

KINSHIP TERMS IN ASSMESE LANGUAGE

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Abstract:

Kinship terms form a considerable part of the Wordnet in any language. Most of the kinship terms interact each other with different relational characteristics of Wordnet. This paper explores the area of kinship terms in Assamese language, and outlines the standard kinship relations, associated set of terms in the language. The formation of such terms are also elaborated with grammatical analysis. We also present here the discussion on the issues of creating Assamese Wordnet following expansion approach from Hindi Wordnet, specific to concepts related to the kinship terms. It is found that the creation of Wordnet in Assamese from Hindi Wordnet following direct translation approach is not always feasible. Conceptual dissimilarities and also hierarchical dissimilarities are often experienced. We present here the details of such associated problems, required measures to be taken with elaborations and examples.

Introduction:

Kinship terms form an important aspect in morphology of Assamese Language. The Kinship terms enhance the shapeliness of Assamese Language in a considerable manner. These terms are formed owing to the existence of different relations. Kinship terms are determined based on the social traditions as existing in that particular society. Most of the kinship terms in Assamese are of Sanskrit in origin; and as these have evolved in conformity with the pattern of historical evolution, most of the terms are 'tadbhawa' words. There is a tradition of using different kinship terms based on age and kind of relations in Assamese Language.

Formation Process of Assamese Kinship terms:

Like other languages of the world, Assamese kinship terms are formed based on three kinds of relations i.e. by birth, marriage and friendship. Around eighty kinship terms has been formed based on these three kinds of relations. Among them /pitamDh/(পিতামহ), /matamDh/(মাতামহ), /pitri/(পিতৃ), /matri/(মাতৃ), /xwami/(স্বামী), /xtri/(স্ত্রী), /pDti/(পতি), /pDtni/(পত্নী), /xDntan/(সন্তান), /b^hai/(ভাই), /b^hDgni/(ভগ্নী), /xɔk^hi/(সখী), /bɔnd^hu/(বন্ধু) and some others totaling to fifteen or sixteen in numbers are Sanskrit 'tatsama' kinship terms; the rest are 'tadbhawa' words. A table illustrating the Assamese kinship terms based on male and female gender [4] is given as bellow:

Masculine Gender

/azokDka/ (আজো ককা)

/kDka/ (ককা)

/pita/ (পিতা), /pitai/ (পিতাই), /pitadeu/ (পিতাদেউ),

Feminine Gender

/azoaita/ (আজো আইতা)

/aita/ (আইতা)

