

TOWARDS INDIAN PHONOLOGY AND LINGUISTICS

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SYNOPSIS

Most of the languages in India have been held to belong to one or the other of two major language families, considered to be sharply distinct from each other. The DED and CDIAL have brought together word-items in the two families, on this basis.

This Author has, over the past fourteen years, brought out deep-seated similarities between Tamil and Marathi representing the two families, mainly on the basis of primary vocabularies.

This Paper presents the much wider correspondences observed between the word-items in Emeneau's 'Dravidian Comparative Phonology : A Sketch' and Marathi words from Molesworth's Marathi-English Dictionary of 1857. Phonological correspondences are explained with two examples under each of the sections in Emeneau's 'Sketch'. The complete list at the end will show that almost ALL items in Emeneau's 'Sketch' have correspondences in Marathi, which could not be attributed to chance or borrowings.

The Sanskrit roots and reconstructions for the Marathi items ~~available~~ in Turner's CDIAL are also given side by side, where available. Many of them will be seen to be, what this Author has styled as 'udbhrahs' a' formations. We are therefore led to the conclusion that perhaps the assumed sharp distinction in the two families is based more on the lack of extension of the field of observation across these divisions than on real difference in origins. This would open the field of a composite INDIAN Phonology and Linguistics covering all Indian languages.

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0. Introduction

For over a hundred and fifty years now, linguists have held the view that the languages and dialects spoken by the majority of people in India belong to two neatly divided families, headed by Sanskrit in the North and Tamil in the South. During the last thirty years two monumental comparative dictionaries have brought together thousands of word-items separately for the two families. Their mutual exclusiveness is well brought out by the following statement in the Dravidian Etymological Dictionary (DED):

We have avoided inclusion in the dictionary of words that were certainly borrowed by Dravidian languages from IA languages, ... A very few items of this kind have been presented especially when it seemed possible that the words were really Dravidian or that there was contamination between Dravidian words and borrowed IA words. ¹

This is also corroborated by the averments in the Comparative Dictionary of Indo-Aryan Languages (CDIAL):

..the head-words under which the material is collected do not represent the vocabulary of a real and comparatively uniform language ...

Generally speaking, however, the head-words have the phonetic structure proper to the earliest recorded form of the language which, while still comparatively uniform, was brought into India by the Aryan invaders. ²

Some borrowings from Dravidian have been acknowledged by CDIAL too

Despite an historical explanation for difference, the fact of geographical contiguity of the areas of currency of the two families~~sp~~ persuaded linguists to look upon Marathi as a meeting ground, though they had no doubt that it originated in Sanskrit.³ The inter-family connection has not been investigated in depth. Though the DED makes a mention of "...Marathi alone on the IA side presenting a similarity with Dravidian material..."⁴, the total number of words from Marathi, listed at the end, is just one hundred.

This writer has brought out, during the last fourteen years, considerable evidence from rural speech, the basic vocation of farming, cults and myths, to show that the connections between Marathi and Tamil, say, are much deeper than imagined and that the proposed Sanskrit 'origins' are often purely phonetic creations lacking in meaning.⁵

In these investigations, the starting point was Marathi vocabulary. This Paper approaches the problem from the opposite side. The starting point is the wholly Dravidian material brought together in "Dravidian Comparative Phonology : A Sketch" by M B Emeneau (Annamalai University 1970). The word-items present a random cross-section of Dravidian and could not be biased in favour of Indo-Aryan. For almost each and all of them, correspondences are presented from Marathi, which exhibit as much similarity of sound and meaning as the items from various members of the Dravidian group. Where available, head-words from CDIAL are also given with their meanings, under which the Marathi words appear there. Conclusions as to common phonology are presented and the shortcomings of the IA head-words discussed. The Author's "sammata" hypothesis is proposed as an alternative to the compartmentalised study of Indian languages under the two family-divisions.

1. The Correspondence Items

The short list below shows the correspondence word-items, from the 'Sketch', from Molesworth and from the CDIAL, in that order. Absence of item from the latter two sources is shown as '...'. Unless otherwise indicated, items from the 'Sketch' belong to Tamil. The examples are grouped under the different sections signifying the individual phonemes or other phenomena.

