

**NOMINAL MORPHOLOGY IN MAITHILI
LANGUAGE**

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LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

Date:

This is to certify that **Mr. Ram Binay Ray** has completed this thesis on the topic **NOMINAL MORPHOLOGY IN MAITHILI LANGUAGE** under my guidance and supervision. I recommend this thesis for evaluation.

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The undersigned members of the thesis committee have approved this thesis entitled NOMINAL MORPHOLOGY IN MAITHILI LANGUAGE submitted by **Mr. Ram Binay Ray** to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for M.A. degree in English.

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Abstract

Maithili belongs to the Eastern sub-group of the Indo-Aryan group within the Indo-Aryan family. It forms a sub-group with Bhojpuri and Magahi and is linguistically closer to *Assamese*, *Bangla* and *Oriya* than to its more contiguous language, namely, Hindi and Nepali. It is the second major language of Nepal.

This work entitled '**Nominal Morphology in Maithili Language**' attempts to describe noun and pronoun along with their number, gender, case, honorificity and classifier.

This thesis is divided into three chapters. The first chapter gives the introduction of Maithili language. The second chapter is the focal point of this dissertation which deals with noun and pronoun in detail. The last chapter summarizes the whole thesis and presents a brief conclusion.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABL	-	Ablative
ACC	-	Accusative
AUX	-	Auxilliary
CAUS	-	Causative
CLAS	-	Classifier
COREL	-	Correlative
DAT	-	Dative
DO	-	Direct Object
EMPH	-	Emphatic
F	-	Female
FUT	-	Future
GEN	-	Genitive
H	-	Honorific
HH	-	High honorific
HP	-	Honorific Particle
IMP	-	Imperative
IMPER	-	Imperfect
INF	-	Infinitive
INS	-	Instrumental
LOC	-	Locative
M	-	Male
MH	-	Mid honorific
NH	-	Nonhonorific
NHP	-	Nonhonorific Particle
NOM	-	Nominative
PCL	-	Participle
PERF	-	Perfect
PL	-	Plural
PRES	-	Present Tense
PT	-	Past Tense
PTPCL	-	Past Participle
REFL	-	Reflexive
REL	-	Relative

CHAPTER - ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Nepal is a multilingual, multiethnic and multicultural state where people speak varieties of languages and dialects according to its geographical variation. The 2001 census establishes Nepal as a country of 102 ethnic groups and 92 languages. Such figures and formulations highlight the ethnic and linguistic diversities that contribute toward the cultural mosaic of Nepal. Thus, it is obvious that Nepal is a land of ethnic diversity and linguistic plurality.

The people of the Terai region of Nepal generally speak more than two languages at their command. They understand Bhojpuri, Nepali, Hindi, Maithili etc. Maithili is one of the prominent living languages spoken in India and Nepal - the two South Asian countries. Yadava (2001:443-4) has given many factual details about the Maithili language:

As its name implies, Maithili is, properly speaking, the language of Mithila, the prehistoric ancient kingdom, which was ruled by King Janak and was the birth place of Sita or Janaki, Lord Ram's wife. This region was also called *Tairabhukti*, the ancient name of *Tirhut* comprising both Darbhanga and Muzaffarpur districts of Bihar, India.

Maithili belongs to the Eastern subgroup of the Indo-Aryan group withing the Indo-Iranian branch of the European language family. It forms a subgroup with Bhojpuri and Magahi and is linguistically close to Assamese, Bangla and Oriya than to its more contiguous language, namely, Hindi and Nepali, which belong to Central and Western subgroup of Indo-Aryan, respectively.

The alternative names of the Maithili language are *Tirhutiya*, *Dehati*, *Abahata* or *Apabharamsa*. It is spoken mainly in the northern part of the Indian state of Bihar and the eastern part of Nepal's Terai region. There are also Maithili speaking minorities in adjoining Indian states like West Bengal, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh and the Central Nepal Terai.

There are seven regional dialects of Maithili. They are: the standard, southern, eastern, *chik chiki*, western, *Jolhi* and the central colloquial dialect. Of them, standard Maithili is spoken in the north of Darbhanga district (Bihar State, India), which now forms the part of the Madhubani district. Maithili exhibits social variations in its pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar in terms of the speaker's caste, sex, education, interpersonal relationship, and other social factors.

