CASE MARKING IN THARU: A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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This paper compares the case marking system in Kathariya and Dangaura Tharu spoken by an ethnic group called Tharu. Both of these varieties typologically follow the nominative-accusative marking system. These varieties have different markers to code different cases. Only the Genitive marker -kə or -k are shared by both of these varieties. The dative-accusative markers -kehən, or -ke, instrumental marker -ləike, and ablative marker -ti are used in Kathariya Tharu. Dangaura Tharu is unique in its use of compound case marking in Genitive case. The locative marker in Kathariya Tharu is -me but it is -ma in Dangaura Tharu. The experiencer subjects in both of these varieties are dative case marked.

Keywords: Kathariya, Dangaura, Tharu, case marking

1. Background

Tharu is “an umbrella ethnonym’ uniting a variety of historically endogamous groups that speak different dialects and are also distinct in many socio-cultural aspects” (Chaubey et al., 2014, p. 1404). It is the largest indigenous group of Nepal living in the 23 Tarai and inner Tarai districts of Nepal and bordering districts like Champaran, Gorakhpur, Gonda, Basti, Baharaich, Lakhimpur Kheri, and Udham Singh Nagar of India. Based on the linguistic and cultural variations, the Tharu ethnic group has been broadly classified into four different groups: the Rana Tharu, the Dangaura Tharu, the Chitoniya Tharu and the Kochila Tharu (Boehm, 1998, p. 3; Paudyal, 2014, pp. 7-8). However, in the 24th edition of Ethnologue, this community is classified as Central Tharu, Dangaura Tharu, Kathariya Tharu, Mid-eastern Tharu, and Rana Tharu (Eberhard et al., 2021, pp. 54-56). The nomenclature 'Tharu' denotes both the community members and the language they speak. Contrary to Grierson’s (1968, p. 311) claim “there is no such a thing as Tharu language”, this classification shows that we have at least five varieties of Tharu language spoken in Nepal and India. Since no comprehensive studies of all these varieties have been done so far, except Dangaura and Chitoniya Tharu, we cannot claim that all these groups are only the varieties of a single Tharu language or different languages with their distinct linguistic features.

This paper concentrates on comparing two Tharu varieties- Kathariya and Dangaura Tharu- which are in close contact, in terms of case marking system. Dangaura Tharu is spoken in Rupandehi, Dang, Banke, Bardiya, Surkhet, Kailali and Kanchanpur districts, whereas Kathariya Tharu is spoken only in Kailali district of Nepal. In Kailali, as the president of Kathariya Samaj, Nepal, Dukhi Ram Chaudhary reported, out of the total Tharu population, 80% are Dangauras and only 20% are Kathariya Tharus.

2. Methodology

The linguistic data, mainly natural and elicited texts, of Kathariya Tharu were collected from Joshipur municipality-3, Lakkad, Ghodaghodi municipality-9, Sisaiya, Ghodaghodi, Kota, and Kailari-8, Lausa, and that of Dangaura Tharu were collected from Rampur-3, Palanse, Tulasipur-4, and small population living in Kheri, Pilibhit, Gorakhpur, Bahirayach of Uttar Pradesh and Champaran District of Bihar.”

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Badgaun, Hekuli-3 Hekuli and Saudivyar-9, Sisahaniya of Dang district. The collected texts were transcribed and translated. Toolbox was used for morpheme breaks and interlinearization. A corpus of each of these languages was prepared and the examples are taken from these corpus.

3. The typology of case marking

Case is an inherent ‘syntactic as well as morphological category’ of the noun phrase. It establishes the functional or semantic relation of the arguments in the subject position with the predicate in a clause or sentence. Languages tend to have only three distinct core grammatical relation categories (Subject, Object, and indirect Object) but many (potentially an unlimited number of) semantic roles and pragmatic statuses (Payne, 1997, p. 133). The argument relations in a clause can be realized in the form of case inflections and adpositions, in the form of a bound pronouns attached either to the predicate or to some other constituent of a clause or in the constituent order as in English (Dixon, 2010, p. 119). Both Kathariya and Dangaura Tharu are Indo-Aryan languages and follow the nominative-accusative case marking system. In both of these languages, the arguments in A and S functions are marked with nominative case marker, whereas the arguments in P function are marked with dative-accusative case marker.

