

Introduction

Aims and Objects

Kalyani-Kosh is a practical dictionary of the Maithili language. It is presented for the use of native speakers as well as outsiders. Both Devanagari and Roman scripts have been used for the words included here. The meaning and/or definition of each word are given in both Maithili and English. It contains about 40,000 (forty thousand) words and phrases which were collected in the course of interaction with the members of different walks of life of Maithili speech community. Besides, the books of Maithili literature were also consulted in this context. The words belonging exclusively to Maithili have been our first choice. Most of the words contained in this dictionary (or in any dictionary of Modern Indo-Aryan language) belong to the common vocabulary of the allied languages.

Maithili problematically abounds in the regional and dialectical variance. In our liberal social out-look all such variants living in the mouth of the speaker are equally correct and deserve accommodation in dictionaries. We have actually accommodated a number of them in this dictionary. But, for us, it could not be possible to collect all such variants and incorporate them in this dictionary of practical end and moderate size. Consequently, we have to satisfy ourselves only with those variants which have sustained the test of time, being used continuously by the entire community. Of course some words taken from the literary sources are exception to it, and as such they are labelled as *cls* (classical) denoting that they are used only in literature and not in the common parlance.

Orthography in Maithili has, for long, been a hot bed of controversy. We have however, maintained a uniform way of spelling and for this have adopted a system of orthography that is being followed since long in the widest area.

The rapid development of science and technology, trade and commerce and means of communications has enormously changed the life style of the Maithili speaking people within the last five decades. In course of this development numerous things of recent production and new activities of modern life have come up mostly with their English names. Out of the English loan words of this kind we have accommodated only those which are found to be sufficiently naturalised.

Keeping in view the limit of our ends and means, we have tried our best to make the present dictionary as compact and precise as possible. For this, we have excluded all unnecessary derivatives and compounds retaining only those which convey some extra significance. For example, one can find the basic word देखब, but not its regular derivatives like देखल, देखाओल, देखनिहार, देखओनिहार etc. Likewise, there is राज° "royal", but not the compounds राजकुल, राजगुरु, राजभवन, राजमहल and the like, as their senses are clearly conveyed by their components themselves.

We have paid special attention to the ceremonial and cultural significance of the words. Similarly we have carefully shown the secondary, figurative and other indirect meanings. Literal, etymological and historical meanings are given within single inverted commas whenever they were found helpful. But in English such meanings are not given considering them unnecessary for practical purposes.

The Language : An Overview

The words and expressions covered in *Kalyani-Kosh* belong to the language known as *Maithili*, *Mithilā Bhākhā* or *Tirhutīā*. It is spoken by some 20 million people inhabiting a tract of land called *Mithila* or *Tirhut* covering an area of about 28,000 square kilometres situated mainly in north Bihar in India and partly in the territory of Nepal.

Till the 16th century Maithili enjoyed the highest status in its region and even outside. It was the sole medium of all sorts of social and cultural activities of the people. It had the prestige and privilege of being the mother tongue of the then royal families of the *Karnatas*, *Oinibars* and *Khandwalas* in Mithila, *Mallas* in Nepal and *Sens* in Morang. Many of the kings of these dynasties composed poems and dramas in Maithili and liberally patronized its writers. It is to be noted here that the present dictionary is also a fruit of the generosity of our late-lamented Maharaja of Darbhanga coming from the said Khandwala dynasty. For long, Maithili also served as a *lingua franca* in the north-east comprising Nepal, Assam, Bengal, Orrisa and south-east Bihar. It had been the most effective vehicle in spreading the Vaisnavism in the said region.

In the growth of literature Maithili stood ahead of all its neighbouring languages and touched its acme as early as in the 14th century A.D. with the advent of poet Vidyapati, and the trend continued for some centuries.

