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Author/s	Chandan Kumar	
Affiliation	Christ University, India	
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Echo Construction and Ad hoc Categories: Semantics of Group Reference in Magahi

Chandan Kumar

Assistant Professor, Christ University, India. ORCID: 0000-0003-0427-9179.

Email: chandan.kumar@christuniversity.in

Abstract

Recent studies in the domain of heterogeneous plural indicate homogeneous and heterogeneous categories as two separate functional mechanisms. Given the strategic usage of language, the paper locates the pluralizing strategies in speech context and investigates their interpretive nature from the perspective of (non)/restrictive parametric features of categories like associative (APL), simulative (SPL) and definite plural in Magahi (ISO639-2 mag), an Indo-Aryan language. Focusing on variables within members of the ad hoc set over the speech act variables like context, intersubjectivity, and culture, the paper endeavours to perceive pluralizing as a strategic approach that extends beyond the realm of mere a number reference. It closely observes the phenomenon of homogeneous and heterogeneous plurality and makes the following claims: (a) echo construction functions as heterogeneous plural in Magahi, (b) the heterogeneous plural falls within the parametric feature of nominal plurality, (c) there is heterogeneity in the homogeneous sets, thus, pluralizing is beyond plural, (d) SPL and APL are two categories because of their interpretational differences and not because of operational, and (e) APLs can have describable references.

Keywords: Ad hoc category, Pluralizing strategy, Echo-word, Associative, Simulative, Indo-Aryan, Magahi

1. Introduction

Reference to plurality has been studied extensively across languages, providing a good typological understanding of the same (Greenberg, 1977; Mohan, 1978; Conklin, 1981; Barz and Diller, 1985; Chierchia, 1998, 2010; Bisang, 1993, 1999; Bhattacharya, 1999; Borer, 2005; Gebhardt, 2009 among others). The representation of plurality, though it varies across languages, is generally construed similarly in providing the reference to a group - a group that lacks a specified cardinality (except duality and other numerically fixed references (Corbett, 2000, p. 4-5)). Further, the nature of the membership of elements of a group can be understood from the perspective of the homogeneous and heterogeneous nature of the group. Broadly, languages realize the two concepts as additive and non-additive, respectively. The additive plural is regarded as the regular plural. This classification stems from its distinctive behaviour when interacting with both animate and inanimate objects. Notably, it exhibits a lower degree of sensitivity to the animacy hierarchy (AH) when compared to alternative pluralization strategies (Corbett, 2000, p. 55-60). The additive plural is also defined through its interaction with numerals (Gebhardt, 2009). As a mechanism, it

facilitates the occurrence of the cardinal numeral in the construction. The idea of the use of cardinal numerals presumes homogeneity.

Descriptive grammarians usually have been non-committal to the description of the general extenders¹ in the typology of nominal plurality owing to the vagueness of the referred set (Daniel and Moravcsik, 2013). The interpretation of general extenders has been regarded as puzzling across the domains of pragmatics, semantics, and morpho-syntax. The literature has tried to locate the position of the heterogeneous plural in the general sphere of nominal plurality (Mauri and Sanso, 2018, 2020; Corbett and Mithun, 1996; Corbett, 2000; Moravcsik, 2020; Daniel and Moravcsik, 2005; Daniel, 2020 among others). However, considering the non-canonical syntax and semantics of the heterogeneous set, it has mostly been treated differently, particularly when compared with homogeneous plural. Some of the noticeable differences in heterogeneous plurals are (a) the non-occurrence of the cardinal numeral, (b) the use of the exemplar noun as a referential index, and (c) non-committal/vagueness about the internal specification of the group/set.