The Maithili language is spoken by more than 30 million people as a first language and by many other as a second language in the north eastern part of the Indian state of Bihar and the eastern part of Nepal's Terai region. In Nepal, it is the language of approximately 12 percent (approximately 2.3 million) of the total population and figures second in terms of the number of the speakers – next only to Nepali, the language of the nation, spoken by a little over 50 percent of the population.

Previously, Maithili had its own script, called *Mithilakshar* or *Tirhuta*, which originated from *Br hmi* (of the third century B.C.) via the Proto-Bengali script and is similar to the modern Bengali and Oriya writing system. Besides the *Mithil kshar* script, the *Kanthe* script was also used by *K yashtha* (belonging to a caste of writers and clerks) especially in keeping written records at government and private levels. These two scripts are now almost abandoned. For the sake of easy in learnability and printing (and also perhaps under the influence of Hindi writing system), they have been gradually replaced by the *Devanagari* script used in writing Hindi, Nepali and some other languages of both Indo-Aryan and Tibeto-Burman stocks spoken in adjoining areas.

In both Nepal and India, Maithili has been taught as a subject of study from school to university levels of education. Especially in India, however, it has been hampered by the lack of official recognition as a medium of instruction. In Nepal, there has recently been made a constitutional provision for introducing all the mother tongues spoken at primary level of education. This is, no doubt, a welcome step for their promotion, but in spite of speakers' zeal, there has not been much headway in this regard in the dearth of official initiatives and basic requirement like teaching, reading materials and trained manpower. Both PEN (Poets, Essayists, Novelists) and *Sahitya*

Academy have recognized Maithili as the 16th largest language of India, though it has not yet been included in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution despite the unceasing efforts made by the Maithili-speaking community in India.

1.2 Statement of Problems

Maithili, an independent and rich language in itself, still needs various types of studies, explorations, researches, conservations and developments, which can bring the facts and figures of the real situation, concept and attitude of the language speakers and necessity to take the preventive measures to preserve the Maithili language. This short research raises the following questions:

- a. What are the features of nominals?
- b. How are nouns derived from nouns, verbs and adjectives?
- c. How are nominals marked by plural, case, honorific markers?
- d. How do non-nominative cases work as subjects in a sentence?

1.3 Objectives of the Research

The major objective of this thesis is to shed light on the nominals in the Maithili language. The followings are the main objectives formulated for this research:

1. To analyze the features of the Maithili nominals;
2. To analyze the derivational and inflectional system on nouns;
3. To analyze the honorific, plural, case and gender marking system;
4. To analyze the non-nominative case functioning as subjects.

1.4 Review of the Earlier Literature

Although the government of Nepal has not paid much attention to the Maithili language, there are some linguists who have studied it, including nominals. The review of literature upto now can be summarized as follows:

Yadava has written so many articles and books regarding the Maithili language. For examples, in his article '*Non-nominative subjects in Maithili* (2004)', he discusses non-nominative cases as subjects. Like in so many other languages, in Maithili, too,

non-nominative cases, besides nominative one, function as subjects, triggering the verb agreement. In another article '*Maithili (2001)*' which is included in '*Facts About the World's Language*', Yadava discusses briefly about gender, number, honorificity and case regarding Maithili language. Similarly, the book '*Reading in Maithili language, Literature and Culture (1999)*', edited by Yadava, discusses various aspects of the Maithili language, literature and culture. Almost the similar things are also discussed in '*Sayapatri (2055 B.S.)*' edited by him.

'*A Reference Grammar of Maithili (1997)*' by Yadav is a standard grammar of Maithili language which describes, in details, the rules and various particles such as case marker, plural marker, honorific marker, postpositions etc. in the Maithili language. In this book, Yadav has talked of phonology, nominals, their inflections, adjectives, verb, adverb, passivization, causativization, sentence types etc. of the Maithili language.

Similarly, '*Maithili Vyakaran aur Racana (Maithili Grammar and composition) (1989)*' by Yogeshwar Jha is yet another grammar of the Maithili language in which Jha, like Yadav, talks of various grammatical topics in Maithili. In the *Racana* portion, he further discusses about Maithili idioms, proverbs, essays, letters etc.