/deuta/ (দেউতা), /bopai/ (বোপাই)	/ai/ (আই), /ma/ (মা), /bɔu/ (বৌ)
/po/ (পো)	/zi/ (জী), /ziari/ (জীয়াৰী)
/po/ (পো)	/boWari/ (বোৱাৰী)
/kɔkai/ (ককাই), /kɔkaideu/ (ককাইদেউ), /dada/ (দাদা)	/bai/ (বাই), /baideu/ (বাইদেউ)
..	/bɔu/ (বৌ), /bɔudeu/ (বৌদেউ), /nɔbɔu/ (নবৌ)
/b ^h ai/ (ভাই)	/bhɔni/ (ভনী)
..	/boari/ (বোৱাৰী)
/bɔrpitai/ (বৰপিতাই), /bɔrdeuta/ (বৰদেউতা)	/bɔrma/ (বৰ মা)
/k ^h ura/ (খুৰা), /k ^h uradeu/ (খুৰাদেউ), /dɔdaideu/ (দদাইদেউ)	/k ^h uri/ (খুৰী), /k ^h urideu/ (খুৰীদেউ)
/b ^h ɔtiza/ (ভতিজা)	/b ^h ɔtizi/ (ভতিজী)
/nati/ (নাতি)	/natini/ (নাতিনী)
/zet ^h u/ (জেঠু), /zet ^h pa/ (জেঠপা), /zet ^h pɛha/ (জেঠপেহা)	/zet ^h ai/ (জেঠাই), /zet ^h aideu/ (জেঠাইদেউ)
/mama/ (মামা), momai (মোমাই), momaideu (মোমাইদেউ)	/mami/ (মামী), /mamideu/ (মামীদেউ)
/b ^h agin/ (ভাগিন)	/b ^h agini/ (ভাগিনী)
/mɔha/ (মহা), /mɔhadeu/ (মহাদেউ)	/mahi/ (মাহী), /mahideu/ (মাহীদেউ)
/zet ^h eri/ (জেঠেৰী)	-----
/boinai/ (বোনাই)	-----
/zoai/ (জোঁৱাই)	/zi / (জী)
/zɛ ^h ai/ (জেঠাল), /bɔrɔɔna/ (বৰজননা)	/za/ (জা)
/deor/ (দেওৰ)	/nɔnɔd/ (ননদ)
/deor/ (দেওৰ)	/za/ (জা)
/k ^h ulxali/ (খুলশালী) +definitive suffix '-to' (-টো)	/k ^h ulxali/ (খুলশালী) +definitive suffix '-zɔni' (-জনী)
/xalpɔti/ (শালপতি)	-----
/b ^h inihi/ (ভিনিহি), /b ^h indeu/ (ভিনদেউ)	/bai/ (বাই), /baideu/ (বাইদেউ)
/xɔhur/ (শহুৰ)	/xahu/ (শাহু)
-----	/zɛxahu/ (জেসাহু)
/bioi/ (বিয়ে)	/biɔni/ (বিয়নী)
/pɔi/ (পে)	/g ^h ɔini/ (ঘেণী)
-----	/xɔtini/ (সতিনী)
-----	/mahi ma/ (মাহী মা), /mahi ai/ (মাহী আই)
/taɔi/ (তাই)	/amɔi/ (আমৈ)
/xɔk ^h a/ (সখা), /xɔk ^h i/ (সখি)	/xɔk ^h i/ (সখী)
/bɔnd ^h u/ (বন্ধু) +definitive suffix '-to' (-টো)	/band ^h ɔbi/ (বন্ধু) +definitive suffix '-zɔni' (জনী)
/band ^h ɔb/ (বান্ধৱ)	/band ^h ɔbi/ (বান্ধৱী)
/mita/ (মিতা)	/mitini/ (মিতিনী)

etc.

The above mentioned kinship terms are in conformity with the standard Assamese language. However, it ought to be mentioned that these terms do assume different forms in different parts of Assam.

A general outline of the Assamese kinship terms were stated above. And the specific specifications are mentioned below :

Some of the Assamese kinship terms are fundamental in nature while others are secondary in nature. Assamese kinship terms are seen to be used in two different ways; while some Assamese kinship terms are used as the terms of reference, the other terms are used for the purpose of addressing others. e.g.

Terms of reference : /deutak/ (দেউতাক), /mak/ (মাক), /kDkaɛk/ (ককায়েক), /b^hDniɛk/ (ভনীয়েক), /nDɔuɛk/ (নবৌয়েক) etc.

Terms of address : /deuta/ (দেউতা), /ma/ (মা), /dada/ (দাদা), /nDɔu/ (নবৌ), /k^hura/ (খুৰা), /k^huri/ (খুৰী) etc.

The Assamese kinship terms have been influenced by different inflections in a considerable manner. The forms of inflections affecting the Assamese kinship terms, according to G. C. Goswami [1], are as follows:

The nouns of relationship are a small class of words in the language which undergo two sets of inflections, viz. (i) the inflection for Personal Relations, and (ii) the inflection for the Cases.

The Case inflection always follows the Personal inflection; that is the nouns with Personal inflection form base, with or without the Definitive's following them, for the Case inflection.

These sets of nouns, like the finite verbs, have inflections for four Persons; e.g.

First Person in -i

Second Person Familiar in -ɛr

Second Person Polite in -ɛr-a, and,

Third Person in -ɛk.

The First Person morpheme -i occurs in two allomorphs: i and Φ , conditioned morphologically; e.g.

pitai, pita-i 'my father' cf. pita 'father'

momai, moma-i, 'my maternal uncle'; cf. mama 'maternal uncle'

dɔdai, dɔda-i, 'my uncle

zi, zi- Φ 'my daughter'

bɔinai, bɔinai- Φ 'my brother in law'

pehi, pehi- Φ 'my fathers younger sister'

etc.

The Second Person Familiar morpheme -ɛr has two allomorphs: r and ɛr conditioned phonetically.