The paper asserts that homogeneity, which is one of the characteristics of the regular plural, is the outcome of the speech act strategy, rather than a structural configuration. For example, the English word, *toys*, refers to a group of toys that are homogeneous at the level of idea or concept of a toy, and not at the level of physical realization of the linguistic expression. The expression like *toys* refers to a set that can consist of different kinds of toys in different colours, shapes, and sizes. Thus, at the conceptual level, a similarity is found between the heterogeneous and homogeneous groups (Moravcsik, 2020). Further, the heterogeneous plural becomes important as both a conceptual as well as a structural mechanism for understanding the overall concept of plurality. Employing language-specific phenomena, such as the bare and the marked plural, the paper argues for the heterogeneous nature of the additive plural, complicating the established notion of canonical plurality. It explores the dynamic aspects of plurality within the speech act strategy as a requirement to communicate complex information and emotion.

Based on the interpretational differences, the literature identifies two types of heterogeneous plural: associative and similitive plural (Vassilieva, 2005; Mauri and Sanso, 2018, 2020; Daniel and Moravcsik, 2013; Daniel, 2020; Moravcsik, 2020). The observation reveals that in APLs, the reference is made to a singular, unique entity along with its related associates. On the other hand, in SPLs, the reference is directed towards the exemplar noun and similar items. Additionally, APLs and SPLs behave differently when it comes to their application on the AH. Based on the relevant literature, the following points can be derived about APL and SPL.

- (a) They are in complementary distribution.
- (b) There are different markers for APL and SPL, and thus, have different functions.
- (c) The referred group or set orientation is different in APL and SPL.
- (d) Both are used to achieve different communicational purposes.

The paper, nevertheless, asserts that the two strategies are not conceptually distinct applications but rather stem from the same underlying phenomenon. The difference in readings of the resultant sets emerges from the nature of the participating lexical entities, the role of the interlocutors, and the context. The phenomenon of heterogeneous plural is examined using novel

data from the Magahi language, a lesser-known language. It is spoken in the Eastern parts of India. It is considered one of the dialects of Hindi and is believed to be spoken by around 12 million people as per the Census of India (2011). It belongs to the modern I-A languages. Most of the examples used in this paper are primary data, observed in the speech community. The researcher is a native speaker of the language.

Section 1 describes the semantics of the additive plural in terms of the membership of the referred group. It discusses the form, function, and distribution of the additive plural in Magahi. It claims that the reference made by the marked plural is closer to the associative plural and not to the regular/bare plural. Section 2 describes the form and function of the echo word construction and investigates its role in placing it in the cross-linguistic typology of general extenders. In section 3, an effort is made to understand the relationship between the members of the heterogeneous sets like APL and SPL. It describes the structural, functional, and semantic nature of the echo word construction and heterogeneous plural in Magahi.

2. Plurality: Reference to a Group

The homogeneous group can be described as a set that comprises entities where any entity can be the representative of the set. The word *boys*, for example, refers to a set that consists of homogeneous entities such as {boy, boy, boy, boy, ... n}ⁱⁱ. In this regard, it is different from the heterogeneous plural. Additionally, the homogeneous set can be modified by the numeral. The relationship between countability and plurality is though unclear in the literature (Greenberg, 1977; Chierchia, 2010; Borer, 2005; Gebhardt, 2009 among others), some feel that countability is the precondition of plurality (Greenberg, 1977 and Moravcsik, 2020).ⁱⁱⁱ The syntactic-semantic interaction between the noun and the numeral is not an immediate concern of the paper; however, some of the observations from Chierchia (1998), Greenberg (1977), Joosten (2003), Borer (2005), and Kumar (2018, 2020) are used as working hypotheses to understand the interaction between the noun, number, and plurality. Additionally, the regular plural mechanism appeals to the idea of the basic mathematical operation of addition. When a cardinal numeral modifies the nouns such as *five boys*, it interacts with the surface structure of the conceptual schema of a boy as linguistic reality and not as a non-linguistic reference. Deriving from Croft (1994, p. 162), the numeral as part of its functionality prompts to identify multiple units of the same kind. An alternative but crucial observation concerning the additive plural pertains to its usage as a strategic means to minimize the cognitive load of interlocutors by overlooking the differences among elements within the set. Following Traugott (2010, p. 14) and Brems (2021), intersubjectivity, the pragmatic-semantic notion, provides the correlation between structure and function.^{iv} According to Overstreet,

“the general extenders have been treated as a form that indicates additional members of a list, etcetera, or category. The general assumption has been that these expressions combine with a name exemplar, [...], some non-specific form of reference”. (Overstreet, 1999, p. 11).