4. Case marking in Kathariya and Dangaura Tharu

The discussion of case marking system in modern languages is basically based on the Paninian Grammar of Sanskrit. Unlike the eight-case system including the vocative in OIA (Whitney, 1962, p. 89), both Kathariya and Dangaura Tharu varieties exhibit seven cases excluding the vocative. They are: nominative, dative-accusative, instrumental, ablative, genitive, locative, and comitative. This section presents the morphosyntactic differences between these Tharu varieties.

4.1 Nominative case

The arguments with S and A functions in a clause are in nominative case which is always unmarked in both the Tharu varieties: Kathariya and Dangaura. The nominative case in both of these languages is unmarked. In other words, the subject of an intransitive verb as in (1a and c) and that of a transitive verb as in (1b and d) are in the nominative case and are always unmarked. For example:

(1) a. ekṭo ṭaũma phul ḍokñi rani ba (Dangaura)
   ḍokñi rani one-NCLF place-LOC Phul ḍokñi queen
   be-PRS -3SG
   ‘There is Phuljokhi queen at a place.’
   (FR_MRC.056)

b. ṭa səpwa kʰaɭ ki mw ar maŋ sur kutsʰ nai ḥo
   (Dangaura)
   səpwa kʰaɭ ki mw ar PRT snake say-PST,3SG.NH that 1SG.GEN
   maŋ sur kutsʰ nai ḥo demand other some NEG be,PRS,3SG.NH
   ‘Then the snake said that he did not have any other demand.’
   (FR_MRC.055)

c. pʰer gaine hįjase tʰimanand mahatô
   (Kathariya)
   pʰer ja-n-ɛ hįjase-tʰimanand also go-PST-3PL here-ABL Chhimanand
   mahatô Mahato
   ‘Then Chimananda Mahato went from here.’
   (SRK_PLS..107)

d. ḍəwaram iskul kʰolle ɦae
   (Kathariya)
   ḍəwaram iskul kʰol-le ɦio be,PRS -3SG
   ‘Jauwa Ram has started a school.’
   (SRK_PLS..043)

The example (1a) and (1c) have intransitive clauses in Dangaura and Kathariya Tharu respectively. The

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4 In contrast, Bhojpuri has only three types of postpositions that are used to express the case relations: the object marking postposition, the genitive marking postposition and the adverbal postposition (Shukla, 1981, p. 97) and there are only three organic cases: the nominative, the instrumental, and locative in Modern Maithili (Jha, 1958, p. 306).

5 The arguments in A and S functions in Chitoniya Tharu (Paudyal, 2014, p. 84), Maithili (Yadav, 1996, pp. 72-3; Yadava, 2004, p. 253), and Bhojpuri (Shukla, 1981, p. 68) are also unmarked.
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subjects in both of these sentences, $pu'ul$ dəkʰ'i rəni and $bʰi⁴maŋd$ matə, are in nominative case and unmarked. Similarly, the noun phrases in Agentive role in examples (1b) and (1d), sərəwa ‘snake’ dəluwəɾəm ‘Jauwa Ram’ are also in nominative case and unmarked. 6

4.2 Dative-accusative case

Dative is the case of indirect object, the recipient, of a ditransitive predicate, whereas accusative is the case of direct object, the patient, of the transitive verb. Because in most of the NIA languages, both the dative and accusative cases are marked with the same marker, Masica (1991, p. 239) claims that “there is no accusative case in the NIA”. In both of these Tharu languages- Dangaura and Kathariya-, there is no distinction between the P element and R element. Both the direct and indirect objects are treated equally. However, the Dative-accusative markers in both of these languages are different. In Kathariya Tharu it is coded with -kehan, as in example (2a) and (2b).

