RESEARCH NOTE

THE MORPHOLOGY OF THE MAITHILI CONJUNCTIVE PARTICIPLE-Kə

Ramawatar Yadav

i	*ke*	*batāha*	*kavi*	*-bhāṅga*	*pībi*		*svāgata*
this	who	crazy	poet	hemp	drink	-CP	welcome

basanta	*achi*	*gābi*	*rahala?*	Kāñcinātha Jhā 'Kiraṇa'
spring	AUX	sing	IMPERF ASP	

'Who is this crazy poet singing 'welcome to spring' having drunk hemp?

Introduction

This conjunctive participle is one of the characteristic devices for linking sequences of clauses to the host clause in Maithili.

The conjunctive participle in Maithili is marked by the affix *-kə* (also by an allomorph *–kəe* depending on idiolectal stylistic predilections and written in Devanagari variously as *<ka>*, *<kae>*, and *<kaya>*) which is attached to a tenseless verb of a nonfinite clause in a sentence. The following examples illustrate it.

1. *hin-ka*   *kətha–kẽ*   *kəne bekcha-kə dekh-ə / ja-e*
   he-Hon-GENIT story-ACC/DAT a little elaborate-CP see-PSTPCPL go–OPT

'Let his story be viewed in a little more detail / Let's look at his story a little more elaborately.'

2. *bap*   *dekh-l-ǝk*   ＼   *je*   *chc̃ṛa*   *dhaǝrphǝṛa-kǝ* *uth-ǝ /*
   father see-PST-3Nonhon+3Nonhon REL boy hurry-CP   Aarise-PST-3Nonhon
   'The father saw that the son arose hurriedly.'

Sentence (1) is a complex sentence the matrix of which consists of a finite verb *dekh-ǝ/je-e* which in effect is a complex predicate composed of the polar verb stem *dekh-* and the vector verb stem *ja-* to which person, tense, aspect, and mood desinences are compositely attached, while the embedded clause consists of a non-finite verb *bekchaeb* to the tenseless form of which is attached the conjunctive participle -*kǝ* upon deletion of the infinitive marker -*eb* (e.g. *bekchaeb → bekchaɸ → bekcha-kǝ*). Similarly, sentence (2) is also a complex sentence the matrix of which consists of a finite verb *uth-ǝ* / which is composed of the stem *uth* plus the person, tense, aspect, and mood desinences, while the embedded clause consists of a non-finite verb *dhǝrphǝṛaeb* to the tenseless form of which is attached the conjunctive participle -*kǝ* upon deletion of the infinitive marker -*eb* (e.g. dhǝrphǝṛaeb → dhǝrphǝṛaɸ → dhǝrphǝṛa-kǝ).

A number of other -*kǝ* forms also coexist in Maithili, e.g.

3.   *rait-kǝ*   *nǝi*   *a-u*
      night-PP   not   come-IMP-2 Hon
      'Don't come at night'
In sentence (3) –*kǝ* acts as a post position denoting time.

When the verb stem *kǝ r* (of the infinitive *kǝ rǝ b* 'to do') is combined with such action verbs as *leb* 'to take', *deb* 'to give', *aeb/œb* 'to come', *jaeb/jœb* 'to go' to form compound verb expressions in Maithili then the stem final -*r* is deleted and the resultant complex predicates are as follows: *kǝ le-l-ǝk (*kǝr le-l-ǝk), kǝ de-l-k-ǝ inh (*kǝr dė-l-k- ǝ inh)*. The following examples are illustrative:

4.   *u*   *bhojǝn*   *kǝ*   *le-l-ǝk*
      he-Non hon   meal   do   take-PST-3 Non hon
      'He already ate.'
5.   *tō*   *kaj*   *k ǝ* *ǝe-l-ẽ*
      You- Non hon   work   do   come-PST-2 Non hon
      'You already finished the work.'

6. *o*   *hun-k-ər*   *kaj*   *kə*   *de-l-k-ə inh*
    he-Hon   he-Hon-GENIT   work   do give-PST-3Hon+3Hon
    'He already finished his job.'

A few Maithili idiomatic expressions (generally borrowed from Hindi) also contain -*kə* forms, e.g.

7. *o*   *hath dho-kə*   *ok-ra*   *pachā pəir ge-l-ah*
    he-Hon hand wash-CP   he-Non-hon-ACC/DAT behind lie   go-PST-3Hon
    'He followed him steadfastly.'