With the beginning of the 17th century Maithili started to lose its ground. In proper Mithila it was replaced in official use by Persian. In Nepal and Morang it was ousted by the Nepali language as a sequel to the establishment of Gorkha rule there. When the Britishers came, Persian was replaced by English. Now Hindi is occupying virtually all the spheres of administration, education and mass media under the Government.

In the teeth of all these adversities Maithili is still alive and has been struggling hard to regain its past dignity and glory. The publication of the present dictionary may also be viewed as a stride towards that end.

In linguistic terms, Maithili is one of the New Indo-Aryan Languages belonging to the eastern (Magadhan) group like Assamese, Bengali and Oriya. Situated on the border of the eastern and the western groups of the languages, Maithili has something in common with the both specially in its vocabulary. In spite of this Maithili possesses a good number of its special characteristics sufficient to prove it to be a language as distinct and independent as Hindi, Bengali and the like. A single rule of Verb-Nominal-Agreement (a peculiar system of verb-conjugation) is enough to distinguish it from any other language. Dr. Subhadra Jha has described this peculiarity in very clear terms :

Maithili conjugation has been said to be very very complex. It is due to two reasons : (i) on account of employment of different sets of verbal forms with reference to the subject with the honorific sense associated with them; (ii) on account of such a verb being affected not only by the person of the subject and object but also by the person of the instrument, location, relation etc. To speak more accurately an appropriate verbal form required for use in a sentence is determined not only by the person of the subject but also by that of the noun or pronoun related to the subject. [*The Formation of the Maithili Language*, p. 469]

Another renowned linguist namely S. H. Kellogg has described the result of the above rule as follows :

The Maithili is distinguished from all the dialects exhibited in this Grammar, by the extraordinary exuberance of its verbal forms. Although only a part of the tenses are exhibited in full in the tables, it possesses all the tenses which are found in High Hindi, and each of these uses a bewildering variety of diverse forms, equalled in no other dialect. [*A Grammar of the Hindi Language*, p. 332]

Let us explain this peculiarity by way of examples. A simple English sentence "He went", may be translated in Maithili in as many as seven different forms as the context may demand :

- (i) ओ गेल "He (non-honorific) went"
- (ii) ओ गेलैक " He (non-honorific) went (for 3rd person: non-honorific)."
- (iii) ओ गेलहु "He (non-honorific) went (for 2nd person : non-honorific)."
- (iv) ओ गेलनि "He (non-honorific) went (for 3rd person : honorific)."
- (v) ओ गेलाह "He (honorific) went."
- (vi) ओ गेलथिन "He (honorific) went (for 3rd person : non-honorific)."
- (vii) ओ गेलथुन "He (honorific) went (for 2nd person : honorific/non-honorific)."

Recent Trends of Phonetic Change

Recently some peculiar phonetic changes have taken place in the speech of Maithili speakers. Some of such changes of far reaching consequences are described here. It will facilitate our users in identifying the words disguised in such new phonetic changes. For example, our users will be able to know that सैन and रैब is not different from शनि and रवि.

1. **Elision of अ.**—The sound अ in a weak position is often omitted in rapid speech. For example :

अगहन	agahana	:	अग्-हन्	ag-han
अजगर	ajagara	:	अज्-गर्	aj-gar
गमछा	gamachhā	:	गम्-छा	gam-chhā

This type of elision is shown every where in the Romanised pronunciation in this dictionary. The nature of this elision is clearly and precisely described by A.I. Devic in these words :

It is hypothesized that originally all Maithili words ended in a vowel. The Devanagari script currently used in writing Maithili, supports this theory since every consonant symbol has a vowel-sound inherent in it.In the spoken Maithili of today many words no longer exhibit this final vowel, but it may still be heard in careful or slow speech. In the middle of a word the inherent vowel sound is commonly omitted, but it too may be heard in slow speech. [*Basic Colloquial Maithili*, pp. xii-xiii]

2. **Metathesis of इ and उ.**—Final short इ and उ often move back and come between the vowel and the consonant preceding it. For example :

अछि	achhi	:	ऐछ	aichh
रवि	ravi	:	रैब	raib
काल्हि	kālhi	:	काइल्ह	kāilh
मासु	māsu	:	माउस	māus
बालु	bālu	:	बाउल	bāul

We have exhibited such pronunciation in addition to the standard one, but only in the case of highly frequent words.

