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Abstract:

Language is the identity of the particular region. This paper compares the honorific and ultra honorific pronouns used in two Dravidian Languages Kannada and Telugu. French and English languages will be used to compare the pronouns and understand them in greater detail. Dravidian languages among themselves vary in the usage of subject pronouns, the same is with the languages English and French, though both belong to the same language family, there is a difference in their usage. Dravidian Languages also have ultra honorific pronouns in addition to honorific pronouns. Honorific pronouns are used when one talks to someone elder to him in age, is a stranger or a respectable person. It is a sign of respect. The same word is used to address a group of people as well, that is for a plural number. English does not have honorific pronouns. It also does not differentiate between second person singular and second person plural. French has different pronouns for second person singular in the familiar category and second person singular in the formal category. The second pronoun is also used to express plural form. But it does not have an honorific pronoun for the third person. It is the same word that is used in formal and informal category. Here we have the Dravidian languages which have honorific pronouns for the second person and third person as well. Apart from the honorific pronouns, it also has ultra honorific pronoun for the second person. These concepts will be dealt with using two of the Dravidian languages, Kannada and Telugu.

Keywords: *Pronouns, honorific, ultra-honorific, language family, Dravidian*

1. Introduction

Kannada and Telugu languages belong to the Dravidian language family. They exhibit similar scripts though mutually unintelligible. This paper focuses on the use of pronouns especially the honorific and the ultra honorific pronouns used in these languages. English does not have the use of honorific pronoun in any person. French language uses honorific pronoun in second person. But Dravidian languages use honorific pronouns for second and third person. The languages taken up for study Telugu and Kannada also have ultra honorific pronouns for second person singular. The subject pronouns will be dealt with in detail.

Pronouns are the words that are used in place of noun. They can be used for

I person singular

English : I

French – je

Hindi - mai

Kannanda – na:nu

Telugu – ni:nu

I person plural (exclusive of the listener)

English : we

French : nous

Hindi – hum

Kannada : na:vu

Telugu : me:mu

I person plural (inclusive of the listener)

English : we

French : nous

Hindi : hum

Kannada : na:vu

Telugu : manamu

(only Telugu has a different term)

II person singular (familiar)

English : you

French : tu

Hindi : tum

Kannada : ni:nu

Telugu : nuvu

II person (singular-honorific) / plural

English : you

French : vous

Hindi : aap

Kannada : ni:vu

Telugu : mi:ru

(French, Hindi, Kannada and Telugu have a different term)

II person (singular-ultra honorific)

English : you

French : vous

Hindi : aap

Kannada : ta:vu

Telugu : tamaru

(Only Kannada and Telugu have different terms)

III person singular – masculine

English : he

French : il

Hindi : vah / yah (based on the proximity)

Kannada : avanu / ivanu (based on the proximity)

Telugu : athaDu / ithaDu (based on the proximity)

III person singular – feminine

English : she

French : elle

Hindi : vah / yah (based on the proximity)

Kannada : avaLu / ivaLu (based on the proximity)

Telugu : a:me / i:me (based on the proximity)

III person singular – polite/respectful

English : he/she

French : il/elle

Hindi : ve /ye

Kannada : avaru / ivaru (for both feminine and masculine)

Telugu : a:yana / i:na – for masculine

a:viDa / i:viDa – for feminine

va:ru / vi:ru – for ultra honorific

(Only Kannada and Telugu have different terms, Telugu has a different term based on the gender and also for ultra honorific usage for III person as well)

III person plural

English : they

French : ils/elles (gender specific)

Hindi : ve / ye

Kannada : avaru / ivaru

Telugu : v:aLLu / vi:LLu

III person singular – inanimate / non-humans

English : it

French : il/elle/ca/ce

Hindi : vah / yah

Kannada : adu / idu

Telugu : adi / idi

(here it can be noted that French has different forms of using the III person – impersonal pronoun, it is also gender specific. Telugu uses the form ‘adi’ for III person singular feminine nouns in a very familiar environment).

III person plural – inanimate/non-humans

English : they

French : ils/elles/ce

Hindi : ye

Kannada : avu / ivu

Telugu : avi / ivi

(it can be noted that Kannada and Telugu have different terms to differentiate animate and inanimate subject pronouns, also to be noted is that these pronouns are used for non-humans as well.) French uses gender specific pronouns for third person singular and plural as French language has grammatical gender in addition to biological gender.

2. Ultra honorific pronouns – used in Kannada and Telugu

These pronouns can be used for someone who is highly respectable, a highly religious person, a saintly figure, etc. At the same time it can be sarcastically used for someone to tease him.

Subjective case:

Kannada : ta:vu barabeku

You should come

Telugu : tamaru ra:va:li

You should come

Objective case :

Kannada : tamanna karitivi

We call you

Telugu : tamarini pilusta:mu

We call you

Instrumental case :

Kannada : tamma jothe horagaDe hogabeku

We should go out with you

Kannada : tamatho bayaTiki veLLali

We should go out with you

Dative case :

Kannada : tamage santosha a:yitha?

Are you happy?

Telugu : tamaki santosham ayinda?

Are you happy?

Oblative case:

Kannada : tamminda upaka:ra aayitu

This is a favour from you

Telugu : tamavalla upaka:ram jarigindi

This is a favour from you

Possessive case :

Kannada : tamma mane elli ide?

Where is your house?

Telugu : tamari illu ekkaDa undi?

Where is your house?

Locative case :

Telugu : tamma vaLaga vaLLe guNa ive

There are good characteristics in you.

Telugu : tamalo manchi guNa:lu unnayi

There are good characteristics in you

Reflexive usage : There is a difference of these pronouns in the reflexive usage.

Kannada : avaru tammashakke ta:ve oo:Ta ma:Didru – third person plural/

third person singular - polite

ta:vu tammashakke ta:vu hogri – second person,sarcastic

Telugu : va:LLu va:LLantiki va:LLe bhojanam chesaru

It can be noted that there is no reflexive usage with second person honorific pronoun in Telugu.

In Kannada the second person honorific pronoun is also used in the reflexive usage with third person plural or third person singular (polite) categories

If it is used in the reflexive usage with the second person honorific subject, it is considered to be the sarcastic usage.

Kannada :

na:nu nanna ga:Di alli ho:de

ni:nu ninna ga:Di alli ho:de

ni:vu nimma ga:di alli ho:dri

avanu tanna ga:Di alli ho:da

avaLu tanna ga:Di alli ho:daLu

avaru tamma ga:Di alli ho:daru

Telugu :

ne:nu na: banDi lo veLLanu

nuvu ni: banDi lo veLLavu

athaDu tana banDi lo veLLadu

a:me tana banDi lo veLLindi

va:LLu tama banDi lo veLLaru

Here, we can note that there is no gender difference or number difference, the reflexive pronoun does not change, it is invariable. Whereas in Hindi, the word is the same across all the subject pronouns, but it changes according to the gender and the number of the noun that follows it. (apna, apni:, apne)

English just uses the possessive adjectives.

French also uses the possessive adjectives but the French possessive adjectives accord with the noun (in number and person) that they modify.

3. Conclusion

The languages Kannada and Telugu were taken for a detailed study of pronouns in general and ultra honorific pronouns in particular. Though both are part of Dravidian Languages, they exhibit differences. Telugu uses the same pronoun for third person singular feminine (informal) and third person singular non-human category. Both have honorific pronouns, Telugu has different pronouns for first person plural – including the listener and excluding the listener, whereas Kannada uses the same word. Both the languages have ultra honorific pronouns for second person singular. Telugu has an honorific pronoun for third person singular as well, whereas Kannada does not have one.

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