(2) a. kəhə bəhəniŋə span dadakehan məri?
   kəhə-ū bəhəniŋə əpan
   where-EMPH sister REFL
dada-kefən mar-i
   elder brother-ACC kill-FUT.3SG
   ‘Will a younger sister ever kill her own elder brother?’
   (ELCTD.0516)
b. behan fuigel to puliskefən kʰabər kardehəl
   behan fio-ja-l to
   morning bePRS-go-PST.3SG PRT
   pulis-kefən kʰabəɾ kar-de-Al
   police-ACC information do-give-PST.3SG
   ‘As it became morning, she informed the police.’
   (UCK.MCK.186)

In both of these examples, the arguments functioning as the patient dada ‘elder brother’ and pulis ‘police’ are marked with the accusative marker-kehan.

Sometimes, the second syllable of this marker -han is omitted and only -ke7 is used, as in example (3a).

(3) a. uttəm tənd raɗəke mardehel
   uttəm tənd raɗə-ke mar-de-Al
   Uttam Chanda king-ACC kill-give-PST.3SG
   ‘(She) killed Uttam Chanda king.’
   (UCK.MCK.184)
b. ohsə leɗəke diṁdarke painə diii
   u-ke le-ɗə-ke diṁdar-ke
   that-ACC bring-go-SEQ landlord-ACC
   painə-ə di-fii
   wear-CAUS give-FUT.1PL
   ‘We take the garland and make the landlord wear it’.  
   (Athaiya_MCK.057)

In the examples, uttəm tənd raɗə (3a) and ohsə ‘u-ACC’ (3b) are in Patient role and diṁdar in (3b) is in the role of Recipient, but all of these arguments are marked with the same Dative-accusative marker -ke.

However, Dangaura Tharu is unique in this case. It has a distinct Dative-accusative marker -iŋə or its allomorph -iŋə or -ən, which is not found in any other Tharu languages. The examples (4a-b) are illustrative.

(4) a. u pu'ula məhiŋə gəsləi pari
   u pʰu'ula məx-ŋən gəslə-ə
   3SG flower 1SG-ACC wear-CAUS-NMLZ
   pər-i
   have-to-FUT.3SG
   ‘(You) will have to put that flower on me.’
   (FR_MRC.099)
b. fuŋəŋ pʰe sábəxən tɨr əŋədehəl
   fuŋəŋ pʰe sáb-əxən-hən tɨr
   3PL-ACC also all-NCLF-ACC bank
   ləgə-ɖe-l
   wear-give-PST.3SG.NH
   ‘(He) took all of them also to the bank (of the river).’
   (FR_MRC.114)

Differential object marking (DOM) is also attested in Kathariya Tharu. The difference is based on the

6 In Many of the NIA languages like Bengali (Forbs 1862, p. 21), Hindi (Kachru, 2006, p. 50), Modern Kashmiri (Koul & Woli, 2006, p. 31), Rajbansi (Wilde, 2008, p. 106), Urdu (Schmidt, 1999, p. 7), and Punjabi (Bhatia, 1993, p. 168) the arguments with S function are always unmarked.

7 -ke is a common Dative-accusative marker in Chitoniy Tharu (Paudyal, 2014, p. 89), Bhojpuri (Shukla, 1981, p 78), Lohar (2020, p. 254), Maithili (Yadav, 1996, p. 73), and many other NIA languages.
animacy hierarchy. Kathariya Tharu distinguishes between human and non-human Patients. In this language, human Patients are obligatorily marked with -keñan or -ke as exemplified in (2a-b) and (3a-b) above, whereas non-human Patients are again differentiated on the basis of animacy hierarchy. In Inanimate Patients are never marked (5a) but the animate non-human Patients are optionally marked with -ke or keñan (5b-c).