1.5 Research Methodology

The research is mainly descriptive. It is based on library consultation. To meet the objective of collecting information for literature review, informations were received visiting the following libraries in the Kathmandu valley:

- a. The central library of Tribhuvan University;
- b. The library of the Central Department of Linguistics, T.U.;
- c. The library of the Central Department of English, T.U.;
- d. The library of the Royal Nepal Academy.

Yadava, Yadav and Jha are used for the terminological and conceptual clarity. Similarly, the guidance of the former and senior students is helpful.

1.6 Justification of the Study

Review of the literature shows that some scholars have done some studies on Maithili language. The study of this nature certainly will help the new researchers, general readers and community as a whole. Similarly, this present effort will also be helpful and useful to the future generation of researchers and readers to preserve Maithili language.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

The study is based on the Maithili linguistic practice in Sarlahi, Mahottari, Dhanusha, Siraha, Saptary, Sunsary and Morang. Although the title of this study is '**Nominal Morphology in Maithili Language**', this study links the social, cultural and linguistic situation of the Maithili speaking people. However, this is primarily restricted to the nominals – Maithili nouns and pronouns. And, therefore, the analysis of the data is more descriptive and less theoretical.

1.8 Organization of the Study

1. Chapter One : Introduction
2. Chapter Two : Maithili Nominals
3. Chapter Three : Summary and Conclusion

CHAPTER - TWO

MAITHILI NOMINALS

2.1 Nominals

The nouns and pronouns are the nominals in Maithili language. Each of them has a separate morphological construction.

2.1.1 Noun

Noun is a naming word. It stands for a thing, a person or a place. Noun is that class of words which syntactically functions as a subject or an object of a finite verb and can take number, case and honorific suffixes, and also can be followed by a postposition or functions as a head of a noun phrase. A noun has the following grammatical features:

- a. It contains amongst its most central members those words that denote persons, objects or places;
- b. It is the class to which the categories of number, gender and case have their primary application in languages which have these grammatical categories;
- c. It functions as a subject or an object or a supplement of a verb;
- d. It derives from various categories, e.g., verb, noun, adjective etc.;
- e. Various categories like verbs, nouns, adjectives are derived from nouns; and
- f. It is a open set of items.

2.1.1.1 Classification of Nouns

Nouns in Maithili can be classified on two grounds – derivation and inflection.

2.1.1.1.1 Derivation

It is a major process of word formation in which new words are derived from earlier words or roots, especially using affixes. The words on which the derivation process is applied generally change their grammatical class. For example, a noun is derived from a verb or an adjective etc. On the basis of derivation, there are two types of nouns – basic and derivative.

2.1.1.1.1 Basic Noun

Basic nouns are those nouns which can not be divided, and if divided, they lose their meanings; they become meaningless. For example,

H thi, pothi, hari etc.

Here, if the words *h thi, pothi, hari* are broken – like *h* and *thi, po* and *thi, ha* and *ri* – they don't give any meaningful sense. So, they are basic nouns, which do have meanings wholistically.

2.1.1.1.2 Derivative Nouns

Derivative nouns are derived from the basic nouns, adjectives and verbs. Such nouns have meanings even when they are divided – one part or all the parts may be meaningful. For examples, *p ths l* is a derivative noun which is made of two basic nouns—*p th* 'lesson' and *s l* 'ghar'—and both parts have (their) clear meanings. On the other hand, there are some derivative nouns, which have meanings but different from the meanings of their parts. That is to say, the meaning of such a noun differs from the meanings of its parts. For example, *pit mber* has two parts, *pit* and *amber*, which mean *piyar* 'yellow' and *bastra* 'cloth' respectively. So, the combined meaning here is *piyar bastra* 'yellow cloth'. But the word *pit mber* has its special meaning, that is, 'God Bishnu'.

