Classicism of Odia Language

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Man expresses his feelings and emotions through sentences of any language-spoken or written. Thus, human beings use many words in sentences of language which have come to us by oral use for hundreds of thousand years. Words are evolved and use for expression of man's inner feelings. We borrow such words from other languages also to supplement our own mother tongue.

The vocabulary of a language depends on the richness or treasure of words accumulated and stored in that language by passage of time from the time immemorial. Odia is the mother language of the majority of the people of Odisha at present and also in the past. The present Odisha is the political entity with distinct boundary. But outside Odisha there exists Odia speaking tracts which was the result or resultant of the conquests made by the Ganga Vansi and Surya Vansi Gajapati emperors of Odisha expanding their empire from Ganga to Godavari or even beyond Krishna and Cauvery particularly during the time of Gajapati Kapileswar (Kapilendra) Deva, the founder of Surya dynasty in Utkal.

The geographical situation of Udra Bhukanda or Udra Desha, now Odisha is such that it has been surrounded by other language speaking areas or provinces/states. Such other neighbouring languages are Hindi, Bengali, Telgu, Tamil etc. In addition to this 62 denominations (communities) of tribals live within the State of Odisha. Their spoken languages or dialects had have impact on Odia language for her evolution and enrichment.

Except Surya dynasty rulers all other preceding dynasty rulers have come from outside and brought with them soldiers and officers speaking their native language and after settling in Udra Desha had embraced the then prevailing Odia language. That had impact on development of the vocabulary of Odia language.

In 1568 Odisha empire lost her sovereignty and independence on sudden and sad demise of the last independent and sovereign Hindu king-emperor Gajapati Mukunda Deva in Gohiri Tikira battle field. Odisha was thereafter ruled in succession by Afghans, Moghuls, Marathas and lastly by the British till the 15th August 1947 when India along with Odisha got independence from the foreign rule.

These foreign rulers enforced their language as the official (court) language in administration of Odisha. Odisha was segmented and such segments/ parts were annexed with the neighbouring presidencies and provinces for

convenience and administration from the foreign rulers' point of view. All these political changes had have tremendous impact on the structural advancement and making of Odia language till to day. Eight distinct areas and their regional attributes, so far the vocabulary of Odia language is concerned are to be taken into consideration while estimating its evolution, progressive development, assimilation and abundance. These are 1) Southern, 2) Western, 3) Northern, 4) Eastern, 5) Central, 6) Peripheral, 7) Outlying tracts and 8) the areas under habitation by different tribal communities.

The words used and in vogue in the dialects or sub languages of all these areas have come over to the mainstream of Odia language to build the edifice of the vocabulary of the mother tongue of Odia people proper.

In very ancient time, this land known as Kalinga, Utkal and parts of South Koshal (Dakshin Koshala) was non-Aryan in character so far the 'ways of life' of the original inhabitants of this extensive and vast land mass was concerned. Boudhyana, the then 'Law Giver' called the people of Anga, Banga, Kalinga, Pundra, Sumha etc. as 'Samkeerna yonayah' i.e.'low bred'. Up to the time Boudhayana the people of this land of which the Odia speaking tracts now constitute was not Aryanised / Sanskritised.

Since Sanskrit including the Vedic language had little impact and influence on the 'spoken language' of the people inhabiting this land, the two rival kingdom of Magadha and Kalinga were non-Aryan and non-Brahminical for many centuries as a result of which Jainism and Buddhism flourished in these two kingdoms. Gautam Buddha got enlightenment and preached his new philosophy in Magadha. Later this new

"Ant-Vedic religion" having rebellious attitude towards 'Vedic-Karmakandas' spread into Kalinga. After 'Kalingan War' Asoka, the great emperor of Magadha embraced Buddhism and made all out efforts for spread of this 'new faith' even to lands beyond the boundaries of the present India subcontinent.

History is silent whether Buddha came to Kalinga (Odishan region) to preach his new faith. But Mahavir the 24th Teerthankar of Jainism in 6th century BC came to Kalinga to preach his faith since his father being a king was a personal friend of the then king of Kalinga and it was favourable and conducive for Mahavira to launch his mission in this ancient non-Aryan land. He preached his faith in 'Pali-Prakrita' language from the top of Kumar-Kumari hillocks(now known as Khandagiri-Udayagiri hills).