The nature of the group’s composition is mainly subject to contextual variability (Daniel and Moravcsik, 2013; Mauri and Sanso, 2018). The context and intersubjectivity contribute further in

2.2. General Plurality and (Non)/Homogeneous Group in Magahi

Magahi is a numeral classifier language adhering to some of the typological features of the classifier languages. Greenberg (1977) observes that classifier languages have an optional plural marking system. This behaviour of languages has to do with how a noun organizes itself in the lexicon (Chierchia, 1998, 2010). Magahi does not allow the noun to be directly modified by the numeral.

- (1) hāmra t̪in *(go) kit̪ab t̪ahi
 I.DAT three (NCL) book need.IMPF
 I need three books.

The complementarity between the numeral classifier and the plurality is though weak in Magahi, it restricts the occurrence of the numeral classifier in utterances like (2).

- (2) hūā l̪aik-ən t̪əbahi mət̪əile həi
 There boy-PL havoc create be.PRS.3
 Children are causing havoc there.

The reference in (2) is made to a group of children. The noun in (2) comprises a set of individuals that exhibit differences in the set. However, interactants ignore the specification of the referred set, during interaction. I posit that pluralizing serves as a communication strategy that extends beyond a mere indication of multiple entities. Considering Traugott's (2010) intersubjectivity, its function extends to ease the cognitive load of interactants in processing and accessing information in a certain communicative event. The additive plural as a function overlooks the differences that are manifested by the orientation of a group like *boys* or *children* and focus on the abstracted identity.^v Additionally, homogeneity is an achieved status and not the configured as also discussed in section 1.

Magahi also has a marked plural. It is the addition of the plural marker /-ən/ to a definite noun which is marked by /-wə/. Some examples of definite nouns are *gh̪arwā* (the house), *kit̪əbwā* (the book), and *əḍ̪m̪iən* (the men) (Kumar, 2018, 2020). Example of a definite-marked plural:

- (3) huā l̪aik-w-ən t̪əbahi mət̪əile həi
 There boy-DD-PL havoc create be.PRS.3
 The children have caused havoc there.

At the outset, in (2), the NP has a generic reference. The referred set consists of {child, child, child, n}. However, the presence of the definite determiner /-wə/ brings two kinds of readings in (3): (a) presupposition (familiarity), and (b) uniqueness (Lyons, 1999). In (3), the identity of the elements of the group is accessible to the interactants. The addressee in most cases can access the identity of the members of the set. The children (members), moreover, would be related to each other in some ways (some kinds of associations like siblings or local friends). Taking intersubjectivity into account, the construction exhibits similarities to APL in two aspects: (a) referential heterogeneity, and (b) reference to a group.

The difference between the marked and bare plural lies in the cognitive realization of the reference among interactants. In the cases of common nouns, the reference is to a concept or idea and not to an immediate object. It is not a description but a mental representation of an idea (Rosch, 1975). Let us assume X stands for a child. The plural of X is Xiz (children).

$$Xiz = \{a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, \dots n\} \quad (1)$$

If plural (PI) is a function that applies to X, it yields Xiz, i.e., a group of children, whereas each individual has the same value. The function PI asserts that each individual of the set must be characterized by the semantic features of the lexical entity, CHILD. Characteristics or values of being a child is the function of the set {Xiz}. It is, in the words of Moltmann (2011), a trope. It means the property of being a child gets abstracted over the set.

From the communication standpoint, a homogeneous set is not simply perceived as a reference to multiple objects, but rather as a sophisticated mechanism designed to accomplish much more than that.