ɛr occurs after forms ending in consonants and /i u/, and, r occurs elsewhere; e.g.

pitar, pita-r 'your father'

mamr, mama-r 'your maternal uncle'

ziɛr zi-ɛr 'your daughter' etc.

The Second Person Polite morpheme is constituted of -er plus -a, with phonological variants of -er in r and ɛr as discussed above; e.g.

pitara, pitɑ-r-a, 'your father'
mamara, mama-r-a, 'your maternal uncle'
ziɛra, zi-ɛr-a, 'your daughter' etc.

The Third Person morpheme -ek occurs in k and ɛk:

-ek occurs after forms ending in consonants and /i u/, and -k occurs elsewhere: e.g.

pitak, pita-k 'his father'
mamak, mama-k, 'his maternal uncle'
ziɛk, zi-ɛk 'his daughter' etc.

Synsets related to Kinship Terms: Assamese vs Hindi:

It has been observed that when Assamese WordNet is built based on Hindi WordNet, the process of formation of kinship terms in both the languages follow its own individual essence. As against the usage of kinship terms in Hindi language where different forms of kinship terms are used to address as many as different relatives, the same kinship term in Assamese is used to address as many as several relatives. As for example:

बहन /b^hɒni/ (ভনী)

(from core synset ID-681):

CONCEPT - किसी के विचार से उसके माता-पिता की कन्या

Synset- सगी बहन, सहोदरा, सोदरा

CONCEPT – কাৰোৱাৰ বিচাৰত একে মাক-দেউতাকৰ কন্যা / karobar bisarɒt ɛkɛ mak-deutakɒr kɒnya /

Synset- ভনী /b^hɒni/, ভনী /b^hɒnti/, ভনী/b^hɒgni/, ভনী/b^hɒgini/, ভনী/b^hɒnti/, নিজা ভনী/niza b^hɒni/, নিজা ভনী / niza b^hɒnti /, সহোদৰা /xhodɒra/

(from core synset ID-682):

CONCEPT – सौतेली मा या सौतेले पिता कि लड़की

Synset- सौतेली बहन, सौतेली बहिन

CONCEPT – মাহীমাৰ ছোৱালী /mahimar sowali/

Synset- ভনী/b^hɒni/, সতিনী ভনী /xɒtini b^hɒni /, সতিনী ভনী/ xɒtini b^hɒgni /, বৈমাতৃ ভনী/bɔimatri b^hɒni/

(from core synset ID-683):

CONCEPT- मामा कि लड़की

Synset-ममेरी बहन, ममेरी बहिन

CONCEPT- মামাৰ ছোৱালী/mamar sowali/

Synset-ভনী/ b^hDni /, ভনী/ b^hDnti /, মামাৰ ছোৱালী/ mamar sowali /

(from core synset ID-684):

CONCEPT -चाचा कि लड़की

Synset-चचेरी बहन, चचेरी बहिन

CONCEPT -খুৰাৰ ছোৱালী/k^hurar sowali /

Synset- ভনী/ b^hDni /, ভনী/ b^hDnti /, খুৰাৰ ছোৱালী /k^hurar sowali/

(from core synset ID-686):

CONCEPT -फूफा की लड़की

Synset-फूफेरा बहन, फूफेरा बहिन,फूफेरा भगिनी

CONCEPT -জোঁঠোদেউ বা পেহাৰ ছোৱালী/zet^hodeu ba pɛhar sowali/

Synset-ভনী/ b^hDni /, ভনী/ b^hDnti /, পেহাৰ ছোৱালী/pɛhar sowali /

(from core synset ID-687):

CONCEPT -मौसी की लड़की

Synset-मौसेरा बहन, मौसेरा बहिन, मौसेरा भगिनी

CONCEPT -মাহীৰ ছোৱালী/mahir sowali /

Synset- ভনী/ b^hDni /, ভনী/ b^hDnti /, মাহীৰ ছোৱালী/ mahir sowali /
etc.

Conclusion:

A discussion concerning the kinship term in Assamese language has been discussed above. The specific rules governing the process of formation of kinship terms in Assamese language have also been emphasized upon. The distinction between the kinship terms in Assamese and Hindi languages, with a mention of both the similarities and dissimilarities, has also been stated above in view of the creation of Assamese Wordnet.

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