*a	kaṇ	eye		
	kaṇi	pupil (of eye)		
	...			
*ā	kaṭa	cross, exceed		
	kaḍa	edge, hip	kaḍatā	excess over measure.
	kaṭi	hip		
	vaṛu	to fry		
	varhā	hole in ground for cane-juice to cool		
	vata	round cake fried in oil		
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*ā	āṛu	to cool or heal		
	ārāma	relief		
	ā-rāma	rest house.		
	kāl	leg, move	kāl vāy	channel
	kālvā	canal		
	kāla	time		
	ār	shout		
	āra-ne	to crow, cry		
	ā-rava	shout		

*i	irandu	two		
	irada	secondary sown grain		
	...			
	(Te)giccu	scratch		
	kisane	grate, scrape		
	kra:	plough	krt	cut
<hr/>	<hr/>			
*i	in	bring forth, bear		
	vi-ne	bring forth	ill	(cow) delivered
	*vijana	giving birth		
	pi	excrement		
	pika	squirted from mouth		
	pikka	saliva		
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*u	kuttu	bore, dig		
	kudara	hoe		
	kuddala	spade or mattock		
	utir	to drop off (fruit)		
	utariva	gathered fruit		
	uttarayati	makes descend		
	utaru	to shake off		
	utara-ne	take off clothes		
	uttariya	outer garment		
<hr/>	<hr/>			
*u	cuppu	suck, sip		
	cump(h)a-ne	suck		
	cumb	kiss		
	nul	yarn, thread		
	lula	dangling		
	*lola	tossing, hanging		

*e	eru (sun)rise	(y)era	time, day	vēlā	time
	(Ka.)beral finger	pera	knuckles, joint.	parvan	knot, joint

*ē	tēl	scorpion	tela(muṅḡl)	sharp-biter	
	tēru	be accepted true	theta	black ant	...
		be clarified	heṅgala	genuine, pure	?tathā true
	ēṅkal	shout		perverse stickling	...

*o	(Te.)boggu	charcoal	poccu	vulva
	bogāra	brazier caste	pucci	pubendum muliebre
	...		putikā	id
	totu	connect, join	pūta	buttocks
	joda-ne	join, unite	ollu	be suitable, consent
	*yut	join	ola	hostage
			ōlla	hostage

*ō	tōntān	wolf	cōlam, cōnnal	maize, great millet
	dhondā	hard-hearted man	jondharā	sorgum
	
	mōti	way, style, air	ōtai	large watercourse
	moda	cast, style	odhā	brook, stream
	

Shortening of basic long vowels:	tunai	couple	cīrai	cloth
	dunā	double	cīra	cloth, clothes
	dona	two		
	dvi	two	cīra	strip of bark or cloth.
	kār	be pungent	ksāra	
	khāra-ne	be salt-pickled	pāni	speak, say
	ksāra	corrosive	mhana-na	speak
		bhan	speak	

Distribution
of high and
middle vowels

kilāi	dig up, stir	cirai	shave, scrape
kharagā	pit, hollow	cira-ne	split, slit
khalla	trench, creek	*cīrayati	splits
ciraru	shout	kural	curling hair
ciraka-ne	scream (elephant)	kuful	curl
cītkāra	cry, noise	kurafa	curly hair
		kurula	lock of hair on forehead

Metathesis
and vowel
contraction

{aravu	snake	cirai	wing
{cari(-pp-)	cause to slip	cidi	hen-sparrow
sarapata-ne	to slip or slide.	...	
srp	creep		
taral	glow, shine	tiri-	tremble
tarapa-ne	glow, shine	thara-ka-ne	tremble
...		...	

*k-

kī(Ka.)	to become putrid	kutai	hollow out, scoop
kivana	a maggoty sore	kuduka	round basket
kina	'callosity', scar	kutava	water-pot
kēgu(Ka.)	cry as a peacock	sugi(Ka.)	tear off, strip off
kēkā	peacock's cry	suggi(,,)	season of gathering crop
kēkā	peacock's cry	śūgi	period of the abounding or prevailing..harvesting season
		...	