3. Echo Construction and Heterogeneity

Reduplication is a morpho-phonological process whereby the base gets repeated to give additional meaning to the base lexical item. Abbi (1985) argues that semantic independence makes the reduplicated structure (RS) derivationally a separate construction from the original word. According to Mohan (2009), there are four types of reduplicative structures in Indian languages: expressive, word reduplication, redundant compounds, and partial reduplication.

The four sub-categories present different interpretations of the event and the objects expressed. For example, the semantics of the redundant compound or 'synonymic compound' (Dongare 1975), or 'semantic reduplication' (Vacek, 1994) gives the conceptual extension with regard to the possible semantic field triggered by the reduplicated structure. The interpretation of RS is subject to context and intersubjectivity. The base word and the RS in the given case (4) cannot be replaced.

(4)	okər	ʃɑdʒi (*ʃɑdʒi-vivəh)	me	ɦɪm	ne	gelik	həl
	His	marriage	in	I	NEG	go.PRF	be.PRF

I have not attended his wedding.

ʃɑdʒi (marriage) - X (marriage- ambiguous between generic and specific reading, depending upon the context)

ʃɑdʒi-vivəh (marriage etc.) - Yx (marriage – generic reading, refers to the act of marriage and such or marriage and things related to marriage).

The partial reduplication phenomenon is known as echo formation in Indian linguistics. It is one of the aerial features of the South Asian linguistic area (Emeneau, 1956). The meaning of the echo construction is similar to RS (Mohan, 2009). It refers to x and things like x. Daniel and Moravcsik (2013) observed that the semantics of 'x and such things' has been associated with the simulative plural. Few scholars like Thompson (2012, p. 313) and Schiffman (1999, p. 172) have identified the echo construction as SPLs in Bengali and Tamil, respectively.

- (5) Context- There is a dispute between A and B over a piece of land. A friend of A advised him to pay money, etc., to B and settle the issue.

ekəra	kuč̃h	pəisa-væsa	d̪e-ke	hətava
DEM	some	money-EW (echo word)	give-CP	remove

Give him some money and such things and settle it.

The referred set (prompted by *pəisa-væsa*) has been analyzed as a vague category (Voghera, 2012, p. 354-358 cited in Mauri & Sanso, 2020). As far as the semantic extension of the set is concerned, it is not that the speaker lacks the linguistic commitment to the composition of the set but avoids the specification bringing the focus to the hearer as an 'active conceptualizer' (Brems, 2021, p. 334).

- (6) Context: - Two people went to a local tea stall in the market. The tea stall also sells biscuits, toast, fritters, etc. The shopkeeper knows the food habits of his regular customers.

surendər	bʰəiɪa	tʃæ-væe	pilavə
Surendra	brother	tea- EW	drink.CAUS.H

Brother, Surendra! Give us tea, etc.

- (7) gāo me d̪ud̪h-ud̪hə aram se mil ja həi
Village in milk-EW easy from get go be

It is easy to get milk, etc., in villages.

The constitution of the cognitive field is not only centered around the exemplar noun in (6) but also the reference is prompted out of the combination of the context and the exemplar noun. Thus, the range of lexical fields could be tea, coffee, water, biscuit, toast, fries, chips, etc. The exclusivity, however, is contextually bound where the creation of the lexical field is subject to the informed discourse. The echo construction must also be approached as an exclusionary device. For example, the reference to the expression *d̪ud̪h-ud̪hə* in (7) excludes many things which can be either directly or indirectly made up of milk. The lexical items that it probably enumerates are milk, curd, ghee, buttermilk, butter, and other cultural-specific items that are directly derived from milk. Apart from the two factors, i.e., the exemplar noun and the context, sometimes, the speaker's intention is also an important factor to account for in order to describe the membership of the group in SPL.

