₁	F ₂	F ₃
/i/	304 (30)	2568 (279)	3200 (252)	241 (19)	952 (48)	1054 (37)
/e/	471 (79)	2052 (218)	2770 (336)	339 (42)	853 (46)	986 (54)
/u/	354 (85)	1056 (142)	2786 (297)	271 (53)	587 (48)	989 (49)
/o/	518 (61)	1094 (105)	2737 (283)	364 (31)	601 (35)	981 (46)
/ə/	453 (92)	1630 (131)	2786 (265)	331 (49)	757 (67)	991 (41)
/a/	832 (72)	1592 (115)	2709 (273)	506 (29)	747 (24)	977 (45)

F₁ and F₂ values (averaged), as shown in the table above, can acoustically locate the monophthongs on the plot:

Dialectal Impact on Vowel Acoustics:

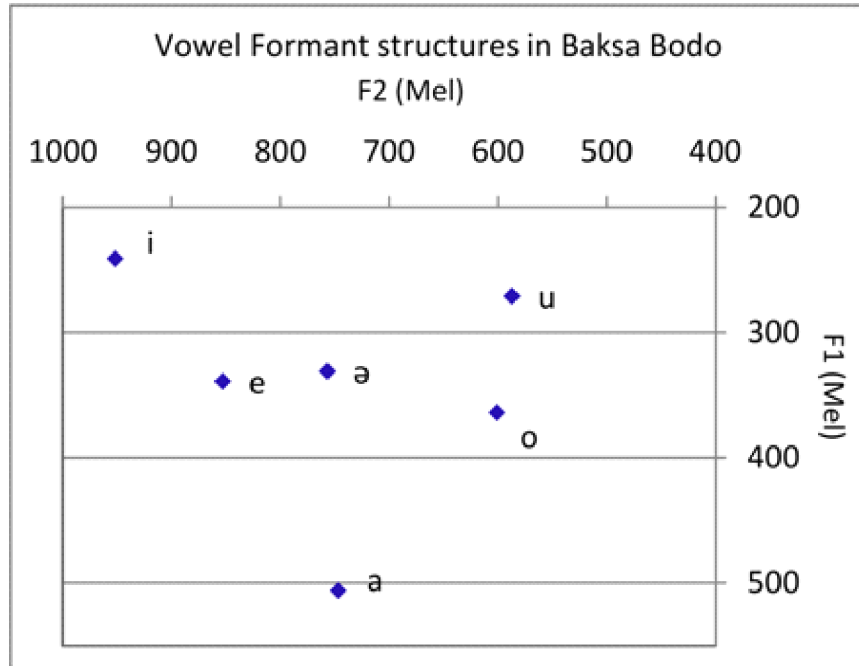


Figure 6: Acoustic locations of monophthongs in Baksa variety of Bodo

In this variety neither the /u/ tends to move forward nor the /ə/ is so upish. Now we can have a look at the respective intervocalic positions and resultant distinctiveness that can be measured through the intervocalic Euclidian distance.

Table 8: Euclidian Distance between vowels in the Baksa variety
(Mel values used)

	i	e	u	o	ə
e	139.30				
u	366.23	274.55			
o	371.92	253.24	94.05		
ə	214.77	96.33	180.28	159.45	
a	335.03	197.80	284.30	203.67	175.29

It shows that in Baksa variety of Bodo the largest Euclidian distance is between /i/ and /o/ (that is, 371.92), whereas the smallest between /u/ and /o/ that is only 94.05. The distance between /e/ and /ə/ (that is 96.33) is also very close to the smallest.

In the third round, following formant configurations have been assigned to the Bodo vowels by the speech data collected from the Udalguri speakers:

Table 9: Mean formant values (standard deviation in parenthesis) of Bodo vowels produced by the informants from Udalguri (6 male, 6 female)

	(Formants in Hertz)			(Formants in Mel)		
	F ₁	F ₂	F ₃	F ₁	F ₂	F ₃
/i/	332 (15)	2451 (267)	3217 (374)	260 (19)	931 (50)	1056 (54)
/e/	486 (66)	2228 (256)	2887 (322)	347 (35)	888 (53)	1005 (55)
/u/	371 (43)	900 (90)	2770 (336)	283 (26)	533 (40)	986 (54)
/o/	549 (97)	889 (92)	2663 (150)	379 (48)	527 (41)	970 (26)
/ə/	433 (68)	1549 (101)	2817 (339)	319 (36)	737 (47)	997 (53)
/a/	794 (111)	1470 (67)	2690 (289)	490 (45)	716 (31)	975 (81)

Averaged F₁ and F₂ values, as presented above (i.e. Table 9), have determined the following acoustic distribution of monophthongs on the plot:

Dialectal Impact on Vowel Acoustics:

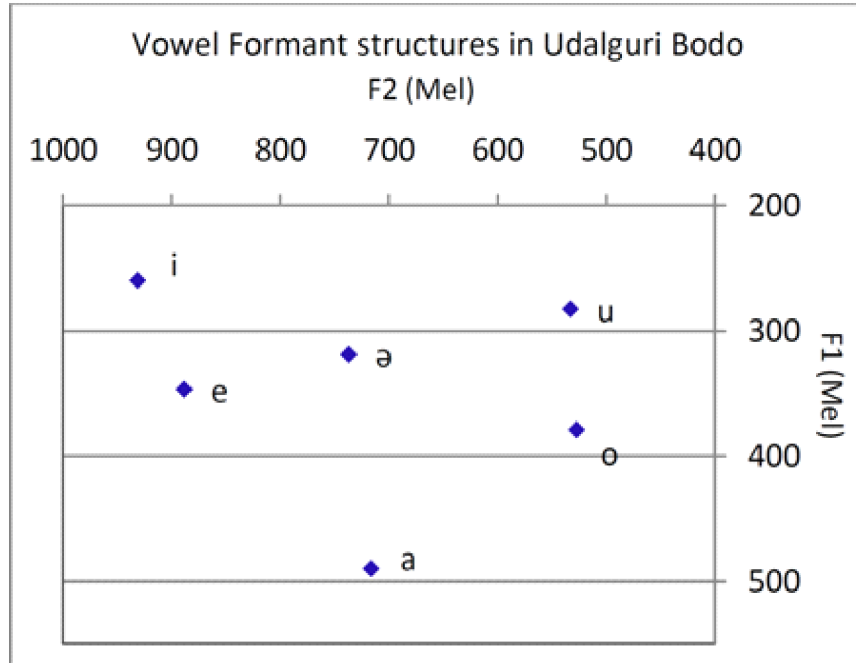


Figure 7: Acoustic locations of monophthongs in Udalguri variety of Bodo
Such vowel distribution on the acoustic plane determines the degree of vowel distinctiveness that can be measured through the intervocalic Euclidian distance.

Table 10: Euclidian Distance between vowels in the Udalguri variety
(Mel values used)

	i	e	u	o	ə
e	97.05				
u	398.66	360.72			
o	421.16	362.42		96.18	
ə	202.77	153.57	207.15	218.40	
a	314.84	233.68	276.29	219.18	172.28

It shows that in Udalguri variety of Bodo the largest Euclidian distance is between /i/ and /o/ (that is, 421.16), whereas the smallest between /u/ and /o/ that is only 96.18.

Thus, Experiment-I has provided sufficient insights into the formant structures of all the six Bodo monophthongs. The figure (8) graphically presents the true cross-dialective formant variances:

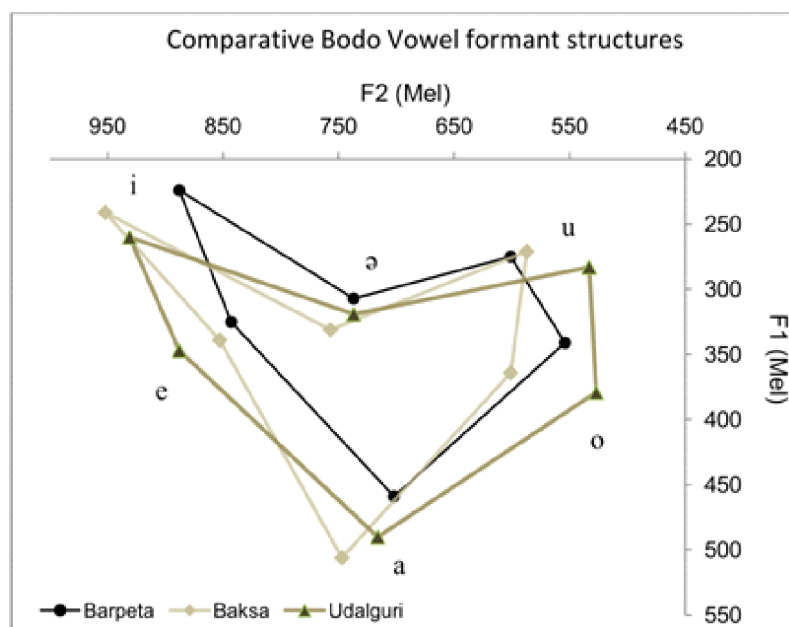


Figure 8: Acoustic spaces used by the vowel systems across three Bodo varieties

Now all the three varieties have been taken together as a representative of rural Bodo in Assam. Dialect-specific acoustic values of vowels in these varieties are averaged into the following table that may stand for the vowels in Bodo as spoken in the western part of rural Assam:

Dialectal Impact on Vowel Acoustics:

Table 11: Formant structure of vowels in Bodo spoken in rural Assam

	(Formants in Hertz)			(Formants in Mel)		
	F ₁	F ₂	F ₃	F ₁	F ₂	F ₃
/i/	304	2416	3260	242	924	1063
/e/	467	2094	2789	337	861	989
/u/	361	1017	2753	276	574	983
/o/	514	978	2678	361	561	971
/ə/	433	1577	2751	319	744	986
/a/	782	1497	2651	485	722	968

The table shows that formant structures of vowels in the rural Bodo as spoken in the western part of Assam is represented more efficiently by the Udalguri variety, while two other varieties exhibit more acoustic variances.

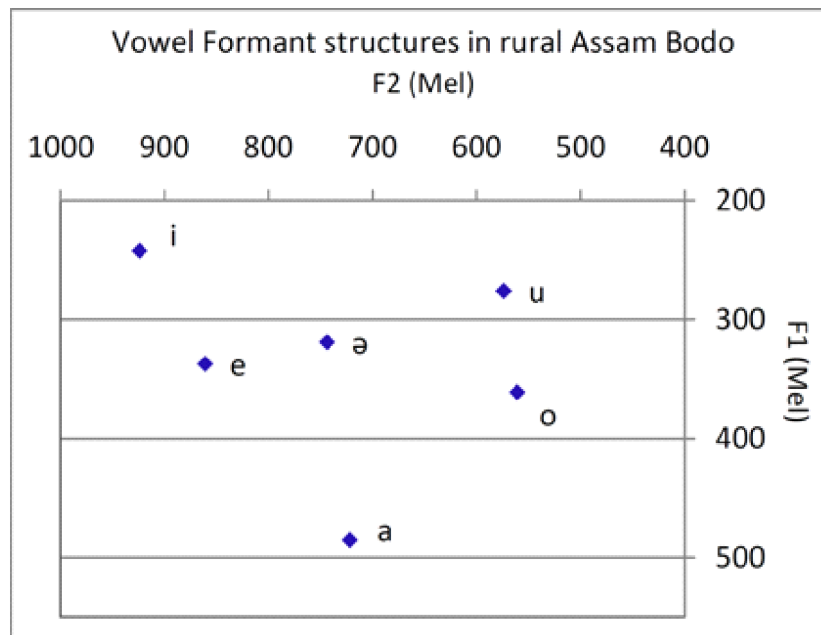


Figure 9: Acoustic distribution of monophthongs in rural Assam Bodo

Now let us check the point about the vowel distinctiveness (in Bodo as spoken the rural areas of Assam) that can be measured through the intervocalic Euclidian distance.

Table 12: Euclidian Distance between the vowels in rural Assam Bodo (Mel values used)

	i	e	u	o	ə
e	113.99				
u	351.65	293.41			
o	382.01	300.96	85.99		
ə	195.78	118.38	175.35	187.76	
a	316.01	203.04	256.09	203.22	167.45

It shows that in rural Assam Bodo the largest Euclidian distance is between /i/ and /o/ (that is, 382.01), whereas the smallest between /u/ and /o/ that is only 85.99.

The Experiment-II was conducted with the phonetic length of Bodo monophthongs in three rounds, each dealing with one language variety. It has yielded the following durational attributes of monophthongs across the Bodo varieties:

Table 13: Comparative duration of the vowels (Three varieties of Bodo)

Vowels	Duration (in msec.)		
	Barpeta vowels (1st Round)	Baksa vowels (2nd Round)	Udalguri vowels (3rd Round)
i	92.25	111.85	122
e	106.1	135.5	138.9
u	101.4	106.75	127.2
o	108.5	134.9	139.25
ə	88.85	85.8	97.05
a	112.5	90.6	118.15

Dialectal Impact on Vowel Acoustics:

These findings can be presented graphically like the following:

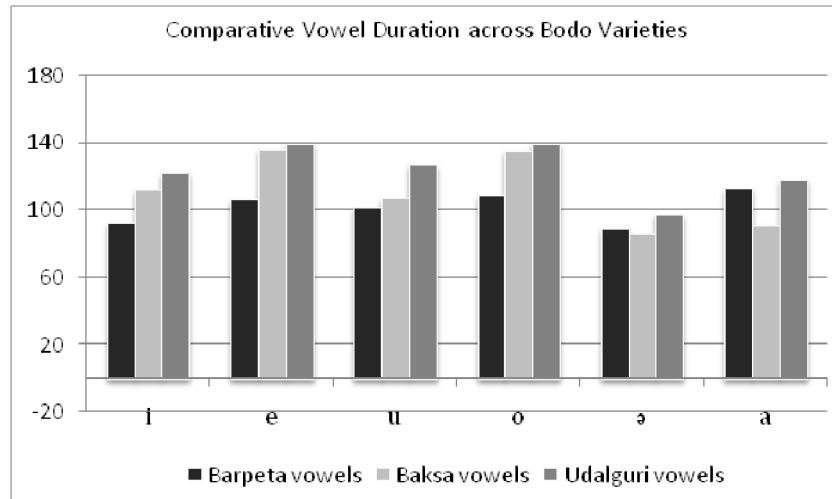


Figure 10: Vowel duration in the three varieties Assam Bodo

In every round, length has been measured in a gender-specific way. In the first round, speech data collected from the Barpeta speakers reveal the following durational patterns for the vowels:

Table 14: Duration of the vowels in Barpeta variety of Bodo

Vowels	Duration (in msec.)		
	♂ Male	♀ Female	Average
i	82	102.5	92.25
e	99.2	113	106.1
u	85	117.8	101.4
o	103	114	108.5
ə	79.7	98	88.85
a	105	120	112.5

These findings can be presented graphically as in the following figure:

These findings can be presented graphically like the following:

