Review of Research

International Online Multidisciplinary Journal

PROCESS OF NEGATION IN BORO AND RABHA LANGUAGE: A TYPOLOGICAL STUDY

Lakshmi Basumatary[1] and Phukan Ch. Basumatary[2]
[1]Research Scholar
[2]Supervisor, Bodoland University, Assam, India.

ABSTRACT

In this paper an attempt will be made to discuss the process of negation used in both the languages. From a preliminary investigation it is seen that negation is made in these languages by adding prefix before the verb root. But there are certain dissimilarities between the languages. In Boro negation is also made by adding suffixes like {-a}, {-i}, {-li-a} etc. which are not seen in Rabha language. Rabha has only a minimum of prefix {-ta} and suffix {-cha} used with the verb root to signify the sense of negation. Negation is, sometimes, made with the help of semantic relation in a syntactic structure. All these points will be discussed elaborately in this paper.

KEYWORDS: Negation, Prefix, Suffix, Reconstruction, Syntactic relation.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

relations of words of negation. Another point is that there are two fold of constructions having use of positive-negative words in syntactic relations which express sense of negations. In both the languages all these aspects have been seen almost in a similar manner. From this comparative analysis it may be argued these two languages typologically form common morphological features being agglutinating languages under the Tibeto-Burman sub-family of the Sino-Tibetan family of languages.

1.1 OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

The study aims at analyzing the process of negation as used in Boro and Rabha. It is observed that essentially negation is made by adding prefix and suffix with verb root. But in a sentence construction there is a two-fold typology i.e. positive-negative sentence construction which may be discussed from syntactic point of view. In this construction one fold is positive and the other part signifies negative sense. All these points are discussed in below.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

The proposed topic has been analyzed from the synchronic point of view. Required data relating to the Rabha language are gathered from the speakers of Rongdani, Maitori, Koch groups. Thus data for Boro language are also taken from the published and unpublished sources. To make convenient the discussion necessary linguistic materials of morphology especially a variety of negative affixes have been utilized where necessary. Basically use of affixes in different linguistic context as well as situations in both the languages has been discussed from a typological view point. To speak this is a comparative analysis of negative affixes as used in Boro and Rabha languages. Note worthy is that both the languages are genetically related linguistic group under Tibeto-Burman languages.

2.0 TYPES OF NEGATION

From a primary observation it is seen that there are three types of processes of negation found in both the languages. These are: (i) by using prefix (-s) (ii) by using suffix (-s) and (iii) negation by syntactic relations in different context or linguistic situations.

2.0.1 Negation made by adding prefix

In general uses, Boro has two different affixes; one is prefix {da-} and the other is suffix {-a}. Each of the bound morphemes has morphological representations and on the one hand phonemic representations in different context and linguistic applications. In Boro the prefix {da-} signifies sense of negation as well oppositeness. In this case it follows the verb root. For example-

1. {da-za}>daza (not to eat)
2. {da-maɔ}>damaɔ (not to do)
3. {da-phɯi}>daphɯi (do not come)
4. {da-lir}>dalir (do not write)
5. {da-gab}>dagab(do not cry)
6. {da-thaŋ}>dathaŋ(do not go)
7. {da-la}>dala(do not take)
8. {da-lɯŋ}>dalɯŋ(do not drink)
9. {da-undu}>daundu (do not sleep)
10. {da-hɔm}>dahɔm(do not catch) etc.

Thus Rabha language has also two different kinds of affixes that are used with verb root in making the negative presentation. The prefix {ta-} is used to refer sense of negation. For example -

1. {ta-}-tan (cut) >tatan(do not cut)
2. {ta-}-sa (eat) >tasa(do not eat)
3. {ta-}-reŋ (go) >tareŋ (do not go)
4. {ta-}-rɯŋ (drink) >tarɯŋ(do not drink)
5. {ta-}-ra (take) >tara(do not take)
6. {ta-}-raba (bring) >taraba(do not bring)
7. {ta-}-khar (do) >takhar(do not do)
8. {ta-}-khap (cry) >takhap(do not cry)
9. {ta-}-riba (come) >tariba(do not come)
10. {ta-}-gur (sleep) >tagur(do not sleep) etc .

From a comparative analysis it is seen that the prefix {da-} and {ta-} have equivalent functional representation in both the languages. Also it is seen that uses of negative prefix in Garo, Dimasa and Kokborok languages have similar kind of functions and semantic significance. Example

GARO: {da-}

1.{da-}-V. cha?a (eat) >da?cha(do not eat)
2. {da-}-V. re?baa (come) >da?rebaa(do not come)
3. {da-}-V. grapa (cry) >dagrapa(do not cry)
4. {da-}-V.rɯta(cook)>da?rɯta(do not cook)
    Dimasa has also the similar structure in case of negativization.