*kk-

nakku	lick	cakkattam	mockery, sport
naku(nakku-)	shine, glitter	cakātyā	merry stories and jests
lakkha	clean, bright	...	
...		cakkhānā	penetrate into
cakkal	rotten straw	caka-ne	throw into a hole (marbles etc)
caghara	chewed and trampled fodder	...	
...			

*ak

tuaku	hang, swing, sleep	tāaku	uphold, support
dhungana	buttocks	tānga	leg
...		tāngane	hang
		...	

*ñk-	poñku	bubble,swell	veñkai	tiger
	boñgā	swollen umbilical cord, potbelly	vāgha	tiger
	...		vyāghra	tiger
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*c-	cōlam	sorghum	cori	to itch
	jondharā	sorghum	curacura	smart,tingling pain
	
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-*c-	usumu(Te.)	scour,wash,cleansc.	dusuku(Te.)	slip,slide
	usapa-ne	bale out water	usakatane	discompose an arrangement
	utsiñcati	causes to flow	utersta	let loose (usatne)
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	mick- misuku(Ka)	yield to importu- move,quiver ^{hi ty}	ñicaka-ne vīcu	motion throw,make violent/
	micaka-ne	close and open eyes	vijū vijñā	lightning fan
	*micc-	close the eyes	vidyut vijana	lightning fanning
<hr/>				
-*cc-	giccu(Te.)	scratch,pinch	muccu	cover
	gica-mida	scribbled piece	musaka-ne	cover over face,muffle
	kiCCA	mud,dirt (kīcada)	...	
<hr/>				
-*ñc-	nañcu	poison	añcu	fear
	nanāñi	species of caluber	accam acambā	dread,terror wonder,astonishment
	
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*t-	utumpu	iguana	oñku	be restrained
	ūda	Typus paradoxurus	oñhañga-ne	be within the sphere of control
	udra	an aquatic animal	...	
<hr/>				
-*tt-	viñu	leave,abandon	irattai	pair,couple
	biñhāra	lodgings	irada	grain sown with another
	

<u>*nt-</u>	man̄tai	head, skull.	iran̄tu	two
	mun̄dī	head	len̄d	two (in the game of tip-cats)
	mun̄da	shaved, bald	--..	
	tan̄ta	arm, upper arm	un̄taru	eat and digest
	danda	upper arm	undāra-ne	get inflated and puffed up
	danda	stick, handle	...	
<hr/>				
<u>*r-</u>	aru	become extinct	karu	grow black, become dirty
	harapa-ne	be lost	khara	rubbish
	hārayati	causes to be taken	...	
<hr/>				
<u>*rr-</u>	tirru	to feed	curru	to revolve, be coiled
	totarā	obstruction of the fauces	sūta	cord, thread
	totarā ...		sūtra	thread, cord
	teru	tarry	purri	ant-hill
	thera	dissolute practices	phutaḥara	broken here and there, embankment
	...		?sphuṭayati	is burst open
<hr/>				
<u>-t-</u>	total(u)	stammering	pitukku	be squeezed out
	totarā	stammerer	pidavi-ne	make a person exert
	...		?pīd	press (f. pilane)
	poti	udder	mitar	brain
	pote	sack	mendū	brains
	pōta	cloth	...	
<hr/>				
<u>*pp-</u>	kappa	hole in ground	kuppai	rubbish, excrement
	kapāra	hole in hill/rock	gū	excrement
	

<hr/> - *mp-	pāmpu	snake	kāmpu	flower-stalk, handle
	bhāmbāva-ne	take fright	kāmba	bar of metal
	...		skambha	prop, pillar (f. khāba)
<hr/> - *n/	nata	walk, go, proceed	aral	be terrified
	nata-ne	strut or mince	hararī	loud cry
	?nata	dancer	...	
<hr/> *y	yātu	goat	nāy	dog
	edakā	ram	? 3da nāyaka	r leader
	ēda	sheep or goat	nāyaka	leader (f. nī to lead)
<hr/> *v-, - *v-	ari	know, perceive		
	harabhāsa	knowing and clever		
	...	arhat		
<hr/> - *r-	irutti	fix permanently	curul	become rolled
	ruta-ne	get fixed, entrenched	sururī	roll
	*rupati	pierces, plants	?suruṅgā	subterranean passage
<hr/> - *l-	kal	learn	pāl	milk
	kalā	art	KALĀ pālāra	any/practical/art/(KAL) descent of udder into milk udder.
	kalā	any practical art	...	
<hr/> - *ll*	palli	lizard	pilli	cat
	pāla	house-lizard	pillū	young of animal, bird
	pallī	house lizard	pilla	(f. pillai)

