



BHADERWAHI LANGUAGE: AN EVALUATIVE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Bhaderwahi language is spoken in the Doda District of Jammu and Kashmir which is yet another language of western pahari group classified by G A Grierson. It is spoken by atleast 120000 people of Bhaderwah and its native villages. Bhaderwahi is a pahari language and has its own grammar and folklore. It is yet to get recognition and status.

KEY-WORDS: *Bhaderwahi, Bhalesi, Grierson, folklore, Western Pahari*

INTRODUCTION

Bhaderwahi language is spoken in the Doda District of Jammu and Kashmir which is yet another language of western pahar group classified by GA Grierson. It is spoken by atleast 120000 people of Bhaderwah and its native villages. Bhaderwahi is a pahari language and has its own grammar and folklore. It is much developed language. The nearby languages having lexical similarities with Bhaderwahi are Bhalesi spoken in three tehsils of Gandoh, Chilly Pingal and Kahara. We will discuss the Bhalesi and its grammatical features in detail in next chapter. Other languages neighboring Bhaderwahi are Sarazi, Padri, Pougali, Saroori, Banjwali Dachhni, Marwi and Khashali etc. Bhaderwahi is regarded as the lingua franca of Bhaderwah- a town located in the Doda District. Bhaderwahi is the oldest language and has its own grammar and folklore. Owing to its own speech it is spoken by both the communities of Bhaderwah and its adjoining areas. Some writers are of the opinion that Bhaderwahi language is extended upto the Lahul spiti. It is the languages which have been enlisted in the western pahari by the linguists and other people of latter. Bhaderwahi is spoken in Bhaderdesh. Bhaderwah is also known as Switzerland of India or Chotta Kashmir (small Kashmir) owing to its lush green uplands and places of interest.

Bhaderwah comes under the western Pahari- a group of pahari languages classified by in the volume 9 Part 4 of the Linguistic survey of India. Bhaderwahi has been researched by the other linguists like Grahme Bailly, Dr. Siddeshwer Verma, Dr S P Vaid and many others. It is also mentioned in the Census of India many times.

Bhaderwahi is settled predominantly in the sub himalayan mountainous regions of Doda (Chenab valley) in Jammu & Kashmir. It derives its name from the beautiful mountain valley of Bhadarwah, also Called as “Nagon ki bhoomi” (land of Snakes). Bhaderwahi also known by the names of Bhaderi, Bhadrohi, Bhidli, etc., is spoken by all the communities in every household in Bhadarwah town and surrounding Villages of Doda district of Jammu and Kashmir state.

G A Grierson (1919) has placed Bhaderwahi into Indo Aryan group of languages in Pahari category of western pahari classification.

After the early sketches published in Bailey’s Languages of the

Northern Himalayas (1908) and Grierson (1919). Bhaderwahi has received less attention from

The linguists and the policy makers and even at government level. There has not been significant research on it. Bhaderwahi doesn’t have any script of its own and uses Arabic or Devnagri script. The languages are limited only to the songs and are getting less attention from the authorities. The linguists were busy only in the development of the other western pahari languages of Himachal Pradesh and other areas of Kashmir and Poonch Rajouri but received little attention from the people, writers and policy makers. Western Pahari is not concentrated only to the himachal, Kullu Kangra Shimla, Karna Teetwal or Poonch Rajouri, The term as elucidated by the Grierson (1919) in his linguistic survey of India is used in a broad sense. The western Pahari is a wide term and the writers and researchers need to get abreast of the term so that the Pahari speaking people of Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban get their due share in the reservation and other schemes. Bhaderwahi is a part of Chenab valley group of languages spoken in the sub himalayan areas and are legally the part of Western Pahari classification given by the Grierson.

No question is what the western pahari are and where we can locate them. Western Pahari is a cluster of 17 different languages which are spoken in Doda, Bhaderwah, Bhalessa, Saraz, Padder Kishtwar and Pogal Paristan Ramban areas of Jammu and Kashmir, areas of Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, and Himachal Pradesh Regions. The word order of Bhaderwahi language is SOV. Out of these 17 Western Pahari languages Bhattiyali, Bilaspuri, Chambeali, Churhahi, Hinduri, Kangari, Kinnauri, Mandala, Pahari-Mahasu, Pahari-Kullu, Sirmauri, and Pangwali are spoken in

Himachal Pradesh state of India; and Gaddi is spoken in 6 Indian states namely Delhi,

Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, and Uttar Pradesh; and Dogri is spoken in Jammu of Jammu and Kashmir state; and Jaunsari is spoken in

Uttarakhand state; and Pahari-Potwari is spoken in Pakistan and Kashmir state.

