RESEARCH NOTE

THE MORPHOLOGY OF THE MAITHILI CONJUNCTIVE PARTICIPLE-Kə

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\[ i \quad ke \quad batāha \quad kavi \quad -bhānga \quad pībi \quad svāgata \]
\[ this \quad who \quad crazy \quad poet \quad hemp \quad drink-CP \quad welcome \]

\[ basanta \quad achi \quad gābi \quad rahala? \quad Kāncinātha Jhā ‘Kirāṇa’ \]
\[ spring \quad AUX \quad sing \quad IMPERF \quad ASP \]

‘Who is this crazy poet singing ‘welcome to spring’ having drunk hemp?’

Introduction

This conjunctive participle is one of the characteristic devices for linking sequences of clauses to the host clause in Maithili.

The conjunctive participle in Maithili is marked by the affix -kə (also by an allomorph -kəd depending on idiolectal stylistic predilections and written in Devanagari variously as <ka>, <kae>, and <kaya>) which is attached to a tenseless verb of a nonfinite clause in a sentence. The following examples illustrate it.

1. hin-ka \quad kətha-kə \quad kəne \quad bekcha-kə \quad dekh-ə / \quad ja-e
he-Hon-GENIT, story-ACC/DAT a little elaborate-CP see-PSTPCPL go-OPT

‘Let his story be viewed in a little more detail / Let’s look at his story a little more elaborately.’

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2. bap dekh-l-ḍk \ je chōṇa dhāṛphāra-kḍ uṭh-ḍ / 
father see-PST-3Nonhon+3Nonhon REL boy hurry-CP Aarise-PST-3Nonhon
'The father saw that the son arose hurriedly.'

Sentence (1) is a complex sentence the matrix of which consists of a finite verb dekh-ḍ/je-e which in effect is a complex predicate composed of the polar verb stem dekh- and the vector verb stem ja- to which person, tense, aspect, and mood desinences are compositely attached, while the embedded clause consists of a non-finite verb bekchaeb to the tenseless form of which is attached the conjunctive participle -kḍ upon deletion of the infinitive marker -eb (e.g. bekchaeb → bekchaφ → bekcha-kḍ). Similarly, sentence (2) is also a complex sentence the matrix of which consists of a finite verb uṭh-ḍ / which is composed of the stem uṭh plus the person, tense, aspect, and mood desinences, while the embedded clause consists of a non-finite verb dhāṛphāraeb to the tenseless form of which is attached the conjunctive participle -kḍ upon deletion of the infinitive marker -eb (e.g. dhāṛphāraeb → dhāṛphāraφ → dhāṛphāra-kḍ).

A number of other -kḍ forms also coexist in Maithili, e.g.

3. rait-kḍ nāḍi a-u
night-PP not come-IMP-2 Hon
'Don’t come at night'

In sentence (3) -kḍ acts as a post position denoting time.

When the verb stem kḍ ṛ (of the infinitive kḍ ṛ b ‘to do’) is combined with such action verbs as leb ‘to take’, deb ‘to give’, aeb/aeb ‘to come’, jaeb/jaeb ‘to go’ to form compound verb expressions in Maithili then the stem final -r is deleted and the resultant complex predicates are as follows: kḍ le-l-ḍk (*kḍr le-l-ḍk), kḍ de-l-k-ḍ inh (*kḍr dē-l-k- ḍ inh). The following examples are illustrative:

4. u bhōjan kḍ le-l-ḍk
he-Non hon meal do take-PST-3 Non hon
'He already ate.'

5. tō kaj kḍ de-l-ḍ
You- Non hon work do come-PST-2 Non hon
'You already finished the work.'
The Morphology of the Maithili  

6. o hun-k-\(\partial\) kaj \(k\ \partial\) de-l-k-\(\partial\) inh
   he-Hon he-Hon-GENIT work do give-PST-3Hon+3Hon
   'He already finished his job.'

A few Maithili idiomatic expressions (generally borrowed from Hindi) also contain -\(k\\partial\) forms, e.g.

7. o hath dho-k\(\partial\) ok-ra pach\(\partial\) p\(\partial\)ir ge-l-ah
   he-Hon hand wash-CP he-Non-hon-ACC/DAT behind lie go-PST-3Hon
   'He followed him steadfastly.'

Please note that sentence (7) does not ever mean that 'he first washed his hands and then followed him.'

Finally, a few Maithili adverbial expressions also contain -\(k\\partial\) forms attached to them, e.g.

8 bi\(\partial\)es-k\(\partial\) 'Specifically'
9 khas-k\(\partial\) 'Specially'

Since the -\(k\\partial\) forms illustrated in sentences (3-9) are not germane to the main argument of this paper, these will not be discussed here. The main purpose of the paper is to describe the morphological properties of the conjunctive participle -\(k\\partial\) which is attached to a tenseless verb of an embedded clause in Maithili.

Morphology

-\(k\\partial\) is a non-neutral affix in that it tends to trigger changes in the shape of the verbal base to which it is attached. The exact nature of the verb stem alternation depends on the phonotactic structure of the verb, i.e., on whether the verb stem ends in an open or closed syllable or whether it contains a diphthong or not. Thus, to begin with, in a consonant-ending verb stem, -\(i\) is inserted at stem-end. In pronunciation the inserted -\(i\) is metathesized to a position prior to the final consonant, resulting thereby in profuse diphthongization in Maithili. In spelling, however, -\(i\) is retained at stem-end. In those sociolects in which the pronunciation and the spelling equate, metathesis does not occur – resulting thereby in an increase of the number of syllables. The following examples illustrate it.
Note that if the consonant-ending verb stem contains -i, the insertion of -i rule applies but the inserted -i is never metathesized—apparently to preserve the canonical phonological pattern of Maithili by disallowing a vowel hiatus of -ii or an occurrence of three vowels in a row within a phonological word in Maithili, e.g.

