

**HONORIFICITY AGREEMENT IN MAITHILI – A
MESO-LEVEL COMPARISON WITH
MAGAHI AND BANGLA**

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**DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI**

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MAGAHI AND BANGLA**

By

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DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Submitted

**in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
to the**



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MARCH 2023**

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis – **“Honorificity Agreement in Maithili – A Meso-Level Comparison with Magahi and Bangla”** – submitted by Preeti Kumari to the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IIT Delhi) for the award of the degree of **“Doctor of Philosophy”** is a record of bona fide research work carried out by her under my supervision and guidance, and it is in conformity with the rules and regulations of IIT Delhi.

She has fulfilled all the requirements for the submission of this thesis which has, in my opinion, reached the standard of fulfilling the requirements for the degree.

To the best of my knowledge, the material contained in this thesis has not been submitted, in part or in full, to any other University or Institute for the award of any other degree or diploma.

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When I entered the PhD program in Linguistics at IIT Delhi, I simply came with my dreams and not a lot of preparation. I was under the impression that an interest in the formal aspects of language would be all that I would need. I now know better that a PhD is a different ball game and requires a lot more. I owe this revelation and this knowledge to my supervisor Prof. Pritha Chandra. She has taught me everything that I know about language – from the basics to the bigger questions. She has also taught me something more fundamental- the art of breaking every thought into as many steps as possible, and the creative process of connecting them. Her teachings, both academic and non-academic, have guided me throughout these five years and I hope to do justice to them as I go along. I express my deepest gratitude to her for believing in me.

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All errors are my own.

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Preeti Kumari

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the syntactic encoding of (Hon)orificity as a feature in the nominal and the verbal domain. It focuses on the under-studied Eastern Indo-Aryan (EIA) language Maithili by analysing some novel aspects of Maithili honorificity. Keeping Maithili at the centre, this work also looks at meso-level variation by comparing Maithili to a well-studied EIA language, Magahi, and to another under-studied EIA language, at least with respect to honorificity, Bangla.

This work claims that the honorificity feature can be either a multi-valued or a set of binary features in Maithili. Additionally, it shows that the inflectional Hon feature must project to HonP in the nominal structure. However, in languages where honorificity is encoded using number or person features, Hon piggybacks on these phi-features. Thus, differences in honorificity in the nominal domain emerge from its values as well as its position in the nominal structure.

In the verbal domain, this work shows that the Hon feature is at the root of deriving referent honorificity agreement in Maithili. It plays a role in subject and object agreement in two crucial ways—first, it redefines the person values in Maithili by making the 3rd person honorific a ‘true person’ while keeping the 3rd person non-honorific as a default or ‘no-person’ value. Second, the Hon feature forces objects to trigger differential agreement by moving them to the vP edge for Hon valuation. The effects of the Hon feature combine with the presence of two-probes on the T head in Maithili which results into multiple agreement. The neighbouring EIA languages, Magahi and Bangla, fail to show multiple agreement due to a single probe on the T head, which always agrees with the subject.

Another crucial finding of this work is in the domain of allocutive honorificity agreement, where Maithili allocutivity shows a much lower locus of agreement, on the T head, than any allocutive language studied so far. Due to this low encoding of allocutivity, Maithili allocutive agreement blocks object agreement, while it co-exists with subject agreement. Magahi and Bangla show no such interaction as they do not encode object agreement. Thus, in both referent and allocutive honorificity agreement, the differential nature of the T head is at the centre of the cross-linguistic variation illustrated by these languages.

Another novel insight in the domain of honorificity agreement comes from the study of the vocative phrase in these languages. This thesis advocates a unified account of allocutives and vocatives by showing that allocutive honorificity agreement may also be realised as agreement with the vocative particle. Languages like Bangla encode allocutive agreement within the vocative phrase as the vocative particles show honorificity agreement with the vocative noun. In comparison, Maithili and Magahi show that these two forms of allocutivity – verbal and vocative – may co-exist in a language.

सार

यह थीसिस नाममात्र और मौखिक डोमेन में एक विशेषता के रूप में (माननीय) orificity के वाक्यात्मक एन्कोडिंग की पड़ताल करती है। यह मैथिली सम्मान के कुछ उपन्यास पहलुओं का विश्लेषण करके कम अध्ययन वाली भाषा पूर्वी इंडो-आर्यन (ईआईए) मैथिली पर केंद्रित है। मैथिली को केंद्र में रखते हुए, यह काम मैथिली की तुलना एक अच्छी तरह से अध्ययन की गई ईआईए भाषा, मगही, और कम से कम सम्मान, बांग्ला के संबंध में एक अन्य अंडर-अध्ययनित ईआईए भाषा से करके मेसो-स्तरीय भिन्नता को भी देखता है।