The poets and singers such as Kailash Mehra Sadhu, Bashir Ahmed Mastana,

Ghulam Nabi Goni, Basir Charag, and Master Dina Nath are mainly responsible for the

Development of the oral culture of this language. Bhadarwah tehsil has its own radio

Station. Bhadarwahi programme is broadcasted on each Sunday at 8'o clock on radio station Bhaderwah.

As per 2016-17 handout of the government (District Administration Doda) reads as under. . . “The district is having mixed culture and the people are Pahari Speaking. Because of its connectivity with Jammu, Srinagar, Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh, the people are generally speaking Kashmiri, Ladakhi, Dogri, and some Pahari languages like Bhaderwahi, Kishtwari and Siraji. The people are also credited to have unity in diversity. For example, besides regional languages, there are about one dozen languages being spoken in different areas. These are Kashmiri, Dogri, Bhaderwahi, Kishtwari, Siraji, Pogli, Khashali, Gojri, Paddri and Panjabi etc. According to Dr. G.A. Grierson, the word “Pahari” applies to the group of languages spoken in the sub-Himalayan hills extending from Bhaderwah to the eastern parts of Nepal. The Bhaderwah group includes three dialects, viz. Bhaderwahi, Bhalesvi and Padri. Bhaderwahi language is abundantly rich in words, phrases and idioms.”

According to Amitabh Vikram Dwivedi a professor in Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, India in his paper titled Bhaderwahi: A typological sketch has made the following comparative analysis lexically of Bhaderwahi with other dialects.

Lexical similarity of Bhadarwahi with other Pahari languages Pangwali is 45% similar Siraji is 30 percent similar, Padri is 60% and Bhalesa having 70% lexical similarity with Bhaderwahi language. It is worthwhile to mention that Dr. Siddeshwer Varma (1928) during his linguistic tour to Bhalesa to study Bhalesi found unique features in Bhalesi language like diphthongs, dropping of l and other grammatical feature quite different from other languages which makes Bhalesi as distinct, unique and different language.

GRAMMATICAL FEATURES OF BHADERWAHI LANGUAGE

G.A. Grierson (1919) has given brief description of Bhaderwahi and Bhalesi morphology.

Koul (2014) has elucidated some of the linguistic features of Bhaderwahi with the other

Dialects of western Pahari in his book. He also talks about the influence of other languages like Dardic,

Munda, Dravidian, Sanskrit, Prakrit and Hindi on Bhaderwahi.

VOWEL SYSTEM IN BHADERWAHI

According to Aejaz Mohammed Sheikh a researcher of University of Kashmir in his work “Phonological Description of Bhaderwahi” (2017) has given the different features of Bhaderwahi. According to him, Bhaderwahi language has seven vowels: I, e, a, o, u, i, and ə. Vowel length is phonemic in

Bhaderwahi language. Each vowel has a longer counterpart, except for i and ə. All short and long vowels occur in nasalized form except for I, e and i vowel. The oral vowels occur in word

Initial, medial and final positions while as some nasalized vowels do not occur in all position.

In 2013, Dwivedi documented this language in the descriptive grammar.

According to him Bhadarwahi has an 11 vowels system In terms of vowel height,

There are four high vowels /i:/, /i/, /u:/ and /u/, and five mid vowels /e/, /e:/, /ə/, /o:/, and /o/, and four low vowels /ə/, /o/, /ɑ/, and /ɑ:/. In terms of backness, there

Are four front vowels /i:/, /i/, /e/ and /e:/, one central vowel /ə/, and six back vowels /u:/, /u/, /o:/, /o/, /ɑ/, and /ɑ:/.

There are five pairs of short and long vowels: /i/ and /i:/, /ɑ/ and /ɑ:/, /e/ and /e:/, /u/ and /u:/, and /o/ and /o:/. As in: d̪lɑ ‘marriage’, d̪lɑ: ‘brother’, koʃi ‘where’,

Koʃi: ‘a leper’, kero ‘did’, ke:ro ‘how’, muʃo ‘mother’s sister’s husband, mu:ʃo ‘mouse’, horo ‘and’, and ho:ro ‘another’.

