Polysemy in GujaratiPost Positions / ʈʰi / AND/ne/

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Abstract

Gujarati is an Indo-Aryan language, native to the Indian state of Gujarat. Postpositions, in Gujarati, are observed to have multiple, related senses. This paper undertakes a cognitive approach to examine the polysemic behaviour of the Gujarati postpositions /ʈʰi/ and /ne/ with the help of image schematic structures. It further explains how these senses are related by means of the concept of prototypicality. The classical model advocates strong semantic boundaries disallowing all these derived senses to fall under the same category; however, Lakoff's (1987) prototype approach allows for fuzzy boundaries and thus, explains the relatedness between the senses within the same category by assigning them core and peripheral membership. The analysis attempts to identify the different senses that the use of

/ʈʰi/ and /ne/ convey in various instances on account of their metaphorical and metonymical extensions.

This paper seeks to intensify the understanding of a native Gujarati speaker of his/her own spatial cognition, and aid the speakers of other languages to identify the contrast of their mental schema

with that of the native Gujarati speakers. Moreover, it aims to provide senses of these markers beyond the available existing glossary, and contribute to the lexicographical works as well as language teaching methods and sources in Gujarati.

The paper is divided into three sections. The first section deals with introduction to the

category of postpositions in Gujarati language as well as some of the basic tools of Cognitive Linguistics employed in the paper. The second section derives the core and peripheral senses for each postposition. The third section forms the conclusion.

Keywords: postposition, polysemy, prototype, image schema, conceptual metaphor, metonymic extensions.

Area: Cognitive Linguistics

Introduction

Gujarati language is one of the prominent members of the Indo-Aryan language family, and part of the greater Indo-European language family. The Gujarati script is a variant of Devanāgarī script, differentiated by the loss of the characteristic horizontal line running above the letters and by a small number of modifications in the remaining characters.

1. Morphologically, Gujarati is an agglutinative language and syntactically, a head-final SOV language.

Though Gujarati grammar incorporates a prominent case-system, the total number and the types of cases that form the case-system is debatable. While most Gujarati grammar references mention the occurrence of seven cases, certain grammarians indicate the presence of eight. Also, the cases are commonly referred to by their number as prathama, dvitiya, tritiya, etc. as per the Sanskrit-based Indian Grammatical Tradition; consequently, there being an ambiguity regarding the accuracy of their types. Phadake (1842/2008: 11-13) states that Gujarati grammar involves seven cases, if vocative case is omitted, and that only the fourth case – objective – is made up by means of significant postpositions, whereas the rest are formed by terminations or affixes added. He further names the seven cases and their respective markers, in the order of their number, as Nominative (-Ø), Accusative (/ne/), Implementive (/e/), Dative (/ne Y~t̪ʰe/), Ablative (/t̪ʰi/ or /t̪ʰYki/), Genitive (/no/ or /ni/ or /ni/) and Locative (/mã/) (with Vocative being the eighth which he considers to be

functioning same as Nominative). Taylor (1985: 23) mentions the cases in Gujarati as being seven – including the Vocative case; and refers to the remaining six as Subjective (-Ø), Objective (/ne/ 'to' or 'for'), Agential (/e/ 'by'), Ablative (/t̪ʰi/ 'from' or 'by'), Genitive (/no/ or /ni/or

/ni/ 'of') and Locative (/e/ 'on' or 'at' and /mã/ 'in'). /t̪ʰYki/), Genitive (/no/ or /ni/ or /ni/)

and Locative (/mã/) (with Vocative being the eighth which he considers to be functioning same as Nominative). Of these, the given paper examines the locative markers /mã/ and /e/ and explores their polysemic behavior through image schematic structures as well as their metaphorical and metonymical extensions.

The present analysis attempts to derive the different senses that the use of /mã/ and /e/, at various instances, convey, followed by establishing the relatedness between the various respective senses. It also aims at identifying the senses that serve as the 'typical members' of the categories of /mã/ and /e/ respectively, so as to obtain the core and peripheral members of the categories through the Prototype Approach. The Classical Theory advocates the uniformity of categories in their inclusion of members that share the necessary and sufficient features by its strong proposition of 'clear boundaries of common properties'. The members that do not fulfill this set of conditions or features fall outside the strong boundary of the category. However, the Prototype Approach allows fuzzy boundaries and further expounds 'membership gradience' or 'degree of variation' by assigning core (or central) and peripheral membership within the category.