The derivative nouns are derived from noun, verb and adjectives as follow:

From verb

- (1) a. *padh* 'read' – *padh- i* 'reading'
- b. *likh* 'write' – *likh- i* 'writing'

From noun

- (2) a. *k m* 'work' – *kam i* 'working'
- b. *p th* 'lesson' – *p ths l* 'school'
- c. *pita* 'yellow' – *pit mber* 'yellow cloth'

From adjective

- (3) a. *daridra* ‘poor’ – *daridrat* ‘poverty’
b. *nagna* ‘naked’ – *nagnat* ‘nakedness’

2.1.1.1.2 Inflection

Inflection is any form or change of form which distinguishes different grammatical forms of the same lexical units, e.g., plural noun ‘books’ is distinguished from the singular noun ‘book’ due to the plural marking ‘-s’. Thus, inflection is the change in the form of a word showing its case, gender, number, person, tense, mood, voice etc.

The Maithili nouns have their inflectional forms according to number, gender, case, honorificity and classifier which are discussed below:

2.1.1.1.2.1 Gender

Gender, which classifies nouns into various categories, is not a universal phenomenon; on the one hand, the number of gender differs from language to language, and on the other, some languages have no gender at all. In the context of gender in Maithili language, Yadava deserves to be mentioned here:

Grammatical gender in Maithili noun is very much restricted both as a morphological category and as a syntactic category. There exist declensions like *-i* (*cha r* ‘boy’/*cha ri* ‘girl’), *-in* (*guru/guru in* ‘teacher masculine and feminine’) etc., but they are confined to a limited number of nouns and do not apply across board (2001: 445).

Thus, it can be said that Maithili nouns have two genders – masculine and feminine. But the gender system is confined to a very small number of nouns. For example, *ghor* ‘horse’ is masculine, while *ghori* ‘mare’ is feminine. Similarly, *b p* ‘father’ is masculine, whereas *m e* ‘mother’ is feminine (Yadav 1997: 63).

Agreement between the gender of an animate subject and the verb in the Maithili sentence is of a restricted nature. For instance, in the present tense, verbs show no agreement with the gender of their subject (Yadav 1997: 63-4), e.g.,

- (4) a. *m ster* *padhb-ait* *ch-aith*
 teacher (M) teach-IMPER AUX-PRES-(3H)
 ‘The (male) teacher teaches.’
- b. *masterni* *padh-b-ait* *ch-aith*
 teacher (F) teach-IMPER AUX-PRES-(3H)
 ‘The (female) teacher teaches.’

In the past tense, however, gender agreement between an intransitive verb and its subject does occur – but mostly in formal and literary styles using honorific form (Yadav 1997: 64; Yadava 2001: 445), e.g.,

- (5) a. *r m* *daur-l-aith*
 ram (M) run-PT-(3H)
 ‘Ram ran.’
- b. *sit* *daur-l-ih*
 Sita (F) run-PT-(3H)
 ‘Sita ran.’

In future tense sentences, both transitive and intransitive verbs may agree in gender with an animate subject – but again mostly informal and literary styles using honorific forms (Yadav 1997: 64; Yadava 2001: 445), e.g.,

- (6) a. *bhaiy* *khae-t-ah*
 elder brother (M) eat-FUT-(3H)
 ‘The elder brother will eat.’
- b. *bhauji* *khae-t-ih*
 sister-in-law (F) eat-FUT-(3H)
 ‘The sister-in-law will eat.’

Sentences (5-6) demonstrate that gender agreement between an animate subject and a past or future tense verb form correlates significantly with the presence of honorific inflection on the verb. In colloquial styles, on the other hand, it is perfectly correct to say *r j ae-l-aik* ‘The king came’ or *r ni au-t-aik* ‘The queen will come’; here the verb agree neither in gender nor in honorific grade with their subject.

2.1.1.1.2.1.1 Gender – formation Rules

A. *Tatsama* (i.e. words borrowed from Sanskrit) masculines have the original Sanskrit feminines as their counterparts (Yadav 1997: 65), e.g.,

Table 1. Tatsama Masculine and Feminine Gender

Masculine		Feminine
<i>ch tra</i>	‘student’	<i>ch tr</i>
<i>putra</i>	‘son’	<i>putri</i>
<i>dev/deb</i>	‘god’	<i>devi/debi</i>
<i>br mhan</i>	‘a caste’	<i>br mhini</i>

B. In the native vocabulary, a number of distinct formal correspondences exist between masculine and feminine nouns:

I. Some feminine nouns derive from masculine nouns either through:

a. **suffixation**, or b. **vowel modification**.

