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The Morphological Realization of Tense, Aspect and Mood in Gaddi

Abstract

One of the most remarkable features of India is its linguistic diversity. With over a billion speakers, India is home to various magnificent tongues that are a representative of the six major language families of the world. One such tongue is Gaddi. It is primarily spoken in the state of Himachal Pradesh, at the foothills of the majestic Himalayas. The goal of this paper is to present the verbal inflection system of Gaddi.

All the data presented in this paper have been collected as part of fieldwork conducted in Palampur, India. Verbal inflection in Gaddi is predominantly marked for the categories of tense, aspect and mood. Since the association of agreement with these categories is very significant in the language, it shall be one of the key areas that this paper attempts to illuminate. A feature-based approach is adopted to present the data. Hence tense, aspect, mood and agreement are presented as features that the verbs in the language inflect for with various values.

Keywords: Agreement, Aspect, Gaddi, Mood, Morphology, Tense, Verb

1. Introduction

One of the communities to inhabit the land with a breathtaking view and picturesque grandeur is the 'Gaddi community'. They are found to live in the highest concentrations on both the sides of the Dhauladhar range, Bharmour tehsil of Chamba, Mandi and Kangra. Even today some of them live in very challenging and inaccessible terrains like regions between the Pir-Panjal and Dhauladhar mountain ranges and between the rivers Ravi and Chenab. With time Gaddi people migrated from these regions in search of better opportunities to the neighboring states like Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Punjab and Haryana. Doing so not only led them to intermingle with people from other places but also led to the intermingling of their culture with others and their language Gaddi with other languages.

Gaddi enjoys the status of being a '6a' language on the EGIDS (Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale) scale¹. One of the first notable work on Gaddi was carried out by Grierson (1916). He placed Gaddi in the Western Pahari group of the Indo-Aryan language family. Gaddi's sound system, word formation processes, system of agreement, case system warrant to Grierson's placement of Gaddi into the Indo-Aryan language family.

Verbal inflection in Gaddi is predominantly marked for the features of tense, aspect and mood (TAM). Each exponent that represents TAM in Gaddi can be viewed as a bundle of features that inflects for various values. Verbs in the language display agreement in accordance with the controller of the agreement and it too can be viewed as a feature that the verbs in the language inflect for.

Gaddi displays verb inflection in two ways: either as exponents that attach to the verb root or as periphrastic constructions that make use of auxiliaries. Many a times for some values of verb inflection, a single exponent is found to be attached to the verb root that collectively is a representative of TAM features and agreement. But in some cases, the exponent is a

¹ "Gaddi". *Ethnologue*, 2019, <https://www.ethnologue.com/language/gbk>. Accessed 3 Sept 2018.

representative of the value for just the TAM features. To this, another exponent that represents agreement is attached. All the following combinations of TAM work together to depict various expressions in Gaddi in a very fascinating way and display a regular and systematic paradigm for verbal inflection.

2. Agreement

If we take a close look at the system of verbal agreement in Gaddi, we realise that the Gaddi verbs inflect for the features of gender, number and honorificity. Number and gender can be viewed as binary features that have two values each. For number, Gaddi verbs inflect for the values of either singular or plural and for gender, they inflect for the values of masculine or feminine. Honorificity can be viewed as a privative feature of the verb that possesses the same value as that of plural.

3. Tense

Gaddi verbs inflect for the values of past, future and perfect tenses. In the following sections, tense is understood in terms of Reichenbach's (1947) theory based on E (point of Event), S (point of Speech) and R (point of Reference). Implementing this theory by logically structuring E, S and R with reference to linear time axis enables a precise description of the eventuality of time in the language.

3.1 Past tense

Past tense is formed in Gaddi with the addition of an auxiliary at the end of the sentence. In terms of Reichenbach (1947), when the point of Event (E) precedes the point of Speech (S), past tense is pictured in the language. The auxiliary agrees for number, gender and honorificity. The values for past tense are: $t^h u$ (masculine), $t^h i$ (feminine) or $t^h i j e$ (plural or honorific).

pitʃija	sala	so	dəp ^h tər-ɑ-məndʒ	ke
last	year	he.3M.SG	office-OBL.M .SG-in.LOC	what.Q
kamm	kər-d-ɑ	t ^h -u?		
work.N	do-IPFV-M.G	PST-M.SG		