As per the observation, in comparison to the APLs reference, SPLs are highly dependent on the context. The contextual dependency is lesser in the case of the APL as the exemplar noun is definite and, thus, the creation of the set is prompted based on the presuppositional account (discourse anaphora). Lesser contextual dependency comes from the fact that definite descriptions have a relatively fixed referential index. The context becomes crucial and quite often the deciding factor in the creation of the semantic field; for example, observe the different contexts in the examples given below^{vi}.

(8) Context- The person is at home, asking his daughter or wife for tea.

soniya tʃæ-væ pilao
 soni.CL tea-EW drink.CAUS.NH
 Soni, make tea, etc., or give tea, etc.

(9) Context- The person is at a tea shop/stall. He asks the shopkeeper for tea.

bʰəiɣa, tʃæ-væ pilavə
 brother tea-EW drink.CAUS.H
 Give me tea etc., brother.

(10) Context- Two people are at a fancy tea/coffee shop. One is asking another to order tea.

tʃæ-væ məŋgavə
 tea-EW ask.H

In (8), the possible items that can be enumerated are *tʃæ* (tea), *biskut* (biscuit), *tʃənətʃur* (snack), *tʃəpəʃi* (flatbread), *niməki* (salted bread), etc. In context, only interlocutors are certain about the probable membership of the referred set. The membership of the set depends upon what is available in the house, what people usually take with tea in that culture, at what time of the day the person is asking for the tea, etc. In (9), the lexical domain would be tea, toast, biscuits, chips, fried stuff (*səmosa* region/culture-specific), etc. Thus, in (9), *tʃəpəʃi* (flat bread) would not be enumerated in the referred set. In (10), the echo expression would mean tea, coffee, black/green tea, muffins, chips, sandwich, cookies, etc. In branded cafes, the expression *tʃæ-væ* (tea, etc.) would not include flatbread, fritters, regional chips, and other fried stuff. Similarly, in the other two contexts (8 and 9), the sets would not include muffins, black/green tea, coffee, cookies, etc., in their lexical fields. Nevertheless, on many occasions, interlocutors are not certain about the exact identity of the members of the referred set, however, have access to the probable members. In such a context, structurally, the reference of the echo word cannot be definite; it is also not generic. It provides the reference to a non-definite non-generic set. Its function is to suggest the possible members of the referred set and not to determine the members of the set.

There is a clear distinction in the nature of the membership of the sets in (8), (9), and (10). Neither the membership of the possible items in a particular domain nor the outcome (an achieved set) remains the same. To approach the question of the identity of members, let us assume that X is tea, Y_x is an echo construction made on X. Y_x is, thus, a set where elements are not restricted until it gets in the intersection relation with the context. Let us assume that Y_x is a set that comprises elements like x, w, z, m, and so on.

X- Tea

Y_x = {x, w, z, m, t, n } (Echo form) (3)

The formation of the set Y_x in equation (3), let's assume, is based on the independent accessibility of the lexical term *tea*, prompted by the use of the echo word (it works like a wake word for the possible addition of lexical items). The set, then, will immediately be modified or restricted by

contextual factors such as domain, availability, time, and the interlocutor's experience and intention. Let us assume that a set formed by the context is Z upon the mentioned variables.

$$Yx \cap Z = \{\text{resultant set (SPL)}\} \quad (4)$$

To elucidate it further, let's assume that Yx means tea and something. The membership is only probable and not restricted in Yx. The set Z cannot in a technical sense be considered as a subset of the set Yx, as we cannot at any point configure the exact membership of the Yx. The nature of the set Z is largely defined by the nature of the pragmatic; it can both put a restriction on the probable members of the set Yx as well as facilitate the formation of the set, as can be seen in (8). Consequently, if we assume that the echo-word expression *tʃæ-væ* (tea, etc.), independently, can form a set, then (8), (9), and (10) would have the same members. However, since they have different members, it is evident that membership is elucidated by the interaction between the set Yx and Z. The final set will always have tea as one of the members. Further, the relationship among elements of the group, however, is broadly defined as functional. The echo word thus is a functional operation like the plural.