II. In some cases, however, the relation between the feminine and the corresponding masculine nouns is purely suppletive.

Ia. Suffixation: The suffixes which are added to masculine noun forms in order to make feminine nouns are *-in*, *-ain*, *-ni* and *-in* (Yadav 1997: 65).

Ia.1. Use of *-in* (*-ini*)

The noun forms to which *-in* is added may be divided into two classes. Class 1 consists of those masculine nouns which end in a consonant and which undergo no change other than the suffixation of *-in*, e.g.,

Table 2. Masculine and feminine gender

Masculine		Feminine
<i>b gh</i>	‘tiger’	<i>b ghin</i>
<i>jat</i>	‘a caste’	<i>jatin</i>
<i>d s</i>	‘slave’	<i>d sin</i>
<i>s p</i>	‘snake’	<i>s pin</i>
<i>mal h</i>	‘fisherman’	<i>mal hin</i>

Class 2 consists of those masculine noun forms which end in a high front vowel *i* and which drop their final vowel *i* upon the suffixation of *-in*' (Most of such nouns refer to traditional caste-professions) (Yadav 1997: 6), e.g.,

Table 3. Masculine and feminine gender

Masculine		Feminine
<i>dhobi</i>	'washerman'	<i>dhobin</i>
<i>p si</i>	'palm wine man'	<i>p sin</i>
<i>m li</i>	'gardener'	<i>m lin</i>
<i>teli</i>	'oilman'	<i>telin</i>
<i>tamoli</i>	'betel leaf man'	<i>tamolin</i>
<i>parosi</i>	'neighbor'	<i>parosin</i>

Most of the feminine nouns cited above retain a final *i* in their present day spelling. Thus, for example, *telin* 'oilwoman' is written as *telini*. Except in the highly affected styles, however, the final *i* is dropped in actual pronunciation.

Ia.2. Use of - in (- ini)

The suffix *- in* is added to a few masculine nouns (dealing mostly with caste and family name) to form feminine nouns, e.g.,

Table 4. Masculine and feminine gender

Masculine		Feminine
<i>ojh</i>	'a family name'	<i>oj hin</i>
<i>modi</i>	'confectioner'	<i>modi in</i>
<i>th kur</i>	'a family name'	<i>thakur in</i>
<i>dhanik</i>	'rich'	<i>dhanik in</i>

Ia.3. Use of - ain (-aini)

A few masculine noun ending in *- r* lose this ending *r* when the feminine marker *- ain* is added (Yadav 1997: 67). For example,

Table 5. Masculine and feminine gender

Masculine		Feminine
<i>kumh r</i>	‘porter’	<i>kumhain</i>
<i>loh r</i>	‘a caste’	<i>lohain</i>
<i>cam r</i>	‘a caste’	<i>camain</i>

Ia.4. Use of -ni

A few masculine nouns are changed into feminine through the suffixation *-ni*. For example,

Table 6. Masculine and feminine gender

Masculine		Feminine
<i>t</i>	‘camel’	<i>tni</i>
<i>cor</i>	‘thief’	<i>corni</i>
<i>gidar</i>	‘wolf’	<i>gidarni</i>
<i>sinh</i>	‘lion’	<i>sinhni</i>
<i>musahar</i>	‘a caste’	<i>musharni</i>
<i>mukht r</i>	‘clerk’	<i>mudht rni</i>

Ib. Vowel Modification

A small set of masculine nouns become feminine through the replacement of final with *i*. For examples,

Table 7. Masculine and feminine gender

Masculine		Feminine
<i>k k</i>	‘uncle’	<i>k ki</i>
<i>j</i>	‘grandfather’	<i>ji</i>
<i>bet</i>	‘son’	<i>beti</i>
<i>ghor</i>	‘horse’	<i>ghori</i>

Most of such nouns refer to kinship relations or animals.