यह काम दावा करता है कि मैथिली में सम्मान विशेषता एक बहु-मूल्यवान विशेषता है, जबकि यह मगही और बांग्ला में एक द्विआधारी विशेषता हो सकती है। इसके अतिरिक्त, यह दर्शाता है कि विभक्तिक माननीय विशेषता को नाममात्र संरचना में माननीय को प्रोजेक्ट करना चाहिए। हालांकि, उन भाषाओं में जहां संख्या या व्यक्ति सुविधाओं का उपयोग करके सम्मान को एन्कोड किया गया है, इन फाई-सुविधाओं पर माननीय पिगीबैक। इस प्रकार, नाममात्र डोमेन में सम्मान में अंतर इसके मूल्यों के साथ-साथ नाममात्र संरचना में इसकी स्थिति से उभरता है।

मौखिक क्षेत्र में, यह कार्य दर्शाता है कि मैथिली में सम्माननीय सम्मान अनुबंध प्राप्त करने के मूल में माननीय विशेषता है। यह दो महत्वपूर्ण तरीकों से विषय और वस्तु समझौते में एक भूमिका निभाता है- पहला, यह तीसरे व्यक्ति को गैर-सम्मानित रखने वाले तीसरे व्यक्ति को डिफॉल्ट या 'नो-पर्सन' के रूप में रखते हुए तीसरे व्यक्ति को सम्मानित करके 'सच्चा व्यक्ति' बनाकर मैथिली में व्यक्ति मूल्यों को फिर से परिभाषित करता है। ' मूल्य। दूसरा, माननीय फीचर वस्तुओं को माननीय मूल्यांकन के लिए वीपी किनारे पर ले जाकर अंतर समझौते को ट्रिगर करने के लिए मजबूर करता है। माननीय फीचर के प्रभाव मैथिली में टी हेड पर दो-जांच की उपस्थिति के साथ मिलते हैं जिसके परिणामस्वरूप कई समझौते होते हैं। पड़ोसी ईआईए भाषाएं, मगही और बांग्ला, टी हेड की एकल जांच के कारण कई समझौते दिखाने में विफल रहती हैं, जो हमेशा विषय से सहमत होते हैं।

इस काम की एक और महत्वपूर्ण खोज आबंटन सम्मान समझौते के क्षेत्र में है, जहां मैथिली आवंटन अब तक अध्ययन की गई किसी भी भाषा की तुलना में टी सिर पर समझौते का बहुत कम स्थान दिखाता है। आवंटन के इस कम एन्कोडिंग के कारण, मैथिली आवंटन समझौता वस्तु समझौते को अवरुद्ध करता है, जबकि यह विषय समझौते के साथ सह-अस्तित्व में है। मगही और बांग्ला ऐसी कोई बातचीत नहीं दिखाते हैं क्योंकि वे वस्तु समझौते को एन्कोड नहीं करते हैं। इस प्रकार, दोनों संदर्भ और आवंटन सम्मान समझौते में, टी सिर की विभेदक प्रकृति इन भाषाओं द्वारा सचित्र क्रॉस-भाषाई भिन्नता के केंद्र में है।

सम्मान समझौते के क्षेत्र में एक और उपन्यास अंतर्दृष्टि इन भाषाओं में वाक्पटु वाक्यांश के अध्ययन से आती है। यह थीसिस यह दिखाते हुए आवंटन और स्वरों के एकीकृत खाते की वकालत करती है कि आवंटन सम्मान समझौते को वोकेटिव कण के साथ समझौते के रूप में भी महसूस किया जा सकता है। बांग्ला जैसी भाषाएं वाक्पटु वाक्यांश के भीतर आबंटन समझौते को सांकेतिक शब्दों में बदलना करती हैं क्योंकि वोकेटिव कण, वोकेटिव संज्ञा के साथ सम्मान समझौता दिखाते हैं। इसकी तुलना में, मैथिली और मगही बताते हैं कि ये दो प्रकार के आवंटन - मौखिक और मौखिक - एक भाषा में सह-अस्तित्व में हो सकते हैं।

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ABBREVIATIONS

1	first person
2	second person
3	third person
ABS	absolutive
ACC	accusative
ALL	allative
ALLOC	allocutive
CL	classifier
COMP	complementizer
DAT	dative
DECL	declarative
DEF	definite
ERG	ergative
F	feminine
FOC	focus
FUT	future
GEN	genitive
H	honorific
HD	honorific-distant
HH	high-honorific
IMP	imperative
INF	infinitive
IPFV	imperfective
M	masculine
MH	mid-honorific
NEG	negation, negative
NH	non-honorific
NOM	nominative
OBL	oblique
PASS	passive
PFV	perfective
PL	plural
PRF	perfect
PRS	present
PROG	progressive
PST	past
PTCP	participle
Q	question particle
SG	singular
TOP	topic
VOC	vocative