Saba Mushtaq (2015) revealed that

13 vowels are also present. Bhaderwahi possess double consonant clusters in the Bhaderwahi language.

Phonemic description of vowels involves contrast of tongue position, tongue height, and the Rounding of lips” Aejaz Mohammed Sheikh (2017).

CONSONANTS IN BHADERWAHI

Research revealed that here are Thirty-four consonant phonemes were identified for Bhaderwahi language, Aejaz Mohammed Sheikh (2017). Consonants are having different groups on the basis of their manner and place of

Articulation. Dwivedi (2013) in his study on Bhaderwahi speaks of 37 consonants sounds in the Bhadarwahi language. The eight points of

Articulation are attested, viz. bilabial, dental, alveolar, palatal, velar and glottal. There

Appears distinctive voicing and aspiration in this language. Aspiration is a prominent

Feature of this language; twelve consonant sounds show this feature. Saba Mushtaq a researcher also observed that the consonantal system is rich consisting of 35 consonants. There are three different accouts about the consonants in Bhaderwahi language.

According to Dwivedi (2013) Stress is not a phonemic feature in Bhadarwahi

Language. Generally a syllable having a consonant cluster gets stressed. As in: kənne

‘and’, dʒək^hno ‘bite’, həd̪d̪ ‘bone’ In a di-syllabic vowel where both the syllables

Having vowel sounds (if vowel is of same length), the first one gets stressed. As in:

Piŋo ‘to drink’, sukk^ho ‘dry’, k^haŋo ‘to eat’.

The first syllable gets stressed if it is a low

Front vowel or a back vowel. As in: dure ‘far’, deli ‘Delhi’. The second syllable gets stressed when the first syllable having a short vowel. As in: həro ‘green’, həsno ‘to laugh’, and dərja ‘river’. In a tri-syllabic word if first and third syllable having long

Vowel and the middle vowel is short; the initial vowel gets stressed, Dwivedi (2013).

Palatal

NASAL SOUND

According to Dwivedi (2013) the palatal

Nasal sound occurs only in the word middle position and nasal velar sound occurs in the word middle and the word final position. Bhadarwahi has a palatal fricative sound ç which is not found in Hindi and Dogri.

Bhadarwahi consonant sounds geminate in the word middle and the word final position. The gemination of two aspirated sounds makes the first sound unaspirated Such as, pəttərũ ‘back’, hədd ‘bone’, kənn ‘ear’, səpp ‘snake’, çəpp ‘hide’, bəʃtʃo

‘child’, tʃəkki ‘water-mill’, məkku ‘axe’, ʃukku ‘dry’, and pəkkʰo ‘fan’.

Phonotactics

The simple vowels are found in all positions. Most of the vowels can be nasalized.

Nasalization is a distinctive feature in Bhadarwahi; it has a phonemic status, tɑ ‘and’,

Tã ‘then’, ba ‘hit’, bã ‘forearm’, zid ‘obstinacy’, zīd ‘darling’, d^hou ‘washed’, d^hoũ

‘washed’ (past participle), sei ‘right’ and seĩ ‘from/with’. These features are prevalent in Bhaderwahi language.

Vowel contrast

Vowel contrast is also in the Bhadarwahi language as tənki ‘water-tank’ and tənki: ‘water-tanks’,

Nəlko ‘tap’ and nəlki ‘yarn thread’, ka: ‘which’ and ki: ‘why’, ded ‘sister’ and da:d

‘grandmother’ (paternal), and go:ɽ ‘cow shed’ and guɽ ‘sugar’.

Almost all consonants are attested in all positions, except [ŋ], [ɲ] and [ɳ].

Consonant clusters

Consonant clusters are also seen in the Bhaderwahi and they occur at word initial, word middle, and word final position. According to Saba Mushtaq, in Bhaderwahi, only double consonant clusters are present which usually occur at word initial, or final positions. Br brat ‘fast’ pr prə:m ‘affection’ tr trakɽi: ‘balance’ zj zja:da: ‘many’.

