Local Cases in EIA Languages

(Oral/Poster)

The paper describes the local cases of some of the eastern Indo-Aryan languages using cognitive framework. The languages under observation are Angika, Bhojpuri, Maithili, Magahi (Group A), Asamiya, Bangla and Oriya (Group B) spoken in India. I have divided the languages into two groups for the convenience of description. The paper is divided into four parts. First part 'Intoduction' introduces the languages and gives a basic idea about the local cases. The second part ,'Static' describes the static cases of these languages. The languages of Group A have two locative markers showing two way distinction; /me/ (/mẽ/) and /pər/. Both are postpositions which follow the noun (LM) in relation to which the other object's (TR) position is marked. Broadly, /me/ marker can be said to be used for the sense of inclosure. To mark the peripherry the marker /pər/ is used but I have tried to prove that both the markers are of two different levels. Group B languages have one marker which can be called general spatial term (GST) (Levinson 2003, Feist 2008). It shows location of TR in context to LM but the marker neither states the position nor the direction of the TR. It is expressed only through the context.

In the last part of the second section I try to prove that in Group A languages /me/ is the original locative marker which was used in every context of location. I have given arguements in the favour of the agrument that /pər/ is a recent development in these languages. The occurance of /pər/, the grammaticalised version of /upər/ in these languages is redefining the meaning of /me/ in these languages. The occurance of /pər/ has redefined the meaning of /me/ by narrowing down its meaning.

Group A languages do not use static marker with animate objects whereas Group B languages can do so. Unidimensional spatial case systems tend to be organized according to a tripartite distinction between location, destination of movement, and source of movement (Creissels 2009). The languages under observation too mark three spaces which can be stated as static location, starting point and path. The third part 'Dynamic', describes the two dynamic relationships (starting point and path) between the LM and the TR. Among all these seven languages, only Oriya perceives path differently. In other languages it is marked by instrumental and (or) ablative cases.

In the last section 'Conclusion', I have compared and contrasted the static and dynamic cases of both the groups. The use of the verb generally decides whether the TR is static or dynamic. But it was interesting to find that sometimes when the TR is just a patient then depending on the context the TR can either be marked by the static marker or the dynamic marker. Replacing one by the other does not make the utterance infelicitous but they are semantically different and contextually bound.

References:

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