A Morphological Study of Baiga Kinship Terminology

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Abstract

The present paper attempts to explore the existing kinship terminology system of Baiga tribe, a particularly vulnerable tribe of central India. The study examines the morphological patterns of Kinship terms of Baigani language, the native language of Baiga, and a highly endangered language of India. The Baiga tribe is patrilineal tribe and they allow marriage between a man and his immediate relations of his mother's side. The study reveals that classificatory system of Kinship prevails in Baiga. It has been noted that suffix plays an important role in differentiate gender in Baigani language. In the relationship terms of Baigani language, it is observed that Baiga people use adjectives like /bəɽka/, /məʒula/ and /nan/ meaning elder, middle and younger with root words to differentiate the age. These adjectives are used in the case of brothers, sisters, Father's brother, Father's sister, Mother's brother and Mother's sister to distinguish age in the relation. Reduplication is found to be another important morphological feature in Baiga Kinship terms and the reduplicate is most often repeated only once.

Keywords: Kinship, Baiga, Baigani, Endangered, Classificatory

1. Introduction

Kinship relations are blood relations or those relations which are created naturally. It is a method of acknowledging relation and a social bond initiated by blood or genetic as well as marriage. Kinship is important in all culture and all human interaction. Kinship ties are of fundamental importance in every society all over the world. There are basically two types of kinship within a family and they are affinal kinship and consanguineous kinship. Affinal relation

is based on marriage and most primary affinal relation is one between a husband and a wife which in its extended form includes parents and siblings of both sides and their spouse and children. Kinship based on descent is called consanguineous kinship, commonly known as blood relation. The relation between a child and his parents, between children of the same set of parents, between uncles and nephew/niece are examples of consanguineous kinship. All societies recognize kinship relationship with certain limitation. In primitive societies, kinship relation are broad based and known as broad range kinship. Kinship terminology forms an important part in the whole kinship system as it serves as index to understanding of the kinship relation and patterns of behaviour among various kin groups (Jha 2009). According to M. Lamp to understand fully the nature of kinship system it is necessary to understand what kind of linguistic element theses are, and what kind of linguistic relationship (Sydney 1965). Kinship plays an important role in social, economic, and political structures of a society.

The present study attempts to carry out a linguistics analysis on existing kinship terminology in Baigani language, the native language of Baiga tribe, one of the primitive tribes of India. Baigani language is contact with Gondi and Chhattisgarhi, another two dominant languages, for a very long period of time. When languages are in contact with each other for a very long period of time they tend to assimilate several features of languages in contact at all levels of grammar and thus deviate considerably from the characteristic features of their own genetic stock (Abbi, A 2001). Since, Baigani language is constant contact with these two languages (Gondi and Chhattisgarhi), some similarity in kinship terms cannot be denied completely. The purpose of this paper was to examine the prevailing kinship terms used by the Baiga tribe. The study focuses on both types of kinship-affinal and consanguineous kinships. The study also aims at to examine the morphological patterns of kinship terms of the language. Baigani language exists without having any written record or documentation. There is hardly any literature is available on Baigani language and no linguistic study has been carried out on the language. Besides, the language does not have any orthography form.

The study adopted questionnaire method and direct interview method to carry out the research. The questionnaire includes kinship terminology arrange according to consanguineous relations and affinal relation. The data had been collected from the native speakers of Baigani language of

Anuppur and Dindori district of Madhya Pradesh. The study is completely based on the primary data collected from the native speakers of Baigani.

2. Description

The Baiga people use the term /ʒat nat/ meaning kinship in their native language. They learn the kinship terms during the early stage of their life. The Baiga tribe is patrilineal tribe and they allow marriage between a man and his immediate relations on his mother's side, and they refer this relation as /hasɔubʰa/ which means with whom they cut jokes or laugh. Kinship terms are used in addressing persons of ascending generations or of the same generation but older. As general rule, in Baiga society, a family member senior to oneself in generation or in age is never addressed by name as a sign of respect, whereas it is acceptable that those junior to oneself in generation or in age may be addresses by name.

2.1. Consanguine Kinship Terms

Ego's own generation:

Siblings address each other according to their relative age with the term /dau/ for "brother" and /bai/ for "sister". However they use adjectives like /bəɽka/, /məʒula/ and /nan/ meaning elder, middle and younger with root words to differentiate the age. For elder brother, they use the term /bəɽkadau/ and for elder sister /bəɽka baɪ/./bəɽka/ means "elder" and /dau/ and /bai/means "brother" and"sister" respectively.