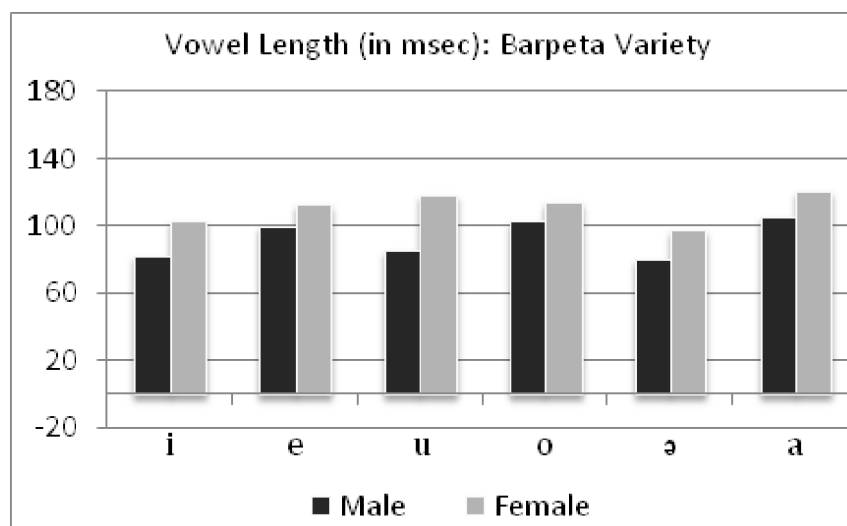


Figure11: Vowel duration of Barpeta male and female speakers

In the second round, speech data collected from the Baksa speakers have yielded the following durational patterns for the six vowels:

Table 15: Duration of the vowels in Baksa variety of Bodo

Vowels	Duration (in msec.)		
	♂ Male	♀ Female	Average
i	85.7	138	111.85
e	118	153	135.5
u	90	123.5	106.75
o	120.8	149	134.9
ə	75.6	96	85.8
a	99	82.2	90.6

Dialectal Impact on Vowel Acoustics:

These findings can be presented graphically like the following:

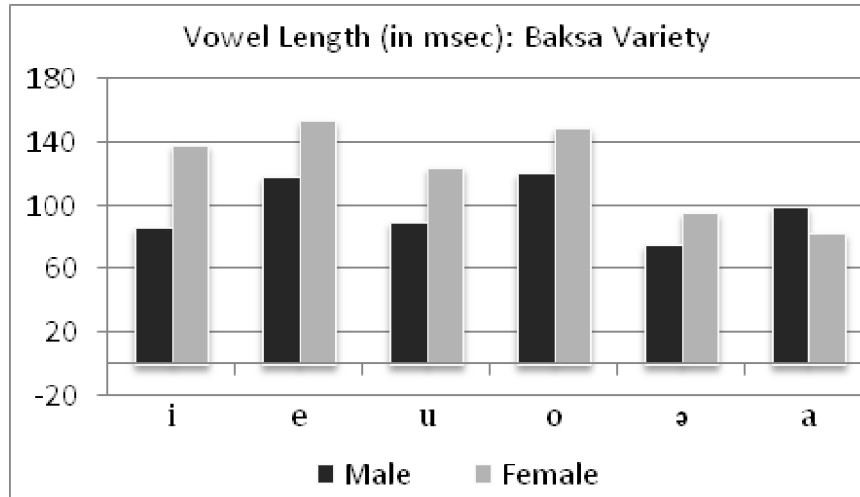


Figure 12: Vowel duration of Baksa male and female speakers

In the third round, following length configurations have been assigned to the Bodo vowels by the speech data collected from the Udalguri speakers:

Table 16: Duration of the vowels in Udalguri variety of Bodo

Vowels	Duration (in msec.)		
	♂ Male	♀ Female	Average
i	127	117	122
e	130	147.8	138.9
u	115.4	139	127.2
o	137	141.5	139.25
ə	91.5	102.6	97.05
a	116.3	120	118.15

These findings can be presented graphically like the following:

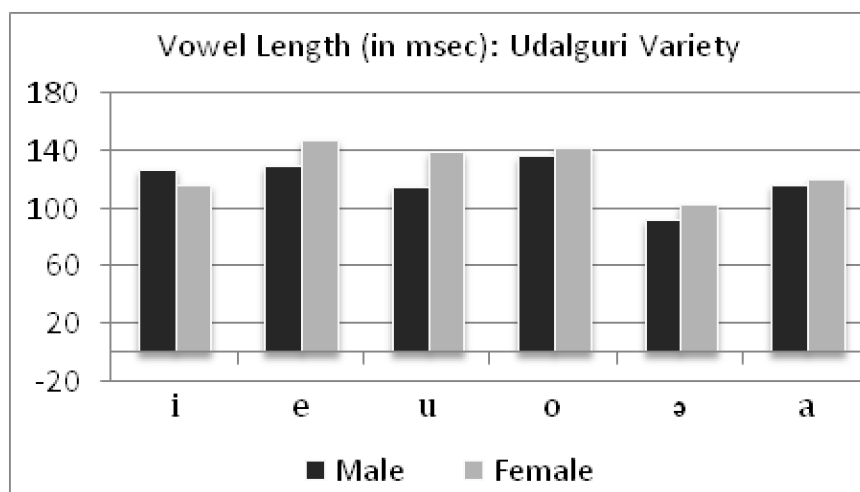


Figure 13: Vowel duration of Udalguri male and female speakers

Table 17: Gender-specific durational patterns of monophthongs in the rural Assam Bodo varieties

Vowels	Duration (in msec.)		
	♂ Male	♀ Female	Average
i	98.23	119.17	108.70
e	115.73	137.93	126.83
u	96.80	126.77	111.78
o	120.27	134.83	127.55
ə	82.267	98.87	90.57
a	106.77	107.4	107.08

Dialectal Impact on Vowel Acoustics:

These findings can be presented graphically as in the following figure:

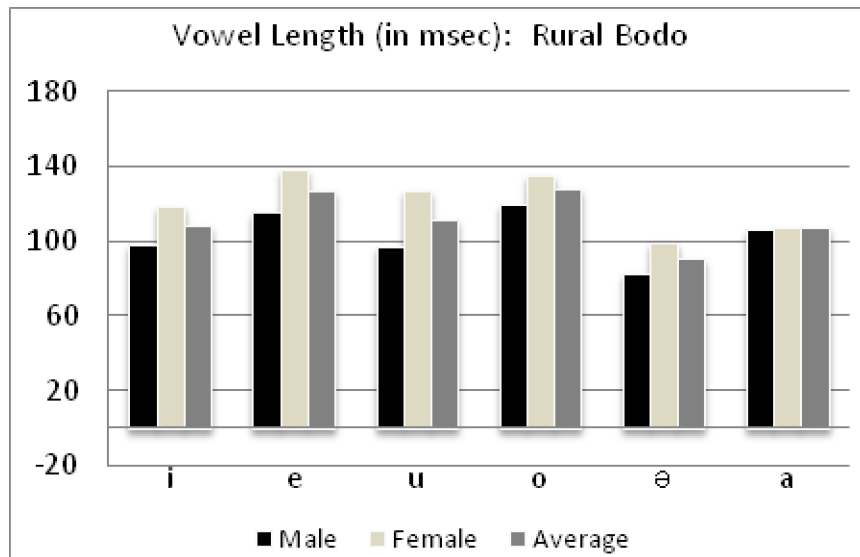


Figure 14: Length of vowels in the rural Assamese varieties

This empirical investigation yielded acoustic evidences in the forms of formant values and vowel length that confirmed dialectal impact on the acoustic structures of all the six Bodo monophthongs. Speech token analysis reveals some significant variances across language varieties in the acoustic qualities of target vowels. In the Udalguri variety, the high vowels are not significantly shorter than other vowels. In fact, vowels in this Bodo variety all vowels are consistently longer than their counterparts in two other varieties. They also exhibit acoustic variations in formant structures. The /ə/ and the mid-vowels are lower than that in the other varieties. Udalguri and Barpeta vowels show greater distinctiveness, as manifested through no evidence of acoustic area overlap that characterizes Baks /u/ and /o/.

Word Notes

1. This statistics about the number of Bodo speakers is as per the 2011 Indian Census report.
2. Bodoland Territorial Region is an autonomous region in the northwest of Assam.

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Appendix-I

Word	Gloss	Word	Gloss	Word	Gloss
zi	Ten	beŋ	Surround	buŋ	Speak
p ^{hi}	Wet	zeŋ	We	bu	To swell
lir	Write	se	One	p ^{hu} ŋ	Morning
bi	Beg	der	Grow	p ^{hu}	Uproot
bi	He/she	p ^{he}	Be mild	nu	To see
ni	From	er	Grow	zu	Pack
si	Tear	p ^{he}	Intoxicate	muŋ	Name
sni	Seven	neŋ	You	guduŋ	Hot
bisi	wife	ze	Net	subuŋ	Person
dinwi	Today	bebeŋ	Bone	gusu	Cold
zo	Sit/Together	p ^{hə}	Sow	k ^{ha}	Tie
no	House	zə	Sting	daŋ	Touch/ Clean
t ^{ho}	To be enough	zəŋ	We	sa	Ache
bo	To pull	sər	Who	p ^{ha}	Along with

Word	Gloss	Word	Gloss	Word	Gloss
hor	Hang	nəɪj	You	za	To be
on	Love	zə	Kick	bar	Bloom
hor	Night	zəɪj	We	san	Day
goK	horn	sər	Who	gab	Colour
hor	Send	nəɪj	You	tʰaɪj	Live
p ^h o	Pluck stem	p ^h ə	Sow	baɪra	Dog

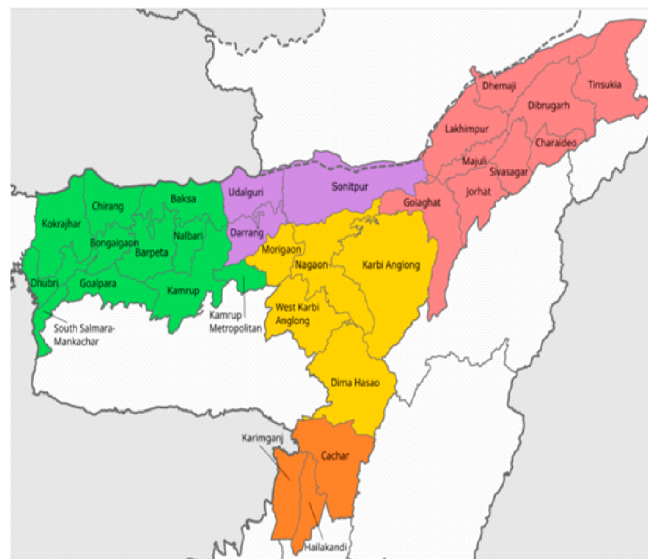
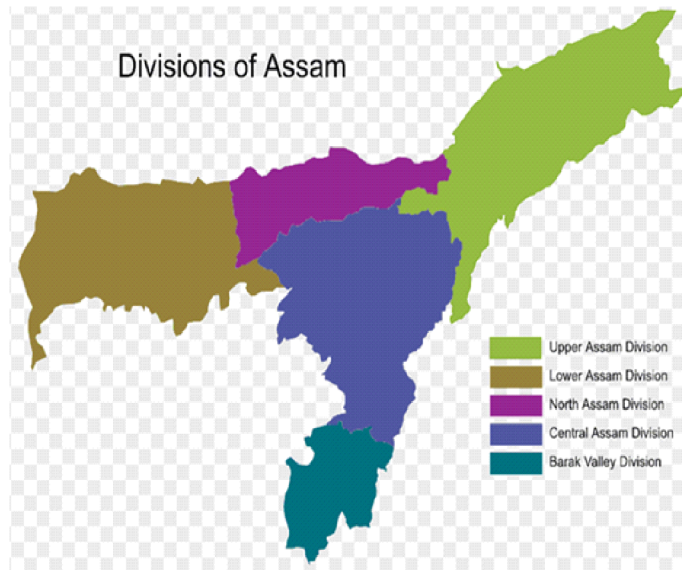
*Appendix-II***Vowel Tokens Distribution**

Barpeta				Baksa			Udalguri			Total
	Male	Fe- male	Total	Male	Fe- male	Total	Male	Fe- male	Total	
i	300	300	600	300	300	600	300	300	600	1800
e	300	300	600	300	300	600	300	300	600	1800
u	300	300	600	300	300	600	300	300	600	1800
o	300	300	600	300	300	600	300	300	600	1800
ə	300	300	600	300	300	600	300	300	600	1800
a	300	300	600	300	300	600	300	300	600	1800
Total	3600			3600			3600			10,800

Dialectal Impact on Vowel Acoustics:

Appendix-III

Assam Maps and Study Sites (Barpeta, Baksa and Udalguri)



Green: Lower Assam, Purple: North Assam, Yellow: Central Assam,
Orange: Barak Valley, Red: Upper Assam

VĀCYA: Morpho-Syntax of Pragmatic Salience in Bangla

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Abstract :

The concept of vācyā “voice” is investigated in this article to explore its role in windowing attention to alternative intentions during communication with a focus on Bangla aka Bengali. Pragmatic salience, which is about the relative importance of intensional content, often reveals itself through the relevant morpho-syntactic principles of a language. While exploring the above-stated issue, the following two questions are raised: (a) How is vācyā morpho-syntactically expressed in Bangla? (b) How is the morpho-syntactic encoding of vācyā affected by the underlying communicative intentions? – This in turn leads us to the following question: (c) How is vācyā crucial in pragmatic alterations through accentuating, emphasizing, obfuscating etc. of the communicating intention expressed through an utterance?

Keywords: *vācyā, voice, pragmatic salience, active, (quasi) passive, impersonal*

1. Introduction

The concept of *vācya* in Bangla is translated as voice in English. The intricacies involved with the structural configurations related to different types of *vācya* is well-studied. However, very little has been explored to understand its role as one of the major factors involved in any speech act. One problem which keeps *vācya* away from the investigators' attention is its non-discrete nature: Unlike any other discrete concepts of linguistic analyses, it is expressed not through a single structural entity or process—but through a collection of structuration processes which are crucial in understanding the speaker's choice during the communication of a particular intention. Having said this, the present work seeks to assert that the study of *vācya* from the viewpoint of speech may shed some light on the issues of forming alternates through the use of linguistic structures and structurations. Though *vācya* is dealt with, here in this paper, at the level of sentences with a particular focus on the formation of the utterances, same can also be discussed with a focus on the formation of the Bangla words as is shown below in examples ranging from (1) to (7).