4. Echo Word Formation and Associative Plural

There are a few lexical quantifiers like *log* (people) and *sʌb* (all) that are used with NPs to get the semantics of associativity. Renkovskaya (2020, p. 74) noticed three interpretations of the construction [NP (proper name) + *log* (pl)]; for example, *raju log* (Raju people) implies several boys named Raju, Raju and his family/friends, and Raju and those like him. These interpretations, nonetheless, possible, I argue, are strictly subject to the variability of context and interactants' intentions.

(11) Context: - Grandfather asked Raju's father to ask Raju and others to bring him something from the market.

raju log ke bol ki bəjar se ja ke le aye
raju people PP say that market PP go PP bring come

Ask Raju and others to go and get this from the market.

(12) Context: The kid enters the house, not finding any members who can help him with food, he asks his younger brother.

məmmi-sʌb/ummi kidʰər geləi he
mother all/EW where go.PRF be

Where have Mother and all gone?

The reference of the expression *raju log* (Raju and all) in (11) would be Raju and others associated with Raju in a certain socio-pragmatic context. Similarly, in (12), the linguistic expression *məmmi sʌb/ummi* (mother and all/others) refers to a set whose membership is subject to the semantic field created by the protagonist (mother) and the socio-kinship context. In (12), the group will only have female members of the family. Also, the food and kitchen as per the semantic field of

that culture enumerate women. The boy in (12) is possibly looking for his mother, sister, and grandmother who can cook/serve the food to him.

- (13) golua-olua ke bəjar bʰej nə
 golu.CL-EW PP market send QN.Tag

Send Golu etc. to the market.

- (14) Context- In the house, Raju was alone. His father, uncle, etc., were not in the house at that time. A person comes to the house and asks Raju the following.

- papa-upa kãha hæʈʰun bua
 father-EW where be.3H boy

Where is your father etc.? Boy!

To explore the individual identity of the group in (13), the context and the speaker's intention need to be analyzed. The wife is asking her husband to go to the market. The husband, while working in the field, annoyingly asked to send Golu (his son) and/or others in his place. In the natural occurrence of the expression, the group consists of Golu, Golu's brother, Golu's other siblings, and Golu's close friends who stay in the neighbourhoods. Females would not be the possible members of the group, considering social rules. The addressee has a greater role and agency in incorporating members into the set compared to the speaker in APL. It is possible that the speaker and the hearer do not have the same members in their probable semantic fields. In (14), the members of the set would be Raju's father, uncle, grandfather, and others. However, the group will not consist of mothers, sisters, or other female counterparts. The formation of the sets in (13) and (14) is the result of the interaction of protagonists, context, and interactants.

Daniel (2020) and Mauri and Sanso (2020), following Anderson (2007), observe that unlike exemplar nouns in the case of SPLs that provide similarity-based reasoning, proper names and kin terms have identificatory rather than descriptive functions. The identificatory feature comes from the fact that the referred object is referentially unique. What is important in Daniel's (ibid) observation is the descriptive function of the non-definite elements (SPL). In examples 12, 13, and 14 the kin terms and proper names behave as trigger words that lead to the formation of sets whose membership is enumerated by the trigger word, context, and interactants' intention. The description of the process of the enumeration of a set in the case of the APL then is not very different from the SPL. Observe the possible interpretations of the examples below to understand the description and unique aspects of the exemplar nouns.

- (15) sonu-unu a:j kal kãha hæi ho
 sonu-EW nowadays where be.PRS ADD.H2

Where are Sonu and his friends/brothers?

- (16) kisan-usan virodʰ ʈo kərtəʰi hæi
 farmer-EW protest PART do.IMPF be.PRS

Farmers and others are protesting.