3. **Shortening of आ.**—Change of आ to अ plays very important role in the phonetic structure of Maithili. Sometimes it is purely phonetic change, as :

काका—कका	टाका—टका	मामा—ममा	पानबाला—पानबला
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But mostly it is of morphophonemic nature; as :

आइन—अइना	आरब—अरबा	कापड़—कपड़ा	ठाकुर—ठाकुराइन
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This type of morphophonemic change is the result of the Rule of Short Antepenultimate which is of universal application in Maithili and determines its phonetic structure. According to this rule Maithili admits long vowel only in the ultimate or penultimate syllable, and all the rest are shortened. Here we are concerned only with the fact that अ is an allophone of आ in most cases (but not in all cases). It may be noted that the said rule is not a new trend, but its application as shown here is the result of a new trend of lengthening final vowels (See below).

4. Lengthening of final vowels.—A large number of words ended in short vowel अ (inherent), इ or उ have recently lengthened their final vowel perhaps under western influence. For example :

Old	:	आँगन	कापड़	माड़ब	माकड़
New	:	अडना	कपड़ा	मड़बा	मकड़ा
Old	:	डोरि	चोरि	तेलि	चौधरि
New	:	डोरी	चोरी	तेली	चौधरी
Old	:	बालु	नेरु	छाडु	चलु
New	:	बालू	नेरू	छाडू	चलू

5. Elision of इ and उ.—The short इ and उ (like अ) in certain weak positions specially final ones are mostly omitted in the recent trend. It is so not only in speech but also in writing. For Example :

Old	:	धोबिनि देखिकेँ चीन्ह गेलि आ चलि गेलि।
New	:	धोबिन देखके चीन्ह गेल आ चल गेल।

6. Coalescence of vowel clusters.—Old Maithili had a lot of vowel clusters. The new trend is to eliminate them. The old clusters अइ and अउ took the graphic form of ऐ and औ retaining almost the same phonetic value. But अए and आए have recently coalesced to one vowel symbolized in phonetic script by æ and pronounced as a in English word MAN. Likewise the clusters अओ and आओ coalesced to one sound heard in English word THOUGHT. As the traditional scripts lacked the symbols of these newly developed sounds some writers continued to use traditional bigraph अए/अओ and आए/आओ for these sounds, but in the recent trend both the pairs are expressed by ऐ and औ respectively. Consequently the two graphs ऐ and औ now represent three sounds each. ऐ=अइ, अए, आए; and औ=अउ, अओ, आओ :

ऐला	ailā	overgrowth	“अइला”।
ऐलाह	aelāh	came	“अएलाह”।
ऐल	āel	came	“आएल”।
औक	auk	vomitting	“अउक”।
औताह	aotāh	will come	“अओताह”।
पौल	pāol	received	“पाओल”।

7. **Miscellaneous Changes.**—Besides the above there are some changes of miscellaneous nature observed in recent speech. Such as :

- (a) **Elision of find °त in present participle.**—करैत छथि (old) : करै छथि (new).
- (b) **Elision of °ह.**—नहि (old) : नइ (new), गेलाह (old) : गेला (new), एहि (old) : एइ (new).
- (c) **Splitting of sonant aspirates.**—अदहा (new) : आधा (old), सबहक (new) : सभक (old).
- (d) **Simplification of ङ्ग into ङ.**—रङ्ग (new) : रङ्ग (old), छैन (new) : छैन्हि (old).
- (e) **Simplification of ञ्ह to न.**—छन्हि (old) : छनि (new).
- (f) **Use of dot in place of nasals followed by stops**—अङ्क (old) : अंक (new).

