SCRIPT USED IN BODO LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT:

Bodo language is one of the most prominent languages of north-east India among the tribal people. The language is originally derived from Sino-Tibetan language family under the TibetoBurman group. It is closely related to Dimasa, Garo, and Kokborok languages of Assam, Meghalaya and Tripura. This language speakers are residing in the north eastern part of India, in North-Bengal area of the state of West Bengal and in the neighbouring country Nepal. Regarding its origin, Bodo language has no any particular record. They use Devanagari Script for the writing purpose but earlier they used Roman Script for writing the language. The Bodo language is one of the 22 languages recognized by the government of India and included in the eight schedule of the Indian constitution. Bodo language was introduced as the medium of instruction in the primary level in 1963. Presently, this language is being used as medium of instruction in educational institutions up to the secondary level. In 1994, the Gauhati University introduced a diploma course in this language and in 1996, the Bodo language has attained a position of pride with the opening of post-graduate course in Bodo language and literature in the Gauhati University. There are numerous famous books on poetry, novel, drama, short story, biography, travelogue, children literature and literary criticism written in Bodo language.

KEYWORDS: Language, Roman Script, Devanagiri, Recognised, Eight Schedule.

OBJECTIVE:

The objective of the study is to highlight and study about Historical perspectives of scripts used in Bodo Language and literature. It is mainly focused on the analysis about scripts used in Bodo language. With the sole objective of understanding the transition of traditional dresses has been developed in this paper.

METHODOLOGY:

The methodology of the study is obviously inter-disciplinary method with the combination of historical sources and field work. Both primary and secondary sources are consulted. Accordingly, the work is primarily based on field investigation for collecting first hand data as well as also based on all the literary texts. The technique of anthropological, data collection, participants, observation, interview methods, both structure and non-structure, case study, genealogical methods are adopted. The collected data have been the paper is mainly based on the secondary data, which is collected from the available written materials in the form of book and Magazine. To make convenient the structural analysis of phonemes has been done with linguistic approach.

INTRODUCTION:

It is stated that the script is necessary in oral writing or verbal mode of speech which is very important in conversion to express the feelings and thoughts into written. For writing languages and documented any kinds of literary and linguistic text, the orthographical requirements are necessary. 'Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Linguistics' shows that Script as "the act of representing, or the representation, of thoughts, ideas and speech by conventional material signs" 1. any kind of Language cannot be written down or preserved in a methodical process without a script. As a result, Script can be calling a part of creativity of human beings as competence and performance.

Since long time it is noticed that the Bodo language does not have historic evidence of the script. However, Kalaguru Bishnu Prasad Rabha a renowned personality of Assam viewed about the Deodhai scripts among the Kacharis in ancient time. 2 According to Madhu Ram Baro, the Boro kings had a kind of Deodhai scripts, akin to Brahmi, to inscribe on the stone, pillars, monuments, royal gate, stone slates and copper plates etc. and this kind of scripts may be seen till now in indistinct state on those articles spread in the form of wreckage in the jungle areas of Khaspur, Maibang and Dimapur etc. However, it is difficult to mentioned that when and how Deodhai script was disappeared from the Bodo dynasty.

The Bodo literature was started from the Missionary period just before the end of the 19th century. Madhu Ram Baro stated that the Missionaries discovered the Boro writing system and gave a form of writing language in modified and simplified Roman scripts. 4 The British rule in Assam is turning point of outcome of the Bodo language which started after the Treaty of Yandabo on 24th February 1826 signed between British East India Company and Burmese. After that the European missionaries entered in Assam and spread the ideology of Christianity and then studied the regional languages of Assam. As a result, Roman script was used by Christian Missionary to write Bodo language and started to write and transcript oral corpus as well as collected oral literatures and in writing the grammar based on spoken variety of Bodo language of Darrang district.

