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Case Relations in Gaddi: A Language of Gaddi Tribes

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Abstract: This paper presents 'Case Relations' in Gaddi – a Tribal language of the State of Himachal Pradesh, India. This research is based on the data collected from Palampur and nearby Gaddi speaking areas of Himachal Pradesh. Gaddi exhibits ten case relations, where the nature of some postpositions is homophonus. Gaddi has split ergativity in the perfective aspect and 'case markers' in Gaddi do not encode animate-inanimate, alienable-inalienable distinctions. One of the most interesting part of case system in Gaddi is oblique case, where there is an addition of /ɑ/ vowel word finaly if the word ends with consonant whenever a case marker is marked on. This paper explains all the cases of Gaddi in detail with their exclusive properties.

Keywords: Gaddi, case, case marker, relationship, oblique case

1 Introduction

1.1 Gaddi Tribes

Gaddis are located in many states of northern India - Surroundings of Chamba district in Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, south-eastern parts of Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Panjab, and New Delhi. However most of their population is located in the state of Himachal Pradesh around Mandi, Bilaspur, Kangra district and Bharmour area of Chamba District. In 2007 there were more than...
110,000 speakers of this language in India. Gaddi belongs to Indo-European language family. The tree structure is as follows:

Indo-European
  Indo-Iranian
    Indo-Aryan
      Northern zone
        Western Pahari
        Gaddi

(Ethnologue 2014)

Map 1: Places in India where Gaddis live (both majority and minority)
Gaddi is the mother language of the Gaddi tribes. This language has not been recognized for work in offices or teaching in schools. New generations of this tribe is seen influenced by the other local languages like Hindi, Punjabi and Kangri. However the older generation still uses Gaddi. This influence can be seen more commonly in the cities where modern generation uses Gaddi only to communicate with older member of their family. However, Gaddi is still a part of daily communication amongst Gaddi Tribes in rural regions.

Gaddis consider themselves descending from Lord Shiva and Siva Ratri [the Birthday celebration of Lord Shiva] is their main festival. Although many parallels exist between the Hindus and the Gaddis, yet Gaddis do not have strong belief in cast-system as it exists in Hindus. However, they still have castes like Khatri, Brahmin, Dhangar, Rajput, Thakur & Rana. Gaddis are known for their humble nature and peaceful life-style. Members of this tribe follow strict moral and social principles. They hold strong faith in their spiritual culture, they are well known for their honesty and friendly nature. Although the Gaddis do not have a high literacy rate yet their community has a very low crime rate (based on information collected from informants at the field).

Gaddis primarily make their living by cattle herding. They raise and sell sheep, goats, mules and horses. Some of the wealthier members of the community are farmers and weavers. Being involved in cattle trading the Gaddis are not usually vegetarians.

One of the most important aspects of the Gaddi tribe is their unique dressing style. Men wear cholā, turban or safā and dor and women wears launchiri. Ladies likes to wear bright colorful dresses with a thick scarf. They use a sash on their back in which they carry little children. Women of this community like gold jewelries, sometimes men also wear gold earrings. Wearing semi-precious stone is very common in the community. Gaddi's beautiful attire makes them easily distinguishable from the rest of other local communities.
1.2 Features of Gaddi Language

Gaddi is a language which has many alternate names, as Bharmauri Bhadi, Gaddyali, Gadi, Gadiali, Pahari Bharmauri, and Panchi Brahmauri Rajput. The general structure of Gaddi follows SOV (Subject-Object-Verb), but it has free phrase order like Hindi. Gaddi has interesting amount of voiceless vowels. Takri (Tankri/Takari) used to be older script of Gaddi, but now Devanagari is used for writing script throughout the Gaddi speaking belt (Ethnologue 2014).

1.3 Phonetic Charts

Oral Vowels

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## Consonants

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### 2.1 CASE RELATIONS IN GADDI

Case is a system of marking dependent nouns for the type of relationship they bear to their heads. Traditionally the term refers to inflectional marking, and typically, case marks the relationship of a
noun to a verb at the clause level or of a noun to a preposition, postposition or another noun at the phrase level (Blake 2004, 1). Case is a semantic relationship while case markers exhibit this very relationship by some phonological word (Abbi 2001, 127).

An example of cases in Gaddi is as follows:

\[\text{bull.M.3SG.ERG} \hspace{1em} \text{child.M.3SG.ACC} \hspace{1em} \text{horn.INS} \hspace{1em} \text{kill-do.PRF}\]

\[\text{field} \hspace{1em} \text{in.LOC} \hspace{1em} \text{throw-give.PRS} \hspace{1em} \text{AUX}\]

The bull hit the child with its horns and knocked him down in the field.

