The Structure of Sambalpuri Language

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Abstract

Sambalpuri is an Indo-Aryan language variety spoken in western Odisha, India. It is alternatively known as Western Odia, and as Kosali (with variants *Kosli*, *Koshal* and *Koshali*), a recently popularized but controversial term, which draws on an association with the historical region of Dakshina Kosala, whose territories also included the present-day Sambalpur region.

Its speakers usually perceive it as a separate language, while outsiders have seen it as a dialect of Odia, and standard Odia is used by Sambalpuri speakers for formal communication. A 2006 survey of the varieties spoken in four villages found out that they share three-quarters of their basic vocabulary with Standard Odia.

Introduction:

The present article aims to present the verbs of Sambalpuri language on the morphological basis. Though the article is not enough to describe the whole about the subject yet it tried to explore some basics about the structure of the language. It will descriptive both the derivational and inflectional properties in Sambalpuri language. And it also gives a description of the verbal base of Sambalpuri language. Sambalpuri is the language spoken around ten million people in the western part of Indian state of Odisha, South-Western district of Madhya Pradesh (present day Chhattisgarh) and Bihar (present day Jharkhand). The name of the language is given after the name of the region. But some researchers claim it to be 'Kosali' which is after the earlier name (Koshal) of this region. Sambalpur (now) was an earlier part of great Kosala Empire, hence 'it should better be renamed 'Kosali' instead of Samablpuri (Joshi, 1983).

Some scholars do not agree with the above given viewpoint as we know that not only this region (Sambalpur) was under the Kosala Empire but also many parts of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand were under this empire, where Sambalpuri is not being spoken. Therefore, it is quite better not to equate this language with Kosali (Saxena, 1972:9).

The language is presently spoken in the districts of Sambalpur, Bargarh, Bolangir, Sonepur, Kalahandi, Sundargarh, Boudh, Deogarh, Nuapada, Jharsuguda and Athmallick sub-division Angul district of Odisha along with the adjacent districts of Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand. The main Sambalpuri speaking region approximately extends from 17°N to 23°N latitude and 82°E to 86°E longitude.

Structural Analysis and Verb Morphology:

The verb is used with grammatical classification of words, refers to an action, event and process involved with them. Verb is one of the most significant linguistic category which bears indispensable role to play in expressing meaning of a sentence structure and its syntactic behavior. They decide the number of participants take part in a certain action.

Semantically it can be classified as state verbs, action verbs and process verbs. And syntactically they are classified into intransitive, monotransitive and ditransitive.

In order to define verb Lyons (2008) says, it is 'a term used in the grammatical classification of words, to refer to a class traditionally defined as 'doing' or 'action' words (a description which has been criticized in linguistics, largely on the grounds that many verbs do not 'act' in any obvious sense, e.g. *seem, be*).' But formally he describes it as 'an element which can display morphological contrasts of tense, aspect, voice, mood, person and number.' And further on functional basis Lyons (2008) defines that 'verb is the element which, singly or in combination with other verbs (i.e. as a 'verb phrase'), is used as the minimal predicate of a sentence, co-occurring with a subject, e.g. *she/wrote*.

Verb is the most important grammatical category which governs the whole sentence structure. As Abbi (2001) says, "It governs all other grammatical elements in the sentence. It determines how many nouns these are in a sentence, which in turn determines what kind of modifiers, accompany these nouns. In other words, the valency of the verb determines the semantic and syntactic nature of the sentence."

"The verbs not only expresses an event an action, process etc., but it also links whatever it expresses to particular times. Three such times are normally distinguished, according to their relation to the present moment: past, present and future (Klein, 1994, pp. 18-)." In the upcoming chapter we will deal with the verbal root of Sambalpuri language.