In Missionary period literature evidence are available where Roman script was used suitably and conveniently. As evidence it may be mentioned a title of monograph 'Essay the first on the Kocch, Bodo and Dhimal Tribes'; it is one of the most establishing work on the aborigines of India written by B. H. Hodgson in 1846 and printed by J. Thomas, Baptist Mission press in 1847, Calcutta. This book was basically written in three parts, part I.- Vocabulary, Part II.- grammar and in Part III.- Location, Numbers, Creed, Customs, Condition, Physical and Moral Characteristics of the people. It is mentionable that the term 'Bodo' was coined as generic term for the first time in this book.

ANALYSIS:

It is also stated that Reverend Sidney Endle used Roman script for writing the Bodo language. In 1884, a grammar book entitled 'Outline Grammar of the Kachári (Bàrà) Language' was introduced as spoken in Darrang District of Assam. in 1889, Rev. L. O. Skrefsrud also wrote a book entitled 'A short grammar of the Mech or Bodo language'. 'A Collection of Kachari Folk-tales and Rhymes' by J. D. Anderson a book on Bodo folk literature is also published in 1895. 'Grammar and Dictionary of Kachari Language' a Bodo grammar and dictionary by A. Christiansen also published in 1904. In the year 1904, this script was used to teach the Boro children in 'Cachari Reader', published by the Government of Assam.5 By introducing the 'Cachari Reader' text book, education was imparted to the Bodo Children in primary schools of Assam from 1904 to 1936. Another famous book written by Rev. Sidney Endles 'The Kacharis' was published in 1911 after his death with an introductory note by I. C. S. (retired) J. D. Anderson. This book represents about Kachari (Bodo) race elaborately and described including their characteristics, physical and moral; Origin,

Distribution and Historic summary, Social and Domestic life, Laws and Customs, Religion, Folk-lore, traditions, superstitions, specimen of grammar etc.

In the year 1903, G. A. Grierson also incorporated his work materials on Bodo linguistics using roman script in the 'Linguistics Survey of India', Vol.-III, Part-II which was one of the remarkable research worked on Bodo language.

The book 'Outline Grammar of the Kachári (Bàrà) Language, as spoken in District Darrang, Assam;' is incorporates some sentences in details about the Bodo folktales. The following are some artefact examples of using Roman script:

Example-1

"Găhàm hoásá," a good man.

"Găhàm hingzháusá," a good woman.

(Page No. 11)

Example-2

How far is it from Tezpur to Orang? "Tezpurnifrai Oranghá lági bèsè găzàn?"

It will be hard to get there in one day. "Sánsèáu bíkhô manhŭínŭ thán záagan."

(Page No.59)

All above mentions are historical evidences of using Roman script during the Missionary period. It is seen that the text extracted from the grammar book of Endle is to be marked as spoken variety of Bodo language of Darrang district. The sentence was made transcript into Roman orthographic sign with a number of diacritic marks to define the mode of articulation.

There are six vocalic phonemes i.e. / i, ɯ, u, e, o, a / all the six vowels are voiced and short vowel and Sixteen consonantal phonemes i.e. / p^h , b, t^h , d, k^h , g, m, n, ŋ, s, z, h, r, l, w, y / in Bodo language, where /w/ and /y/ are Semi vowels of Segmental features. Using of /ɯ/ sound is one of the special characteristics in Bodo language. It is seen that the segmental and supra-segmental phonemes; and diacritics are used in peculiar manner during missionary period. Here discussion may be done as given below:

Example of Vowels with Words

/i/ = /i/: unmarked, short, as in English 'pin';

in Bodo e.g. 'Ling' meaning 'call'

'Bíni' meaning 'his' 'Mai' meaning 'paddy'

/í/: long, as in English 'marine';

in Bodo e.g. 'Bí' meaning 'he'

'Mànsŭí' meaning 'man'

'díni' meaning 'to-day'

/ɯ/ = /ŭ/: this is the representation of vowel /ɯ/. Using of this

sound makes special characteristics in Bodo language.

in Bodo e.g. 'Bŭnŭ' meaning 'to drag, pull'

'dŭí' meaning 'water'