(5) a. ātra taśur leke dzæeb (Kathariya)
    ātra taśur le-ke dz-a-b
    this much rice bring-SEQ go-FUT.1PL.
    ‘We will go taking this much rice.’ (Diwari_MCK.007)

b. dzib dzanabkeñan nai mana taśi (Kathariya)
    dzib dzanabar-keñan nai mana taśi
    living creatures-ACC NEG kill.INF should
    ‘We should not kill animals.’ (ELCTD.044)

In the examples (5a), we see the inanimate P argument taśur ‘rice’ is not marked, whereas in (5b) the non-human animate P argument dzib dzanabkeñan ‘living creatures’ is marked with -keñan.

On the contrary, Dangaura Tharu does not exhibit differential object marking. No distinction is attested between human -non-human or animate-inanimate Patient arguments in terms of dative-accusative case marking. All the arguments with Patient or Recipient role are marked with the Dative-accusative marker -haña or its allomorph -hañ. For example:

(6) a. tā apan tvaawañana kañal (Dangaura)
    tā apan tvaawañana kañal
    PRT REFL son-DAT kill-3SG.NH
    ‘Then he told his son.’ (DIL_YRC.143)

b. u baɡwa u təsturjai giñrñana pakaɾlelis
    u baɡwa u təsturjai giñrañana
    that tiger that clever jackal-DAT
    pakaɾ-le-l-is
    catch-take-PST-3SG.NH
    ‘The tiger caught the clever jackal.’
    (CJ_DLC.028)

In these examples, (6a) has human Patient apañ tvaawañana ‘his son’ and (6b) consists of a non-human but a living creature giñrñana ‘jackal -Dat’ but both of these arguments in Patient role are marked with the Dative-accusative marker -haña.

Similarly, Dangaura Tharu does not exhibit the animacy distinction in the non-human living creatures, as in the examples (7a), (7b) and (7c) where the inanimate Patients hirañana ‘diamond -ACC’, tvañiña ‘hive -ACC’ and kañña ‘story -ACC’ respectively are marked with the same Dative-accusative marker -haña.

(7) a. dzänner mânajjã u hirañana tvañiña dãideñal
dzänner mânajjã u hirañana
woman man that diamond-ACC

b. dzosra marak bʰirjakt mañrik tvañiña tʰaɾï
    dzosra marak bʰirjã-k
    then PRT bumble bee-GEN
    mañrik tvañiña tʰaɾï-a
    bumble bee-GEN hive-ACC hit-3SG.NH
    ‘(He took him) to hit the bumble bee hive.’
    (BMC_JR.056)

c. mai apañ kañña jahã antja kaɾtũ
    mai apañ kañña jahã antja
    1SG REFL story-ACC here ending
    kaɾtũ
    do-PRS.1SG
    ‘I finish my story here. Thank you.’
    (CJ_DLC.044)

Both of these languages do have postpositions to express the Recipient role or the benefactive function of the argument. In Kathariya Tharu a separate post-position- tañan ‘for’ is attested for the case. This peculiarity is undoubtedly derived through contact with Dravidian.

8 Chatterji (1926, p. 722) finds the distinction between animate and inanimate objects in all the Magadhan languages. He states that Magadhan speeches including Bengali preserved the common NIA differentiation between animate and inanimate nouns in the accusative case.
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purpose. In the examples (8a-b), the Recipient role is coded with the postposition -tāhān, which is the function of Dative case.

(8) a. *dai morthāhan adz bʰat nai nidiwïjo*
dai mor-tāhān adz
mother 1SG.GEN-DAT-ADP today
bʰat nai nidiwïjo
food PROB cook-FUT-2PL
‘Mother, do not cook food for me today.’

b. *Ab u ka karaḥ apān dadak tāhān kʰana banaɪl*
ab u ka kar-ā ṭa-hān kʰana banaɪl
now that what do-PST.3SG REFLEX
dada-k tāhān kʰana elder brother-GEN DAT.ADP fo od
banaɪl make-PST.3SG
‘Now what she did was prepare food for her elder brother.’