Polysemy, as stated by Taylor (2003:103), is the association of two or more related senses with a single linguistic form. He further adds that 'a polysemous item associates a phonological form with a number of more or less discrete though related meanings, which cluster in a family resemblance category.' (Taylor 2003:124). Some of the early works on polysemy by Lakoff (1987: 417) reveal that 'The senses of a word are related to one another more or less closely by various means, one of which is conceptual metaphor.' The image schematic structures used in this paper act as one of these means.

2. Wittgenstein's (1953) notion of 'family resemblances, centrality and gradience' by explaining the range of senses that count as *game*, points out the absence of boundaries, thereby falsifying the prediction of Classical Theory. Austin (1961) infers the concept of a 'primary nuclear sense' for

the central or prototypical senses through the analysis of adjective *healthy*. Coleman and Kay (1981) also analyze different senses of the word *lie* through the prototype view. Thus, the prototype model marks the central or typical members ofa

category, the exemplars, as the 'prototypical' members and the other related members of the category as less typical or 'peripheral' (Rosch 1973b, 1975, Rosch and Mervis 1975, Rosch et al. 1976).

A diagrammatic representation, that allows us to vividly associate the different senses of a category and assists in deducing which of the members maybe more typical, is the Image Schema. According to Mark Johnson (1987), 'an Image Schema is a primitive level of cognitive structure underlying metaphor and which provides a link between bodily experience and higher cognitive domains such as language. Embodied experience give rise to image schemas within the conceptual system. Image schemas derive from sensory and perceptual experience as we interact with and move about in the world. Image schemata are the conceptual structures that emerge out of our interaction. Image schematic structures are metaphorically projected from concrete to more abstract domains of understanding.'

Metaphor is no more a concept limited to the figurative language use of being a poetic device or figure of speech but ascertains a fundamental usage in everyday language in accordance with Cognitive Semantics. Cognitivists insist on the influence of metaphors over a wide range of linguistic expressions because of their strong presence in speaker's mind. As Taylor (2003:134) puts it, 'Metaphor is seen as a means whereby more abstract and intangible areas can be conceptualized in terms of the familiar and concrete.' Therefore, 'Metaphors allow us to understand one domain of experience (target) in terms of another (source).' (Lakoff and Johnson1980). Here, the donor concept can be treated as source domain and the receptor as the target domain.

A similar conceptual process which involves identifying a referent by something associated with it is Metonymy. Metaphor is viewed as mapping across conceptual domains whereas metonymy establishes a connection within a single domain. (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, Lakoff 1987, Lakoff and Turner 1989). 'A cognitive linguistic analysis of metonymy is the ability of a speaker to select a different contextually salient concept profile in a domain or domain matrix than the one usually

symbolized by the word.' (Croft and Cruse 2004:48)

Thus, the given concepts help us comprehend and enhance our linguistics abilities, as expressed by Evans and Green (2006:5), 'Language offers a window into cognitive function, providing insights into the nature, structure and organization of thoughts and ideas. The most important way in which cognitive linguistics differs from other approaches to the study of language, then, is that language is assumed to reflect certain fundamental properties and design features of the human mind.'

3.Analysis ofPostpositions

POSTPOSITION /ʈʰi/

The postposition /ʈʰi/ typically marks the ablative case signifying either the existence of a particular action since a previous point of time or detachment or disconnection from a previous point of action. Furthermore, it also indicates the instrument of the action, thereby assigning instrumental case as claimed by certain grammarians. Both the features of the postposition have been distinctly analyzed here.
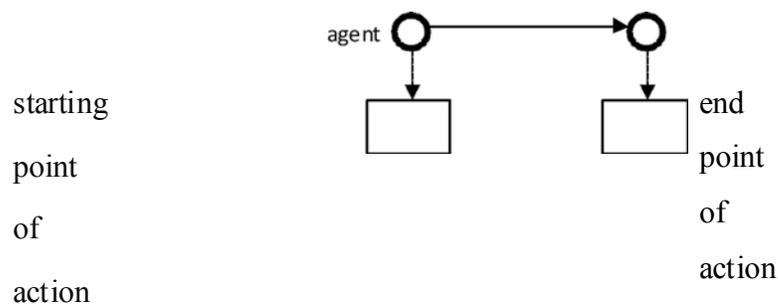
2.1.1/ʈʰi/ occurring as an ablativemarker

'I went walking to school from home.'