'árŭ' meaning 'and'

/u/ = /u/: unmarked, short, as in English 'pull'

in Bodo e.g. 'Hingzháu' meaning 'woman'

'dáu' meaning 'bird'

'gubun' meaning 'other'

/ú/: long, as in English 'pool'

in Bodo e.g. 'Búnŭ' meaning 'to beat'

'Zaú' meaning 'rice beer'

'Mosaú' meaning 'cow'

/e/ = /e/: unaccented, as in English 'bed'

in Bodo e.g. 'Gădet' meaning 'great'

'Båbe' meaning 'which'

'Zeblá' meaning 'when'

/ê/: as 'ey', as in English 'they'

in Bodo e.g. 'Mêgan' meaning 'eye'

'Bê' meaning 'this'

'Bêáu' meaning 'here'

/è/: an intermediate sound between the two former

in Bodo e.g. 'Bèsè' meaning 'how much?'

'Horsè' meaning 'all night'

'Khaisè' meaning 'some'

/o/ = /o/: unmarked, short as in English 'stop'

in Bodo e.g. 'Mosá' meaning 'tiger'

'Lábo' meaning 'bring' 'Gorai' meaning 'horse'

/ô/: long as in English 'bone' in Bodo e.g. 'Núnggô' meaning 'yes'

'Bíkhô' meaning 'him'

'mithígô' meaning 'understand'

/a/ = /a/: unaccented, always short as in English 'America'

in Bodo e.g. 'Nang' meaning 'you'

'Mairang' meaning 'rice'

'Mai' meaning 'paddy'

/á/: long as in English 'father'

in Bodo e.g. 'Tháng' meaning 'go'

'Oá' meaning 'bamboo'

'Házu' meaning 'mountain'

/à/: sharp, short sound as in English 'pan'

in Bodo e.g. 'Mànsŭí' meaning 'man'

'Thàm' meaning 'three'

'Dàn' meaning 'cut'

/å/: broad sound as in English 'call'

in Bodo e.g. 'Båbe' meaning 'which'

'Bårå' meaning 'Boro' 'Gåthå' meaning 'child'

Use of Diacritic Marks

It is seen that the Missionary used the following diacritic marks to make convenient the mode of articulation of the phonemes.

/ŭ/: This is the representation of vowel /ɯ/; and used for marking High back un-rounded vowel. /å/: The upper case as marked at the top of the /a/ used for marking back rounded vowel.

/ă/: The top rafar as marked at the top of the /a/ used for marking low central un-rounded vowel as nasal sound.

To Mark the Supra-Segmental Features

The following diacritic marks were used for marking high tone, low tone, and high-low tone. /´/: This mark represents high tone.

Example: 'Oá' meaning 'bamboo'

'Tháng' meaning 'go'/`/:

This mark represents low tone.

Example: 'Thàm' meaning 'three'

'Dàn' meaning 'cut' / ˆ/:

It represents high-low tone.

Example:

'Bíkhô' meaning 'him'

'Mithígô' meaning 'understand'

'Mêgan' meaning 'eye'

'Bê' meaning 'this'

CONCLUSION:

In constructing the Bodos cultural, grammatical, and ethnic identities, it has been aimed to examine the multiple roles of the Bodo language. It is also used analytical and explanatory methods to explore and explain how the Bodo language helped the Bodos to construct unique identities and significant roles in creating the Bodos identities. Further, the Bodo language facilitated the Bodos in producing the grammatical identity by framing rules about forming words, nouns, pronouns, adjectives, pronunciations, and gender words. Besides, the Bodo language aided the Bodos in developing their ethnic identity by enlightening their racial origin, physical features, history, and connections with the Mech, the Koch, and the Dhimal. Therefore, the future study should focus on studying the resulting behaviour of the Bodos from the cultural, grammatical, and ethnic identities that have developed. This study will help Bodos understand both the positive and negative effects of identity construction. The Bodos will further learn to preserve and enrich their grammatical, cultural, and ethnic identities.

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