Similarly, a separate post-position- lag- ‘for’ is attested to express the Recipient role in Dangaura Tharu. It is close to the Nepali post-position lagi ‘for’ which shows the influence of Nepali upon this language. The examples (9a-b) illustrate the case.

(9) a. *mwar lag bāsaqelo ki nafí?*
mwar lag
1SG.GEN DAT.ADP
bāsaqelo ki nafí save-give-PST-2PL.MH or NEG
‘Have you saved some for me or not?’

b. *tīhār lag bāsaqelo kʰnū*
tīhār lag bāsaqelo kʰnū
2SG.GEN DAT.ADP save-give-keep-PST-1SG
‘I have saved for you.’

The Dative-accusative case in these Tharu languages is realized quite differently in plural. We have noticed that in singular it is marked by the Dative-accusative marker -keñān or -ān in Kathariya Tharu and -hān or -hān in Dangaura Tharu. But in plural, Kathariya Tharu attests a different Dative-accusative marker -in which is applied after affixing the plural suffix-bʰār to the root form of the argument. It is illustrated in the examples (10a-b) where Patient arguments nokarbhār-in ‘servant -PL -DAT.ACC’ and laurijâlāqhārin ‘daughter -PL -DAT.ACC’ have been marked differently.

(10) a. *baba pāqadeñāl nokarbʰārin*
baba pā-ša-de-AL nokar-bʰār-in
father send-give-PST.3SG servant-PL-ACC
‘Father sent all the servants.’

b. *i raḍa apān laurijâlāqhārin kʰhale raʃe ki mor bʰagse kʰiṭiṭjā*
i raḍa apān laurijâja-bʰār-in
this king REFLEX daughter-PL-AACC
kʰiṭ-e raʃe ki mor say-PRF be.pst-3SG that 1SG.GEN
bʰag-se kʰa-t-iṭjā fate-ABL eat-PRES-3PL
‘This king had told all these daughters that they all eat due to his fate.’

4.3 Non-nominative subject

The argument in the S or A function is in nominative case and it is not overtly marked in both of these varieties. But in most of the NIA “and non-NIA” languages there are expressions in which the arguments used in the subject position are not the Agents or doer of the action. They are rather the experiencers of the predicates in the sentences and are termed as non-nominative subjects (Yadava, 2004, p. 255). Since most of the NIA languages use the Dative construction for such arguments, Masica (1991, p. 346) calls it the dative subject. Such expressions are used only when the predicates embody the “states of affairs that are conceived as uncontrollable” (Shibatani & Pardeshi, 2001, p. 324). Genetti (2007, p. 111) finds the Dative experiencer constructions very common in South Asia and, states that they “are taken as a criterion for establishing the South Asian sub-continent as a linguistic area.” Both of these Tharu varieties use dative subject construction, as Masica calls it, to mark the experiencer subject. In Kathariya Tharu the experiencer subject is marked with the dative-accusative marker -keñān or its allomorph -ke, as illustrateds in (11a-b) where (11a) presents the physical state and (11b) shows the obligation of the experiencer subject.

(11) a. *laurijākeñān sardi lag-Al he*
laurijā-keñān sardi lag-Al
daughter-DAT-ACC cold start-PST.3SG
The instrumental marker in the sense of means or instrument. Unlike means and instrument in OIA (Whitney 1962), in Kathariya Tharu. In (13a) su is used as an instrument to make a guɾi ‘doll’. Similarly, in (13b), reḍa ‘comb’ is used as an instrument to comb hair. So, both of these arguments are marked with an instrument marker -laike.

However, Dangaura Tharu attests a different instrumental case marker -le which is not found in any other Tharu languages. The Dangaura Tharu instrumental case marker -le shows the direct influence of Nepali up on this language. Let’s see the examples in (14a-b).