In (15), the set includes the protagonist Sonu, his friends, and/or his brothers. Compare this set with the one in (16), where the reference is to a common noun (human). The set has intended members like farmers (the ones who plough agricultural land), agricultural labourers, agricultural-produce sellers, etc. The inclusion of the members also depends on the nature of the sentence, e.g., the use of the word *virodḥ* (protest). The exemplar noun, farmer, is both describable and referential in the case of (16). It does not have a kind reference. As mentioned, the processes of the set formation in both APL and SPL are almost similar. However, in the case of APL, there is an additional stage that is not overtly enumerated in the case of SPL, i.e., intersubjectivity. The APL markers in languages ask interlocutors to evoke a common shared cognitive field where they both can stipulate the possible members of the set. I believe the set prompted by APL will have the following equation.

$$\{\{\text{set prompted by the exemplar noun and echo word}\} \cup \{\text{set created by interlocutors' shared experiences}\} \cap \{\text{set created by the context}\} = \{\text{APL set}\} \quad (8)^{\text{vii}}$$

At this point, the difference between the similative and the associative plural can be mapped in terms of the exclusive participation of the exemplar noun in the formation of the set. In the SPLs, every resultant set must include the exemplar noun. However, the same is not true for the associative plural in the concerned language. In the case of APLs, there are possibilities that the resultant set (it is not a probable set but an achieved set in a speech act) would not include the pivot or protagonist. In Magahi, when echo construction is used with the proper name, the probable set has more than one member, however, the resultant set might require just one member. Thus, there is a possibility of the exclusion of the protagonist in the achieved set. This flexibility in APLs is for the reason of AH, the inclusion of human reference, and intersubjectivity. Varnaegon (2005) has argued that intersubjectivity is omnipresent and it involves coordination between the interlocutors as a communication strategy in sharing the required information facilitating the minimum input and maximum processing. Some linguistic constructions highlight this type of coordination more than others (Brems, 2021), and I believe APL highlights it more compared to the SPL.

In the analysis of a heterogeneous set, the discussions are mostly about the probable members of the set. I have tried to bring the achieved set into the picture to understand its vagueness. The above analysis of the reference of the APL indicates the fact that there is an expressive meaning associated with the higher sides of AH as well (particularly, in the analysis of the example in 15). I also believe that the speaker is not committed to the named pivot, and possibly the whole idea of using APL is not making the pivot referentially strong, but rather weak by unmasking other elements in the set. The echo formation is a mechanism to create vagueness or dilute the straightforward referential properties of the elements like a proper name.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The trajectory of meaning explication of elements of the higher side of AH (referential) indicates expressive meaning which comes from (inter)/subjective factors (Brems, 2021; Traugott, 2010). The creation of the reference is locally constructed by interlocutors. As Hopper (2010) has pointed

out “changes result not from purely language-internal factors, but from verbal interactions among speakers” (cited in Overstreet, 2014, p. 106).

The semantic changes happen as a part of verbal interaction within a speech act. Based on these facts, I argue that in SPL, it is rare to exclude the exemplar noun. However, with APL, there is a possibility of the exclusion of the protagonist as in the case of (15). The reason for this exclusion emerges from the fact that the protagonist is a human noun. Human reference cannot be treated as an object – also because the protagonist interacts with the interlocutors and context differently. The emotional and socio-cultural weightage also plays an important role in expressing the relational equation between the protagonist, speaker, and hearer. Montaut (2009) while analyzing the semantics of echo construction in Hindi/Urdu observes that the pivot or the exemplar noun can be replaced by the other members of the notional domain indicating the non-centrality aspect of APL.

The idea that general extenders exclusively create a probable set that is not always an achievable set must be reconsidered, as Overstreet (2014) also emphasizes how a set is also locally limited. Overstreet (2014) cites Barsalou (1983) and Overstreet and Yule (1997a), to instantiate locally restricted achieved sets. The research developed in the field of meaning creation shifted from the original framework, which was based on a monological model, describing the speaker’s output only, to a dialogic where addressee-oriented phenomena have also been accommodated. In the same spirit, in the case of Magahi, focusing on the expressive meaning of the echo word with the proper name, the locally achieved set might not include the protagonist. This exclusion can adhere to the fact that the addressee has a larger role in the speech act.