21. /pis+kəd → pisikəd/ [pisıkə-pisıkə/*pisıkə] <pisika> ‘having gound’
22. /pdis+kəd → bdisikəd/ [bdisıkə-bdisıkə/*bdisıkə] <baisika> ‘having sat’
23. /dí+h+kəd → aíhikəd/ [díhıkə-díhıkə/*díhıkə] <díhika> ‘having twisted’
24. /pdiskəd → pdisikəd/ [písıkə-písıkə/*písıkə] <paisika> ‘having entered’
25. /cir+kəd → cirikəd/ [cirıkə-cirıkə/*cirıkə] <cɪrɪka> ‘having pierced’

Secondly, in a extremely small subset of recalcitrant monosyllabic verb stems ending in -r, the addition of the conjunctive participle -kə triggers the deletion of the final r and an optional insertion of e at stem-end in educated styles of Maithili, e.g.

26. /kə+kd → kəfıkəd/ → [kəfıkə-kəfıkə/*kəfıkə] <kaka/kaeka> ‘having done’
27. /dhər+kəd → dhəfıkəd → [dhəfıkə-dhəfıkə/*dhəfıkə] <dhaka/daeka> ‘having held’

It is worth noting here that in eastern dialects of Maithili, [kəfıkə] and [dhəfıkə] are also pronounced as [kəkə] and [dhəkə] respectively.

Thirdly, in a subset of verb stems ending in -a, upon addition of the conjunctive participle -kə, -b- is infixed prior to the insertion of -i. Alternatively, one might argue that b is inserted at stem-end, rendering the stem as consonant-final. The -i insertion then applies and the metathesis rule too applies as usual. The following examples exemplify it.
28. /la+kə → labikə → [laibkə/*labkə] <labika> ‘having brought’
29. /a+kə → abikə → [aibkə/*abkə] <abika> ‘having come’
30. /pa+kə → pabikə → [paibkə/*pabkə] <pabika> ‘having got’

Fourthly, a few -i ending verb stems optionally undergo the -b- infixation rule prior to -i insertion, but block the metathesis to occur – apparently to disallow the hiatus of two high front vowels in Maithili. Thus, two sets of alternate verb forms coexist in Maithili, e.g.

31. /pi+kə/ → [pibikə-pikə/*piibkə-*piikə] <pibika-pika> ‘having drunk’
32. /si+kə/ → [sibikə-sikə/*siibkə-*siikə] <sibika-sika> ‘having sewn’

Fifthly, a few a and o ending verb stems do not undergo -b- infixation. Naturally, in such cases the -i insertion rule does not apply. Optionally, -e may be inserted at stem-end, e.g.

33. /ja+kə/ → [jakə-jaekə/*jaikə] <jäka-jäeka> ‘having gone’
34. /kha+kə/ → [khakə-khaekə/*khaiəkə] <khāka-khāeka> ‘having eaten’
35. /cora+kə/ → [corakə-coraekə/*coraikə] <corāka-corāeka> ‘having stolen’
36. /dho+kə/ → [dhokə-dhoekə/*dhoikə] <dhoka-dhöeka> ‘having washed’

Sixthly, the inchoative -o ending verb stem ho ‘become’ undergoes a suppletion upon addition of the conjunctive participle -kə, and an optional e is inserted at stem-end, e.g.


In some dialects, the stative ho ‘be’ does not undergo any change:

38. /ho+kə/ → [hokə] <hoka> ‘having been’

Finally, a subset of Maithili verb stems ending in e undergo stem alternation upon addition of the conjunctive participle -kə as shown below:

39. e → φ
   φ → ə (e)
Or, alternatively,
   e → ə (e)
Examples:
40. /le+kə → /ʃkə → /dəkə/ → [/dəkə-/dəkə/*lekə] <laka-laeka> ‘having taken’
41. /de+kə → /dəkə → dəkə/ → [dəkə-dəkə/*dekə] <dak-daeka> ‘having given’

Or,

42. /le+kə/ → [/dəkə-/dəkə] <laka-laeka> ‘having taken’
43. /de+kə → [dəkə-dəkə] <dak-daeka> ‘having given’

Conclusion

Stem alternations in Maithili compound verb formations and conjunctive participle constructions are quite similar. For more information on Maithili compound verb constructions, the reader is referred to Yadav (1996:191-208). Also, -kə deletion, as evidenced in the quotation cited at the onset of this paper, is characteristic of educated/literary styles of Maithili. All this and the syntactic and semantic properties of the Maithili conjunctive participle constructions will be discussed elsewhere.

Abbreviations

// Underlying Form
[] Surface Form
<> Written Form
* Unacceptable form
Ø Deletion
~ Alternate Form
→ Becomes
ACC/DAT Accusative-Dative Case
AUX Auxiliary Verb
CP Conjunctive Participle
GENIT Genitive Case
Hon Honorific
IMP Imperative Mood
IMPERF ASP Imperfective Aspect
Non hon Nonhonorific
OPT Optative Mood
PP Postposition
PST Past Tense
PSTPCPL Past Participle
The Morphology of the Maithili 275

REL Relative Clause Marker
2 Second Person
3 Third Person

Reference