The instrumental case marker -le is used with ākʰile ‘eye -INST’ (14a) and korrare ‘whip -INST’ (14b) in these examples.

Besides, Dangaura Tharu also attests another instrumental marker -se which is common in many of the NIA languages like Hindi (Kachru, 2006, p. 49), Bhojpuri (Shukla, 1981, p. 99) and Chitoniya Tharu. In the examples (15a-b) and (15c) we notice that the instrumental marker -se is affixed to katʰik hār ‘wood -GEN plough’, kuɾar ‘axe’ and bʰaɡ ‘fate’ to mark the instrumental case.
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The ablative function is realized in the form of -tā which is affixed to the argument from which the ‘removal, separation or distinction’ occurs. The origin may be temporal or spatial as illustrated in the examples (17a-b).

(17) a. ḋamre ɡʰaɾi ḍaikke ḍaeb pʰul mala
fiamre ɡʰaɾ-ṭi le-ke
IPL house-ABL bring-SEQ
dza-b pʰul mala
go-FUT.IPL flower garland
‘We take flowers and garlands from our own home.’ (Athaiya_MCK.053)

b. ṭaṅ ḍabti ḍukanme kam ḍarat bāte?
ṭaṅ ḍab-ti ḍukan-me kam
2SG.NH when-ABL shop-LOC work
‘How long have you been working in a shop?’ (ELCTD.0186)

The example (17a) shows a spatial origin ɡʰar ‘house’ and the one in (17b) shows temporal origin ḍabti ‘when -ABL’ from where the separation takes place.

However, in Dangaura Tharu, the ablative function is coded with the ablative marker -se which is common in many of the NIA languages. The examples in (18a-b) illustrate the situation.

(18) a. oṅo saṅṭhari kahāse aīto?
Oṅo saṅṭhari kafā-se a-tō
EXCL friend where-ABL come-PRS-2PL.MH
‘Hey friend, where are you coming from?’ (CJ_DLC.031)

b. uṅi ḍinse hūkānca gʰarṁa bāḍa māḍaṣe rāla
u-ṅi ḍin-se hūkta-ak gʰaṛ-ṁa
that-EMPH day-ABL 3PL-GEN house-LOC
bāḍa māḍaṣe tāṅ-l-a
much good-ABL live-PRG-3PL
‘That day onwards, they lived a very happily and prosperous life.’ (DIL-YRC.148)

The spatial and temporal origin for ablative marker is attested in Dangaura Tharu too as in the example (18a) we have a spatial origin and in (18b) we see the temporal origin.

In Dangaura Tharu we notice compound case marking system in ablative case which is lacking in Kathariya Tharu. For example:
This compound case marking is attested only in ablative case in which the ablative marker -se follows the locative marker -MA as in kũwomase ‘well -LOC -ABL’ (19a) and gaiumase ‘village -LOC -ABL’ in (19b). The multiple case marking in Dangaura Tharu is not attested in all the situation of ablative case. The locative marker -MA is only used when there is the sense of ‘from inside’. So in these examples, kũwomase means ‘from inside the well’ and gaiumase means ‘from inside the village’.

4.6 Genitive case

The genitive case marker -KA or its allomorphs -k is common in Tharu languages like Chitoniya, Dangaura and Kathariya Tharu and Maithili (Yadav, 1996, p. 90). The genitive marker -kA/k is affixed to the argument with the genitive relation with the other arguments in the clause. The NP with the genitive case marker always has an adjectival function. The examples (20a-d) are illustrative.