“Last year what work did he do at the office?” (Mehta, 2016, 134)

kε	tei	pε ε	dari	g ^h ɑɖ-ur-i	t ^h -i
did.Q	2.ERG.F.SG	before	window.N.F	open-PRF-F.SG	PST-F.SG

“Did you open the window before?” (Mehta, 2016, 138)

kε	tei	k ^h ana	k ^h ɑ-ŋ-ε-t ^h əu	pε ε
PQ	2.ERG.M.SG	food.N	eat-INF-OBL.M.SG-ABL	before
hānt ^h	d ^h o-ε	t ^h -ijε?		
hand.PL	wash-PFV.PL	PST-PL		

“Did you wash your hands before eating the food?” (Mehta, 2016, 164)

3.2 Future tense

When the point of Speech (S) precedes the point of Event (E) in the language, future tense is implied. Future tense in Gaddi is formed with the attaching of the exponent -ŋ to the verb root and to this, the exponent of agreement with values -ɑ/-i/-ε for masculine/feminine/plural or honorific attaches. It is interesting to note that the exponent -ŋ was found to be the exponent for the infinitive in Gaddi as well.

o	alli	melle	gɑ-ŋ-ε-ra
3F.SG	now	market	go-INF-OBL.M.SG-GEN.M.SG

sotʃʃ-ŋ-a ləg-ur-a
 think-INF-M.SG begin.happen-PRF-M.SG

“He is thinking of going to the market” (Mehta, 2016, 177)

mu səndzər-ε tʃiʃʃʃi likʰ-ŋ-i
 1F.SG evening.F.SG-in.LOC letter.N.F write-INF-F.SG
 h-a
 IND-SG

“I will write a letter in the evening” (Mehta, 2016, 138)

dzehŋε tessi-jo pεsse mul-ŋ-ε ta təss
 when.Q 3M.SG-DAT money get-INF-PL then he.2M.SG
 kuʃi-jo əkk gipʰəʃ kʰərid-ŋ-a
 girl-DAT one gift.N buy-INF-M.SG

“When the boy will receive the money he would buy the girl a gift”

(Mehta, 2016, 148)

3.3 Perfect tense

When the point of Event (E) precedes the point of Reference (R) and point of Speech (S) in the language, perfect tense is implied in Gaddi. Perfect in the language, in the simplest of terms is used to denote an event of the past that has relevance in the present. For perfect tense, the exponent -ur attaches to the verb root after which the exponent for agreement -a/-i/-ε for masculine/feminine/plural or honorific attaches. The focus is always on the resultant state in the perfect construction.

mera	k ^h aŋe-jo	trəkki	gətʃ-ur-a
my.2M.SG.POSS	food.OBL-DAT	dry.ADJ	go-PRF-M.SG

h-a?

IND-SG

“My food dried?” (Mehta, 2016, 184)

k ^h ad	hukki	gətʃ-ur-i	h-a
river.N.F	dry.ADJ.F	get-PRF-F.SG	IND-SG

“The river is dry” (Mehta, 2016, 182)

min-dzo	ləg-d-a	ki	tinni	seu
i.1M.SG-DAT	feel-IPFV-M.SG	that	he.3M.SG.ERG	apple.N
k ^h a-ŋ-ε-t ^h əu	pɛ[ɛ]	əmb	k ^h a-i	lə-ur-ε
eat-INF-OBL.M.SG-COM	before	mango	eat-PFV.FE	feel-PRF-PL

t^h-ijɛ

PST-PL

“I think he must have eaten the apples before eating the mangoes”

(Mehta, 2016, 170)

4.Aspect

To get a better understanding of the temporal view of the event or state expressed by the verb and the way the events actually relate to time, a study of the aspect seems most beneficial. In the case of Gaddi, we find inflectional exponents indicating the values of imperfective, perfective, progressive and inchoative aspects.

4.1 Imperfective aspect

In the imperfective aspect, the attention is on the internal structure of the situation. The situation is not bounded either. Imperfective aspect (including the habitual construction) in Gaddi is formed with the attaching of the exponent -d to the verb root after which the exponent for the values for agreement -a/-i/-ε for masculine/feminine/plural or honorific attaches.

tunda	b ^h ai	əbε	kε	kam
you.GEN.M.SG	brother.N.M.SG	now	what.Q	work.N.M.SG
kər-d-a?				

do-IPFV-M.SG

“What does your brother do?”