In the above example, the nouns are related to the verbs, depicting different relationships. Here, \(-\varepsilon\)/ is ergative marker, \(-\jmath\)/ is accusative marker, \(-\varepsilon\)/ is instrumental marker and \(-\m\)/ is locative marker which demonstrate the respective relationships of nouns to the verb 'thrown'. Therefore, at clause level, the verb is considered to be the head, and the nouns are its dependents and bear different types of relations with it.

In the example below, the genitive case, demonstrates the relationship of a noun with another noun, i.e. how 'anand' is related to his 'wife' and what is the relationship between 'wife' and 'name'. Genitive markers are \(-r_1\)/ and \(-r\)/.

\[\text{Anand.M.3SG.GEN} \hspace{1em} \text{wife.GEN} \hspace{1em} \text{name Nancy} \hspace{1em} \text{AUX}\]

Anand’s wife’s name is Nancy.

2.2 Cases in Gaddi

Gaddi has a very interesting case system. All the cases are marked by postpositions and they bring about some phonological change in the nouns they get attached to. Primarily there are 10 cases in
Gaddi with an additional 11\textsuperscript{th} oblique case. Some postpositions are not only homophonous in nature but they also demonstrate a larger semantic set which comprises some other semantic fields as subsets. In the perfective aspect, Gaddi demonstrate split ergativity. Case markers in Gaddi do not encode animate-inanimate, alienable-inalienable distinctions.

Table for Case and Case Markers in Gaddi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Case Marker</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>/-ɸ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ergative</td>
<td>/-ɸ ~ -ɛ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative/Dative</td>
<td>/-ɸ ~ -ʃo ~ -jo/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ablative</td>
<td>/-槐 ~ -槐 /</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>/-ɾa ~ -ɾi ~ -ɾɛ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locative</td>
<td>/-mɑ ~ -mənʃ ~ -pəɾ ~ -pur ~ -puttʰ /</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>/-soggʃ ~ -hoggʃ ~ -ʃɛ ~ -sʃtɛ ~ -tɛ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comitative/Associative</td>
<td>/-soggʃ ~ -sʃtɛ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allative</td>
<td>/-mənʃ ~ -ʃʊ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocative</td>
<td>/ɸ ~ -ɛ/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3 Nominative case

Nominative case denotes the subject of the verb and is phonologically null. Gaddi has zero case marker (ɸ) for nominative case and is marked on subject place. For example:

\texttt{rəvi \ so-u \ kər-ɸa \ hə}

Ravi.M.SG.NOM sleep.PFV do.3SG.M.PRS AUX

Ravi sleeps.
2.4 Ergative Case

Gaddi demonstrate split ergativity only in the perfective aspect, with variations of zero (ɸ) and /-ɛ/ as markers and is marked on subject place.

Abhishek.M.SG.ERG shampoo with.INS head.ACC clean.3SG.PST.PFV
Abhishek has washed his head with shampoo.

Sita.F.SG.ERG flowers with.INS room.ACC decorate.3SG.PST.PFV
Sita has decorated the room with flowers.

In case of Ergativity, the marker /-ɛ/ is attached only to nouns having C [+cons, -voc] at word final position. Whereas, nouns with V[-cons, +voc] at word final position takes zero marker. This is seen clearly in the above examples, /-ɛ/ is attached to /əb^h_iʃekk/ as it is ending with consonant /k/ where /s^-t-zα/ takes zero marker.

2.5 Accusative Case/ Dative Case

Accusative and Dative deals with the objects of the verb, where accusative is the direct object and dative is the indirect object. The markers which exhibit the relation of the objects to the verb are /-ɸ ~ -jo ~ -jo/. For example:

Mina cut the fruits with knife.
Ram killed Ravan with arrow.

Ravi gives fruit to Neha.

In this language, there is zero marker when object occupies 2nd objects’ position, whereas /-jo/ are the markers marked on 1st objects’ position.

2.6 Ablative case

Ablative case depicts the relation of noun and verb where there is a sense of separation or detachment. It is marked with postposition /-təʊ/ and /-tʰəʊ/ which are homophonous in nature. For example:

bɔtəl-a  təʊ  pɔnɨ  dʊɭɪ-a-go
bottle from.ABL water fall.PST.PFV

Water fell from the bottle.

sɔ  rɑhɔl-a  təʊ  dʊr  cɔl₁-go
he.3SG Rahul.M.SG.OBL from.ABL away go.3SG.PST.PFV

She went away from Rahul.