(20) a. ḛapna ḛapna gaũk kalan (Kathariya)
 ḛapna ḛapna gaũke kalan
REFL REFL village-GEN tradition
‘The tradition of one’s own village.’
(DR_BRK.163)

b. ab naĩi ai gaũk mañaĩ (Kathariya)
ab naĩi a-i gaũk mañaĩ
now NEG come-FUT.3SG village-GEN man
‘Now the villagers do not come.’
(Athaiya_MCK.082)

c. giḍra baɣwaka ḛarleke bepaṭṭa b⁵agal
(Dangaura)
giḍra baɣwaka-ka ḛar-le-ke
jackal tiger-GEN fear-take-SEQ
bepaṭṭa b⁵ag-al
unknown run-away-PST.3SG
‘The jackal ran away being afraid of the tiger.’
(BMC_TAC.227)

d. ḛurwa ḛiṭurawaka g⁶ar ḛjak⁵al nai?
(Dangaura)
ḛurwa ḛiṭurawaka-ka g⁶ar
Durwa Diturawa-GEN house
ḍjak⁵-l nai
see-PST.3SG.NH NEG
‘He saw (fire) in Durwa Diturawa’s house, didn’t he?’
(KCS-JLC.144)

It can be clearly said that both of these languages share the same genitive marker -KA or its allomorph -k as we see in gaũk ‘village -GEN’ (20a), gaũk ‘village -GEN’ (20b), baɣwaka ‘tiger -GEN’ (20c) and ḛurwa ḛiṭurawaka ‘Durwa Diturawa -GEN’ (20d), though (20a-b) are extracted from Kathariya Tharu and (20c-d) from Dangaura Tharu corpus.

Besides, Kathariya Tharu also attests a different genitive marker -ke. We have plenty of examples in our corpus in which the genitive relation is coded with the genitive marker -ke instead of -KA as in (21a-b).

(21) a. u malwarake raḍa rañe
u malwaraka-ke raḍa rañ-e
3SG Malhwaraka-GEN king be.pst-3SG
‘He was the king of Malhwar’a.
(CH.MCK.016)

b. patta ke dona bana ke umne daru ḛañi
patta ke dona bana ke u-me
leaf-GEN leaf bowl make-SEQ that-LOC
daru ḛañ-i
wine be.pst-FUT.3SG
‘We make a bowl of leaves and keep wine in it.’
(DR_MCK.132)

But we do not have a similar genitive marker in Dangaura Tharu.
4.7 Locative case

The locative marker in many of the NIA languages like Hindi, Maithili, Bhojpuri, Nepali, Chitoniya Tharu, Dangaura Tharu, and Kathariya Tharu begin with the bilabial nasal sound m. In the languages like Hindi, Maithili, Bhojpuri, it is -me, in Nepali it is -ma, in Chitoniya Tharu it is -ma or its allomorphs -ma or -m and in Dangaura Tharu it is -ma. But Kathariya Tharu locative is similar to that of Hindi which shows Hindi influence on this language. The examples are in (22a-d).

(22) a. ṭuṇḍaɾime diuṭame ṭuṇḍaṭa (Kathariya) ṭuṇḍaɾi-me diuṭa-me ṭuṇḍaṭ-a Chaudhary-LOC God-LOC offer-PRS-3SG ‘In Chaudhary tradition, Jamara is offered to the Gods.’ (Athaiya_MCK.069)

b. lekin ḍhāmmar diuṭame nau ṭuṇḍaṭa (Kathariya) lekin ḍhāmmar diuṭa-me nau but 1PL GEN God-LOC NEG ṭuṇḍaṭ-a offer-PRS-3SG ‘But it is not offered to our Gods.’ (Athaiya_MCK.073)

c. u kōlwama ekṭho gyāgta ṭaṭha (Dangaura) u kōlwā-ma ek-ṭhō gyāgta ṭaṭ-a that river-LOC one-NCLF crab be.PST-3SG ‘There was a crab in the river.’ (BMC_TAC.014)

d. ekṭho baṅwama baṅ̄wa ṭaṭha (Dangaura) ek-ṭhō baṅwā-ma baṅ̄wa ṭaṭ-a one-NCLF jungle-LOC tiger be.PST-3SG ‘There was a tiger in the jungle.’ (BMC_TAC.011)

The locative marker in Kathariya Tharu is -me as in ṭuṇḍaɾime ‘Chaudhary -LOC’, diuṭame ‘God -LOC’ (22a) and diuṭame ‘God -LOC’ (22b). But in Dangaura Tharu it is -ma as in kōlwama ‘river -LOC’ (22c) and baṅwama ‘jungle -LOC’ (22d).