(Mehta, 2016, 132)

duttε	bərk ^h a	b ^h un-d-i	h-a
tomorrow	rain.N.F.SG	be-IPFV-F.SG	IND-SG

“It may rain tomorrow”

(Mehta, 2016, 186)

mera	b ^h ai	abε	g ^h ər
my.GEN.M.SG	brother.N.M.SG	now	house.N.M.SG

k ^h ərɪd-η-a	tʃain-d-a
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buy-INF-M.SG	need-IPFV-M.SG
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“My brother wants to buy a house now”

(Mehta, 2016, 142)

4.2 Perfective aspect

Perfective aspect is formed with the attaching of an exponent to the verb root that collectively specifies perfective aspect and agreement for the features gender, number or

honorificity within the phrase. The event or action is viewed in all cases as a simple whole in Gaddi. Perfective aspect in Gaddi is formed with the attaching of the exponent -u/-i/-ε for masculine/feminine/plural or honorific.

kε	tei	k ^h aŋa	k ^h a-ŋ-ε-t ^h əu		
PQ	2ERG.M.SG	food.N.M.SG	eat-INF-OBL.M.SG-ABL		
pε ε	han ^h	ɖ ^h o-ε	t ^h -ijε	ki	na
before	hand.N.PL	wash-PFV.PL	PST-PL	or	NEG
ɖ ^h o-ε	t ^h -ijε				
wash-PFV.PL	PST-PL				

“Did you wash your hands before breakfast?” (Mehta, 2016, 164)

kε	tu	merε	b ^h ai-tε	
PQ	2.NOM.M.SG	1.GEN.M.SG	brother.N.M.SG-ALL	
mull-i				
meet-PFV.FE.SG				

“Have you met my brother?” (Mehta, 2016, 136)

mindzo	hər	ratti-məndz	ɖər	
1.DAT.M.SG	every	night.OBL.F.SG-in.LOC	fear.N.M.SG	
ləg-d-a	ki	tʃora	i-ŋ-a	atε
feel-IPFV-M.SG	COMP	robber.OBL.M.SG	come-INF-M.SG	and
mindzo	mar-i	ga-ŋ-a		
1.DAT.M.SG	kill-PFV.FE.SG	go-INF-M.SG		

“I’m scared that every night robbers will come and kill me” (Mehta, 2016, 169)

When one looks very carefully at the large set of data collected, a fascinating detail that one realizes is that as far as gender agreement is concerned, it doesn't seem to be with the controller of the agreement and neither are the verbs conditioned to be either masculine only or feminine only as they can be both masculine or feminine in various instances. Thus in order to reflect on these facts, the label of gender agreement in the perfective is named as the feature 'gend' (rather than gender) so as to distinguish it from feature gender, the latter being genuinely a feature that cross-references subjects or objects depending on the syntactic construction. The values of the feature are also denoted differently, as MA and FE instead of M and F for masculine and feminine respectively.

4.3 Progressive aspect

When attention is on the internal structure and the event is in progress at the reference time, we have the progressive aspect at play in Gaddi. Progressive aspect in Gaddi is formed with the help of a periphrastic construction. With the main verb, the exponent for perfective attaches that agrees for gend alone. To the verb root either exponent -u attaches or -i, for MA or FE agreement respectively. The second verb in the construction is always found to be the imperfective form of the verb *kərŋɑ*, i.e. the verb root *kər-* to which the imperfective exponent -d is attached and then the exponent for agreement -ɑ/-i/-ε (masculine/ feminine/plural or honorific) attaches.

mindzo	gussa	itʃtʃ-u	kər-d-ɑ,	tei-ta
1.DAT.M.SG	anger	come-PFV.MA.SG	do-IPFV-M.SG	hence
tʃin-d-ɑ	ləg-ur-ɑ			
shout-IPFV-M.SG	happen-PRF-M.SG			

“I am getting angry; hence I am shouting” (Mehta, 2016, 176)

ram	sotʃʃ-i	kər-d-a	ki	səb ^{hi} -
Ram.3M.SG	think-PFV.FE.SG	do-IPFV-M.SG	COMP	all.PL-
bətʃʃe-dʒo	kε	k ^h əri-d-a	b ^h u-ʃʃ-a ?	
child.OBL.M.SG-DAT	what.Q	buy-IPFV-M.SG	be-EM-M.SG	

“Ram is thinking of what the children could have possibly bought?”