When Asoka conquered Kalinga (261 BC) he promulgated royal commandments (decrees) in 'Magadhi-Prakrita' language. Rock edicts got erected by him at Dhauli and Jaugada (Samapa) near the present Purushottampur, Ganjam district are glaring illustrations of this.

Later Aryan infiltration/migration along with Sanskrit language took place which influenced the non-Sanskrit dialect/language of the people of the ancient land of Odisha. Sanskrit words were assimilated into the vocabulary of the then prevalent language which was a digested admixture of Pali (Kalinga Pali) and Magadhi Prakrita.

Mahameghabahana Aira Kharavela (40 BC), the emperor of Kalinga was a Jaina in faith and his Hati Gumpha inscription is in 'Kalinga Pali' language using 'Brahmi script'. We find many words in this famous language of Pali used in Hati Gumpha inscription which are Sanskrit words or

derived from Sanskrit and also prevalent in Odia language.

Bharata Muni composed 'Natya Shashtram' which belongs to second century AD (some scholars place 'Natya shashtram ' composed in 2nd century BC.) In Natya Shastram there is reference of 'Udra Bibhasha' which was then the mother tongue of the majority of the people of 'Udra Bhukhanda' (Udra Desha/ Udra Land). Gradually what happened the Kalinga Palli of Hatigumpha inscription and Magadhi Prakrita of Asokan edicts amalgamated with locally spoken dialect (if any and possibility is on affirmative side) to emerge as 'Udra Bibhasha' most probably. No literature in Udra Bibhasha is forthcoming and available at present except a few lines/ sentences available in Prakrita Vyakarana (grammar) namely 'Prakrita Sarvaswa' of Markendeya Dasa.

Udra Bibhasha most possibly after undergoing evolution and transformation has lost its entity to submerge like river 'Phalgu' in the sands of a dialect nearer or equivalent to 'Boudha Gana and Doha' which flourished in 7th-8th century AD in this 'Udra Bhukhanda'. The language of the Boudha GanaO Doha is a corrupt 'Apabhramsha' (Sandhya) which is the prime shape and expression of Odia language as per the opinion of historians and research scholars.

When Hiuen Tsang, the famous Chinese pilgrim visited Ukkal (Utkal) he found here a spoken language in use which was quite distinct from the languages prevalent then in other parts of Indian subcontinent he came across during his entourage. By that time, Odia language had crystallized into a distinct and separate language which gave birth to the great epic 'Mahabharat' in Odia language in the blessed hands of 'Adikavi' Sarala Das who also composed to his credit "Chandi Purana' and "Bilanka Ramayan". These

trinity-poetics are literary glossary of vocabulary of Odia language in the 15th Century AD.

Below illustrated some Odia words derived from different sources of having similarity with other languages :

Vedic	Odia
Toka/Tok	Tokka
Nanaa/Nanee	Nanaa/Nanee
Bikal	Bikal
Bishaya	Bishaya
Kharavela Hatigumpha Inscription	**Odia**
Ghar	Ghar(House)
Lekha	Lekha
Gopura	Gopura

Corrupt Form :

Pachhima (Paschima in Sanskrit) -Pachhima

Pathama (Pradhama in Sanskrit) – Pathama

Yoboraja (corrupt form of Yubaraj in Sanskrit)

Raja (King), Siri from 'Shree'

Dutiya (Dwiteeya in Sanskrit)

Tutia – corrupt form of 'Tritiya' in Sanskrit

Terasa (Terasa – Terashaha – Thirteen hundred)

Naba (Na'a)

'Hathee' of Hatigumpha inscription has turned 'Haatee' in Odia. Bata, Danda, Kothaghar, Paata, Daha (pond or tank full of water) etc. are

common in both Kharavelan language and modern Odia language.

This is an attempt to illustrate how words from Vedic, Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit have merged into Odia language in course of time which is as old as minimum four thousand years.