4.8 Comitative case

Comitative case in many of the NIA languages begins with -s. In Hindi it is sat, in Nepali it is saṅga, in Chitoniya Tharu, it is saṅge and in Bengali and Oriya it is -sônge and -sange respectively (Masica, 1991, p. 247). In this case Dangaura and Kathariya Tharu share the same comitative postposition -saŋ as illustrated in the examples (23a-d).

(23) a. ṭīth pʰen tum̡ar saŋ ḍaṭar dźim
   ṭiṭ pʰen tum̡ar saŋ ḍaṭar dźa-m
   1SG also 2SG GEN SOC market-go-1SG-FUT ‘I will also go to market with you.’ (ELCTD.0502)

b. ṭāi daiḳ saŋ ḡ̡ar baiṣ́
   ṭāi dai-k saŋ ḡ̡ar-me baiṣ́-∅
   2SG.NH mother-GEN SOC house-LOC sit-IMP ‘You remain at home with mother.’ (ELCTD.0504)

c. ṭāi mwar saŋ tɔl
   ṭāi mwar saŋ tɔl-∅
   2SG.NH 1SG GEN SOC walk-IMP ‘You come with me.’ (FR_MRC.152)

d. mwar ḍaṇṇi apan baṅiṅjā saŋ laiḥar gail
   mwar ḍaṇṇi apan baṅiṅjā 1SG GEN wife REFLEX younger sister
   saŋ laiḥar dza-l
   SOC parental home go-PST.3SG.NH ‘My wife went to her parental home with her sister.’ (ELCTD_PG.219)

The case marking system in both of these languages can be summarized in the table 1.

Table 1. Case Markers in Kathariya and Dangaura Tharu

<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kath.</td>
<td>-∅</td>
<td>-kekan</td>
<td>-laike</td>
<td>-ṭi</td>
<td>-ke</td>
<td>-me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dang.</td>
<td>-∅</td>
<td>-haṇa</td>
<td>-la</td>
<td>-se</td>
<td>- ṭe</td>
<td>- sı</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Conclusion

Typologically both Kathariya and Dangaura Tharu languages follow nominative-accusative pattern. In both of these languages the S or A elements are always unmarked, whereas the P element is marked with the dative-accusative marker -kekan or -ke in Kathariya Tharu and -haṇa or -haṇ in Dangaura Tharu. Kathariya Tharu exhibits the differential object marking (DOM), whereas Dangaura Tharu does not. Kathariya Tharu attests an instrumental case marker -laike, whereas in Dangaura Tharu it is realized in the form of -le or -se. Kathariya Tharu is unique in this case, no other Tharu language has this instrumental marker, nor do any language in contact have. Kathariya Tharu is unique in the ablative case too. The ablative case is coded with a
unique case marker -ti which is not attested in any other Tharu language. Dangaura Tharu shares the ablative marker -se with Hindi and Chitoniya Tharu. Genitive case marking, in both of these Tharu languages, is very close to Maithili, Bhojpuri and Chitoniya Tharu. Genitive case in all these languages is coded with -ka or its allomorph -k. Kathariiya Tharu has another Genitive marker -ke too. The locative case marker in Kathariiya Tharu is -me which shares with that of Hindi but in Dangaura Tharu it is -ma. Dangaura Tharu locative marker -ma seems to be very close to that of Nepali -ma which also shows the influence of Nepali on this language. It is only in the comitative case where these two languages share the same case marker -sm. Thus, even in case marking system, Kathariiya and Dangaura Tharu seem to be following different linguistic system, although at the first glance they sound to be similar.

References


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