(Mehta, 2016, 186)

əgər	təs	dəbbu-dʒo	pεsse	muʃʃ-i	gən-d-ε
if	that	boy.N.M.SG-DAT	money.N.PL	get-PFV.FE.SG	get-IPFV-PL
ta	tes	gip ^h ət	k ^h əri-d-i	din-d-a	
then	3.ACC.F.SG	gift.N.F.SG	buy-IPFV-F.SG	do-IPFV-M.SG	

“If the boy gets the money, he will buy a gift for the girl” (Mehta, 2016, 149)

4.4 Inchoative aspect

Inchoative aspect is used in Gaddi to indicate the beginning of change in state and it is also formed with a periphrastic construction. With the main verb, the exponent for infinitive -*η* attaches after which the exponent for agreement (-*a* masculine/ -*i* feminine/ -*ε* plural or honorific) attaches. The second verb in the construction is always the perfect form of the verb *lægηα*, i.e. the verb root *læg-* with the perfect exponent -*ur* to which the exponent for agreement -*a*/*-i*/*-ε* (masculine/feminine/plural or honorific) attaches.

əũ	bəs	əbdʒu-hi	su-η-a	læg-ur-a
1M.SG	just	now-only	sleep-INF-M.SG	begin.happen-PRF-M.SG

h-a

IND-SG

“I will go to sleep early (speaker-immediate plan)” (Mehta, 2016, 139)

so	gaṇa	ga-ṇ-a	ləg-ur-i
3.NOM.F.SG	song.N.M.SG	sing-INF-M.SG	begin.happen-PRF-F.SG

t^h-i

PST-F.SG

“She was beginning to sing the song” (Mehta, 2016, 187)

ɖa arɛ	pəttər	ʃer-ṇ-ɛ	ləg-ur-ɛ
branch.OBL.GEN.PL	leaves.N.PL	fall-INF-PL	begin.happen-PRF-PL

h-in

IND-PL

“Leaves are falling from the branch” (Mehta, 2016, 180)

5. Mood

Palmer (2001) treats mood as a grammatical device that is used to express the intent of speaker or the degree of commitment of the speaker about the statement uttered. Indicative, epistemic and imperative are three moods that the verbs are inflected for in Gaddi.

5.1 Indicative mood

The indicative mood is reflected by the auxiliary that is placed at the end of the sentence. The auxiliary agrees with the features number and honorificity. It is used when the situation or

event that is mentioned in the statement is real or factual. For singular agreement -a attaches to h- that appears at the end of the sentence and for plural or honorific -in attaches to h-. The present tense too is indicated by the indicative mood in the language. Particularly in the copulative constructions, the auxiliary is obligatory but in rest of the constructions involving future or present tense, it may or may not be present. An interesting fact to be noted is that in the future tense, some constructions are coupled with the auxiliary for the indicative mood to perhaps give the irrealis sense.

sita	gita	ho	ləmbi	h-a
Sita.F.SG	gita.F.SG	than	tall.ADJ.F.SG	IND-SG
“Sita is taller than Gita”				(Mehta, 2016, 175)

inde	səb ^h i-rɛ	dʒ ^h o ɛ	bəɖɖɛ	girke
these.OBL.PL	all-GEN.PL	bag.PL	very.ADV.PL	heavy.ADJ.PL
h-in				
IND-PL				
“All these people’s bags are very heavy”				(Mehta, 2016, 175)

5.2 Epistemic mood

The epistemic mood is formed in the language with the attaching of the exponent -|| to the verb root after which the exponent for value of agreement -a/-i/-ɛ for masculine/feminine/plural or honorific attaches. The usage of this mood indicates the amount of confidence or conviction the speaker has of the statement uttered in Gaddi.

b^hai kε kər-d-α ho-[-α]
 Brother.M.SG what.Q do-IPFV-M.SG be-EM-M.SG
 “What would brother be doing?” (Mehta, 2016, 133)

duttε əgər bərk^hα b^hu-[-i] ta su
 tomorrow if.COND rain.N.F.SG be-EM-F.SG then 2M.PL
 g^hər-ε hi rε-η-α
 house.N.M.SG-LOC only stay-INF-M.SG
 “When I get home, he will be happy. If it rains tomorrow, we will be at home”
 (Mehta, 2016, 140)

jeh^hε tessi-jo pεsse mu-[-ε] t^h-ijε ta
 when.Q you.2M.SG-DAT money get-EM-PL PST-PL then
 tinni ku[ⁱ-jo əkk gip^hət k^hərid-u
 3M.SG.ERG girl-DAT one gift buy-PFV.MA
 “When the boy got the money he bought the girl a gift” (Mehta, 2016, 149)