DIMASA[3]: {da-}

1. {da-}-V. thaŋ (go) >dathaŋ (do not go)
2. {da-}-V. zi (eat) >dazi (do not eat)
3. {da-}-V. phuri (read)>daphuri (do not read)
4. {da-}-V. reb(write) >dareb(do not write)

KOKBOROK[4] : {ta-}

1. {ta-}-V. cha (eat) >v.tacha(do not eat)
2.{ta-}-V. thaŋ (go) >v.tathaŋ (do not go)
3. {ta-}-V. rɯŋ (learn) >tarɯŋ (do not learn)
4. {ta-}-V.nai(look)>tanai(do not look)

2.0.2 Negation made by adding suffix

Boro and Rabha posses some suffixes which do signify sense of negation. The Boro {-a} suffix is also required to make the sense of negation which is added after the verb root. But there is also another construction to refer the sense of negation. After the position of suffix {-a} a supportive bound morpheme like {-khɯi} is to be affixed to make clear the representation of negation in some cases. For example, za-a-khɯi>zaakhɯi (have/has not had or eaten). Here the suffix {-khɯi} is used to refer extensive sense of negation. In Boro, the suffix {-i} is also used with verb root to signify the sense negation. For example za-{-i}>zai~ zaɯi (not eaten), {thaŋ-i}> thaŋi~thaŋɯi (not gone) etc. Now it is to be justified that Boro has two kinds of affixes that are functional in making the process of negation. These two have been used in the following words to justify the statement.

{-a}:

1. V.tʰaŋ-{a-}>tʰaŋa (do not go)
2. V.pʰɯi-{a-}>pʰɯia(do not come)
3. V.daŋ-{a-}>daŋa(do not touch)
4. V.tʰɯi-{a-}>tʰɯia(do not die)
5. V.bu-{a-}>bua(do not beat)
6. V.nu-{a-}>nua(do not see)
7. V.za-{a-}>zaa>zaya (do not eat)
8. V.se-{a-}>sea(do not snatch)
9. V.su-{a-}>sua(do not cold)

In this language the negative suffix {-a} is found in extended forms as {li-a} and {a-khɯi} respectively. The suffix {-lia} is found as in za-lia>zalia (will/shall not eat), maɔ-lia>maɔlia(will/shall not do), phɯi-lia>phɯilia (will/shall not come) etc. In fact this is a compounded form of two different morphemes; e.g. {-li-} and {-a}. {-a} is the suffix having basic identity which refers to the meaning of negation in real sense. Thus the suffix {-li-} is used for extending meaning of verb root which is occurred before the suffix {-a}.Thus {-a-khɯi} is also found uses as in za-a-khɯi>zaakhɯi (have/has not eaten), maɔ-a-khɯi>maɔakhɯi(have/has not done), thaŋ-a-khɯi>thaŋakhɯi(have/has not went) etc. In this formation {-a} is a suffix used for denoting sense of negation and the successive suffix {-khɯi} is basically used for extending meaning of the whole interpretation.

On the one hand, in Rabha, the suffix {-cha} is also functional in making the sense of negation in some cases. For example-

Rabha:{-cha}

1. V.sa-{-cha}>sacha (do not eat)
2. V. reŋ-{-cha}>reŋcha (do not go)
3. V. saŋ-{-cha}> saŋcha (do not happen)
4. V. riba-{-cha}>ribacha (do not come)
5. V. rɯŋ-{-cha}>rɯŋsa (do not drink)
6. V. ra-{-cha}>racha (do not take)
7. V.rakhu-{-cha}>rakhucha (do not give)
8. V. nuk-{-cha}>nukcha (do not see)
9. V. khar-{-cha}>kharcha (do not do)
10. V. si-{-cha}>sicha(do not die) etc.

From a comparative analysis it is seen that the suffix {-a} and {-cha} have equivalent functional representation in both the languages. Also it is a matter of comparison that in comparison to other cognate languages spoken in the North-East region negative suffix of Garo, Dimasa, Kokborok languages have similar kind of functions. For Example-

Garo:{-za}

1. V.daka-{-za}>dakaza (do not work)
2. V.khnaa-{-za}>khnaaza (do not listen)
3. V.am?a-{-za}>am?za (do not looking)

Dimasa:{-ya}

1. V. zi-ya}>ziya (do not eat)
2. V.tʰaŋ-{-ya}>tʰaŋya (do not go)
3. V.pʰuri-{-ya}>pʰuriya (do not read)
4. V.kʰam-{-ya}>kʰamya (do not sit)

Kokborok:{-a}

1. V.tʰuŋ-{-a}>tʰuŋa (do not play)

2.   V.nai-{-a}>naia (do not look)
3.   V.tʰui-{-a}>tʰuia (do not die)
4.   V.kaŋ-{-a}>kaŋa (do not thirst)

3.0 NEGATION FOUND IN SYNTACTIC RELATIONS

In some cases negation is also made in syntactic relations where negative relations are vividly occurred based on purpose of the speakers. This process is related to reduplication of words of negation to some extent.