Moreover, at times, it is not difficult to assume that the speaker, despite knowing that the pivot is not available, makes the construction. In such cases, the expression is used as a probing strategy; it can be the case that the speaker doesn’t know the name of Sonu’s brother. Also, it has been noticed that proper names and/or kinship terms in APL function to make the pivot describable, e.g., *māmmi-ūmi* (mother and other). Referentiality is not straightforwardly achieved or clear in the context of Magahi APL. At the abstract level, the proper name invokes referentiality, however, in the context, as per the expressive meaning, the descriptive aspect of the construction is visible. At this point, it is also important to bring back the implication of the definite-marked plural (Section 3). The marked plural compared to the APL and SPL is less dependent on the context.

Vassilieva (2005) mentions that the interpretation of the SPL differs significantly from the interpretation of APL, also because many languages have separate forms for them. As it has been observed and described in this paper, Magahi has just one form. The mechanism (echo word formation) assures that at least from an operational perspective, there is no functional difference at the applicational level. When the strategy applies to the higher side of the AH, the interpretation changes, not because of the strategy but because of the object the strategy is applying to (case in point is APL and the definite marked PL). When the strategy applies to inanimate nouns, the orientation is different because of the nature of the lexical items. However, the difference is nuanced and not straightforwardly clear on referential and descriptive reading.

Appendix

2-Second-person, 3-Third-person, APL- Associative plural, ADD- Addressing term, CAUS- Causative, CLA- Classifier, CP- Complementizer phrase, DEF- Definite, DD- Definite determiner, EMPH- Emphatic, H- Honorific, HAB- Habitual, IMPF- Imperfective, INF- Infinitive, N – Noun, NCL- Numeral classifier, NEG- Negative, NH- Non-Honorific, PL- Plural, PRS- Present, PST- Past, QN Tag- Question Tag.

Notes

ⁱ The semantics of general extenders is described as “and stuff (like that), and things (like that), or something (like that)”. (Overstreet, 2014, p. 105). General extenders can be used as a priori expression for the phenomenon.

ⁱⁱ The cardinality of the set is n.

ⁱⁱⁱ Allan (1980) says that countability is the feature of a noun phrase and not a noun, i.e., it is syntactic (Borer, 2005). It brings the discussion that the use of cardinality is not the precondition of plurality, however, is a syntactic requirement.

^{iv} Untoward differences can arise for multiple reasons: the state of the mind of interactants, the (un)/familiarity with the objects, non-participation of interactants, memory, word association, etc.

^v Abstraction works as an index that triggers the associated semantics. The additive plural works like a generic singular in shaping the idea of the object. This can also be understood as a ‘notional domain’ as well. Montaut (2009, p 22), following Culioli (1990b) cited in Montaut, explains the notional domain as having a centre and a boundary that delimits the interior from the exterior of the exemplar noun. They explain that the centre for the notional domain of a dog is what can truly be adhering to the properties of a dog, and to construct the extension of the notion is to construct its occurrences.

^{vi} Lexical field/domain and semantic field are used interchangeably in this paper. Gao and Xu (2013) have also used the term interchangeably and defined it as a ‘field or domain that refers to the combination of a bunch of words with interrelated meaning dominated under the same concept’ (p. 2031).

^{vii} It is possible to have slightly different members in the interlocutor’s sets. It is because of the nature of the definite description. It evokes different associations depending upon the individual’s experience with the protagonist.

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Dr Chandan Kumar is an Assistant Professor at the Department of English and Cultural Studies, Christ University, India. He has been teaching various linguistics courses to undergraduate and postgraduate students there. Mr Kumar presently is on a Fulbright scholarship, placed at the University of Illinois, Chicago as a primary Hindi language instructor. He obtained his PhD degree in linguistics from Jawaharlal Nehru University. His doctoral thesis explored the morpho-syntactic aspects of nominals in modern Indo-Aryan languages. His research interest broadly lies in the intersection of language, culture, cognition, and technology.