Please note that sentence (7) does not ever mean that 'he first washed his hands and then followed him.'

Finally, a few Maithili adverbial expressions also contain -*kə* forms attached to them, e.g.

8   *biśes-kə* 'Specifically'
9   *khas-kə*   'Specially'

Since the -*kə* forms illustrated in sentences (3-9) are not germane to the main argument of this paper, these will not be discussed here. The main purpose of the paper is to describe the morphological properties of the conjunctive participle -*kə* which is attached to a tenseless verb of an embedded clause in Maithili.

Morphology

-*kə* is a non-neutral affix in that it tends to trigger changes in the shape of the verbal base to which it is attached. The exact nature of the verb stem alternation depends on the phonotactic structure of the verb, i.e., on whether the verb stem ends in an open or closed syllable or whether it contains a diphthong or not. Thus, to begin with, in a consonant-ending verb stem, -*i* is inserted at stem-end. In pronunciation the inserted -*i* is metathesized to a position prior o the final consonant, resulting thereby in profuse diphthongization in Maithili. In spelling, however, -*i* is retained at stem-end. In those sociolects in which the pronunciation and the spelling equate, metathesis does not occur – resulting thereby in an increase of the number of syllables. The following examples illustrate it.

10. /uṭh+k∂ →uṭhik∂/ →[uiṭhk∂/*uṭhk∂] <uṭhika> having arisen'
11. /an+k∂ →anik∂/ →[aink∂/*ank∂] <ānika> 'having brought'
12. /bujh+k∂ →bujhik∂/ →[buijhk∂*bujhk∂] <bujhika> 'having understood'
13. /dub+k∂ →dubik∂/ →[duibk∂/*dubk∂] <dubika> 'having drowned'
14. /baj+k∂ →bjik∂/ →[baijk∂/*bajk∂] <bājika> having spoken'
15. /kaṭ+k∂ →kaṭik∂/ →[kaiṭk∂/*kaṭk∂] <kāṭika> 'having cut'
16. /k∂h+k∂ →k∂hik∂/ →[k∂ihk∂/*k∂hka∂] <kahika> 'having said'
17. /h∂s+k∂ →h∂sik∂/ →[h∂isk∂/*h∂ska] <hāsika> 'having laughed'
18. /c∂r+k∂ →c∂rik∂/ →[c∂irk∂/*c∂rk∂] <carika> 'haing grazed'
19. /p∂k∂r+k∂ →p∂k∂rik∂/ →[p∂k∂irk∂/*p∂k∂rk∂] <pakaṛika> 'having caught'
20. /hur+k∂ →hurik∂/ →[huirk∂/*hurk∂] <hārika> 'having filled'

Note that if the consonant-ending verb stem contains -i, the insertion of -i rule applies but the inserted -i is never metathsized – apparently to preserve the canonical phonological pattern of Maithili by disallowing a vowel hiatus of -ii or an occurrence of three vowels in a row within a phonological word in Maithili, e.g.

21. /pis+k∂ pisik∂/ [pisk∂~pisik∂/*piisk∂] <pisika> 'having gound'
22. /p∂is+k∂ b∂isik∂/ [b∂isk∂~b∂isik∂/*b∂iisk∂] <baisika> having sat'
23. /∂ĩth+k∂ aĩthik∂/ [∂ĩthk∂~∂ĩthk∂/*∂ĩithk∂] <aĩthika> 'having twisted'
24. /p∂isk∂ p∂isik∂/ [p∂isk∂~p∂isik∂/*p∂iisk∂] <paisika> 'having entered'
25. /cir+k∂ cirik∂/ [cirk∂~cirik∂/* ciirk∂] <cīrika> 'having pierced'

Secondly, in a extremely small subset of recalcitrant monosyllabic verb stems ending in -r, the addition of the conjunctive participle -k∂ triggers the deletion of the final r and an optional insertion of e at stem-end in educated styles of Maithili, e.g.

26. /k∂+k∂ →k∂ɸk∂/ →[k∂k∂~k∂ek∂/*k∂rk∂] <kaka/kaeka> 'having done'
27. /dh∂r+k∂ →dh∂ɸk∂ →[dh∂k∂~dh∂ek∂/*dh∂rk∂] <dhaka/dhaeka> 'having held'

It is worth noting here that in eastern dialects of Maithili, [k∂ek∂] and [dh∂ek∂] are also pronounced as [kæk∂] and [dhæk∂] respectively.