2.1.1/ʈʰi/ occurring as an ablative marker

(1.a)	hũ	gʰəre	-ʈʰi	niʃaḷ	caḷʈo	gəjo
	I	home	PO.P	school	walking	go-
						PAST

In example (1.a), /ʈʰi/ is bound to the noun 'house' where the commencement of action is taking

starting point of action

end point of action

place. However, the course of action furthers by detachment from this point of commencement towards a definite goal. In (1.a), the mental schema generated is a path schema but with two definite points at both ends of the path. It also explicitly states the agent, the point of initiation and point of conclusion of action – thus, stating a specified goal.

Therefore, /ʈʰi/ occurs as an ablative marker in (1.a) giving the prototypical sense *from*.

(1.b)   mɔheman   surəʈ   -ʈʰi   nikʲi   gɔja

        Guests   Surat   PO.P   leave   go

        'Guests have left Surat.'

        'Guests have left Surat.'

agent

point

of
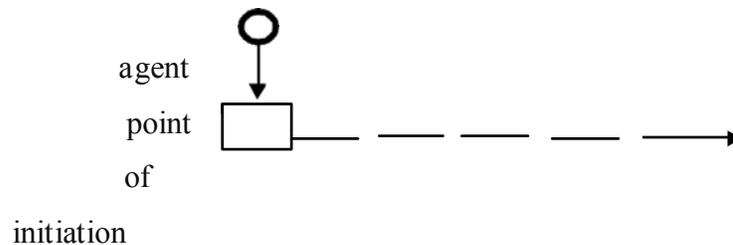
initiation

path (detachment from previous point of action)

In example (1.b), /ʈʰi/ is attached to the name of the place indicating where the action commences. As the action progresses, the agent moves away from this point of initiation with a consequent disconnection. Thus, the postposition assigns ablative case to the noun 'Surat' and derives the prototypical sense *from*; the only difference between (1.a) and (1.b) being that there is no mention of a specified goal in (1.b).

(2)   gəikal   -ʈʰi   vərsad   calu   cʰe

          Yesterday   PO.P   rain   continue   be-

          PRES 'It is raining since yesterday.'

In example (2), the postposition is bound to 'yesterday'. It temporally determines the point of initiation of the event of 'raining'. Here, the time is metaphorically perceived as a site of

commencement of event. As the event advances, it surpasses this duration of time and moves into another temporal space – that is the time of speaking. The sense derived for this usage is *from* (yesterday) or more appropriately, *since*.

1.1.1 /t̪ʰi/ occurring as an instrumental marker

(3)	pencil	-t̪ʰi	ləkʰʊ̃	səhelũ	cʰe
	Pencil	PO.P	write	easy	be-

PRES 'It is easy to write with a pencil.'

In example (3), the occurrence of postposition /t̪ʰi/ with the noun 'pencil' implies the function of the noun as an instrument to perform the given action. This can be reasoned for the fact that, here, the postposition does not indicate a site of action for the noun it is bound to neither does it cause any disconnection from the noun to further the action. Rather, it states the noun as being a tool for carrying out the action. Hence, it acts as an instrumental marker in this example. As the action of 'writing' is being carried out with the help of 'pencil', the sense derived for the postposition here is *with* – a prototypical sense of /t̪ʰi/ as an instrumental marker.

(4)	mara	-t̪ʰi	kac	ʈʊʈjo
	Me	PO.P	glass	break

'The glass was broken by me.'

The postposition /t̪ʰi/ is bound to the first person singular pronoun in example (4), indicating

its role in the performance of the action. Here, the action 'break' is being intentionally carried out by the agent and the attachment of /t̪ʰi/ confirms its role as an instrument to execute the action. Considering that, in (4), the instrument itself executes the action; the sense obtained from this example is *by* (in the view of the action being carried out *by* the agent / instrument). This, again, can be deemed as a prototypical sense for this alternative usage.

(5)   prem   -t̪ʰi   ʋat̪   kərvi   ɟoiɟe

        Love   PO.P   talk   do   should

        'One should speak with love.'

Example (5) illustrates the action 'talk' to be performed with the help of the abstract feeling of 'love'. Hence, the abstract noun 'love' is being metaphorically perceived to be a physical unit that can aid the execution of an action; implying its role as an instrument for the given action. Though the sense derived here is *with*, it is peripheral on account of its metaphorical conceptualization.

(6)   ɟat̪e   ləkʰʋa   -t̪ʰi   ɟad̪   rəhe

        Own   write   PO.P   remember   AUX

        'One grasps it well if one writes by oneself.'

In example (6), /t̪ʰi/ is bound to the phrase 'to write by oneself' signifying that this entire act as a whole aids in the consequent performance of 'remembering'. Hence, this act is perceived

as a tool employed to enable the action of 'remembering'. Therefore, the sense that is metaphorically obtained here suggests 'one can grasp well' *by* 'writing on one's own'.