If somebody is younger in age, they use the term /nan/ like /nan dau/, /nan baɪ/ for younger brother and younger sister. A distinction is made between patrilateral and matrilateral cross cousins. As marrying mother's brother son or daughter is allowed in Baiga society, they use the term **/hasobʰa neɵ/** for reference**.** For addressing, they use the terms /dau/ to mean Ego's mothers brother's son and **/hasobʰa neɵ/** to mean Ego's mother's brother daughter.

In the same way as differentiation by age applies to parallel cousins, in parental generation it is also apply to both paternal and maternal side.
For example:

Father's brother……………………./bəɽka baba/

Father's elder sister……………. …./bəɽka pʰua /

Father's younger sister………………/nan pʰua/

Mother's elder sister-------------------/ bəɽka daɪ/

For Mother's brother they use the word /mama/. For elder one they use the term /bəɽka mama/ while for younger one they address him as /nan mama/. No differentiation is made between the mother's brother on the basis of their relative age to the mother, but on the basis of their birth rank. Grandfather and Grandmother of paternal side are usually addressed or referred to as /dada/ and /a:ʒɪ/. But for maternal side Grandfather and Grandmother, they use the word /nana/ and /nanɪ/ for both address and reference.

In daily speech, children are called by their first names or pet name for address and for reference the terms which are used for offspring are /beta/ for "boy" and /betɪ/ for "girl". The two specific terms are designate for nephew and niece and these are -/bʰaneʒ/ and /bʰaneʒɪ/. A female speaker will refer to her sister's children as her own children /beta/ and /betɪ/ whereas her brother's children will refer as /bʰaneʒ/ and /bʰaneʒɪ/.

Grandchildren are also commonly addressed by their names. There is difference in reference of grandchildren of son's side and daughter side. The male Grandchild from son's side is called /natɪ/ and /natɪnɪn/ for female grandchild. The word /natɪ/ is also used for maleGrandchild from daughter side but for female grandchild the word /natanɪa/ is used. The gender is differentiated by adding suffixes -/nɪn/ and /nɪa/. In case of / natanɪa/, some phonological changes also take place.

2.2 Affinal Kinship Terms

In case of affinal relation similar elementary terms /baba/ (father) and /daɪ/ (mother)are used exclusively. These terms are proceededby adjectives to differentiate the age and these elementary terns are mostly used for parental generation. The term /bəɽka daɪ/ is used for Father's elder brother's wifewhich are also consanguineous kinship terms and mostly used for

mother' elder sister.The term /bəɽka baba/ which is used for father elder brother as well as mother's elder sister's husband (affinal). Since they can marry their mother's brother's son, they address their father in law as /mama səsuɽ/ and mother in law as /pʰua sãs/ and for reference just /səsuɽ/ omitting the term /mama/ for father in law and /sãs/ for mother in law. These two words are also found to be used in Hindi language to mean the same persons. However, it is still under study whether these terms are borrowed terms from Hindi language, one of the neighboringlanguages of the community. Other kinship terms which are found similar to Hindi language are /nənəd/ husband's younger sister, /ʒəθanɪ/ husband's elder brother's wife /dama:d/ daughter's husband, /bəhu/ son's wife, /səmdʰɪ/ son's wife father and / səmdʰənɪa/ son's wife mother. Husband and wife do not use any particular term to address each other.   The other kinship terms are /ʒəɽ sãs/ husband's elder sister, /sarubʰa/ wife's sister's husband, /bʰato/ brother's of brother's wife and /bʰɔuʒɪ/ sister of brother's wife. They use the word /sara/ for wife's younger brother as reference and /behnɔɪ/ for sister's husband both for address and reference.

A female speaker call her Husband's brother's son as / bʰətɪʒ/ and husband's brother's daughter as / bʰətɪʒen/ for both address and reference. She also can use the pet name to address the children.

2.3 Suffixation to Determine Gender

As discussed earlier, in Baigani language, gender is differentiated by adding various suffixes like /i/, /ɪa/, /nɪn/, /ɪn/ and /en/. The suffix additions are prevalent only in female gender. Like Indo Aryan languages –Hindi, Assamese, Bengali, Baigani also has a number of kinship terms in which female gender is indicated by a final suffix /i/. In such terms, the final vowel sound /a/ for male gender got deleted and suffix /i/ is added to determine the feminine gender. On the other hand, reduplication is found to be one of the morphological features of Baigani language. In reduplication, the reduplicate is most often repeated only once. For example, /baba/, /mama/, /dada/.