—			urai, duppi (TE)	deer
*r-	aru	lament	aravi-ne	
	aravi-ne	intreat by tender appeal	dubā	male calf
	
—				
	uru	plough		
	kūlavu	mix		
	kurava	harrow mixing sowed earth		
	...			
—				
Alternations of various consonants	patu	fall	poti	be pulverized
	pada-ne	fall	*pūda	powder
	patati	falls, flies	...	
—				
Toda vowels	pū	flower	kūn (Ma.)	mushroom
	phūla	flower	kutarmūta	mushroom, toadstool
	phulla	expanded, blown	kūkai	owl
	kūkai	owl	bōdiñcu (Te.)	shave
	ghubada	owl	boda-ne	shave head
	ghūka	owl	*butta-	defective
	kōtu	horn, branch	tōy	wash
	khoda	trunk of tree	dhoni	water in which vegetables, clothes washed
		*dhavati	washes
	ul	inside	kulampu	hoof
	ulhāsa	delight, joy	khura	hoof
	ullasati	sports	khura	hoof
	tumpu	sneeze	munai	sharp point
	tumbārā	impetuous gush upon opening passage	monā	spike issuing from plantain, palm
	tumbati	distresses	...	
	ēy	be suited, meet	ey	to know
			eytu	approach, reach
	ye-ne	be known suited	ye-ne	be known, arrive
	aiti	comes near (RgV)		be arrived, approach

Toda vowels	cikku	be entangled	il	not to exist
	cikana	gummy, glutinous	ilisa	small quantity
	cikkana	slippery	alisa ?les'a	small portion
	vinavuka	to ask, hear	ney, nec	weave
	vinavi-ne	implore, entreat	nesa-ne	put on clothes
	vi jnāpayati	begs, makes known/nivaste		puts on over another garment.
	mai	barren buffalo	ilakku	shake
	mhaisa	buffalo	helakāva-ne	sustain any shaking oscillation
	mahisa	great, buffalo	hillati	moves, shakes
	kēl	ask, learn, be informed	itu	to place, put
	kala-ne	be understood	thū	place(imp. sing.) put
	kalayati	counts, thinks	sthiti	continued existence
	tēy(-nt)	wear off, be emaciated	vai	keep, place
	daina	miserable condition	baisa	sit(sing. imp.)
	?dīna	scanty, sad	upavis'ati	sits down
	piri	squeeze out	pinti	oil cake
	pira-ne	squeeze, twist	penda	oil cake
	pīdayati	presses, squeezes	pinyanka	oilcake
	vēttai	hunting	iraku tedha-ne	descend surround, encircle
	vedha-ne	surround, encircle	rānga-ne	crawl, creep
	vēstayati	surrounds	?raṅg	move to and fro
	pirukku(Ma.)	mosquito	tumbe	large black bee
	putuṅgī(Kur.)	midge		
	pataṅga	moth	...	
	pataṅga	insect	tumpati	hurts

2.A Common Phonology

The list of correspondences indicates the following broad conclusions, that can lead us to a common phonology of the two assumed families :

1. To start with, the number of correspondences of word-items between Dravidian and Marathi is far more than the one hundred listed in the DED. The nearly cent per cent correspondence with a random collection like in the 'Sketch' is likely to hold also for the DED as a whole.
2. On the other side, the Marathi vocabulary shows considerable similarity with that of the other IA languages and through them, with the hypothetical Sanskritic reconstructions and attested word-items. Thus, Marathi can be taken as the medium through which the common phonology can be worked out.
3. The vowel- and consonant systems of the two families are basically similar. The apparent dissimilarities caused by the difference of groupings in Tamil and all other literary languages are also explainable from the correspondences with Marathi :
 - 3.1 The long vowels ē and ō are represented by e and o in IA, very much as in a number of examples in Dr itself. The variation of short and long vowels that appears in standard literary forms often depends on the dialect that has come to rule as standard. Changes of Dr ultimate u, ai, o etc into va, a or ay, u ū or va are also ascribed to folk-speech and dialects.
 - 3.2 The surds k c t p provide any of the four consonant sounds in the different groups in IA alphabet. Marathi has a pronounced tendency towards aspiration.
 - 3.3 As cerebrals and semivowels can freely occur at the beginning of Marathi words, they often correspond with Dr words after elision of the initial vowels common in their standard forms.