9. MORPHOLOGY OF BHADERWAHI

We can see prefixing, suffixing and infixing. Prefixation and suffixation which can be Employed in derivational and inflectional morphology where as infixation converts a Verb into a causative verb. Morphology can be presented into four levels Viz. nouns and nominal morphology, adjectives, verb morphology and adverbs and Other categories.

Nouns and nominal morphology

Bhadarwahi nouns are used in gender, number, and case by morphosyntactic

Categories. Nouns are masculine or feminine, and count or non-count. All nouns in

Bhadarwahi are given a grammatical gender, e.g kaw ‘crow’, dlag ‘cheetah’,

Bacco ‘kid’, etc.

GENDERS

Like other languages Bhadarwahi too has two genders: masculine and feminine. Both animate nouns and Inanimate nouns get a gender.

Most males are masculine nouns. Most of the masculine nouns get suffixed with /o/ sound, and the rest is consonant ending. For example, g^hoɽo ‘horse’, tʃatʃo ‘uncle’, bətʃtʃo ‘kid’, kaw ‘crow’, səpp ‘snake’, luhar ‘black-smith’, kumhar ‘potter’, pəkk^ho

‘fan’ alike. Most females are feminine nouns. Most of the feminine nouns get suffixed

With /i/ sound, and rest are consonant ending, such as g^hoɽi ‘mare’, tʃatʃi ‘aunt’,

Luharni ‘blacksmith’s wife’, kumharni ‘potter’s wife’, tʃəpli ‘slippers’ kutəri ‘bitch’, bəçç^hi ‘cow’ etc.

Pluralization : There is a pluralisation in Bhaderwahi

The vowel sounds /ɑ/, /ã/, /i/, and /ĩ/ are used as a suffix for the

Pluralization in Bhadarwahi. But the word final and medial vowel

Changes in /e/, /ẽ/, and /a:/. As in: məm ‘father-in-law’ and məmə ‘fathers-in-law’,

Bein ‘sister’ and beina ‘sisters’, b^heĩ ‘buffalo’.

WORD ORDER

Bhadarwahi is a subject dominant language with an SOV word order (SV if without Object). Its subject comes in the first place, an object comes in the middle, and the Verb comes in the final position.

13. According to Sabba Mushtaq in her “Phonological System of Bhaderwahi” includes

14. Diphthongs. A diphthong are nothing but gliding vowel is a phonetic sequence, consisting of a vowel and a glide that is included as a single vowel. It refers to two adjacent vowel sounds occurring within the same syllable. As per the data three diphthongs are observed in Bhaderwahi language. These diphthongs are as under

Diphthong Example ei: lei: a: no: ‘to appear’ ua: sua: d ‘taste’ ai bəlai ‘cat’.

15. Mutual intelligibility

Amitabh Vikram Dwivedi is of the view that owing to the contact of Bhaderwahi with Hindi, Dogri and Kashmiri speakers, the natives of Doda and Bhadarwah have borrowed script and few lexical items from these languages. Despite this, Bhadarwahi is a different language and the language does not show any mutual intelligibility with Dogri, Hindi and Kashmiri. However, other languages spoken in the region such as Pangwali, Siraji, Padri and Bhalesi show lexical similarity up to fifty to fifty five percent.

16. Status

Some speaker may even call it a dialect of Dogri. The language has no official status or recognition. According to the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the language is of definitely endangered category, i.e. many Bhaderwahi parents are not teaching this language to the children with which the number of its native speakers is decreasing.

CONCLUSION

The Bhaderwahi is indeed a Pahari language and the recognition is yet to be met. There have not been any concerted efforts to promote Paharies of Bhaderwah. The indigenous language movement initiated under the name and style of Core committee Pahari and Allied language and Culture of Doda Kishtwar and Ramban is in place which has represented the government especially the LG administration for providing status or share of 4 percent reservation to the people of Doda Kishtwar and Ramban including Bhaderwah. The Core committee efforts helped and paved a way to LG administration and local administration to make several recommendations for promotion of Bhaderwahi Bhalesi Padri Sarazi Pogali Kishtwari languages of Chenab valley. In October 2021, the LG in response to Core committee announced in his official address that Bhaderwahi Bhalesi Padri Sarazi and Pougali will be developed and efforts will be made to develop them.

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