RESEARCH NOTE

THE MORPHOLOGY OF THE MAITHILI CONJUNCTIVE PARTICIPLE-\(\text{-k}\)\(\text{d}\)

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\(i\) ke \(\text{batāha}\) kavi -\(\text{bhāṅga}\) pībi svāgata

this who crazy poet hemp drink-CP welcome

\(\text{basanta}\) achi gābi rahala? Kāñcināṭha Jhā ‘Kirana’

spring AUX sing IMPERF 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 -\(\text{k}\)\(\text{d}\) (also by an allomorph -\(\text{k}\)\(\text{de}\) depending on idiolectal stylistic predilections and written in Devanagari variously as <\(\text{ka}\)>, <\(\text{k}\)\(\text{ae}\)>, and <\(\text{k}\)\(\text{aya}\)>) which is attached to a tenseless verb of a nonfinite clause in a sentence. The following examples illustrate it.

1. \(\text{hin-ka}\) k\(\text{ð}\)tha-k\(\text{ē}\) k\(\text{ð}\)ne bekcha-k\(\text{d}\) dekh-\(\text{d}\) / 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-ďk je chörma dhöṛphdra-kď uth-ď /
father see-PST-3Nonhon+3Nonhon REL boy hurry-CP Aairise-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-ď/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 -kď upon deletion of the infinitive marker -eb (e.g. bekchaeb → bekchaφ → bekcha-kď). Similarly, sentence (2) is also a complex sentence the matrix of which consists of a finite verb uth-ď/ which is composed of the stem uth plus the person, tense, aspect, and mood desinences, while the embedded clause consists of a non-finite verb dhöṛphdraeb to the tenseless form of which is attached the conjunctive participle -kď upon deletion of the infinitive marker -eb (e.g. dhöṛphdraeb → dhöṛphdraφ → dhöṛphdra-kď).

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

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

In sentence (3) –kď acts as a post position denoting time.

When the verb stem kď r (of the infinitive kď rď 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: kď le-l-ďk (*kďr le-l-ďk), kď de-l-k-ď inh (*kďr dē-l-k- ď inh). The following examples are illustrative:

4. u bhōjďn kď le-l-ďk
he-Non hon meal do take-PST-3 Non hon
'He already ate.'

5. tō kaj kď ďe-l-ď
You- Non hon work do come-PST-2 Non hon
'You already finished the work.'
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\a p\partialir 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\-\=s\-\=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+kə  pisikə/ [pisikə-pisikə*piiskə] <pisika> ‘having gound’
22. /pdis+kə  bdisikə/ [bdisikə-bdisikə*bdisikə] <baisika> having sat’
23. /di+h+kə  ațiḥikə/ [atiḥikə-atiḥkə*atiḥkə] <atiḥika> ‘having twisted’
24. /pdiskə  pdisikə/ [pdisikə-pdisikə*pdisikə] <paisika> ‘having entered’
25. /cir+kə  cirikə/ [cirikə-cirikə*cirikə] <cirika> ‘having pierced’

Secondly, in an 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+kə  → kəfıkə/ →[kdkə-kdkə*kdkə] <kaka/kaeka> ‘having done’
27. /dhør+kə  → dhørkə →[dhdkə-dhdkə*dhdkə] <dhaka/dhaeka> ‘having held’

It is worth noting here that in eastern dialects of Maithili, [kədkə] and [dhəkə] 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.
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+kɔ/ → [piɓikɔ-*piikɔ] <piɓika~piika> ‘having drunk’
32. /si+kɔ/ → [siɓikɔ-*siikɔ] <siɓika~siika> ‘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+kɔ/ → [jakɔ-jaiko/*jaiko] <jako~jaiko> ‘having gone’
34. /kha+kɔ/ → [khaikɔ-khaiko/*khaiko] <kako~kako> ‘having eaten’
35. /cora+kɔ/ → [corako-corako/*corako] <corako~corako> ‘having stolen’
36. /dro+kɔ/ → [droko-droko/*droko] <droko~droko> ‘having washed’

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

37. /ho+kɔ/ → [bhɔkɔ-bhɔko] <bhako~bhako> ‘having become’.

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

38. /ho+kɔ/ → [hokɔ] <hoka> ‘having been’

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

39. e → ø
   ø → ð(e)
   Or, alternatively,
   e → ð(e)
Examples:
40. /le+kə → /fϕkə → /dəkə/ → [ləkə-γdəkə]+lekdə] <laka-laeka> 'having taken'
41. /de+kə → dϕkə → dəkə/ → [dəkdə-γdəkdə]+dakə] <dak-daeka> 'having given'
Or,
42. /le+kə/ → [ləkə-γdəkə] <laka-laeka> 'having taken'
43. /de+kə → [dəkdə-γdəkdə] <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

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\begin{array}{ll}
/ / & \text{Underlying Form} \\
\[] & \text{Surface Form} \\
< > & \text{Written Form} \\
* & \text{Unacceptable form} \\
\emptyset & \text{Deletion} \\
\sim & \text{Alternate Form} \\
\rightarrow & \text{Becomes} \\
\text{ACC/DAT} & \text{Accusative-Dative Case} \\
\text{AUX} & \text{Auxiliary Verb} \\
\text{CP} & \text{Conjunctive Participle} \\
\text{GENIT} & \text{Genitive Case} \\
\text{Hon} & \text{Honorific} \\
\text{IMP} & \text{Imperative Mood} \\
\text{IMPERF ASP} & \text{Imperfective Aspect} \\
\text{Non hon} & \text{Nonhonorific} \\
\text{OPT} & \text{Optative Mood} \\
\text{PP} & \text{Postposition} \\
\text{PST} & \text{Past Tense} \\
\text{PSTPCPL} & \text{Past Participle}
\end{array}
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Reference