Of course, nearly 80% of Odia words have been derived from Sanskrit as scholars claim. Nevertheless, Odia is rightly and correctly developed as the bosom younger sister of Sanskrit language. Odia has attained the 'Classical State' along with Sanskrit and some other modern Indian languages in terms of ancientry and affluence of vocabulary with a grand distinct grammar emerged on scientific basis. Odia Vyakarana (Odia grammar) composed by Pandit Neelakantha was published as back as 1933 while he was a teacher in Satyabadi Vana Vidyalaya established by Utkalmani Pandit Gopabandhu Das in 1909 AD.

Our forefathers were skilled and adept maritime traders. To repeat it is pertinent that they built up enormous Odia empire with overseas colonies in Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Cambodia (Kamboj), Laos, Burma-now Myarmyer etc carrying Kalingan (Odishan) culture, architecture, sculpture, epics, purans, religious faith, language etc. to such colonies. They had maritime link with western part of the world. So in addition to that of English, words of Greek, Latin, Arabian, Urdu, Turkese, French, Persian, Portuguese etc are found in original or corrupt form in Odia vocabulary through 'give and take' process for centuries. Till that is going on.

Words from languages of neighbouring States is Ahamia (Assamese), Agria (migrated from Agra), Urdu, Chhatisgadee, Tamil, Telgu, Bengali, Jharkhand (Seraikala-Kharasuan), Hindi

have been taken into Odia language in original or corrupt form.

Words from tribal dialects and languages have entered into Odia and are in use vocabulary i.e. Kui, Kuvi, Kudami, Oram, Koya, Gond, Juang, Desia, Bhadri, Bhuina, Munda, Mundari, Shabar, Saura, Santali, Halvi, Ho, etc.

Inside regional sub-languages have also contributed words to Odia vocabulary i.e. Baleswaria, Keojharia, Kotapad Boli, Nayagadia, Phulbani Odia, Sambalpuri, Ganjami, Kataki, Puria etc. If illustrations are given from each category it would be a full-fledged and full length dictionary. Hence, restrained to limit the discussion.

Special attributes and ancientry of Odia vocabulary:

Linguistic experts opine that 'pratyayas' like ni, 'Anti' 'Nitu', are in use in Greek, Latin, Vedic language from thousand and thousand years ago. Such Pratyayasa are also in Odia language. For example- Galani - has gone, Karanti- do or is? are doing, Khaanti- eat or is/are doing, Khaanti – eat or is/are eating, Gaanti-sing or is/are singing; Karantu-Please do, Khaantu-Please eat etc. So all these indicate the ancientry of Odia language.

In Odia only, like other two M.I.Ls i.e. Gujurati and Marathi we have 'la' to differentiate pronunciations of word with 'la'. In Sanskrit, Hindi and all other regional languages there is one 'La'. For example: 'mula' - wage 'mula' - foot or root of a tree or basic, origin, original, fundamental etc.

Similarly 'Maane' which is used in 'plural number in Odia language is not repeated not in any other Indian language. For example : 1. 'manushya' - in singular means 'Man',

'manushyamane' - in plural means 'Men'. 2. 'Pandaba' - singular number. 'Pandabamane' - in plural number 3. 'Naari' - woman in singular number, 'Narimane' means women in plural number.

Furthermore, in Odia we use 'Ja' and 'ya' according to pronunciation of words. But in Sanskrit, Hindi etc. only 'ya' is used. For example: (Jama) for 'yama' in Hindi and Sanskrit. Niyam for Niyam in Hindi and Sanskrit. These specialities in Odia vocabulary gives special and rare distinction to Odia language. It adds to the elasticity of word-crafts of Odia as a modern Indian language which is not found in other languages.

From all angles of discussion and consideration, Odia as a modern Indian language and the official language of Odisha State carving a deserving and rightful place in the 8th Schedule of our Constitution profoundly deserves to be declared as a 'Classical Language' which the Government of India should most rationally and favourably do in its right and proper perspective with due objectivity to bestow natural justice on the people of Odisha without further lapse of time.

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Interaction of the Development Commissioner, Sri R.N Senapati with the Bamboo Weavers present at weekly Haat of Malanandapur Gram Panchayat, Jajpur.