Unlike Hindi language, Baigani has unique terminologies for female gender for /mama/ (Maternal uncle) and for /dada/ (Father's Father). They address maternal aunty as /pʰua/ and paternal Grandmother as /a:ʒɪ/

For example:

Addition of Suffix /i/:

Relative Class	Kinship term in Baigani	Gender Marker Suffix
Mother's Father	/nana/	
Mother's Mother	/nani/	/i/

Addition of suffix /ɪ/ with root word------

Relative class	Baigani Kinship term	Gender Marker Suffix
Brother's son	/bʰaneʒ/	
Brother's daughter	/bʰneʒɪ/	/ɪ/

Addition of suffix /nin/ with root word----

Relative class	Baigani Kinship term	Gender Marker Suffix
Grand son son's	/nati/	
Grand daughter son's	/natɪnin/	**/nin/**

Addition of suffix /en/ with root word-----

Relative Class	Baigani Kinship terms	Gender Marker Suffix
Husband's brother' s son	/ bʰətɪʒ/	
Husband's brother's daughter	/ bʰətɪʒen/	**/en/**

Addition of suffix /nia/ with root word---

Relative Class	Baigani Kinship terms	Gender Marker Suffix

Daughter's son	/nati/	
Daughter's daughter	/nətɔnia:/	**/nia/**

Conclusion

Kinship is the Baigani heritage of relationship, respect, solidarity and mutual obligation in the family, clan and society. Baiga people use some kinship terms extensively both to address and reference. It has been noted that suffix plays an important role in differentiate gender in Baigani language. The classificatory system of kinship prevails in some extent among Baiga and use of classificatory term is mostly prevalent in both for reference and address. Adjectives are used before classificatory term to differentiate age. The kinship terminology of Baiga has been remained unknown to the date and it is anticipated that the present discussion and result may contribute to the documentation and research on a particularly vulnerable tribe of central India tribe.

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APPENDIX

Consanguineous Relation

Sl. No	Relative classed	Terms of address in Baigani [phonetic transcription]
1	Grand Father (Father's side)	/dadɪ/
2	Grand Mother (Father's side)	/aːʒɪ/
3	Grand Father (Mother's side)	/nana/
4	(Grand Mother) (Mother's side)	/nanɪ/
5	Father	/baba/
6	Mother	/daɪ/
7	Elder Brother	/bəɽka dau/
8	Elder sister	/bədde baɪ/
9	Middle brother	/ məʒla dau/
10	Middle sister	/ məʒlɪ baɪ/
11	Younger brother	/nan dau/
12	Younger sister	/nan baɪ/
13	Father's elder brother	/bəɽka baba/
14	Father's elder sister	/bəɽka daɪ/
15	Father's younger sister	/nan pʰua/
16	Mother's brother	/mama/
17	Mother's elder sister	/bəɽka daɪ/
18	Son's son	/natɪ/

19	Son's daughter	/nətaına:/
20	Daughter's son	/natɪ/
21	Daughter's daughter	/nətɔnɪa:/
22	Brother's son	/bʰaneʒ/
23	Brother's daughter	/bʰneʒɪ/
24	Sister's son	/ beta/
25	Sister's daughter	/ betɪ/
26	Mother's brother's son	/hasobʰa neɵ/
27	Mother's brother's daughter	/hasobʰa neɵ /
28	Father's brother's son	/bəɽka dau/
29	Father's brother's daughter	/bəɽka baɪ/
30	Mother's sister son (elder)	/bəɽka dau/
31	Mother's sister daughter (elder)	/bəɽka baɪ/

Affinal Relation

Sl. No	Relative classed	Terms of address in Baigani
1	Wife's Father	/səsuɽ/
2	Wife's Mother	/sãs/
3	Husband's Father	/mama səsuɽ/
4	Husband's Mother	/pʰua sãs/
5	Father's elder sister's husband	/mama/
6	Father's younger sister's husband	/nan mama/
7	Mother's elder sister's husband	/bəɽka baba/
8	Mother's younger sister's husband	/nan baba/
8	Father's elder brother's wife	/bəɽka daɪ/
9	Husband's sister (younger)	/nənəd/

10	Husband's sister (elder)	/ʒəɽ sãs/
11	Wife's sister's husband	/sarubʰa/
12	Husband's elder brother's wife	/ʒəθanɪ/
13	Wife's elder Brother	/behnɔɪ/
14	Wife's younger Brother	/sara/
14	Sister's Husband	/behnɔɪ/
15	Husband's brother's son	/ bʰətɪʒ/
16	Husband's brother's daughter	/ bʰətɪʒen/
17	Daughter's husband	/dama:d/
18	Son's wife	/bəhu/
19	Son's wife Father	/səmdʰɪ/
20	Son's wife Mother	/ səmdʰənɪa/
21	Brother's Father in law	/səsuɪ/
22	Brother's of Brother's wife	/bʰato/
23	Sister of Brother's wife	/bʰouʒɪ/

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