5.3 Imperative mood

The imperative mood is identified when the statement is a command, an injunction or a request. It is formed in the language with the attaching of the exponent -α/-i/-ε to the verb root that also agrees with the subject or object for gender, number and honorificity; i.e. -α for masculine, -i for feminine and -ε for plural or honorific.

ε kəppə ku^hni b^hə^hni-i ditt-α
 this.DEM cup.N.M.SG who.Q break-PFV.FE.SG give-IMP.M.SG

“Who broke this cup!?” (Mehta, 2016, 152)

αε-σəb ^h	b ^h itta	k ^h old-ε
2NOM-all.PL	door.N.M.SG	open-IMP.PL

“Let us open the door!” (Mehta, 2016, 145)

radʒdʒa	tʃə[-i	ɑ:
King.N.M.SG	come-PFV.FE.SG	come.IMP.M.SG

“The king has come” (Mehta, 2016, 153)

6. Conclusion

With the amount of enthusiasm from the speakers of the language and the quality of overwhelming data received, the study sought out specifically to account for the verbal inflections of Gaddi. The following table depicts the entire verbal paradigm that is factually and descriptively very canonical in nature.

	M.SG	F.SG	M.SG.HON	F.SG.HON	M.PL	F.PL	M.PL.HON	F.PL.HON
PAST _{AUX}	t ^h u	t ^h i	t ^h ije	t ^h ije	t ^h ije	t ^h ije	t ^h ije	t ^h ije
PERFECT	həsura	həsuri	həsure	həsure	həsure	həsure	həsure	həsure
FUTURE	həsna	həsni	həsne	həsne	həsne	həsne	həsne	həsne
IMPERATIVE	həsa	həsi	həse	həse	həse	həse	həse	həse
EPISTEMIC	həslla	həslli	həsllə	həsllə	həsllə	həsllə	həsllə	həsllə
INDICATIVE _{AUX}	ha	ha	hin	hin	hin	hin	hin	hin
IMPERFECTIVE	həsda	həsdi	həsde	həsde	həsde	həsde	həsde	həsde
PERFECTIVE	həsu	həsi	həse	həse	həse	həse	həse	həse
PROG	həsu	həsi	həsu	həsi	həsu	həsi	həsu	həsi
PROG _{AUX}	kərda	kərdi	kərde	kərde	kərde	kərde	kərde	kərde
INCHO	həsna	həsni	həsne	həsne	həsne	həsne	həsne	həsne
INCHO _{AUX}	ləgura	ləguri	ləgure	ləgure	ləgure	ləgure	ləgure	ləgure

Table: Verbal paradigm for the verb “to laugh”- həsnə

Informant Details

Urmila Rana (41), Bukra Devi (62), Ritu Kumari (12), Shabnam Thakur (10), Sneha Devi (12), Rajkumar (12), Amisha Devi (12), Shagun (12), Tannu (13), Pallavi (13), Aniket (13), Simran (12), Nithin (13), Priya (11)

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Abbreviations Used

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| 1 | First person |
| 2 | Second person |
| 3 | Third person |

ABL	Ablative
ACC	Accusative
ADJ	Adjective
ADV	Adverb(ial)
AUX	Auxiliary
COMP	Complementizer
COND	Conditional
COM	Comitative
DAT	Dative
DEM	Demonstrative
DET	Determiner
EM	Epistemic Mood
ERG	Ergative
F	Feminine
FE	Feminine-Gend
FUT	Future
GEN	Genitive
IMP	Imperative
INCHO	Inchoative
IND	Indicative
INF	Infinitive
INS	Instrumental
IPFV	Imperfective
LOC	Locative

M	Masculine
MA	Masculine-Gend
MOD	Mood, Modality
NEG	Negation, Negative
NOM	Nominative
OBL	Oblique
PART	Participle
PER	Person
PFV	Perfective
PL	Plural
POSS	Possessive
PQ	Polar Question
PRF	Perfect
PROG	Progressive
PST	Past
Q	Question word/particle
SG	Singular