- (1) khā 'to eat' > khāon / khāoyā 'eating'
- (2) nāc 'to dance' > nācan / nācā 'dancing'
- (3) bār 'to grow' > bāranta 'growing'
- (4) cal 'to move' > calan 'movement' / calanta, calati, calamān 'moving'
- (5) āṁś 'scales' > āṁṣṭe 'related to scales'
- (6) pyāṁc 'spiral shaped' > pyāṁcāno 'twisted'
- (7) lāthi 'to kick' > lāthāno 'kicking'

At a first glance, it may appear that these are the random isolated examples of the word formations in Bengali. However, besides being typical examples of the Bangla word formations, all of them are the embodiment of morpho-syntactic structures with a set of principles governing the semantic compositions of the utterances—since words have their structural values only as a part of a larger constructions. Support to this claim comes from the discussions where each of these derivations are referred to with respect to a

relevant *vācya*. For example, *kṛta* meaning ‘done’ is derived from $\sqrt{kar}$ ‘to do’ as a passive or past participle in *karma-vācya* (i.e. passive voice); again from same $\sqrt{kar}$, the verbal noun *kar-ā* ‘doing’ can be derived in *bhāva-vācya* i.e. impersonal voice (Chatterji, 1939/2017, p. 134). This shows how deep and ingrained is the issue of *vācya* in languaging our thoughts in Bangla. More specifically, *vācya* remains central in creating different possibilities to express a content depending on the factors involved in the communication like (a) background assumptions and (b) contextual factors—which might have some impact on the entailing, implicating and pre-supposing behaviors of the interlocutors.¹

Under this situation, the current work will deal with following two fundamental questions:

- (a) How is *vācya* morpho-syntactically expressed in Bangla?
- (b) How is the morpho-syntactic encoding of *vācya* affected by the underlying communicative intentions?

The investigation of these two questions, in turn, lead us to the third question:

- (c) How is *vācya* crucial in pragmatic alterations through accentuating, emphasizing, obfuscating etc. of the communicating intention expressed through an utterance?

To achieve the research objective of this paper by investigating the aforementioned questions, this discussion is broken into the following sections: Section 2 contains a discussion on the traditional understandings of *pratyāya* and *vācya*. Section 3 discusses the semantic parameters employed in deriving the words with the use of *pratyāya* while keeping the *vācya* in mind. Section 4 is dedicated to the discussion on how morpho-syntactic apparatus is relative to the issues of meaning and the usage.

2. Traditional Understanding of *Pratyāya* and *Vācya*

In Indian tradition *vācya* is used differently in different contexts. However, in the grammatical tradition it is used to refer to the way the relation between the verb and the nouns of a particular sentence vary according to the intention of the speaker (Bandyopadhyaya, 1966,

p. 1490). It is believed voice or *vācya*, as a grammatical phenomenon, has three distinct roles to play (Klaiman, 1991, pp. 9-11):

- (i) Any alteration in voice, invoking change in the verbal shape, instigates alternate assignments of nominals in the body of the matrix clause.
- (ii) This in turn has a definite impact on the assignment of the nominals in the subject position of the matrix clause. Finally,
- (iii) These two processes related to sentence internal structural adjustment are critical to the understanding of certain discourse level phenomena such as topichood, focus etc.

Taken together, all these discourse level phenomena are relevant in explaining clause level pragmatic saliences.

2.1 Constructional constituents: *pratyāya* and *vibhakti*

For the ease of our discussion, we distinguish *śabda* and *pada*. A word which is not a constituent of a sentence is *śabda*.² To attain the status of a *pada*, a *śabda* must be syntactically and semantically congruent with the other co-constituents of the *vākya* which it is a part of.³ Structurally, this type of congruence is taken care of by the *vibhakti*. With the addition of *vibhakti*, *śabda* attains the status of *pada*. In other words, syntactic and semantic congruency of a *pada* is relative to a structure where different constituents including *śabda* participate. As per this interpretation then *śabda* is similar to that of *prātipadika* and *pada* is formed with the addition of *vibhakti* to the *prātipadika*:

$$(8) \text{ [pada [śabda=prātipadika] [vibhakti]] }$$

śabda is of two types: (a) basic/fundamental and (b) derived. This article is concerned primarily about those base forms which are derived by affixing *pratyāya* to the root forms. A root is termed as *prakṛti*. To refer to the nominal root, *nām prakṛti* is used as against the *dhātu prakṛti* for the verbal root. As per the traditional grammar, a base or *prātipadika* is formed out of a root by adding one or more *pratyāyas* to it. With this understanding, the schematic representation of (8) can be further modified into the following one:

- (9) $\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{pada} \left[\begin{array}{c} \text{śabda} = \text{prātipadika} \left[\begin{array}{c} \text{prākṛti} \left[\text{pratyaya} \left[\text{pratyaya} \right] \right] \right] \right] \\ \text{vibhakti} \end{array} \right] \end{array} \right] \right]^4$

this description is crucial for appreciating the structural significances of different morphological constituents corresponding to the following terms used in morphology:

- (10) Terminological correspondences
- root (= prakṛti),
 - base/stem (= prātipadika),
 - formative (= pratyaya), and
 - affix (= vibhakti)

Before we get into the next section, the following point has to be kept in mind: the role of *vācya* as a meaning-making act is neither restricted to the morphology nor to syntax only. It is evenly distributed across the levels of analyses.

2.2 *vācya*

Traditionally, *vācya*, which is often translated as voice, is all about *what is spoken and how something is spoken*. It can be of following four types for which the corresponding English terms are used following Chatterji's proposal (1939):

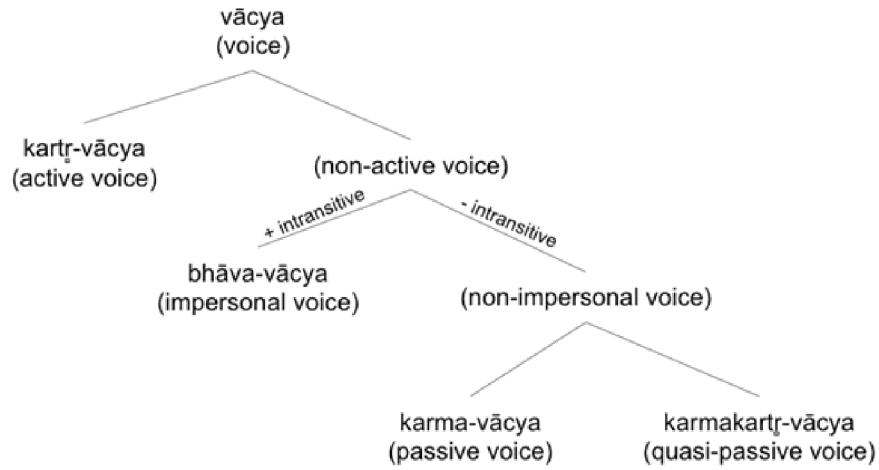
- (11) kartṛ *vācya* (= active voice)
- | | | |
|-------|---------------|-----------------|
| āmi | sinemaṭā | dekhechi |
| I.NOM | movie.CLF.ACC | see.PERF.PRES.1 |
- I have seen the movie.
- (12) karma *vācya* (= passive voice): Passive is not applicable to utterance with intransitive verb.
- | | | | |
|-------|---------------|----------|----------------|
| āmār | sinemaṭā | dekhā | hayēche |
| I.GEN | movie.CLF.ACC | see.NMLZ | be.PERF.PRES.3 |
- (The event of) my watching the movie has happened.
- (13) bhāva *vācya* (= neuter/intransitive passive/impersonal voice): Unlike passive voice, neuter is applicable to the utterances with intransitive verbs.
- | | | |
|---------|------------|----------------|
| tomār | ghum | hayēche? |
| you.GEN | sleep.NMLZ | be.PERF.PRES.3 |
- Has (the event of) sleeping happened to you?

(14) karmakartṛ vācya (middle/quasi-passive voice)

kalim belṭā bejechilo
calling bell.CLF.ACC ring.IMP.F.PST.3
The calling bell was ringing.

These four ways of expressing the communicative intention through the characteristic usages of *vācya* can be classified into the following taxonomy:

(15) Taxonomy of the voices



The morpho-syntax of *vācya* is crucial in expressing communicative intention with varied degrees of involvement of the speaker in two major types, namely, (a) active and (b) passive voices. Passive can further be classified in two major groups depending on the concept of transitivity: Impersonal voice is amenable to the intransitive verb only. Constructions with non-intransitive verbs are amenable to the following two voices: passive and quasi-passive voices. Sentences with (di)transitive verbs are resulted into the passive voices during voice change. Quasi-passive is like passive with the following semantic twist: In quasi-passive the concept which is in *karma kārak* (accusative case) behaves like *kartā* (nominative case).

Unlike person, gender, number, tense or aspect, there is no dedicated morpheme for *vācya* in Bangla. In fact, expressing *vācya*

in Bangla is relative to a cluster of morpho-syntactic processes. Consider the examples stated in (11) and (12). Here, in this case, the sentential conversion from *kartṛ vācya* (active voice) to its corresponding *karma vācya* (passive voice) requires a cluster of following subsentential processes:

- (16) āmi > āmār
I.SG.NOM > I.SG.GEN

The pronominal form appearing in the subject position in active voice is changed into its corresponding genitive form during the conversion from active to passive.

- (17) dekhechi > dekhā haṇeche
see.PERF.PRES.1 > see.NMLZ be.PERF.PRES.3

The finite verb form of $\sqrt{\text{dekh-}}$ is changed into its corresponding infinite form *dekh-ā* and invites the support of the finite be-verb form *haṇeche*. As a result the structure of the complex predicate emerged. Furthermore, in the newly evolved structure, the finite verb form is in agreement with the *karma*.

One another observation, from the viewpoint of *vācya*, will be of interest here: It is often noticed that due to the change in *vācya*, the number of arguments associated with a verbal predicate gets reduced. Consider the following examples: (18) is in *kartṛ vācya* (active voice) and (19) is in *karma vācya* (passive voice).

- (18) āmi tomāke kathāṭā balechilām
I.NOM you.ACC fact.CLF.ACC inform.PERF.PST.1
I had informed you the fact.
(19) tomāke kathāṭā bal-ā haṇechila
you.ACC information inform-NMLZ be.PERF.PST.3
.CLF.ACC

The fact had been informed to you.

In (18), i.e. in active voice, the number of arguments associated with the verbal predicate is three which is reduced to two when transformed into the passive voice in (19). In addition to this, unlike (18), (19) licenses an accusative-marked expression to appear in the subject position. Note, change in voice affects the argument structure

associated with a verbal predicate by altering structural and grammatical relationships existing between the constituents of a sentence. As a result, the overall configuration of a sentence is affected.

What follows in, therefore, is an understanding that the concept of *vācya* as a sentential level phenomenon largely depends on some subsentential processes often initiated by certain constituents which are carrying information related to different types of *pratyaya* and *vibhakti*. These subsentential processes and constituents are crucial both in regulating and construing the sense of *vācya* at the level of sentence.

3. Regulating and Construing the Sense of Vācya

Previous section discusses the structural and grammatical transformations relevant to the nominal constituents of an utterance during the change in *vācya*. In this section, those structural and grammatical adjustments which are applicable to the syntax and semantics of the verb will be discussed.

It is evident that the *vācya* is regulated by the subsentential processes and constituents. Among the constituents, the verb seems to be the most crucial one around which the other subsentential processes revolve. The conversion of a sentence, which is in active voice into the corresponding passive one, depends largely on the derivation of the verbal noun with the addition of *-ā pratyaya*:

- (20) āmi baiṭā paṛechi
I.NOM book.CLF.ACC read.PERF.PRES.1
I have read the book.

- (21) āmār baiṭā paṛā āche
I.GEN book.CLF.ACC read.NMLZ be.PRS.3
Reading of the book happens to me.

Here in this case the conversion of *paṛechi* into *paṛā āche* revolves around the derived verbal noun *paṛā* which is derived from the verbal root $\sqrt{paṛ}$ with the addition of *-ā*. The addition of *-ā* to the root (= *prakṛti*) produces *paṛā* which has the status of *prātipadika* from the viewpoint of the structure. With the addition of a

nominalizer, the resultant form lacks the power of getting added with the affixes of aspect, tense, and the person. The resultant form can be identified as *asamāpikā* or infinite. Instead of bearing a sense of activity, the derived form is now conveying a sense of stativeness. In other words, the resultant form refers to the state of an action—for example, here in case of (21), the verbal noun is referring to the sense of “being in the state of reading” and in case of (19) it means “being in the state of informed (to someone)”. Point to be noticed, structural adjustment due to the voice change is resulting in the compositional structure of the complex predicate.

Converting the verbal root into a verbal noun opens up a new set of expectancies. To convey the complete sense, the verbal noun now expects a finite verb form to bear the information related to the aspect, tense and person. In case of (21) above, *āche* plays the role of the finite verb. The structural adjustment which we have discussed till now is restricted to the verb category and is crucial in converting an active sentence into the passive one. However, this is not the only adjustment that a sentence in active voice requires to get transformed into passive. The conversion now affects the other constituents of the sentence: In (21), the subject of the active sentence, i.e. *ami*, is converted to its corresponding genitive form *āmār* to satiate the expectancy of the complex predicate *parā āche*.

To summarise, following two issues are discussed in detail till now: (i) Any alteration in voice, invoking change in the verbal shape, instigates alternate assignments of nominals in the body of the matrix clause. (ii) This in turn has a definite impact on the assignment of the nominals in the subject position of the matrix clause.

4. Pragmatics of Vācya

The significance of *vācya* cannot be understood completely without appreciating its pragmatic contribution. Though a concern for exploring the significance of *vācya* from the pragmatic viewpoint is aired in the works of the scholars, most of the time these investigations typically restricted themselves to the study of those

aspects such as topic, focus etc. which can go in consonance with the formalism of syntax and semantics. Pragmatic saliences are talked about but the issues concerning implicature, presupposition, or speech act are hardly examined— in spite of the fact sentential level structural and grammatical adjustments are relative to pragmatic reasons. This section is a humble effort in this direction particularly in a situation when the distinction of active and passive uses of an utterance is believed to be interpreted along the following dimensions:

- (22) Dimensions of active vs. passive uses of an Utterance
- (a) agency and responsibility
 - (b) focus on action vs. outcome
 - (c) formality vs. politeness
 - (d) ambiguity vs. obfuscation

vācya provides alternative ways for communicating a thought. This process of providing alternatives, if approached from the viewpoint of speech acts, are subject to the felicity conditions to avoid the instances of misfire and abuse.⁵ It is noticed, the information related to agency and responsibility is often communicated in an utterance which is in *kartr-vācya*. Consider the following two examples where (23) is in active voice and (24) is in passive voice:

- | | | | |
|------|---|---|------------------------------|
| (23) | tamāli
Tamali.NOM= _{AGENT} | baiṭā
book.CLF.ACC= _{PATIENT} | likheche
write.PERF.PRS.3 |
| | Tamali has written the book. | | |
| | | | |
| (24) | baiṭā
book.CLF.ACC= _{PATIENT} | lekhā
write.NMLZ | hayeche
be.PERF.PRS.3 |
| | The book has been written. | | |

Unlike (23), (24) has no overt information about the agent. The person who has the responsibility for writing the book is explicitly mentioned in (23). Because of encoding the information relevant to agency and responsibility, these two utterances will have differences in their respective implicature and presupposition licensing patterns. Same will also be the case with example (14).

vācya is also an important way to draw attention of the hearer to a particular information. This process is often termed as focus. Since change in *vācya* has direct implication on the action type of a verb in an utterance, it plays a significant role in crafting action-reading and state-reading of a verb as the focus. In (23), writing is communicated as an action verb, whereas it is presented as the corresponding state in (24) through the use of nominalizer. In (24), the concept of *lekhā* is represented more as an outcome than as a process. As a consequence, a more accurate translation of (24) will be the following one: “The writing of the book has happened/occured”.

It is also noticed that non-active voices are preferred over the active voice to be polite or humble. Acts of accusing, abusing, blaming, ordering etc. are always relative to the use of active voice only, whereas the acts of requesting, begging, appealing etc. are preferred to be placed in non-active voices-since non-active voices can be used extensively in obfuscating or ambiguating the information during deliberate obscuring the fact. This, in turn, remains central not only in grounding the presuppositions but also in determining the certainty of the knowledge conveyed through an utterance. Here is a list which summarized the different dimensions of changing presupposition licensing behaviours which are discussed till now in the context of changing *vācya* or voice.

- (25) Dimensions of changing presupposition licensing behaviour
 - (a) presupposition about agency
 - (b) presupposition about focus
 - (c) presupposition about causality and responsibility
 - (d) presupposition related to the foregrounding and backgrounding
 - (e) presupposition about knowledge and certainty

Further understanding of how the world transpires through language is relative to a more intensive investigation of the interplay of mood (< Bangla *bhāva*) and voice (< Bangla *vācya*) through the structural constituents of sentence is required.

End Notes

1. In this context, certain constructions can be referred to for which only a specific type of *vācya* is preferred over the others: For example, an existential statement like *tāder cokhe mukhe klāntir chāp* “in their face there is the signs of tiredness” has no corresponding active version. For non-factual statements like the following one the non-active voice is preferred (Banerjee & Karmakar, 2020): *pāramitā sigāreṭ khetō bale mane hay* “it seems that Paramita used to smokes”. Similar claims can also be made in case of certain desiderative constructions (ref. Roychowdhury & Karmakar, 2024).
2. Note, this particular definition is very restrictive. *śabda* is associated with a wide range of concepts in the literature. For the current purpose, *aṣṭādhyāyī* rule 1.2.48 which states *arthavat=a-dhātuḥ=a-pratyayaḥ prātipadikam* is consulted (Pāṇini, 1997, P. 94). In this definition, Pāṇini has negatively defined the concept of *prātipadika*. This is further interpreted as *arthavat=śabda=rūpam= prātipadika =samjñā bhavati dhātu=pratyay=au varjayitvā* which refers a meaning conveying word excepting *dhātu* and *pratyaya* will have the status of *prātipadika*.
3. suP=tiN-antam padam (*aṣṭādhyāyī*: 1.4.14; Pāṇini, 1997, P. 173)
4. For a detailed discussion, Karmakar *et al.* (2016) may be referred to.
5. Austin (1962) has identified three felicity conditions. The first one states the necessity of a conventional procedure to effect conventionally. The appropriateness of circumstances and persons has to be in consonance with the aforementioned procedures. Secondly, correct and complete execution of the procedure is asserted. Violation of first and second felicity conditions will result in misfire. Thirdly, the significance of requisite thoughts, feelings, and intentions as is specified in the aforementioned two conditions is recommended with the provision of following consequent conduct in case any such specification for the relevant parties are there. Failure to maintain the third condition will result in abuse. Also note, constatives are here conceived as a subclass of performatives following the modified proposal of Austin.

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Essentials in the Sociology of Language: Language Planning

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Abstract :

This paper provides a basic introduction to the systematic approach of language planning, which aims to modify the linguistic landscape of a society. It explores the different categories of planning, the evolution of terminology in the field, distinguishing between language planning, language policy, and language management. It also highlights the contributions of key thinkers like Heinz Kloss, Einar Haugen, and Joshua Fishman, emphasising their roles in shaping the understanding of language planning. The paper hopes to establish the critical role of language planning in shaping linguistic identities and promoting social cohesion in diverse, multilingual societies. The aim of this paper is to encourage students and scholars of the discipline to critically explore the methodologies and implications of language planning in both national and supranational contexts.

Keywords: *language management, corpus planning, status planning, ausbau language, abstand language*

Introduction

Language planning, as the name suggests, is a set of systematic and organised proposals for activities to alter, modify or adjust the existing linguistic situation in society. As social beings with a need for communication for survival, we are directly or indirectly influenced by language planning activities adopted by different institutions. On the other hand, we ourselves also, consciously or unconsciously, participate in language planning activities in various facets of our lives. Before we proceed to discuss these in detail, we may consider the various terminologies and their usage in this field of study

Like any dynamic and contemporary field of study, the field of **language planning** deals with considerable terminological overlaps and incongruities. The term '**language planning**' was first used in the 1960s when the focus of the field was on regulating the language use and language status in post-colonial multilingual nations. The term '**language policy**' is sometimes used interchangeably with 'language planning', though some scholars prefer to create a distinction between the two fields of study. For example, Duemert (2009, p. 371) remarks "...language policy refers to the more general linguistic, political and social goals underlying the actual language planning process.". Many sociolinguists prefer to use a cover term to designate the field as '**language planning and policy**' (or LPP) or '**language planning and language policy** (LPLP). With the expansion of the field which now addresses the complication of the globalised world, the term '**language management**' is proposed by some scholars. Scholars like Spolsky (2018) argue that this term appropriately represents the dynamic nature of the field which has shifted from finding solutions to language problems, to looking for measures and modifications in language behaviours to adjust to changing sociolinguistic conditions and situations.

Content Map

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- Definition and categories

Essentials in the Sociology of Language: Language Planning

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- Issues in status planning
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 - ◆ Language planning as a nation-building activity
 - ◆ Planning for the protection of language diversity
 - ◆ Sub-national language planning
 - ◆ Supranational language planning

Learning Objectives

In this chapter, first, we shall learn about the definition and categories of language planning and their aims and methods adopted in each category. Then we shall look at how the approaches to languages planning have developed since its inception.

Concepts

Language planning and policy, Status and Corpus language plannings, Ausbau and Abstand languages, Linguistic hegemony, Language revitalisation.

Key Thinkers

Heinz Kloss was a pioneer in the field of the Sociology of Language and language planning. Many of the terminologies and concepts used today in the field, can be traced back to him. The first use of the term ‘language planning’ is attributed to **Einar Haugen**. He used it first while working on the language situation in Norway. In many ways, he paved the path for language planning to develop as a separate field of enquiry in Sociolinguistics.

Charles Ferguson was a leading scholar on multilingualism. Apart from his many ground-breaking works in sociolinguistics including the conceptualisation of Diglossia, he was the director of the Center of Applied Linguistics in Washington DC which offered advice in public language policy.

Joshua Fishman was one of the most influential linguists in the field of the sociology of language. His works on language loyalty,

language maintenance, language revival and on multilingualism in general set the context of planning for non-dominant languages.

Jyotirindra Dasgupta was a political scientist and one of the major contributors to the field of language planning. His works (many in collaboration with scholars like Joshua Fishman, Charles Ferguson) language issues in the Asian continent including India are invaluable contribution in understanding the sociolinguistic milieu of the area.

Punya Sloka Ray worked extensively on language standardisation procedures. He also worked on the description of the Bengali language.

Definition and Categories

Language planning is understood as a set of efforts partaken by human beings to intervene with the language, language varieties and existing linguistic contexts in society.

This intervention can be brought about primarily in two ways.

1. An intervention about streamlining the variations in individual languages and regulating their rules of usage.
2. An intervention in the selection and promotion of a language or languages, in a multilingual society, and determination about the distribution of those languages in different domains of communication.

These two types are known in Linguistics as Corpus planning and Status planning respectively. Heinz Kloss, one of the most prominent scholars in the field of language planning, distinguished between these two while working on the possibilities of research in institutional and socio-cultural bilingualism at the *Centre Internationale Reserche sur le Bilingualism*, Quebec, Canada (1969).

Issues in Corpus Planning and Standardisation

Corpus Planning involves two basic operations.

First is the creation of a model language for imitation by all who speak different varieties of the same language. In other words, to create a standardised, normative form of language (for a detailed discussion on the process of standardisation see Ray (1968)). This

is driven by the human societal need to have a relatively stable non-varying mode of communication in which all official and formal transactions including education, governmental business, literature, broadcast media etc. can be conducted with efficacy without much scope of miscommunication or vagueness.

The second operation involves taking the initiative to promote this language variety over other language varieties satisfactorily enough, so that the selected variety can be used to represent all the language varieties which are labelled as the same language. In other words, the developed variety becomes the only legitimate variety for the language.

Languages, as we all notice, demonstrate quite a bit of variation. Some of these variations are a result of geographical distances, some others are shaped by various social factors including class, age and sex. Other than that, there are variations in style (variations based on speech situation), register (variations based on function) and other individual variations. Such variations may (and they often do) create wide-ranging and distinct language varieties—or distinct forms of language—with their own linguistic features including, most prominently, their own pronunciation and grammar. Such varieties are variously termed as Dialect, Vernacular, Patois or ‘Mother Tongue’—as in the Indian Census, etc. Often these varieties demonstrate quite discernible linguistic differences among themselves, so much so that one wonders how or why they are parts of the same language. How to determine if two varieties belong to the same language?

stop and think: Why do you think the term “mother tongue” is used in the census to designate language varieties instead of ‘dialect’, ‘patois’ or simply ‘varieties’? What is the difference between a ‘mother tongue’ and a ‘dialect’? What is the significance of the term ‘mother tongue’?

Identification and grouping of language varieties as a single language is actually a rather complicated task even for linguists. The common linguistic criterion to group these varieties as dialects of the same

language is that of ‘mutual intelligibility’, which is a linguistic criterion for designating a set of language varieties as part of a single language, based on whether speakers of these varieties can readily understand each other without any special effort. However, mutual intelligibility often fails in practical application. We often encounter dialects which appear incomprehensible to another group of speakers of the same language, yet they are firmly established as part of the same language. The different varieties of Chinese are one such example. At times, we encounter cases of one-way intelligibility where comprehensibility is not reciprocal. This is often the case with peripheral dialects and standard dialects. The peripheral dialect speakers can understand standard dialects, but standard dialect speakers may claim that they have difficulty in understanding the peripheral dialects. Moreover, we are also familiar with languages with high levels of mutual intelligibility firmly established as separate languages. As an example, we can think of Hindi and Urdu. In short, the linguistic criterion of mutual intelligibility is inadequate in deciding on how to group dialects into languages.

stop and think: What are the linguistic differences between Hindi and Urdu (including the writing system)? What are the non-linguistic differences associated with these two languages?

Kloss in another seminal paper (1993) (first published in 1967) suggests a sociological criterion for grouping such language as a single language. He introduces the terms *Abstandsprache* and *Ausbausprache* to designate the differences between languages that are linguistically distant and languages that are created through planning activities. He uses the term *Abstandsprache* for languages that are separated by intrinsic distances and *Ausbausprache* for languages which are shaped or “build” to become the vehicle of literary expression. As evident, the *Ausbau* language is the result of deliberate language planning. Here the selected language variety goes through various re-shaping or re-modelling processes including the addition of a selection of language conventions that will be promoted as the “correct” convention. Reshaping the vocabulary with borrowing from other languages of language varieties to give

it a distinct characteristic from another language with which it is mutually intelligible. This is a very common phenomenon, found in many world languages including Hindi and Urdu. These two languages have the same base language variety, but they are build-up or shaped with morphological addition from two different source languages (Sanskrit and Persian respectively), conventionalised with two different scripts (Devanagari and Persian) and are promoted to use in two different linguistic cultures. Hence, though they are not *Abstand* languages and are mutually intelligible, they are firmly established as different languages. Once the *Ausbau* language is developed, it is promoted to become the only legitimate representative of a number of language varieties which may or may not be mutually intelligible. As a consequence, in common knowledge, the *Ausbau* languages become 'the language' and other language varieties become dialects or variations of that language. It becomes the variety that is taught in schools, used in official communication and gradually the speakers of different dialects that are grouped under the same language develop at least some level of proficiency in the language.

Hence corpus planning concentrates on building a language, which can be raised to a status above other competing language varieties.

Stop and think: Do you know of a dialect in your language that is incomprehensible to you? Do you know of dialects of two different languages which are mutually understandable? What, according to you are the factors in the above cases, to group such dialects as one language?

*Check your progress: Read Kloss's (1993) paper on *Abstand* and *Ausbau* languages. What role do you think language planners play in grouping dialects into languages?*

Corpus Planning-Methods

The standard process and steps of corpus planning activities are elaborated by Haugen (1966) in his paper *Dialect, Language and Nation*. He elaborates on four distinct steps to this process.

1. Selection of the norm
2. Codification of the form
3. Elaboration of the function
4. Acceptance by the community

The first step, as the name suggests, is to choose a language variety to build up as the representative standard version of the language in question. This can be a complex process if the varieties under scrutiny show considerable variations and/or if there is no obvious consensus among speakers regarding a representative variety. Selecting a variety as the norm would entail a hierarchy in which the selected variety would be superior to all other varieties and in common understanding, this variety would often be mistakenly considered a better, more prior and the only “correct” variety. The speakers of the selected variety would also get the advantage of possessing the variety which gives various advantages without any special effort. Speakers of the other varieties will have to learn the variety in order to avail of the same advantage.

The second step—codification, is a purely linguistic process of developing the selected variety so that it can become an appropriate tool of communication in different levels of society. In this step, appropriate modifications are made at different levels of the linguistic structure of the selected language variety including phonology, grammar, lexicon and writing. The aim of this process is to eliminate variations in these levels to produce a language form which has the same spelling and same pronunciation for every word and the same grammatical rules operating throughout the language. The forms are chosen to be the norms of language and attempts are made to stabilise these norms as much as possible. In other words, the codified norms become resistant to change. Strict codification can sometimes lead to a division between codified and non-codified varieties. e.g., the written and spoken varieties of Bengali as found in the early nineteenth century. Sometimes it can lead to a diglossia (Ferguson C., 1959) where the H and L varieties of languages are clearly distinguished in their forms and, more importantly, in their function.

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Codification leads to the third step in the process, i.e., elaboration of function. While codification creates a uniform language with no (or at least minimal) variation in form, elaboration aims to develop the language for maximal variation in usage. Since the target of this language is to be of use by a large community of people from different walks of life, the language may borrow words from other languages or dialects or create new words, create new complex forms and styles to meet up demands of communication in different domains of life.

The final step is to promote this developed language variety (the standard 'language'), so that people speaking other varieties of the language (the 'dialects') will accept this variety as the normative form of their language. Acceptance of this elevation of the standard over other dialects may involve direct material incentives as well as symbolic motives. The government and other competent authorities may offer rewards such as career advancement or a salary raise for efficiency in the standard language, knowledge and proficiency in the standard may be required for certain professions. On the other hand, proficiency in the language can give symbolic advantages like being considered educated, sophisticated or having other socially significant attributes.

This four-step process is associated with four different aspects of intervention—a linguistic intervention or change in the structure of the language, a sociolinguistic intervention or change in the selection and acceptance of the language, an intervention in the form or selection and codification of the norm and an intervention in the function of the language or elaboration and acceptance of the language.

Type of intervention	Selection	Codification	Elaboration	Acceptance
linguistic		✓	✓	
Sociolinguistic	✓			✓
Form	✓	✓		
Function			✓	✓

Issues in Status Planning

Status planning, unlike corpus planning—which concentrates on the linguistic aspects of language, is an intervention in the linguistic contexts of society, especially in a multilingual society. At least in the early period of the discipline of language planning, status planning activities focussed on the multilingual scenarios of the newly independent nations of Asia and Africa. They aimed to conceive a plan to solve— what was perceived as— “problems” of multilingualism. Compared to corpus planning, status planning is more oriented towards social aspect of language planning. Acts of status planning may involve the selection/creation of a national or official variety in a multilingual society, taking a decision about their symbolic value and usage and promoting them or implementing their usage in certain domains of functions.

For status planning, the methods involved can be categorised into two primary types following Kaplan & Baldauf (1997)—language selection and language implementation.

The first involves the selection of a language or language variety over several competing varieties in a multilingual society for assigning them special status. This status can be functional such as the language of official communication, link language, or language for education etc., or it can be symbolic status such as a national language which is assigned the representative value of national identity.

Stewart (1968, p. 540) lists ten such possible functions that can be assigned to the selected language.

- a. Official—the legally appropriate language, often explicitly specified in the constitution or in other official documents, for representative purpose through the national territory.
- b. Provincial—functions as a regional official language.
- c. Language of wider communication—the medium of communication across languages.
- d. International—medium of communication across the border.
- e. Capital—primary medium of communication in the capital of the nation.

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- f. Group–medium of communication among a single ethnic / cultural group
- g. Educational–medium of instruction at the primary and secondary level.
- h. Social–language(s) that are taught as a subject in the schools.
- i. Literary–languages that are used primarily for literary or scholarly purpose,
- j. Religious–language(s) used for religious rituals.

The origin of the selected language can also cause a bipartite categorisation (Kloss H., 1968). Endoglossic states are those where the language selected for the national-official status are spoken by a majority of the native population. Exoglossic states are those where a state adopts an ‘imported’ language for that status. A state may be fully or partly exoglossic. India’s selection of official languages (Hindi and English) is an example of part exoglossia.

Similar to Stewart ((1968), Kloss (1968, pp. 79-80)) mentions five categories of the status of the languages based on their juridical status

- a. The official language in the country
 - i. Including only the official language or one of the several co-equal national languages
- b. Regional official language
- c. A language without official status but promoted by the different governmental bodies.
- d. A language which is not promoted officially but enjoys local status, such as a religious language
- e. A language which is prohibited from use

These functions may or may not be explicitly specified in official documents. Hence, they can have the *de facto* or *de jure* status. That is either clearly stated in an official document or the status is accepted as such, though there are no official documents to formally state so. The case of English in Britain is an example where English does not have any *de-facto* status but is accepted by all as the national-official language

The second task–language implementation–involves taking appropriate measures to promote these languages to their designated slots. As may be evident, such decisions are taken primarily by those with power to take political decisions. Several extralinguistic factors are considered when status planning steps are decided and implemented.

Stop and think: What are the different approaches that a state can have towards non-dominant languages? What would be the advantages and problems related to each of those approaches?

Check your progress: Read about the different methods of status planning. What according to you is the impact of status planning on minority languages?

History and Development of Language Planning

This section shall look into the history of the development of the discipline of language planning.

Grammar as Language Planning

The earliest attempt at language planning can be traced back to ancient times and it was motivated by the need to maintain the “purity” of language primarily for the sake of the preservation of sacred knowledge texts. The variation and change in language were found to be messy and detrimental to the preservation, understanding and continuation of those texts. Hence the need to modify and standardise a language for the writers to access and use for the creation of texts was thought as necessary. This involved development of the language with strict codification and elaboration. Greek grammarian Dionysius Thrax or Indian philosopher Panini was also language planners in that sense. Similarly, all grammarians, in the field of what is often called ‘prescriptive linguistics’ are language planners in the field of corpus language planning. Their work aims at rising above the variations in language to create a standardised uniform norm of language usage.

Language Planning as a Nation-Building Activity

Linguistics aims to move away from a prescriptive position and take a more objective and descriptive view of language. However, in some sense language planning appropriates a normative approach. The term ‘language planning’ is attributed to Haugen who used it first for his work on languages of Norway (Haugen, 1993 (1959)). At that time Haugen used the term primarily in the sense of corpus planning.

“By language planning I understand the activity of preparing a normative orthography, grammar, and dictionary for the guidance of writers and speakers in a nonhomogeneous speech community (p-109).”

Haugen was conscious of the normative nature of the activity and stated that here the planners move ‘beyond descriptive linguistics’ to develop a language in the desired direction and in involves ‘a deliberate effort to influence...(the future of the language(s))’.

The field of language planning, in the current sense of the term, developed with this aim of influencing the course of languages. Its emergence and development started in the 1960s and coincided with the end of the colonial era following the second world war and the development of the ideology of nationalism in the newly independent nations, most of which were multilingual nations. The aim of language planning here was not just restricted to setting the norm of usage but also to create a suitable language to represent the new nations. Haugen (1966) points out the basic endeavours of nation-forming.

“it minimizes internal differences and maximizes external ones. On the individual’s personal and local identity, it superimposes a national one.

... ..

in a society that is essentially familial or tribal or regional it stimulates a loyalty beyond the primary groups but discourages any conflicting loyalty to other nations. The ideal is: internal cohesion–external distinction”.

In other words, the idea of a nation is based on cultural uniformity inside the political boundary that can be contrasted with the culture of other nations outside that boundary. Such strict matching of culture with political boundaries is obviously not natural, especially since political boundaries come after cultural settlements and are often redrawn through history. Hence, some “planning” is required to create that one nation-one culture scenario.

Critiques of Nationalist Ideologies in Language Planning

From the linguistic point of view to achieve this idea, a language is required which may be promoted as the symbolic representation of the new nation in contrast with other languages that may represent other nations. The “problems” at hand was that the political boundaries were not corresponding with a linguistically homogeneous population. Multilingualism or loyalty to sub-national local languages was considered a problem. Language planning, in the early days of the development of the field, was optimistic about solving those “problems” by planning to reduce or erase the linguistic differences within the political boundaries and aiming towards a uniform (as much as possible) socio-cultural unit to coincide with the political unit. The solution for the nationalist ideals has been to “pursue language reinforcement and maintenance” (Fishman J., 1968) to replace the colonial language as well as other indigenous languages. Linguists, however, soon became aware of the impracticality as well as the undesirability of this aim, which continues to preserve linguistic hegemony and endorses socio-linguistic inequality (c.f., Tollefson, 1991).

Planning for the Protection of Language Diversity

This prompted one of the shifts in the approach to language planning in later development of the field. The field now includes studies with an aim to appreciate diversity, plurality, and endorsement of linguistic rights of minority language groups. The study of language ecology or ecology of language is incorporated into language planning studies (Kaplan & Baldauf, 2008). On the other hand, issues of linguistic discrimination and linguistic human rights (Skutnabb-Kangas & Pillipson, 1995) also emerged as a significant

influence in questioning the 'multilingualism-as-problem' approach. Fishman's 'reversing language shift' model (1991), reflects this shift of focus from solving the problem of multilingualism to empowering minor languages. The focus of a section of language planning scholars has moved from solving "language problems" of multilingual nations to concentrating on the language problems created by the status language planning activities.

Sub-National Language Planning

Another important shift in the field of language planning is in the focus on the role of various sub-national agents including regional institutions, schools and families in the field. This is often referred to as micro-language planning (Chua & Baldauf, 2011). Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) suggested four major groups of agents authorised to carry out language planning. The first group Government Agencies are involved in the highest level in the language planning hierarchy. This agency has the power to offer incentives to promote the languages chosen. The second group, the educational agency, may take the decision about the medium of instruction, languages to be taught and their order (first/second/third language), and the importance and hours attached to each of the languages. One example of such planning can be seen in some educational institutes in India, primarily with English as the medium of instruction, enforcing punitive measures if students talk in any other languages including their mother tongue, in the school premises. Though educational institutes have comparatively less power and narrower scope, compared to governmental agencies, in imposing the policies to implement their language plan, they have a very significant influence in creating the language attitude of a generation, which in turn may determine the fate of the various non-dominant mother tongues, i.e., whether or not the mother tongues shall be maintained, or whether the speakers would tend to shift to the more dominant languages. The third group, the non-governmental agencies are also instrumental in the spread and preservation of particular languages within or across political boundaries. Phillipson (2008) elaborates on how the acts of different ESL programmes including British

Councils are related to the spread of English and their subsequent impact on world languages. In the fourth group, Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) talk of various agencies which make their own language policies, such as the refusal of US postal service to accept any envelopes written in any other script than Roman script. Kaplan and Baldauf have also included ‘individuals’ in this category, though they did not elaborate on this. In later years, issues pertaining to family language policy have gained a considerable amount of attention from scholars in the field of language planning and management. Curdt-Christiansen & Lanza (2018) following Curdt-Christiansen (2012, p. 57) defines Family Language Management and Planning as the “implicit/explicit and subconscious/deliberate parental involvement and investment in providing linguistic conditions and context for language learning and literacy development”. This consists of various substantial decisions that the authority figure(s) in the family take regarding the use and function of the language within the home, the choice of schools and other official institutions to engage with as per their language policies, creating the environment which is conducive to the language of their choice. Moreover, family language policy also involves the ideological conditioning (often subconscious) of the family members through various acts. These decisions may be influenced by their experiences and aspirations. For example, a study by Cassie Smith-Christmas (2018) shows how the playful interactional involvement of the grandmother in a Scottish family influences the maintenance of the minority Gaelic language.

One thing that has to be kept in mind that the agents of Language Management in the family are not necessarily “free” in their language planning endeavours. They are also motivated and constrained by several social factors that may influence their own language ideologies. The planning of the higher-level agents of language planning, e.g. Governmental/non-Governmental agencies that make policies regarding language proficiency required for various professions and other incentives may directly or indirectly influence the choice of the parents (or other caregivers) while choosing the first language or the language for the medium of

instruction for their children. However, the factors that influence family language ideology can go beyond the obviously evident policies of the government. The demands from the lower level can also influence the formulation or modification of language policies at the higher level (see Figure 1). The lack of success of the Three Language Formula, especially in the northern part of the country can be a case in point. “a Hindi-speaking family may not have a place for a South Indian language in the schooling of their children and may develop discourses of resistance to such top-down choices.” (Nandi, 2024, p. 40)

stop and think: What is the three-language formula? Did you learn any other Indian language in school? Which languages are they? Which languages did the school offer? What is the motivation for offering those languages?

Supranational Language Planning

Just as at the subnational level, with the advent of Globalisation, the roles of the international and supra-national agencies have also become significant in the current era. International agencies such as Alliance Francaise, Goethe Institute, British Council, United States Information services (USIS) have worked for a long time with governmental patronage to spread the language and culture of the respective countries. With the expansion of Multinational Business corporations, a new kind of language planning have emerged. Demand for learning global languages required for securing employment in these corporations has increased. Such languages include French, German, Japanese and Mandarin. However, English has emerged as the key language required for economic success. These language plannings are different from the conventional understanding of language planning since the emergence of globalised economic demands directs the language choices, rather than any *de jure* policies. Yet, the impact of these choices on the majority and minority languages is enormous (for a detailed discussion see Lian, Chua, Taylor-Leech, & Williams, 2018). On the other hand, bona fide international institutions like UNESCO,

UN, EU, ASEAN, World Bank take statutory language policies, though the impact of them on the linguistic scenario is comparatively limited (Chua & Baldauf, 2011).

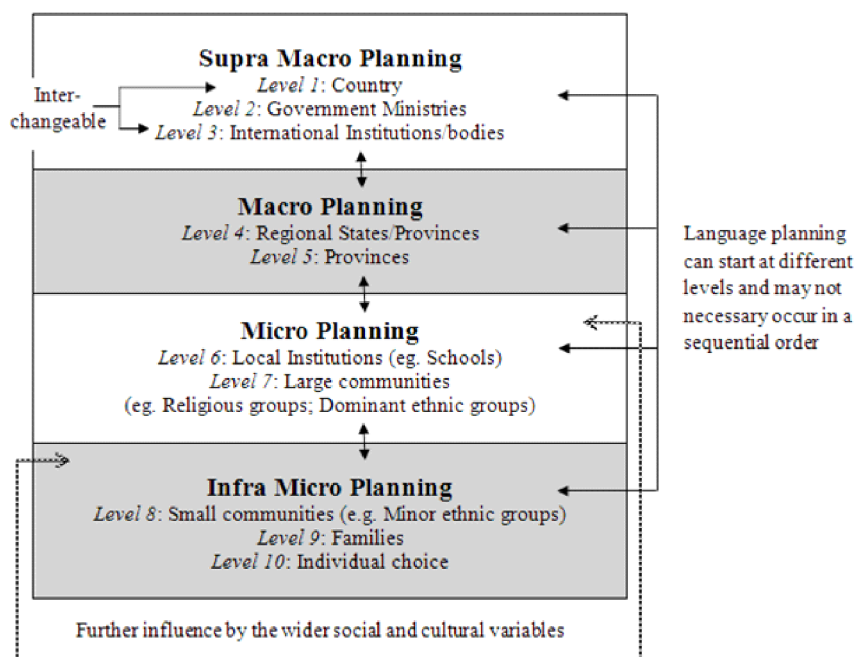


Figure 1 four stages and 10 levels of macro and micro policy planning (Chua and Baldauf, 2011:940)

Stop and think: What was your or your friends' first language / medium of instruction in school? What are the factors that led to those choices? Do you think your school had a language policy to implement a particular language of communication over others? Did they use any coercive measures to implement the language policy in schools?

Check your progress: Read about the language management model (Spolsky, 2018). Give your opinion on whether this is an appropriate model to deal with changing sociolinguistic contexts.

Summary

The field of language policy began with the optimistic aim of containing and controlling sociolinguistic contexts of the nations by adopting two main activities. The first is to develop and language variety, the second is to promote the variety over others. It has been successful in development of the chosen language varieties and the methods adopted for the development could be successfully adopted for all language varieties including minority and endangered languages as well. However, since then, the field has developed and it has critically examined its own initial aims and its fallout on language diversity and linguistic rights. The field adopted new methods and approaches to deal with the changing socio-political scenario as well.

Suggested Readings

Spolsky edited *Language Policy* (2012) consists of chapters which give a comprehensive account of the history of language policy. Rubin Jernudd (1971) edited *Can Language be Planned* is one of the earliest books which critically examines the various approaches and outcomes of early language planning endeavours. Fishman, Ferguson, Dasgupta edited (1968) *Language Problems of Developing Nations* is one of the best resource books on language planning.

Discussion Points

What was the role of language policy in the birth of Bangladesh from East Pakistan?

What are the language policies in international institutes such as UN, EU, ASEAN? What are the major languages there?

What is UNESCO's recommendation regarding mother-tongue-based education?

Check the language related articles in India constitution.

Check the census. How many non-scheduled languages are there?

Check the state reorganisation act. What are the factors, other than language, that are taken into account?

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A Socio-Pragmatic Approach to Refusal Strategies in Bangla

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Abstract :

Refusal is a significant speech act occurring usually in all languages. This study explores how Bangla speakers realize the speech act of refusal in response to the initiating acts of invitations and requests, offers and suggestions etc. Refusal as a speech act has been studied by many researchers. But it is yet to be ventured in the Bangla context. The act of refusal being a face-threatening act requires some specific strategies to soften the process of refusal for softening the listener's face. The present study aims to present a taxonomy of refusal strategies following Beebe et al (1990), which may be employed in analyzing performance of refusal from a socio-pragmatic perspective. The result of the investigation showed that the Bangla speakers prefer indirect strategies as well as combination of direct and indirect strategies in comparison to the direct strategies in refusal in the process of communication with the interactants. Sometimes the speakers also employ non-verbal strategies (such as hand gesture, nodding head etc.) either independently or in combination with direct/indirect strategies to refuse the other participant. The paper also explains how the refusal strategies are constructed in the fictional domain and in dialogic interaction in daily communication.

Keywords: *face, face-threatening act, non-verbal strategies, politeness, refusal strategies, socio-cultural knowledge.*

1.0 Introduction

The present paper brings to the fore one of the important speech acts, namely that of refusing and aims at describing a comprehensive taxonomy of refusals. The taxonomy has been proposed from a sociopragmatic perspective and within a conversational analysis (CA) framework. The sociopragmatic variables as proposed by Brown & Levinson (1987) in their politeness theory also find relevance to the production of speech act of refusal due to its face threatening nature. The typology of refusal routine suggested here is also significant in the analysis of refusal behaviour from the discourse perspective. The central focus of this paper is to investigate the strategic framework of refusal in reference to Bangla speech community. The data of this paper has been collected from some of the important Bangla novels belonging to the span of the second decade of the twentieth century in order to observe how the strategies have been contextually framed within a textual domain. Such a case study reflects some important observations in reference to Bangla speaking speech community. Some Bangla examples have also been incorporated in this paper from the regular daily-life oral communication (though not representing the recorded real life speech corpus as studied in discourse studies).

It is true to admit that refusal like other speech acts occur in all languages. Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) strongly claim that speech acts are governed by universal rules being produced in different languages in similar ways. However, some of the substantial researches rightly confirmed that speech act is culture-specific as every language and culture has its own way of expressing speech act (Blum-Kulka 1987; Wierzbicka 1991). Thus, people having different cultural background perform refusals differently even while using the same linguistic code. Meier (1995) points out that some cultures relate politeness indirectly while other cultures do not.

Refusals are non-compliant/dispreferred (Levinson 1983) responses to the initiating acts such as act of offers, suggestions, invitations and requests (Izadi *et al* 2015). Linguistic coding of

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refusal mostly depends on socio-cultural awareness of a community in which the people interacting belong. For an instance, to refuse a person of higher status depends on the power status, social distance and many other factors relevant in the process of communication (Afghari 2007). Therefore, realization of this speech act not only rests on the grammatical and lexical knowledge of the specific language, but also on the underlying socio-pragmatic rules of that given society. Okla (2018 :324) truly comments: ‘...the strategies that people from different culture use to refuse requests or offers might differ from one to another depending on their culture and how they perceive an act of politeness.’

The scholars like Beebe *et al* (1990) have also found a link between this speech act with the notion of *face* (Goffman 1967, Brown-Levinson 1987). Brown-Levinson (1987) advocate that refusal is a dual *face threatening act* having the potentiality to threaten the face of both the speaker and listener. They discussed face in the context of politeness. This is quite logical as a direct refusal is obviously evaluated as impolite. The present paper also takes into consideration of face in the context of refusing behaviour.

1.1 Researches on Refusal

Studies and researches on refusal have been performed from three different perspectives (Izadi *et al*: 2015). The first category of research was basically in line with cross-cultural pragmatic research, which attempted to compare and contrast refusals realized in two or more languages. Liao and Bresnahan (1996) performed some of the significant research works on American English and Mandarin Chinese; Kwon (2003) also did it on American English and Korean. The second group of study based on ‘interlanguage pragmatics’ has focused on reception and production of refusals by language learners. The researchers in this area have made a comparison of learner-refusal with the native speaker’s refusal to have a look for ‘the evidence of pragmatic transfer as the source of similarity and dissimilarity between the learner language and the native speaker of the target language (mainly English)’ (Izadi 2014: 4). Some of the substantial studies have been done by Beebe *et al* (1990),

Takahashi and Beebe (1987), Wannaruk (2008). They have also addressed cross-cultural comparison of the learner's first and then target language. The third group of study mainly deals with refusals in monolingual or monocultural setting. It attempts to look at refusals in reference to one language. The design of the present article is relatable specifically to this third category of research focusing Bangla as its domain of exploration.

1.2 Refusal as a Speech Act

Speakers in a community perform a variety of speech acts to achieve their communicative goals (Tanck 2003). The basic concept related to speech act or communicative act is that language is employed to perform actions (Austin 1962, Searle 1969). Austin (1962) claims, when we say something, we perform a speech act automatically *via* the use of necessary words under appropriate circumstances. Searle (1969) classified speech acts into five broad categories (namely, commissives, declaratives, directives, expressives and representatives) as well as into more specific acts like apologies, requests, refusals, complaints, expression of thanks etc. (Kasper and Rose 2001).

Refusal as a speech act belongs to the category of commissives (commissive act involves assuming an obligation or committing to a course of action), because they commit the refuser not to perform an action. Refusals can be used as a response to an initiating act and are considered to be a speech act by which a speaker '[fails] to engage in an action proposed by the interlocutor' (Sattar *et al* 2011; cf. Chen *et al* 1995, p.121).

Refusals play a significant role in our daily communication. It acts as a negative response to requests, invitations, offers and suggestions. According to Searle and Vandervken (1985, p.195), the speech act of refusal may be defined as follows: 'The negative counterparts to acceptances and consenting are rejections and refusals. Just as one can accept offers, applications, and invitations, so each of these can be refused or rejected.' Acceptance and agreement, true to admit, are usually preferred and expected in response to the above events, in contrast to refusal and rejection.

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Refusals are basically non-compliant or dispreferred responses (Levinson 1983) to an initiating act like request, invitation etc. Refusing someone associates not only linguistic knowledge but also pragmatic knowledge, largely dependent on the socio-cultural awareness of a community in which the participants live (Izadi *et al* 2015). It is worth noting that cultural gaps may cause misunderstanding or pragmatic failure in the process of communication.

People with different cultural backdrops perform the refusal act differently using the same linguistic codes (as like English). Sattar *et al* (2011) rightly pointed out that 'In many cultures, how one says 'no' is probably more important than the answer itself.' (p.70). Rubin (1983) has also earlier remarked that a great deal of knowledge is specifically required to send or receive a message of 'no'. This special skill in sending or receiving a message of 'no' mostly depends on ethnic and linguistic values of the speaker. He must know the appropriate form, its function and how to use the refusals in specific socio-cultural context. Many non-native speakers also get offended by their interlocutors due to their inability to say 'no' (Ramos 1991, *cited in* Al-Kahtani 2005).

Refusal are also important from the sociolinguistic perspective, because they are highly sensitive to social variables like gender, age, education, power, social distance etc. of the social interlocutors (Brown-Levinson 1987, Fraser 1990).

1.3 Relevance of the Concept of Politeness

Politeness being a broad term, one of the specific usages of politeness strategies are usually employed in the speech act of refusal. So, for a comprehensive study on the act of refusal we should look positively at the definition of politeness. Negative and dispreferred responses from the speaker usually offend a listener. Therefore, 'people need to be aware of different strategies on how to refuse a request or turn down an offer politely.' (Okla 2018: 322). As we know, act of refusal being a 'Face Threatening Act' [FTA] (technicalities related to the notion of 'face' will be discussed later), some specific strategies are essential for softening the refusal in order to save the listener's face. Obviously, the language user must

be well-acquainted with the best refusal strategies required to be used in different situations.

Politeness being a broad term may convey different meanings in different contexts. In spite of extensive researches on politeness, the concept is yet to be defined. Meier (1995) refers to different politeness strategies which can be categorized into positive and negative strategies. He claims, 'negative strategies are characterized as expressions of restraint, formality, and distancing, whereas positive strategies are described as expressions of solidarity, intimacy, informality and familiarity.' (Meier 1995, p. 346). Refusal strategies also differ depending on several factors like formality of the situation, restrictions imposed by the speaker/listener on the situation of the conversation. Sometimes social distance between the interlocutors may also play a significant role. For instance, refusal of an invitation from an intimate friend certainly requires completely different strategies in comparison to the refusal act from an unknown person. Suzila and Yusri (2012) strongly believe that 'social distance, formality of topic, and power difference may be affecting adherence to politeness expectations as it may mold behaviors in several ways.' (p. 128).

Politeness is an indispensable feature in every cultural setting. But it is obviously culture-specific, because different cultures express politeness in different ways. Every language also has its own system to express politeness in different speech acts such as complaints, apologies and request etc. It has been pointed out by Meier (1995) that some cultures relate politeness indirectly whereas other cultures do not. For instance, the Japanese culture associates indirectness to politeness, but in contrast politeness does not mean to be indirect in the American culture (*ibid*, 1995). Meier (1995) truly comments, 'politeness can only be judged relative to a particular context and particular addressee's explanation.' (p. 352). Refusals being involved with politeness also differs depending on specific situation and language.

1.4 Face and Politeness

The concept of 'face' is a well-established research topic in

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Pragmatics. The idea refers to the self-image, social identity and reputation of an individual which is projected as well as maintained through social interactions. The concept was first introduced by Goffman (1967) in Sociolinguistics and later it was scientifically conceptualized in Brown & Levinson's [henceforth B-L] theory (1987) of politeness. Many researches on refusal (Beebe *et al* 1990; Félix-Brasdefer 2006) have connected this speech act with the notion of 'face' (Goffman 1967; B-L 1987). B-L argue that 'face' and 'facework' (strategies to protect, maintain and enhance face, such as apologies, requests, compliments etc.) are the main motivations for the people to be polite. B-L (1987) argue in favour of two faces, namely positive and negative 'face's. Positive one is our desire to be liked, admired and complimented by others. Negative one is our want of being free from imposition by others and need to maintain autonomy and freedom (B-L 1987 :67), These categories play a crucial role in the development of politeness.

The act of refusing in response to request, invitation etc. gets involved often with Face Threatening Act [henceforth FTA]. It refers actions or messages that potentially damage, undermine or threaten individual's face or self-image. B-L (1987) considers that refusal have the potential to threaten the speaker/hearer's face or both. Therefore, they may be categorized as dual FTA. Refusals require softening and mitigating strategy for repairing the social relationship. B-L (1987:24) truly comments, 'some [speech] acts are intrinsically threatening to face and thus require 'softening'.' It is also notable, speakers, depending on the context and the situation of occurrence may use direct/indirect strategies to communicate the act of refusing successfully, with a minimum threat to face (Izadi *et al* 2015).

B-L (1987:60) identified three significant social factors of power, distance and the rank of imposition, which have been evaluated by the individuals in communication as potential threat to their own addressee's face or both. As a consequence they seriously attempt to mitigate the possible threat to face using either positive (aims to build rapport, establish connection and show solidarity attempting to minimize a threat to the addressee's positive face) or negative

politeness (aims to show respect, deference and to avoid imposition) strategies or combination of both.

Researches show that politeness often becomes associated with indirectness and implicitness in speech production and it has definitely a consequence for 'face' (Blum-Kulka 1987). A direct refusal as a speech act, on the other hand, is generally considered to be impolite in nature (Locher and Watts 2005). However, B-L's approach in relating the notion of face with the politeness has often been questioned and challenged in subsequent researches (Eelen 2001). A relevant argument claims that B-L's notion of face has totally been deviated from Goffman's original definition of 'face'. His face is a social and psychological concept. It is a concept of 'self' which relates a speaker to the society. 'Face' according to him is a 'positive social image a person effectively claims for himself by the line others have assumed he has taken during a particular contact.' (Goffman 1972: 322). In recent researches face has been considered as a property of relationships between interactants. It is relational and co-constituted by interactions (Arundale 2010).

1.5 Definition and Function of Refusal

Refusal, from a linguistic viewpoint, refers to a speech act that involves rejecting or declining an offer, suggestion, request or invitation (Mashiri 2002). Refusal may be understood as dis-preferred messages, as in response to the above events acceptance or agreements are usually preferred. Contextually, the notion of preference is considered as 'institutionally ranked conventional action' in which choices available are non-equivalent (Campillo *et al* 2010: 140). B-L (1987) considers, the choices of preference are in most cases motivated and determined by 'face' considerations.

Refusal being a disapproval of the interlocutor's message becomes a threat to the interlocutor's 'face'. Therefore, preservation of 'face' is an important issue in case of refusal. Fl  x-Brasdefer (2008: 196) defines refusals as 'complex speech acts that require not only long sequences of negotiation and cooperative achievements, but also face-saving maneuvers to accommodate to non-compliant nature of the act.' If we say 'no' to other interlocutors that

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obviously includes the risk of offending and threatening their face. (Hei 2009). Thus it is an FTA, intimidating the addressee's negative face (i.e. desire to maintain independence and freedom from imposition). It goes without saying, agreement/acceptance are generally used in direct language without much justification, delay or explanation.

It is worth noting that acceptance or agreement tends to be used in direct language without much delay, mitigation or explanation. But refusal strategy often being indirect includes mitigation and/or delay within the turn. This indirect strategy is simply for mitigation of the FTA and for preservation of the face of the hearer (Hei 2009: 34).

The possible delay in response shows that the refuser has a good reason for refusing and it may imply that s/he would accept or agree in the proposal. It is worth noting that refusals in some specific cases include explanations/reasons to reassure the addressee that such refusals have necessary grounds.

Some of the common features of refusal (as in response to invitation) may be described in reference to Bangla¹ :

- (i) Direct refusal: It uses explicit language to reject the proposal from the interlocutor (Bangla *na, dhonnobad* 'No, thank you').
- (ii) Indirect refusal : It is a refusal through indirect response (*ami niScit noy* 'I am not certain').
- (iii) Mitigated refusal : It refers to softening of the impact of the refusal (*dukkhito, bodhhOE parbo na* 'Sorry, possibly I would not').
- (iv) Delayed refusal : It is an attempt to postpone the direct refusal (*accha dekhchi* 'Okay. I like to consider.').
- (v) Deflected refusal : It is a kind of attempt diverting the attention of the addressee (*accha, e nie pOre kOtha bOla jabe* 'Okay, let us talk about it later.').