The Script

Maithili has its own script called *Tirhutā* (तिरहुता) or *Mithilākṣar* (मिथिलाक्षर), but now we have adopted Nagari in print. We wanted to retain our traditional script in addition to Nagari in the present dictionary, but the absence of computer facility prevented us. It is to be noted that almost all the manuscripts and documents found in Mithila prior to the present century A.D. are in this very script, and therefore knowledge of this script is yet essential for those interested in the tradition and culture of Mithila. Likewise the knowledge of the Newari script is also necessary for them as a good deal of old manuscripts of Maithili literature is preserved in Nepal in this very script. In fact Newari thus is a second script of Maithili. Now both these scripts have given their place to Nagari which virtually has become the third script of Maithili.

A chart of all these three scripts with Roman equivalents is given (at page xxxi) to cover up the lapse of non-inclusion of the traditional scripts in the main body of the present dictionary.

The Sources and the Heritage

For compiling the present dictionary we have explored all the sources within our reach and competence.

So far as oral sources are concerned, our means didnot allow to carry on any field work, and being conversant with the language concerned we ourselves played the role of informants whenever verification for authenticity was needed. We have, however, derived full benefit of the field-work done by Mahavaiyakaran Dinabandhu Jha, George Abraham Grierson, Bihar Rashtrabhasha Parikhad and Alice Irene Davis in course of the compilation of their respective works.

Bulk of the meterial is drawn from written sources, such as complete/ incomplete dictionaries, word-lists and glossaries of Maithili words compiled so far. A few

dictionaries of others languages have given Maithili equivalents to their words. We could explore only a few of them. *A New Hindustani English Dictionary* compiled by S. W. Fallon in this respect deserves special mention. Mr. Fallon is perhaps the first to cover Maithili in any lexicography. His monumental work mentioned above was first published in 1879, and obviously its compilation might have started at least one decade earlier. Mr. Fallon calls this language *Tirhuti* (तिरहुती, abbreviated as Tr), which might have been popular before *Maithili* took its place. He has acknowledged the assistance of Mr. Wattling, "Head Master of Darbahangah (sic) School". We can safely surmise that this gentleman was instrumental in supplying appropriate Maithili equivalents to Mr. Fallon. As the dictionary belongs to the Hindustani language and is mainly printed in Persian script, it so far escaped the notice of the scholars concerned with Maithili. Let us even now pay our gratitude to both the gentlemen for pioneering the lexicography in Maithili.

A glance over the bibliography of lexical works in Maithili (pp 693) will show that Maithili lagged far behind in lexicography. A number of Christian Missionaries working in India towards the close of the last century produced voluminous dictionaries of the modern Indian languages, but Maithili missed the chance. We have learnt that Reverend William Carey of the Serampore Mission, who came to India in 1793, attempted to compile a Maithili dictionary, but perhaps could not succeed. The contribution of G. A. Grierson (See Bibliography, 1882, 1884 and 1885) is indeed highly appreciable in quality and quantity as well, but the words collected by him are scattered in discursive way, mingled with Bhojpuri and Magahi words, and instead of coming together to form a dictionary, appear only as glossaries, vocabularies or word-indexes appended to other works. Of course he felt the need of compiling the words collected by him into a consolidated form, and even brought out two fascicules in collaboration with Mr. A. F. R. Hoernle (See Bibliography, 1885, 1889), but could not proceed further.

The process of incorporating Maithili words against the head words as their equivalents in the dictionaries of different Indo-Aryan languages pioneered by Mr. Fallon was followed by several lexicographers. The Nepali dictionary of Mr. Turner (1931) and *Bangiya Shabdakosha* of Haricharan Bandyopadhaya (1946) are the best examples.