3.4 The characteristic Dr consonants r n l, almost as a rule, correspond to rh nh lh in Marathi. The aspirate sound often undergoes metathesis/giving r n l after aspirate consonants in the corresponding Marathi or Sanskrit words.

3.5 Dr r appears to be cognate with Marathi (and Vedic) r. However, as r in standard Marathi is often replaced by l in some dialects, l would appear as a correspondence to r particularly in Sanskritised forms.

3.6 Dr consonant clusters like kk cc have often reduced to single sounds k c or their sonants in the Marathi cognates.

4. Relationship with Indo-Aryan

The quotation from CDIAL in S.1 above gives us an insight into the process by which the etymology of Marathi words has been solely related to Sanskrit. From a number of items in the trilingual list above, it will be seen that phonetic reconstructs in Sanskrit are provided even for items which are common, phonetically as well as semantically, to Dr and Marathi. The semantic correspondence between the reconstructs and Marathi items is often far-fetched or dependent on laksanā or extensions of meanings. In many cases, the reconstructs are not attested in Sanskrit data. The Marathi items even in those cases correspond to words in other IA languages, leading us to the conclusion that, these items in popular speech including the Dr are the primary data for linguistic analysis together and not under two mutually exclusive groups. The Sanskrit head-words do not constitute the diachronically original etyma of which the Marathi and other IA words are derivatives or apabhraṃs'a but rather, they are the udbhraṃs'a formations in time-honoured Indian literary tradition alluded by Caldwell as well as Bloch.⁶

5. Genesis of the Linguistic Dichotomy

Consider a randomly picked correspondence : usumu (Te.) scour, wash, cleanse and Marathi usapa-ne bale out water. These are both unit etyma. The Sanskrit head-word utsiñcati causes to flow, is compounded of a prefix or upsarga ut and the root or dhātu sine pour out, sprinkle. The latter can be compared with Dr cintu to be strewn, spilled, trickle. So, the purely phonetic reconstruct in Sanskrit connects two different etyma in Dr by forced extension of meaning through the application of a prefix, which also can be compared to u(van) upper place etc. in Dr.

We have to remember that roots or dhātu in Sanskrit are abstractions and not primary etyma. Prefixes are even more artificial abstractions. Therefore, the abstraction sine is linguistically not really on par with cintu and ut is probably an abstraction based on words in u- which suggested the meaning of 'up, above'. utsiñcati is thus obviously an udbhraṃs'a, a literary formation in Sanskrit, fashioned from original items of folk-speech.

Briefly put, the apparent dichotomy of the Indian languages or their suggested families is rooted in the deductive system of linguistic analysis formulated by Sanskrit Grammarians as contrasted with the natural and inductive system of say, the Tolkāppiyam which considers all words as basically nouns. By studying together the entire vocabulary contained in the DED and CDIAL we would be led to the conclusion that the folk-speech or the Indian languages of today contain remnants of the vocabulary of Indians in ancient times, from which were constructed the literary forms in Sanskrit. By its very nature the linguistic material available from Sanskrit does not contain the vocabularies relating to occupations like farming or to popular cults, which contain the maximum of common items in

the contemporary languages of the two families. These are the items for which obvious udbhrams' formations have been set up in literature as well as linguistics. Their study will show that the phonetics and phonology of these formations, like those of the other category too, are generally ad hoc and not as regular as they have often been made out to be.

6. Conclusion

Linguistics are essentially inductive. Even long-standing theories will have to be reconsidered and revised if new observational data are presented. This Paper is meant to present such data pertaining to the vocabulary of the Dr and IA families of Indian languages, for in-depth consideration by scholars in the field of linguistics who are more knowledgeable than the author. The author believes that these data are presented in this light for the first time and would prove to be the first step towards an integrated and proven 'Indian Phonology and Linguistics'.

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