1.6 Refusal Strategies

Refusing is a complex as well as a challenging issue for the native

speakers (NS). They may involve negotiation-moves at length in the process of performing refusal act. The situation becomes even more serious and complex in the process of interaction between Native and Non-native speakers (NNS). In this context, what we specifically need is to identify a taxonomy of refusal strategies from a discourse perspective for describing refusal behaviour in a systematic way. However, the strategies can vary significantly across cultures and languages. Understanding these differences are essential for effective communication between the interlocutors.

In an early attempt to classify refusal strategies Ueda (1972) in the context of Japanese listed sixteen ways to avoid saying 'no'. It was further modified and revised by Rubin (1983) claiming nine distinct ways of refusing across a number of cultures:

- (i) Be silent, hesitate, show a lack of enthusiasm
- (ii) Offer an alternative
- (iii) Postponement
- (iv) Put the blame on a third party or something over which you have no control
- (v) Avoidance
- (vi) General acceptance of an offer but giving no details
- (vii) Divert and distract the addressee
- (viii) General acceptance with excuses
- (ix) Say what is offered is inappropriate

The classification system done earlier paved the way for most influential and impressive research-work performed by Beebe *et al* (1990). They examined how Japanese learners of English refused request, offer invitation and suggestion by means of a Discourse Completion Test [DCT] (research method used in linguistics and discourse analysis to study how people use language in context. It involves presenting participants with a scenario or prompt and asking them to complete a conversation or text.).

In this taxonomy, the classification was based on semantic formulas divided into direct and indirect strategies, as well as into

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adjuncts accompanying a refusal act, but cannot by themselves be used to perform a refusal (Campillo 2010). Direct strategies include performative statements like ‘I refuse’ and non-performative statements like ‘no’ or ‘I can’t’. Indirect categories act as strategies by the refusers to mitigate FTA for softening the negative effects. This is realized through the uses of excuses, statement of regret, explanations etc.

1.7 A Proposed Taxonomy for Analysis in the Context of Bangla

The present paper explores the act of refusal in the intralingual context of Bangla. The taxonomy used here is based mostly on Beebe *et al* (1990). However, it has also incorporated the later work of Kasper (2006) on interlanguage pragmatics with a revision of the Beebe’s model to account for a discourse perspective in the study of refusal behaviour.

1.7.1 Refusal strategies (within NS) in Bangla

Direct Strategies

1. Bluntness: na, SOmbhOb hocche na ‘No, it is not possible’
2. Negation of Proposition: parchi na ‘I can’t’; manchi na ‘I don’t agree’

Indirect Strategies

1. Plain indirect : mone hocche, jete parbo na ‘It looks like I won’t be able to go’
2. Reason/Explanation: SOmbhOboto, odin parchi na. EkTa kaj poRe gEche ‘Probably, I would not be able on that day. I have an appointment (on that day).’
3. Regret/Apology: khub-i dukkhito, parchi na ‘Extremely sorry, I can’t.’
4. Alternative :
 - a. Change option : onno jEYgaY hole jete pari ‘ I can go if it is in other place’
 - b. Change time (postponement) : Ekhon-i bolle jete parbo na. tObe Samner maSe jaoa jabe ‘ I can’t go right now. But it is possible in the next month.’

5. Disagreement/Dissuasion/Criticism: erOkom manoSik OboSthar moddhe tumi ki kore jaoar kOtha bOlo 'How can you speak about the journey in this mental condition?'
6. Statement of principle/Philosophy: parchi na, nitir biruddhe kaj kOra SOmbhOb nOY 'I can't. It is not possible to work against my principle.'
7. Avoidance:
 - a. Non-verbal: Ignoring (silence, walking away etc.)
 - b. Verbal
 - Hedging : accha, dekhchi jodi pari 'Okay, I'll see if I can'
 - Changing topic : Thik ache. kintu age kEmon acho tumi bOlo 'Well, but let you speak about your condition.'
 - Joking: bhulo-mOnader nimOntron kOraE bipOd ache 'It is a risk to invite absent-minded person.'
 - Sarcasm: onno karo kOtha bhable bhalo hOY 'It would be better to think about others.'

Adjuncts to Refusal

1. Positive opinion: khub-i bhalo cinta-bhabna, kintu... 'It is an excellent idea, but..'
2. Willingness: jete to khub-i icche kOre, kintu... 'I'd love to go, but...'
3. Gratitude: amontrOn jananor jonne Onek dhonnobad, kintu... 'Thanks so much for the invitation, but...'
4. Agreement : Thik ache! kintu.. 'Fine! But...'
5. Solidarity/ Empathy: ami jani tumi bEparTa bujhbe, kintu... 'I know that you would understand the situation, but...'

Here, we have distinguished two major categories, namely Refusals and Adjuncts to refusal. Refusal has further been subcategorized into 'direct' and 'indirect' strategies following most of the classification done on the act of refusal. Direct and Indirect strategies are used to perform a refusal and they indicate the action of refusing. But

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Adjuncts on the other hand accompany a refusal, but cannot by themselves perform the intended function of refusing.

Direct strategies include instances in which the interlocutor bluntly refuses the request, invitation etc. by saying 'no'. Negation of proposition is another way for direct refusal. Indirect strategies, in contrast, are employed to lessen the strong effect of Face Threatening in the act of refusal. This is simply a strategy applied for attenuating the negative impact of direct strategies.

Indirect strategies may further be subclassified into at least seven types. We propose here the term 'plain refusal' in place of 'mitigated refusal' used in most of the taxonomies. Because all of the strategies proposed here are definitely instances of mitigated attempt to reduce the effect of FTA. The refuser may take help of the strategy of 'reason/explanation' by showing a legitimate ground for his/her refusal. S/he provides a definite motive for turning down the request /invitation etc. 'Regret/ Apology' is the other alternative by which a refuser expresses his/her regret for turning down the request etc.

The further strategy proposed is 'Disagreement', which certainly points out the negative impact on the requestor. The refuser turns down the request etc. by stating his/her disagreement about the requestor's performative act of asking. S/he may have a motivation in dissuading the requestor from asking. The other option is to criticize the requestor from doing such action. In the 'statement of principle/philosophy', the refuser puts highest preference on his/her moral convictions/ beliefs so as not to comply with the appeal.

Last but not the least, is to mention the 'strategy of avoidance', further subclassified into non-verbal and verbal types. In case of the first one, addressee simply ignores the request through non-verbal means such as silence, walking away from the requestor and so on. The act of refusal, in case of verbal avoidance, is performed *via* hedging, topic changing, joking, sarcasm etc.

Adjuncts, as it has already been stated are part of the refusing act, but they do not constitute a refusal by themselves. In case of 'positive opinion', the speaker believes that the act of request etc. is a good effort by the requestor, but s/he cannot comply with it.

Similarly, in 'willingness' the refuser turns down the request with a pre-statement about his/her willingness in the act of request etc. in order to moderate the act of refusal. Likewise, in the 'strategy of gratitude', the speaker in order to soften the face threatening, thanks his/her interlocutor before or after the act of refusal act. The 'strategy of agreement' expresses consents on the part of the speaker before declining the proposal of the requestor. Finally, we need to mention the 'strategy of solidarity' of the requestor by solicitation of his/her sympathy on the requestor.

1.8 Textual Database

The textual database as given below has been selected here in this article from four of the important novels² (Srikanto, 1917-18), (Coritrohin, 1917), (DebdaS, 1917), (DOtta, 1918) composed by the renowned Bangla writer Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay (1876-1938) during the second decade of twentieth century. The basic aim is to explore different refusal strategies framed in the dialogic exchanges between different characters within these fictions. In addition to the strategies employed such an attempt brings to the fore the moods and attitudes of the characters reflected in the conversational pattern and also the inbuilt stylistic design built in expressing the event of refusal. Here, we are limited to only 20 examples for the analysis and observation, which are significant and relevant for the present theme of the discussion. The titles of the texts and the examples have been inscribed here in modified IPA. The characters engaged in the communicative exchange and the page numbers for each of the extracts are also mentioned in the parenthesis. The primary strategies employed are specified within third brackets. 'Features' highlight the context and the significant key-factors in the respective dialogic exchange. The notation (...) used in the extracts refer to the ellipted parts of the texts not relevant to the present discussion. The lines (—) indicate turn taking by the other interlocutor in the process of conversation.

(i) *Direct Strategies*

1. ami... jiggaSa korilam, ki kOtha? 'I asked, which words?'
—uThe eSo bolchi! 'I request you to get up.'

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—na ta parbo na SomOY ney. ‘No, I cannot. I have no time.’ [Bluntness] (Srikanto; Srikanto & Piari 61)

Features:

The communication continues here between Srikanto and his childhood lover Piari. The male character ignores the request of the woman, who was his lover. In the process of refusing, the power factor related to male dominated society possibly plays a hidden role. However, the explanation given (...SomOY ney ‘I have no time’) is a strategy to soften the blunt and direct refusal in order to avoid the face threatening of the female interlocutor. Interestingly, the broader context in the text, not mentioned here, shows such a refusal ending into an acceptance after a brief negotiation between the interlocutors.

2. kintu tader mukh cee ki eTuku apni Sojjho kore nite parben na? ‘But can you not bear a little bit for the sake of them?’
—na parben na, EkSobar parben na. ... bolia Se hat dia dOrja dEkhaia dilo. ‘No, you will not be able to, surely not—saying it s/he pointed out towards the door with the help of his/her hands.’ [Bluntness with emphasis] (DOtta, NOrendro, BilaS & BijOYa 653)

Features:

Here, three major characters take part in the communicative exchange. The male protagonist NOrendro requests for a favour from the central female character BijOYa, who has concealed her love and affection for the speaker himself. However, the addressee does not get a chance to respond. Instead of that, the male antagonist BilaS, who is jealous of NOrendro and considers him as a competitor of his love, responds bluntly. Such a rude refusal is in fact not connected by any means to politeness. But it surely becomes face threatening to the addresser as well as to the target female participant. The rudeness becomes enhanced by the use of the expression ‘EkSobar parben na’ “you will not be permitted hundred times” underscoring emphasis on the refusing behaviour. Moreover, verbal expression representing non-verbal gesture (‘hat dia dOrja dEkhaia dilo’ “showing the door with the hands”) also proves that

the refusal strategies are not always correlated to politeness, but even to impoliteness and insult.

3. —amake tumi thakte debe na? ‘Will you not allow me to stay?’
 —na ‘no’ .
 ...konodin bhalo-o baSonī? ‘Did you not love me at any time?’
 —na ‘no’ [Direct, Blunt] (Coritrohin, DibakOr & Kironmoy 567)

Features:

The addresser DibakOr’s request gets straightway rejected by Kironmoy, the addressee. The refusal is expressed by a shortest expression of negation without bearing any reason or explanation. So, this blunt refusal does not follow any strategy to mitigate the face threatening of the male addressor. Two negations relate two separate queries: the first one relates to the present situation in the context of the text and the second negation is in reference to the past. It is worth noting that the tensed situation gets absolutely reduced when in the adjacent text following the above extract, the female interlocutor begs excuse to the addressor (‘tomar pae dhore map cacci’ ‘I beg your excuse holding your legs’). As a consequence, the offence created through the dialogue becomes neutralized by the apologetic strategy employed. Thus, blunt refusal gets compensated by a polite negotiation between the interlocutors.

4. ami phire gey khabo—amar jonno konomOtey kOSTo korte parben na ‘I will take meal going back home. You will not at all be permitted to undergo hardship for me.’
 — parbo na kEno ? “Why shall I not be able to do?”
 —Upendro kohilo, na na Se kichutey hObe na. ‘Upendra said, no, no, it will not be (allowed) by any means.’ [Negation of Proposition] (Coritrohin, Upendro and Kironmoy 469)

Features:

The refusal from the male addresser does not create any serious or tensed situation or even does not offend the female addressee.

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The conversation between the interlocutors is polite and simply a ritualistic exchange quite natural in Bangla cultural community. The refusal is not at all face threatening or offensive in nature; on the contrary it is supportive and caring at least from the male addresser's perspective.

(ii) *Indirect Strategies*

5. amader baRite tomake jete hObe, Ekhoni cOlo. 'You must come to our house. Come at once.'
... —Ekhon ami kothaW jete pari ne Indranath 'I cannot move now anywhere, Indranath.' [Plain Indirect] (Srikanto, Annoda and Indronath 32)

Features:

The request from the male addressor appears in the form of insist. The female addressee Annoda refuses it rather in an indirect way. The use of modal verb 'par' "can" results into indirectness ('jete pari na' "I cannot" instead of 'jabo na' "shall not go"). The text following the above extract (not mentioned here) gives the possible explanation for such a refusing behaviour.

6. ...Indro, baRi phire cOlo na bhay! 'Indra, brother ! I am to request you for going back home.'
... —ki korbo Srikanto, aj ekTu deri hObey—anek kaj roeche 'What shall I do Srikanta? I shall be little bit late today. Lots of work to be done (by me).'[Reason/explanation] (Srikanto, Indronath and Srikanto 12)

Features::

The process of communication takes place here between two male interlocutors belonging to similar age group. The request from Srikanto is indirectly refused by Indro without any use of negative marker. The addressee carefully avoids the use of negative in order to save the face of the addresser. The offence is further mitigated by presenting the explanation for such a refusal.

7. kintu tumi kichu khabe na ma? 'But will you not take a meal, mother.'

—cOndromukhi bolilo, na, bhoyrOb amar Ekhono pujo-anhik hOyni. ‘Candramukhi said, no; Bhairab, I have not yet completed my daily religious service.’ [Explanation] (DebdaS, BhoyrOb and Candramukhi 632)

Features:

The male interlocutor requests the female one for taking a meal, but she refuses with an explanation, which is culture-specific. Notably, social status of the male addressor is lower in comparison to the female addressee. In spite of this status difference, the addressee does not directly refuse the request, but she gives an explanation in order to save the face of the addresser. Thus, politeness here in this communicative exchange occurs irrespective of the social status of the interlocutors.

8. tObe tomar babar nam ki bOlo ? ‘Then you speak your father’s name.’
 ... bayji jibh kaTia kohilo, tini SOrgE gEchen. chi-chi taMr nam ki ar e mukhe uccaron korte pari?
 ‘The professional dancing girl said pressing her tongue behind the teeth, he has gone to the heaven; it is a regret to utter his name.’ [Regret and statement of principle] (Srikanto, Srikanto and Piari 43)

Features:

The query of the male speaker is indirectly ignored by the female addressee and the explanation for the refusal and regret is expressed in the form of culture-specific principle, which is a social taboo. Both of them had an intimate connection in the earlier phase of life. So, we find apparently no objection in declaring the name of Piari’s father. Contrary to our expectation, the addressee refuses the query probably with an underlying motif and attitude to maintain secrecy.