Thirdly, in a subset of verb stems ending in -a, upon addition of the conjunctive participle -k∂, -b- is infixed prior to the insertion of -i. Alternatively, one might argue that b is inserted at stem-end, rendering the stem as consonant-final. The -i insertion then applies and the metathesis rule too applies as usual. The following examples exemplify it.

28. /la+kə/ → labikə/ → [laibkə/*labkə] <lābika> 'having brought'
29. /a+kə/ → abikə/ → [aibkə/*abkə] <ābika> 'having come'
30. /pa+kə/ → pabikə/ → [paibkə/*pabkə] <pābika> 'having got'

Fourthly, a few -i ending verb stems optionally undergo the -b- infixation rule prior to -i insertion, but block the metathesis to occur – apparently to disallow the hiatus of two high front vowels in Maithili. Thus, two sets of alternate verb forms coexist in Maithili, e.g.

31. /pi+kə/ → [pibikə~pikə/*piibkə~*piikə] <pībika~pīka> 'having drunk'
32. /si+kə/ → [sibikə~sikə/*siibkə~*siikə] <sībika~sīka> 'having sewn'

Fifthly, a few a and o ending verb stems do not undergo -b- infixation. Naturally, in such cases the -i insertion rule does not apply. Optionally, -e may be inserted at stem-end, e.g.

33. /ja+kə/ → [jakə~jaekə/*jaikə] <jāka~jāeka> 'having gone'
34. /kha+kə/ → [khakə~khaekə/*khailkə] <khāka~khāeka> 'having eaten'
35. /cora+kə/ → [corakə~coraekə/*coraikə] <corāka~corāeka> 'having stolen'
36. /dho+kə/ → [dhokə~dhoekə/*dhoikə] <dhoka~dhoeka> 'having washed'

Sixthly, the inchoative -o ending verb stem ho 'become' undergoes a suppletion upon addition of the conjunctive participle -kə, and an optional e is inserted at stem-end, e.g.

37. /ho+kə/ → [bhəkə~bhəekə] <bhak~bhaeka> 'having become'.

In some dialects, the stative ho 'be' does not undergo any change:

38. /ho+kə/ → [hokə] <hoka> 'having been'

Finally, a subset of Maithili verb stems ending in e undergo stem alternation upon addition of the conjunctive participle -kə as shown below:

39. e → φ

φ → ə (e)

Or, alternatively,

e → ə (e)

Examples:

40. /le+kə →/fφkə→ /əkə/ → [/əkə~/əekə/*lekə] <laka~laeka> 'having taken'

41. /de+kə →dφkə → dəkə/ → [dəkə~dəekə/*dekə] <dak~daeka> 'having given'

   Or,

42. /le+kə/ → [/əkə~/əekə]   <laka~laeka>   'having taken'

43. /de+kə → [dəkə~dəekə]   <daka~daeka>   'having given'

Conclusion

Stem alternations in Maithili compound verb formations and conjunctive participle constructions are quite similar. For more information on Maithili compound verb constructions, the reader is referred to Yadav (1996:191-208). Also, -kə deletion, as evidenced in the quotation cited at the onset of this paper, is characteristic of educated/literary styles of Maithili. All this and the syntactic and semantic properties of the Maithili conjunctive participle constructions will be discussed elsewhere.

Abbreviations

/ /	Underlying Form
[ ]	Surface Form
< >	Written Form
*	Unacceptable form
Ø	Deletion
~	Alternate Form
→	Becomes
ACC/DAT	Accusative-Dative Case
AUX	Auxiliary Verb
CP	Conjunctive Participle
GENIT	Genitive Case
Hon	Honorific
IMP	Imperative Mood
IMPERF ASP	Imperfective Aspect
Non hon	Nonhonorific
OPT	Optative Mood
PP	Postposition
PST	Past Tense
PSTPCPL	Past Participle

REL	Relative Clause Marker
2	Second Person
3	Third Person

Reference

Yadav, Ramawatar. 1996. *A Reference Grammar of Maithili* (Trends in Linguistics: Documentation 11), Berlin & New York: Mouton de Gruyter.