2.1 Basic Verbs of Sambalpuri

Some basic verbs of Sambalpuri language can be enlisted below

Basic verb		Basic verb	
kər	'to do'	ne	'to take'
d̪ʰər	'to hold'	ɑ/ɑs	'come'
kʰɑ	'to eat'	jɑ	'to go'
pɪ	'to drink'	ut̪ʰ	'rise'
d̪e	'to give'	bəs	'sit'
sun	'to hear'	kəhə	'to speak'
gɑ	'to song'	gʰɪn	'to buy'
kand̪	'to cry'	bɪk	'to sell'
nɑc	'to dance'	kʰɛl	'to play'
pəd̪	'to read'	lɪkʰ	'to write'
sɪkʰ	'to learn'	d̪ɛkʰ	'to see'
cɪr	'to tear'	kɑʈ	'to cut'
cɑb	'to bite'	ʈʰel	'to push'

bʰɑŋ	'to break'	gʰɪc	'to pull'
su	'to sleep'	d̪əud̪	'to run'
mər	'to die'	mɑr	'to kill'
cɑl	'to walk'	Ud̪	'to fly'
ɑn	'to bring'	d̪ɛkʰɑ	'to show'
kʰuɑ	'to feed'	gɑdʰ	'to bath'

Now we can look into the nature of these above mentioned basic verbs of Sambalpuri language.

The basic verb in Sambalpuri, when used as inflected form; it may or may retain its original or basic form. It can be changed and used as different inflected forms. Let's take the examples of the verb [d̪e] and [ne]

For example,

1. gɑɛ-mɑnẽ   gurəs   d̪ɛsən
   cow-3PL   milk   give-PRS
   'The cows give milk.'

2. cʰuɑ-mɑne   gʰərũ   kʰɑnɑ   nɛsən
   child-3PL   from home   food   take-PRS

   'The children take food from home.'

In the above examples, both the verbs are in the same present simple tense and their verbal roots have changed. One can better mark that only the initial morpheme has not been changed in both the cases.

This type of change can be seen in the verbal root [kəhə]

For example,

3. se   kəh-ɛsɪ
   s/he-3SG   speak-PRS
   'S/he speaks.'

4. se-mɑne   kəh-ɛsən

. they-   speak-
  3PL   PRS
  'They speak.'

Here, the root form of verb given above has been changed and inflected for tense, person and number. Let's take few more examples,

5   muĩ   kʰɑ-ɛsĩ
.
    I-   eat-
    1SG.NOM   PRS
    'I eat.'

6   ɑme   pɪ-sũ
.
    we-   drink-
    1PL.NOM   PRS
    'We drink.'

In case of these two examples, it can be noticed that there is no change occurred in the verbal base. Rather it has been inflected to show the tense and other agreement features. The root form of verb [jɑ] totally changed to [gə] when it is used in the past tense but in the present and future it simply alters the final vowel of the root.
Now let's have the examples

7   muɪ   gə-lĩ
.
    I-   go-
    1SG   PST
    'I went.'

8   ɑme   jə-
.   ucʰũ
    we-   go-
    1PL   PRS
    'We are going.'

9   cʰuɑ-   jɪ-be
.   mɑnẽ
    child-3PL   go-
                 FUT
    'Children will go.'

                                    Intransitive   Monotransitive
Ditransitive
 Main Verb Vs Auxiliary Verb:

Main verb in a sentence refers to an independent verb which expresses its meaning without seeking support of others, as in English example below:

For example,

   - I eat mango.

   - I love my family.

But, the auxiliaries are the helping verbs. According to New Concise Webster's Dictionary (Revised edition, 1988 edition) Auxiliary verbs are "the verbs used in forming the different moods and tenses of other verbs." 'They combine with the Present or Past Participle or with Infinitives to form the tenses of ordinary verbs' (A.J. Thomson & A.V. Martinet, 1986).

For example,

   - The cow is eating.

   - The cow has eaten grass.

Conclusion:

This article tried to include about the subject theme and explained the respective areas. It also included about the Sambalpuri language and its basics grammar so that the aim of the subject could fill up. Basically, this present article work can be a preliminary one which testified the verbs of Sambalpuri language. From this beginnig further development can be supposed in this field in the language. In each and every aspect described in this dissertation can be further described in more detailed.

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