9. nijer bEbohare tomar lojjito hOWa ucit—Onutap kOra ucit
 ‘You must be ashamed about your behaviour; you must regret.’
 ... —ki jonne Suni? ‘I like to know, for what reason.’
 [Indirect, Challenge] (DOtta, BilaS and RaSbihari 667)

Features:

Here, the communication goes on between a father and his son. Both of them are playing the role of antagonist. The third character is a female (BijOYa) protagonist who is listening the verbal exchange. The father is pretending while accusing his son for his ill behaviour (though he very much supports his son). The father shows as if she wants to save the loss of face of the female protagonist. But his son refuses with a challenging tone causing a face threatening act for the addresser as well as for the target female participant. However, he does not use direct blunt refusal with a negative remark. The suggested advice and its refusal result into a tensed situation.

10. —Ekbar khObor neaW aboSSOk nOY ‘ Is it not essential to inquire about for once?’
—ki aboSSOk? Se amader aMttio-o nOY, bondhuo nOY
‘What is the necessity? S/he is not our relative, not even a friend.’ [Indirect, Challenge & Ignore] (Coritrohin, Jagottarini and JotiS 530).

Features:

The communication goes on between a son and his mother. Mother as an addressor puts a proposal before his son, though he completely ignores it in the form of a challenging tone. This tone is verbally expressed by a foregrounded question. The statement following the question (*Se amader aMttio...*) gives an explanation for the denial. However, the text following (not mentioned here) confirms that such an indirect refusal could not at all mitigate the face threatening situation. Mother gets severely shocked by this neutral behaviour and took it as a serious offence. So, the refusal strategy fails here.

11. ke bOlo na? ‘Please say who ?’
— Ekhon na. Sob Thik kore tObe tomake janabo. ‘Not now. I shall inform you after finalizing everything.’ [Change option] (Coritrohin, Surobala and Upendro 375).

Features:

The communication takes place between a husband and his wife.

The female correspondent requests her husband. At first, he ignores and then puts an alternative time for answering. Such a postponement is logical and as a consequence it does not cause offence to the female addressee. Changing option becomes a strategy to reduce the face threatening act. The same situation happens in case of examples (12) and (13).

12. ami bolilam, Indro eybar cOlo. ‘I said, Indra, let us go now.’
... —thak—aj ar na. ‘Let it be stopped, no more today.’
[change of time/postponement]
(Srikanto, Indronath and Srikanto 18)
13. ... ki upohar debar kOtha bolechilen? ‘Which gift did you ask for to give?’
... — ar Ekdin e kOtha apnake bolbo—kintu aj nOY ‘I will inform you this matter one day, but not today.’ [Postponement] (DOtta, BijOYa and Nolini 719)
14. ... apni ghumon.
— ki ghumobo? kOkkhono na. [Disagreement/Criticism]
(Coritrohin, Sabitri and SotiS 370).

Features:

Sabitri, the female addressor requests the male correspondent for taking rest. But SotiS criticizes the appeal and strongly refuses the request. This is an indirect strategy in which the refuser turns down the request stating his/her disagreement about the requestor’s action of asking. Notably, the addressee first of all questions the proposal and then refutes it. The postponement of the negative answer brings the desired effect of indirectness.

15. ... amake EkTa bhikkhe die jaW. ‘You serve my one request?’
—amar ki ache je tomake debo? ‘What I have to offer you?’ [Indirect, disagreement]
(Coritrohin, SotiS and Sabitri 563)

Features:

The addresser SotiS asks for a favour from Sabitri. But Sabitri avoids it with politeness in order to save face of the addresser.

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Disagreement from the female addressee appears in the form of a question. Such an indirect refusal otherwise reflects the submission of the woman to the male domination. Same type of situation also occurs in the example (16).

16. Taka kal dio na bhai ! ‘Brother! Please give it tomorrow.’
... na bhay Omon kathaTi boliS ne. ‘No brother, do not say those words.’ [disagreement]
(Srikanto, Srikanto and Indronath 15)

Features:

Srikanto requests for postponement of the decision in donating the money. The addressee disagrees his request. But if we look into macro-contextual domain, such a denial in reality does not offend Srikanto, the original addresser. Instead, he understands the noble and generous heart of his friend Indronath.

17. ar Ekdin take ante parbe ? ‘Will you bring him once more?’
—ta bodh hOY parbo na ‘Possibly, I would not be able to.’ [Avoidance] (DebdaS, COndromukhi and Cunilal 611)

Features:

Condromukhi requests Cunilal to bring DebdaS, the central character to bring to her own residence. But Cunilal avoids her proposal mentioning the chance of his inability. The use of the modal verb ‘par’ “can” reduces the possibility of face threatening and avoids the strategy of blunt refusal through verbal strategy. The text following (not mentioned here) shows that after a lengthy negotiation the addressee somehow agrees with the opinion of the addresser.

18. ... Debda, amio jabo. ‘Debda, I too will go.’
... —dur ta ki hOY? [Avoidance] — ‘not to speak of, that is not possible.’
... —Parbati... kohilo jaboy ‘Parbati... said, certainly I will go.’
... — na, - jete hObe na. [Disagreement] tuy age jOl nie aY.
‘No, you should not go. At first you come here with (a glass of) water.’ [Change of topic] (DOtta, 586)

Features:

The above extract represents an altercation between two childhood lovers Debdas and Parbati. Debdas avoids the request of Parbati. Being senior he behaves like a guardian of Parbati and exerts his power of male domination. At first his refusal is expressed in the form of a question. In the second instance, he exerts his power and disagrees the proposal from Parbati through negative statement. He finally uses the indirect strategy by changing the topic. Final statement from the male addresser shows his exertive power shifts in the form of an order ('jOl nie aY' "Come here with (a glass of) water").

19. ...ar amake bujhi cinteW parlen na? 'Moreover, you possibly could not recognize me.'
 ... —cinte parley cena dOrkar naki? 'Is it necessary to recognize even if I cannot recognize (you) ?' [Indirect with sarcasm] (DOtta, NOren and BijOYa 731)

Features:

In the process of exchange, NOren asks BijOYa whether she could identify him. BijOYa knows him very well. The female addressee does not use a blunt refusal. But she indirectly pretends to ignore him in a sarcastic tone. As a consequence, such a tone though indirectly expressed, appears as face threatening and insulting as well (reflected in the text following) to the addresser. Here, we see that refusal strategy fails in saving the face of the addresser.

20. ...Ekbar kolkataY jete hObe SotiS 'Satish, let us go to Kolkata for once.'
 ... —oy hukumTi koro na Upinda 'Do not ask for that order, Upinda' [Avoidance, Sarcasm] (Coritrohin, SotiS and Upendro 400)

Features:

Upendra requests SotiS for a journey to Kolkata. In order to pay respect to his senior brother, SotiS does not straightway refuses the request. Instead, he sarcastically refuses the proposal.

Observation:

1. A refusal may end in an acceptance (example 1) or in other situation sometimes the offence if at all persists, becomes neutralized (example 3). If we look into the larger context such a consequence gets proved. Félix-Brasdefer (2004) also pointed out that in oral interaction refusal may turn into an acceptance in the end after a lengthy negotiation.
2. Refusal strategies may sometimes result into the effect of impoliteness and insult on the addressee (example 2).
3. In a marked situation, the target-addressee does not respond to the addresser; but third-party present as a participant in the process of communication plays a significant role in saving or threatening face (2).
4. Use of non-verbal expression in addition to the verbal one by the addressee may enhance or mitigate the face threatening act to be effective to the addresser (2).
5. Sometimes the communicative exchange may be ritualistic and culture-specific and as a consequence the addressee belonging to the same social or cultural community does not take it as offence (4). Refusing behaviour in some specific cases gets triggered by culture-specific taboos and constraints (7). Occasionally, such restrictions are also exploited in the refusal strategy framed (8).
6. The modal verbs used in the refusal statement often brings the effect of indirectness associated with polite tone (5,17). Turnbull and Saxton (1997) examined in the English context the use of modality (e.g. *can*, *may*, *would*, *perhaps* etc.) in refusals to comply with a request (compare *I don't know* vs. *I can't*).
7. The use of negative marker or statement is often avoided by the addressee to mitigate the blunt refusing behaviour (6,8).
8. Questioning by the addressee may cause enhancement of the refusal tone and as an effect even the indirect strategy with possible reason/explanation included, may cause

serious offence and face loss (9,10). Questioning may also reflect the disagreement of the addressee in reference to the proposal from the original addressor (14,15).

9. The other strategy found specifically in this Bangla extracts is 'challenge' which gets reflected in the form of question in (9,10). This strategy is newly explored being not mentioned in the original framework.
10. The change of option (in reference to time/space) or postponement may be a good strategy to save the face of the refused participant (11-13).
11. In some specific situation refusal strategy may not cause face loss of the addressee present before him/her, but it appears as offensive to the target participant not playing an active role in the communication process (9).
12. Multiple refusal strategies may also be in action in the course of interaction between the interlocutors (18).

1.9 Non-Verbal Strategies

Non-verbal strategies are regularly used either in isolation or in combination with the verbal one for constructing the strategies of refusal. Such strategies would support the speaker in mitigating the refusal speech act and saving the face of the listener. Taguchi (2013: 103) comments that people use 'communication strategies such as back channel cues (e.g. Nodding, affirmative responses etc.) as emphatic responses to reduce the adverse effect of refusals. They also used non-verbal expressions of affect (e.g. laughter) in order to mitigate refusals.' In Bangla community among the non-verbal refusal strategies, we find different patterns like ignoring the offer (avoidance), refusing with nodding of the head only, hand gesture of 'no' signifying a bold refusal, smiling while walking away or looking once at the time of walking away. Okla (2018) investigated the strategies which different people in Dubai implemented while refusing promotions by sales assistants in shopping malls of Dubai. Interestingly, his finding has shown that most people preferred non-verbal strategies than the verbal one in refusing promotion by the sales assistants

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It is worth noting that the use of the non-verbal gestures varies across cultures. For instance, in Turkish 'no' is signaled by moving one's head backward while rolling one's eye upward. However, for an American this typical gesture is close to the signal used for saying 'yes'. (Rubin 1981). The other notable point is that verbal and non-verbal cues may also become contrastive in nature. Verbal cues may give one message but non-verbal cues another. For instance, a Toradjan In Indonesia who worked as a laborer in a school headed by a British principal always said 'yes', but his body position reflected that he didn't intend to do it. (*ibid*, 8).

1.10 Cultural Role

Politeness is expressed in different culture in different ways. The refusal strategies used by people from different cultures in refusing requests differ from one another depending on their culture (Okla 2018: 323). Rubin has clearly pointed out that at least three levels of socio-cultural knowledge are required particularly in the interpretation of the message of negation (Rubin 1981).

First of all, form and function may not match if one person moves to another culture as a foreigner. For instance, Jakobson (1972) showed that head movements for 'yes' and 'no' differ from culture to culture. Learning only the forms will not serve the purpose, a foreigner must also have the communicative competence to learn when and to whom he/she must use the proper form.

Secondly, in cross-cultural communication one also need to consider how the performance of the speech act gets related to social structure. For instance, age is given a higher social value in some communities in maintaining social relations. As we see in Poland, the older a person is, the harder it is to refuse them. In Taiwan, people makes an effort to go through an intermediary for getting a job in order to avoid embarrassing situation and to maintain good social relationship (*ibid*, 11).

Thirdly, underlying social values are also prime factors for the participants engaged in a communicative act. Richard Applegate (1975) notes that Americans are very much concerned about such matters as times, places, routes and so on. So, when asked for

directions of a place, he/she tries to share this information, but if uncertain they admit it and then venture a guess. In contrast, other cultures do not focus on the passing of accurate information but rather on maintaining social relations (as in case of Vietnamese, cf. Rubin 1981:13).

Thus acquisition of communicative competence is essential in bridging these three levels of socio-cultural knowledge for interpretation of inter-cultural messages.

Conclusion

This paper was an attempt to investigate the strategic framework of refusal in reference to Bangla speech community. The taxonomy of refusal strategies has mainly been proposed from the socio-pragmatic and discourse perspective. The taxonomy suggested here mainly depends on the classification system developed by Beebe, Takahashi and Uliss-Weltz (1990). The data of this paper has been collected from some important Bangla novels in order to find out how the refusal strategies proposed have been framed contextually within the textual domain. Moreover, some examples have also been incorporated from the daily oral communication in a Bangla speech community. The paper also seriously considered *face* playing significant role in the context of refusing behaviour. Refusal being a dual face threatening act as advocated by Brown and Levinson (1987) find its relevance in the context of politeness. Section 1.2 established refusal as a speech act. Section 1.3 and 1.4 highlight the significance of the concept of face and politeness in the speech act of refusing. An effort has also been done to define refusal activity and its functional features from the linguistic and sociopragmatic aspects in section 1.5. Section 1.6 makes a brief for the refusal strategies and section 1.7 explains it in the Bangla context. The strategies have been exemplified in section 1.8 from some specific Bangla novels. In this context the features of the conversational pattern have been scanned to identify the substantial features of refusal strategies. Section 1.9 and 1.10 highlighted non-verbal strategies and cultural roles respectively. The present study has mainly dealt with refusals in monolingual or monocultural

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setting. A cross-cultural comparison in reference to Bangla and other foreign languages is no doubt important for future research. Moreover, it is noteworthy that a refusal as noted by Félix-Brasdefer (2004) may also turn into an acceptance after a lengthy oral interaction between the participants. But such type of data has not been seriously highlighted in this paper.

Notes

1. Here the modified IPA for phonetic transcription is used for the examples. O, E are applied for low-mid back and low-mid front vowels respectively. T, D, R denote retroflex sounds and S is used for denoting palato-alveolar sibilant. M represents nasalization of the preceding vowel.
2. Name of the characters within the fictions and name of the texts within the article are also represented in modified IPA symbols.

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 - I. A cover page consisting of
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4. Main body format guidelines—
 - I. The main body should be typed with 1.5 line spacing throughout, font TNR, and font size 12.
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VII. Examples: They should be numbered consecutively. Use tabs (not the space bar) to align examples and glosses. Use italics for the example. Please explain used abbreviations or acronyms used in the abbreviation list at the end of the article:

(1) *Example in italics* Word-for-word gloss in roman type, use small capitals (not capitals) for the acronyms ‘Idiomatic translation in single quotation marks’

(2a) *Kumar naakali-y-il utkaar-ntu iru-kkir-aan*
Kumar table-(y)-LOK sit-KONV be-PRS-3.SG.M
‘Kumar is sitting at the table.’

(2b) *The boat does travel south.*

5. For referencing, follow the APA style. Contributors may check the given link for details

<https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references/>.

Some examples are given below.

I. For in-text reference, use only the surname of the author, the year of publication, and the page number within the first bracket. For example,

- i. One author (Chatterji, 1926, p 63)
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