2.7 Genitive Case

The Genitive Case signifies any relation or connection which may exist between two or more persons or things. In Gaddi, genitive case relates noun with another noun within a phrase. The genitive markers are /-rɔ/, /-rɭ\, /-rɛ/, which agrees with gender and number but does not agree with inalienable and alienable possession. The maker /-rɔ/ is marked when the possessor is masculine. Maker /-rɭ\ is marked when the possessor is feminine. And the /-rɛ/ marker is marked when possessor is plural in number. Following examples demonstrate this fact:
Shyam’s top (kutra) is very beautiful.

Sita had lost her cycle.

Man has two hands and two feet.

2.8 Locative Case

Locative refers to place, time, logical sequence, etc. Gaddi has many locative markers, where /-ma ~/ -mən/ gives sense of ‘in’, ‘into’, etc and /-pər ~/ -pur ~/ -putt/ indicates a sense of ‘on’, ‘above’. As shown in the examples:

Radha ate the mango in the bus.

The box is on the almirah.

Snow fell on the terrace.

He put the box on the bed.
Your glass is in the kitchen.

It is snowing on hills.

### 2.9 Instrumental case

Instrumental case depicts the use of instrument of action. Gaddi has many instrumental markers, /-sogg₁ ~ -hogg₁ ~ -t₁ɛ ~ -s₁t₁ɛ ~ -t₁ɛ/. All of them are homophones in nature. Examples:

- **Ram writes with pencil.**
  
  rám.M.SG.NOM pensɪl-a sogg₁ likʰ-ḏa ha

- **Ram killed Ravan with arrow.**
  
  ramm-ɛ ravaṇa-jo tɪra t₁ɛ maru

- **Teacher had beaten the student.**
  
  Mgašṭo-a baccɛ-jo hottʰ₁ -sogg₁/-hogg₁/-t₁ɛ/-s₁t₁ɛ/-t₁ɛ maru

- **The children cut the mango with a knife.**
  
  nikk-ɛ kɔrdl ˢ₁t₁ɛ əmb bɔḍɖ-d-u

### 2.10 Comitative Case

The Comitative case denotes accompaniment in the sense of “in company with” or “together with”. It is marked by /-sogg₁ ~ -s₁t₁ɛ/. 

Your glass is in the kitchen.

It is snowing on hills.
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Ram. M.3.P.SG.NOM sita with.COM live.PRS
Ram lives with sita.

mu saro.3.P.SG.sit sogg1 g flirt.6 Pl.3.P.SG ga Pl.3.P.SG ha
me.1P.SG saroj with.COM home.ACC go.FUT AUX
I will go home with Saroj.

2.11 Allative Case

Allative exhibits a sense of giving location with movement like ‘from’, ‘into’, etc. The markers for allative are /mən.3 ~ tʰə/. 

so  ɖː ɭ.l ɭ.ʰə  iccʰu  kəɾdə  ha
he. M.3.P.SG delhi.ALL come.PROG do.PRS AUX
He is coming from Delhi.

bʰrəbbu  bən.ə  mən.3  cʰɭ.1  go
bear.3P.SG.NOM forest in.ALL walk.PRF go.PST
Bear went into the forest.

2.12 Vocative Case

The Vocative is the case used when a person or persons are directly addressed. In Gaddi, vocative marker is /-ə ~ -ɛ/. It is marked at subject position only.

ɖəbbu-ɛ  eɭ.1  əɭ.3 Pl.3.P.SG.VOC here come.PRS
Boy! Come here.

kuɭ.1 j-ɛ  bəɭ.1-lɛ
girl.3P.SG.VOC stop.PRS
Girl! stop. (don’t go)
2.13 Oblique Case

Accusative, Ablative, Genetive, Locative, Instrumental, Comitative and Allative case markers brings about a phonological change to the nouns they are marked on. This change is the oblique case marking which adds /ɑ/ vowel word finaly if the word ends with consonant whenever a case marker is marked on, as illustrated here in:

- ɾaɾən-ɑ ɬo (ACC)
- rohən-ɑ r1 (GEN)
- bəɬəl-ɑ ɬəü (ABL)
- bən-ɑ mənɪ (LOC)
- pensɪl-ɑ soğɡɪ (INS)
- səɾoʃ-ɑ soğɡɪ (COM)
- gʰər-ɑ ʰō (ALL)

3. Conclusions

The cases in Gaddi have been explained in detail in this paper with sufficient examples. Gaddi has homophones postpositions as case markers and demonstrate split ergativity in perfective aspect. Gaddi also has an interesting oblique case phenomena.

Reference:


Blake, Barry J. 2004. *Case-Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics*