

Negations in Dual (Garo), Boro, Rabha and Kokborok

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ABSTRACT: The paper attempts to study the similarities and differences between the four languages of Tibeto-Burman stock such as Dual, Boro, Rabha and Kokborok. The main focus of the paper is to show the syntactical function of negation and also will examine the forms of negation with respect of basic structures and imperative negations.

KEYWORDS: Dual (Garo), Boro, Rabha and Kokborok, negation, imperative negations

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I. GENETIC CLASSIFICATIONS

Garo or A·chik, Boro, Rabha, Kokborok languages are included in the Bodo group by Grierson (1903:68-69) in his Linguistic Survey of India, along with the languages like Dimasa, Koch, Kachari, Tiwa, Deori, and Mech etc.

Furthermore, other linguists like Burling (1959, 2003, and 2004), Matisoff (1974), Benedict (1976), Hale (1982), De Lancey (1987), David Bradley (1997), Van Driem (2001), Burling (2003), Thurgood (2003), (Gordon 2005), Lewis et.al (2009), are also of the view that these three languages are linguistically related to Bodo language that belongs to the proto-Sino-Tibetan sub-branch of the Tibeto-Burman language family.

Dual (Garo)

Playfair (1909: 60) and Burling (2004:10-12) and others, mentioned that the Garo language has a number of varieties. According to him, there are eleven varieties, which are as follows: 1. A·we(which is accepted as a standard dialect of the Garo)2. Am·beng or A·beng3. Atong4. Chisak5. Matchi 6. Dual 7.Gara-Gan·ching8. Chibok9. Matabeng10. Rugaand 11. Me·gam.

Out of the eleven varieties of the Garo language, the Dual variety has been selected for this study. Dual speakers are concentrated in small pockets in in South Garo Hills in villages like Goshgaon and Sibbari. A large number of Dual speakers can also be found in South Western parts of Garo Hills in areas like Dalu, Gasuapara, Kapasipara etc. In West Garo Hills, Dual speakers are scattered in different villages like Balachanda, Chandrakona etc. A large number of Dual speakers can also be found in South Western parts of Garo Hills in areas like Dalu, Gasuapara, Kapasipara etc. In West Garo Hills, Dual speakers are scattered in different villages like Balachanda, Chandakona etc. South Garo Hills, Meghalaya. According to Kalakan R Sangma, majority of the Dual speaking groups are found in the neighbouring country of Bangladesh in villages like Sapmari, Digholbag, Kasibari, Boipara, Bandatoli, Ailatoli etc, and they continue to speak Dual.

Boro

The speakers of Bodo are found mainly in B.T.A.D. and all districts of Assam except Cachar, Hailakhandi, Karimganj. They are also found in some adjacent areas of West Bengal, Bangladesh, Nepal Meghalaya and Bhutan. According to 2011 census of India, the total population of Bodo speakers in Assam is nearly 2 million. Based on the regions of concentration of the speakers, Boro language is divided into three main dialect areas. These are:

- a) Western Boro Dialect
- b) Eastern Boro Dialect
- c) Southern Boro Dialect

a) Western Boro Dialect: The spoken variety of the Boro language in the districts of Dhubri, Kokrajhar and Bongaigaon is identified as Western Boro Dialect, which is the basis of the standard i.e, written variety of the Boro language.

b) Eastern Boro Dialect: The Boro language spoken in the northern areas of Barpeta, Nalbari and Kamrup districts and in the northern areas of Darrang district is identified as Eastern Boro Dialect, which shows some differences with the WBD mainly in respect of phonology and vocabulary.

c) Southern Boro Dialect: Southern Boro Dialect is spoken in southern area of Goalpara district, a few places around Boko-Chaygaon area of the South Kamrup district. In this area some other allied languages of Boro are also prevailed and so this SBD is quite distinct from the WBD and EBD.

Rabha

The Rabha is a scheduled tribe constituting one of the important plain Tribes of Assam. They are scattered throughout almost all the districts of Assam, Garo Hills of Meghalaya, West Bengal and Bangladesh. But they are mainly found in the northern parts of the East Garo Hills and West Garo Hills district of Meghalaya, in Jalpaiguri district and Cooch Behar district in West Bengal, and Goalpara, Kamrup, Darrang, Lakhimpur and some adjacent areas of kokrajhar, Sibsagor and Karbi Anglong districts of Assam. Accordind to 2001 census, the total population of Rabha speakers in Assam is 2, 77, 517.

The Goalpara District of Assam, lying between the Brahmaputra and the State of Meghalaya, is the homeland of the Rabhas. It is here that the speakers of the Róngdani dialect, which is analysed here, live. Besides this area, Róngdani speakers are found in the contiguous areas in the Meghalaya. Rabhas are found also to the east of this territory, in the District of Kamrup.

There is another group of Rabhas, known generally as the Mayturi Rabhas who are found in a few villages along the southern bank of the Brahmaputra. There still exists another group of Rabhas, called the Kocho or Koch Rabhas, on the northern bank of the Brahmaputra. While RóngdaniMayturi are mutually intelligible, neither Róngdani nor Mayturi is mutually intelligible with Kocho Rabha

Kokborok

The speakers of Kokborok are found mainly in the North Eastern state of Tripura. They are also found in small scattered groups in Karimganj District of Assam Besides this, a handful of Kokborok speakers are also found in Dhaka and Chittagong hill tracts of the present Bangladesh. According to 2001 Census of India, the total population of Kokborok speakers in the State of Tripura was 761964.

Like many other Tibeto-Burman languages of North Eastern India, Kokborok has its regional dialects. There are eight distinct dialects namely Bru, Debbarma, Jamatia, Koloi, Murasing, Rupini, Tripuri, and Uchoi.

II. NEGATION

According to David Crystal (1980), “Negation (Negative) is a process or construction in GRAMMATICAL and SEMANTIC analysis which typically expresses the contradiction of some or all of a sentence’s meaning.” Thus, negation is expressed by the presence of the ‘negative particles or other possible means such as ‘prefixes’ or ‘suffixes or words such as deny’ in English.

Therefore, negations can indicate opposing the sense of affirmation which is held to be acceptable. Linguistically, the role of morpheme can be the insertion in a sentence or attaching to a word as a negation marker.

2.1 Negation in Proto-Bodo-Garo

Negation in Tibeto-Burman languages of Northeast India is usually expressed by means of affixation either pre-fixation or suffixation however in-fixation is absent in these languages.

According to Wood (2008:85), The Bodo-Garo languages have a negative suffix that follows the main verb or root verb. It is similar in phonological structure across the family, and can easily be reconstructed as /-ya/. The different forms of negation are found across the family are shown in the table below:

Table 1: Proto-Bodo-Garo

Garo	Boro	Rabha	Deuri	Dimasa	PBG
-Ja	-a -ya-wa	-ca	-ya	-Ja	ya

2.2 Negation Structures:

As Proto-Bodo-Garo languages, the basic structure of negative sentences of all four cognate languages are S+O+V+Neg (Subject-Object-Verb and followed by Negation. Illustration is shown below.

Table 2

Dual /ɟa/	Boro /a/	Rabha /ca/	Kokborok /ya/	Gloss
/aŋ-a mi ca?- ɟa/ S + O + V+ NEG 1 st Sg rice-eat Neg	/aŋaŋk ^h amjay-a/ S + O + V+ NEG 1 st Sg rice-eat-Neg	/aŋmais-a-ca/ S + O + V+ NEG 1 st Sg rice-eat-Neg	/aŋmai ca-ya/ S + O + V+ NEG 1 st Sg rice-eat-Neg	‘Ido not eat rice’

2.3 Dual (Garo) negations:As in A• we (standard Garo) the negative marker /ja/ also is used in Dual variety. It is always suffixed to a main verb.

Negative suffixes /ja/:

/aŋ-a caʔ- ja/	/aŋ-a se-ja/
1 st Sg eat-Neg	1 st Sg sleep-Neg
‘I do not eat’	‘I do not sleep’

There is another negative marker /naja/ which is used in future tense in this variety. However, in A• we /jawa/ is marked as negation in future tenses.

Table 3

Dual /naja/	A• we /jawa/
/aŋ-a caʔ-gan/ 1 st Sg eat-fut ‘I will eat’	/aŋ-a caʔ-gen/ 1 st Sg eat-fut ‘I will eat’
Negation in Dual Negation in A• we	
/aŋ-a caʔ-na-ja/ 1 st Sg eat-Neg.Fut ‘I will not eat’	aŋ-a caʔ-jawa/ 1 st Sg eat-Neg. Fut ‘I will not eat’

2.4 Imperative Negation:

In A•we /da/ prefix) and /nabe/ (suffix) is used for negation, however Dual has only one marker /man/ (prefix), marked as a negation. Negative marker /man/ is used only before the root word or base verb in this variety.

Table 4

Dual /man/	A• we /da/	/nabe/
/man caʔa/ Neg eat ‘Do not eat’	/da caʔ-a/ Neg eat ‘Do not eat’	/caʔ-nabe/ Eat neg.Imp
/man sata/ Neg beat ‘do not beat’	/da doka/ Neg beat ‘do not beat’	‘Do not eat’ /dok-nabe/ Beat neg.Imp ‘do not beat’

2.5 BoroNegation:

There are three forms of negation in Boro language. These negations are suffixed to a root verb, such as /a/, /akwi/, /lia.

Negative suffix /-a/:

	/aŋa-o taka gwi-a/ Ist Sg money have-Neg ‘I have no money’
/undu/ ‘sleep’	undu-a Sleep-Neg ‘do not sleep’
/lir/ ‘to write’	/lir-a/ ‘do not write’ Write-Neg
/buŋ/ ‘to speak’	/buŋ-a/ ‘do not speak’ Speak-Neg

/-a-kwi/:

/biyozay-akwi/ 1 st Sg eat-Neg	‘He/she did not eat’
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/nu/	‘to see’	/nu-akwi/ See-Neg	‘has/have not seen’
/za/	‘to eat’	/za-akwi/ Eat-Neg	‘has/have not eaten’
/on/ /li – a/ :	‘to love’	/on-akwi/	‘has/have not loved’
/su/		/su-lia/ Wash-Neg	‘do/does not wash’
	/or/	/or-lia/	‘do/does not bite’
	/bar/	/bar-lia/	‘do/does not bloom’

2.6 Imperative negation:

Negation in imperative mood is marked with the prefix /da/.

1. /da-gab/
Neg-cry
‘Do not cry’
2. /da-tʰaŋ/
Neg-go
‘do not go’
3. /da-la/
Neg-take
‘do not take’

2.7 Rabha Negation

Rabha has a simple negation /ca/ which is added after the root verb or used as suffix.

suffix /ca/

/uosa-ca/
3 Sg eat-Neg
‘He/she did not eat’

/nuk-ca/	2. /sa-ca/	3. /si-ca/
See-Neg	Eat-Neg	Die-Neg
‘do not see’	‘do not eat’	‘do not die’

2.8 Imperative Negation:

This /ta/ morpheme is used as a negative marker in this language and it is preceded by root verb or main verb.

Prefix /ta/

1. /ta-sa/
Neg-eat
‘do not eat’
2. /ta-riβa/
Neg-come
‘do not come’
3. /ta-reŋ/
Neg-go
‘do not go’

2.9 Kokborok

Kokborok generally uses /ya/ as negation followed by a root verb.

Suffix /ya/

/caʔ-ya/	/raŋ-ya/	/munui-ya/
Eat-Neg	money-Neg	laugh-Neg
‘do not eat’	‘no money’	‘not laugh’

2.10 Imperative Negation:

Negative imperative in Kokborok is expressed by prefixing *ta-* to the verb root followed by imperative marker *-di*.

/ ta-ca-di/	/ta-k ^h ar-di/	/ta-t ^h uŋ-di/
Neg-eat-Imp	Neg-run-Imp	Neg-play
‘do not eat’	‘do not run’	‘do not play’

III. FINDING AND CONCLUSIONS:

The different uses of negations in all four languages of Tibeto-Burman branches are discussed; most of the morpheme negative markers are akin to each other. The basic structure of negations is S+O+V+NEG and their primary negative morphemes are identified as a monosyllabic morpheme which is knitted close to one another, such as

- Dual /ja, naja/
- Boro /a, akwi, lia/
- Rabha /ca/
- Kokborok /ya/

Except in Dual /man/; imperative negations in Boro /da/, Rabha /ta/ and Kokborok /ta/ share similar morpheme negations.

There may be other use of negation in the four discussed languages but due to time constraints and limited primary and secondary sources, the scholar has focused only on few forms and functions of the negation morphemes.

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