Krishikosha, a dictionary of the words used in Bihar among the cultivators in their agricultural and allied operations (1966) is perhaps only special/technical dictionary where Maithili words along with Bhojpuri and Magahi ones appear as head words. Its illustrations and clear definitions have helped us very much.

Some Maithil Pandits like M. M. Umesh Mishra, Dr. Subhadra Jha, Dr. Ramdeb Jha and Dr. Shashinath Jha have explored a number of valuable Maithili words in older

forms and meanings from the medieval Sanskrit works. The bulk of such words mostly relating to flora and fauna have come out from the commentaries on the Sanskrit lexicon *Amarakosha* of Amarasimha (C. 6th-7th Cent. A.D.). The oldest of such commentaries goes as far back as 10th century A.D. (Bibliography, 1940). Maithili translation of the said Sanskrit lexicon done recently by Pandit Mukunda Jha (1924) proved for us a good source specially in respect of flora and fauna.

Contribution of Nepal to the development of Maithili lexicography is of a different kind. *Basic Colloquial Maithili* (1984) is the first and the best of its kind and is meant for those who want to learn Maithili as a foreign language either through the medium of English or Nepali. So it is a short dictionary from Maithili to Nepali and English, from Nepali to Maithili and from English to Maithili. *The Paryāyavāchī Shabdakosha* (1974) of the Royal Nepal Academy containing the basic vocabulary of all national languages of Nepal including Maithili is a rare kind of multilingual dictionary. The Maithili word list compiled by Mr. Jennifer Williams concerns itself more with linguistics than practical lexicography.

None of the works described above is a Maithili Dictionary in its proper sense. The first attempt to compile a Maithili dictionary was made by Pandit Bhavanāth Mishra as early as in 1905. Unfortunately only a fragment of his voluminous work namely *Mithilā-Shabda-Prakāsh* could be published in 1914. It is trilingual : Maithili words with Hindi and Sanskrit equivalents.

The Brihat Maithili Shabdakosh or the Comprehensive Maithili Dictionary, of which only two fascicules upto letter औ have so far come out, is being published from the Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, Simla. It is planned ambitiously and is based on the modern principles of lexicography. It is biligual : from Maithili to Maithili and English. It has the credit of adopting Tirhuta, the traditional script of Mithila, along with Nagari and Roman.

Maithili has at présent four dictionaries published completely :

- (i) *Mithilā-Bhākhā-Kosha* (1950) compiled by Dinabandhu Jha. Contains some 15,000 popular words explained in Maithili Sanskritized enough to make itself intelligible even to the outsiders. The compiler has knowingly excluded the high-flown Sanskrit words not intelligible to the mass.
- (ii) *Maithili Shabdakosh* (1992) compiled by Govinda Jha. Contains more than 35,000 words of all kinds explained in plain Maithili.
- (iii) *Maithila-Shabda-Kalpadruma* (1997) compiled by Pt. Matinath Mishra 'Matang'. Contains some 25,000 popular words explained in Maithili. It covers large number of words explored first time.

(iv) *Angikā-Hindī-Shabdakosha* (1997²) compiled by Dr. Doman Sahu 'Samir' embodies the words current in the compiler's locality. It excels in presenting the words in the spoken form as closely as possible.

Sir Monier Monier Williams, one of the noted Sanskrit lexicographers, has rightly observed :

The words and the meanings of the words of a dictionary can scarcely be proved by its compilers to belong exclusively to themselves. [*A Sanskrit English Dictionary*, Preface, page v]

Following the above verdict, we have drawn freely from the lexical works described above whatever we found useful in compiling the present dictionary. Of course, for this we are grateful to their learned compilers.

In absence of field-work facility the books of Maithili literature have been our best informants. But we could explore them only at random. For to adopt any scientific/systematic way would be an exercise too big for us. Yet this literary source proved much rewarding. In exploring literary sources we excluded proto-Maithili works (like चर्यापद, कीर्तिलता) for the sake of maintaining homogeneity in the language.