3.0.1 Made by repetition of words of negation

In Boro, negation is made in sentence construction by repetition of words of negation. Some of the examples are as follows:

Boro:

1. nɯŋ   zaiaba   da-zasɯi (You are not willing, then don not eat)

   ↓   ↓   ↓

You   (not willing to eat)   (do not eat)

In this sentence, the word of negation 'zaiaba' refers to unwillingness of the persons and the word of negation 'da-zaswi' refers to asking not to do. Thus the following sentence is also similar in syntactic relations.

2. nɯŋ   thaŋaba   da-thaŋsɯi (If you are not willing, then do not go)

   ↓   ↓   ↓

  (You)   (not willing to eat)   (do not go)

Thus Rabha has also the similar kind of features in case of negation found syntactic relations. Some of the sentences may be mentioned as follows:

Rabha :

1. nɯŋ   sa-sa bisiŋ   ta-sa (you will not eat do not eat)

   ↓   ↓   ↓

  (You)   (not willing to eat) (do not eat)

2. nɯŋ   lɯi-sa bisiŋ   ta-lɯi (you will not go do not go)

   ↓   ↓   ↓

  (You)   (not willing to go)   (do not go)

3.0.2 Negation made by positive-negative relations in sentence

Boro and Rabha use a kind of sentence of negation which is made of two fold of constructions having use of positive-negative   words in syntactic relations. Example from Boro:

Boro:

1. biɯ   phɯigɯn   phɯia   mithia   (Not sure whether he/she will come or not)

   ↓   ↓   ↓   ↓

  He/she   will come   will not come   know not

2. nɯŋ   zagɯn   zaia   mithia   (Not sure whether you will eat or not)

   ↓   ↓   ↓   ↓

  You   will eat   will not eat   know not

In the example-1, the words /phɯi-a/ and /mithi-a/ both are categorically main verb. Negation is formed by adding {-a} suffix. Thus in the example-2, the suffix {-a} is also added with the main verb to refer to the meaning of negation in the syntactic relations. Syntactically both the sentences are of binary structure having positive and negative sequences. Comparatively the Rabha language has also the similar structure in case of negation. Example:

Rabha :

1. u-be   reŋ-a   reŋ-khutsa   (Did he go or did not he)

   ↓   ↓   ↓

  He/she   to go   not to go

2. name   reŋ-a   reŋ-tsano   (You will go, will not you)

   ↓   ↓   ↓

  you   to go   will not go

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

From the above discussion it is seen that the process of negativization in Boro and Rabha languages is almost similar from typological point of view. Negation is formed by adding prefix or suffix with the verb root. Also the sense of negation is expressed through syntactic. The researcher does express sincere gratefulness to the informants who helped immensely in gathering data during the field work in different places. Some of informants from the Rabha language are Ms. Pushpa Rabha (23, Harinaguri, Kokrajhar,BTAD, Assam), Sujuli Rabha (40, Dobguri, Kokrajhar, BTAD, Assam), Ms. Ronali Rabha (34, Dobguri, Kokrajhar, BTAD, Assam), Jibeswar Koch (50, Teacher, Dudhnoi College, Goalpara, Assam).

REFERENCES

1. Benedict, P.K. Sino-Tibetan A Conspectus. (New York:Cambridge University press,1972.)

2. Burling, Robbins.The Language of the Modhupuri Mandi (Garo),Vol-II. (New Delhi:Bibliophile South Asia,2003.)

3. Dhar, P.C. Kok-Kuthumma. (Agartala: Tribal Research Institute Agartala,1987.)

4. Jose U.V. [ed]. Khurangnala(Panbazar: Don Bosco Publication,2000.)

5. Jahari Phanindra. Garaothai ni Phandar,Garao Dima Nising Engraji (Dictionary-Dimasa to English). (Gdain Raji, Haflong-788819-Dima Hasao,2010.)

6. Matisoft, James A. Hand Book of Proto-Tibeto-Burman.(Berkeley:University of California Press,2003.)

7. Matthews, P.H. Morphology (New York: Cambridge University Press,1974.)

8. Basumatary, Phukan Ch. The Rabha Tribe of North East India Bengal and Bangladesh. (Delhi:Mittal Publications, 2010.)

9. ----------------------. An Introduction to the Boro Languages. (Delhi:Mittal Publication,2005.)

10. Rabha Hakasam Upen. Focus on The Rabhas.(Guwahati:Cambridge India,2010.)

11. Text Book Production Committee[ed]. Rabha Raothap. (Dudhnoi:

Lakshmi Basumatary
Research Scholar