2.2 POSTPOSITION/ne/

The postposition /ne/ generally assigns the objective case in Gujarati language to the direct object or indirect object of the verb.

(1)   Ram   Reena   -ne   məlʃe

        Ram   Reena   PO.P   meet-

        FUT 'Ram will meet Reena.'

Example (1) shows 'Ram' as the agent and 'Reena' as the recipient of the verb 'meet'. The postposition /ne/ bound to the recipient 'Reena' assigns objective case to it. As the action is directed towards the recipient by the agent, /ne/ provides the sense *to* for the given usage.

This is the prototypical sense for postposition /ne/.

(2)   sənsʈʰa   -ne   25   vərʃ   pura   t̪ʰəja

       Organization   PO.P   years   complete   happen-

       PRES 'The organization has completed 25 years.'

The occurrence of /ne/ with 'organization' in example (2) suggests a variant use of the postposition. Here, the entire event of the 'completion of specific time duration' has been perceived as an event happening *to* the object 'organization'. Thus, the sense *to* has been metaphorically derived by viewing the temporally perceived event as a physical entity being directed towards the object, making it a peripheral sense.

(3)   səbʰjət̪a   -ne   ʃobʰe   ʈɛvu   vərʈən   kəro

       Decency   PO.P   suit   (of)   that   behaviour   do-

       PRES 'Behave in a decent manner.'

Example (3) is an imperative sentence wherein both – the recipient 'decency' and the goal of the action – have been metaphorically derived. Here, /ne/ shows the relation between the noun it postpositions and the manner in which the action should be carried out. The action of the 'appropriateness of behaviour' is directed *to* suit 'decency'. The action is perceived as an entity benefitting or being provided to an abstract noun by again comparing the latter to a physical unit which can receive it. Hence, the peripheral sense, metaphorically derived here, is *to*.

Conclusion

We have analyzed the distinct and diverse senses that the various uses of the given postpositions provide. This insight is offered by the construction of schemas that are formed as a consequence of the human mind's creativity and ability to give form and shape to its spatio-physical and spatio-temporal experiences and interactions. The analysis leads us to infer that diversity of perception is highly characteristic of human mind, and this diversity may be influenced by socio-cultural norms that aid in shaping the understanding of individual entities and establishing a relation between them. The attempt made here is to identify the distinctions between different linguistic forms employed by users of two different languages to express their perception of the same reality. The results of this study are summarized with an account of the distinct senses derived from each example. The postposition /t̪ʰi/ marks the ablative case as well as indicates the instrument of action (functioning as instrumental marker) in Gujarati language. For the occurrence of /t̪ʰi/ as an ablative marker, the

core sense derived is *from*, when obtained spatially referring to a particular point in geographical space. For its temporal derivation, the sense obtained is *since*. These senses become less prototypical when applied to abstract domains.

When /t̺ʰi/ is utilized as an instrumental marker, it gives the prototypical sense *with* or *by* denoting the tool that aided in the performance of the action. These senses shift to periphery when used to establish relation between metaphorically conceptualized entities. The postposition /ne/ assigning the objective case to the direct or indirect object of a verb in a sentence provides the central or core sense as *to* when used to indicate the entity towards which the action is directed or being performed for the benefit of. When the postposition is employed for establishing a temporal and/or metaphorical relation between the subject and object, the sense *to* shifts to its peripheral usage. Thus, from the data obtained and analyzed in the given dissertation, it can be concluded that the postposition /mã/ exhibits maximum polysemous behavior by conveying a number of senses distinctly derived through its employment in various usages. Contrastingly, the postposition /ne/ shows less polysemic behavior as compared to those preceding it in the analysis. However, all postpositions, in varying degrees, involve senses other than their core or central sense when used in different kinds of utterances; and these different senses associate with the core sense in varying degrees according to their different features. The classical or formal model of categorization would be unable to put together all these senses under one category; whereas the notion of prototypicality provides explanation for these various mental interpretations of space and time as being related. As Lakoff (1987:5) endorses, 'There is nothing more basic than categorization to our thought, perception, action, and speech'. This stands as a testimony to the fact that speakers of different languages construct reality in their own unique way. By delineating the senses derived by these unique perceptions, an attempt has been made to intensify the understanding of a native Gujarati speaker of his/her own spatial cognition, and aid the speakers of other languages to identify the contrast of their mental schema with that of the native Gujarati speakers.

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