II. Suppletion

A few conceptually related masculine and feminine stand in a suppletive relationship (Yadav 1997: 68-9). For examples,

Table 8. Masculine and feminine gender

Masculine		Feminine	
<i>b p</i>	'father'	<i>m e</i>	'mother'
<i>bh e</i>	'brother'	<i>bahin</i>	'sister'
		<i>bhauji</i>	'sister-in-law'
<i>r j</i>	'king'	<i>r ni</i>	'queen'
<i>bar</i>	'bridegroom'	<i>kaniy</i>	'bride'
<i>muns</i>	'male/man'	<i>maugi</i>	'woman'

Miscellaneous

(i) *-m n* and *-w n* at the end of some masculine nouns are changed into *-mati* and *-wati*, respectively, to make feminine nouns (Jha 1989: 24). For examples,

Table 9. Masculine and feminine gender

Masculine		Feminine	
<i>srim n</i>	'Mr.'	<i>srimati</i>	'Mrs.'
<i>dhanw n</i>	'wealthy'	<i>dhanwati</i>	
<i>rupw n</i>	'handsome'	<i>rupwati</i>	'beautiful'
<i>putraw n</i>		<i>putrawati</i>	
<i>gy nw n</i>	'knowledgeable'	<i>gy nwati</i>	

(ii) At the beginning of some common genders, *nar* or *purush* is added to make masculines, and *m d* or *stri* or *medini* is added to make feminines (Jha 1989: 24). For examples,

Table 10. Masculine and feminine gender

Common gender	Masculine	Feminine
<i>pashu</i> 'animal'	<i>narpashu</i>	<i>m d pashu</i>
<i>lok</i> 'people'	<i>puruslok</i>	<i>strilok</i>
<i>parw</i> 'pigion'	<i>narparw</i>	<i>mediniparw</i>

(iii) In some words, the masculine suffix at the end is changed to feminine suffix, e.g.,

Table 11. Masculine and feminine gender

Masculine	Feminine
<i>m h r j</i> 'king'	<i>m h r ni</i> 'queen'

(iv) In some words, the masculine prefix at the beginning is changed into feminine prefix (Jha 1989: 25). For instances,

Table 12. Masculine and feminine gender

Masculine	Feminine
<i>b bus heb</i> <i>r j s heb</i> 'king'	<i>mai y s heb</i> <i>r nis heb</i> 'queen'

(v) *-ik* is added at the end of some masculine nouns to make feminine ones, e.g.,

Table 13. Masculine and feminine gender

Masculine	Feminine
<i>n yak</i> 'hero'	<i>n ik</i> 'heroine'
<i>g yak</i> 'singer'	<i>g ik</i> 'singress'
<i>samp dak</i> 'editor'	<i>samp dik</i>

2.1.1.1.2.2 Number

Number is a grammatical category which marks a grammatical distinction reflecting the number of countable nouns (or noun phrases) under discussion (Trask 1997: 55). Some number distinctions are: (i) singular vs. plural, (ii) singular vs. dual vs. plural, and (iii) singular vs. dual vs. trial vs. plural (Payne 2003:96). As for number, the followings are some of the possibilities:-

- In most number marking systems, the singular is unmarked while the nonsingulars are marked in some way;
- Some languages mark both singular and plural;
- Another possibility is for the plural to be unmarked while the singular receives a mark of some kind, though this is rare; and

- Some languages only require plurality to be marked on certain kinds of nouns, e.g., animate noun.

Number can be expressed by one of the usual morphosyntactic processes, e.g., prefixation, suffixation, infixation, stem change, reduplication, suprasegmental modification, suppletion or distinct particles.

Maithili language does have number system. It has two types of number--singular and plural. It should be noted that Maithili language has mainly singular nouns. The singular number is unmarked while the plural number is marked by a plural marker like *sab(h)* 'all' and *lokain* 'people'. Generally, *sab(h)* is used to make plural. It is used with all countable nouns like animate, inanimate, honorific, nonhonorific etc. Optionally, *lokain* is used with human nouns in order to indicate plurality as well as honorificity and politeness. It (*lokain*) is not used with nonhonorific and inanimate nouns. For examples,

Table 14. From singular to plural noun

Singular nouns		Plural markers	Plural nouns
a.	<i>mitra</i> 'friend'	<i>sab(h)/lokain</i>	<i>mitrasab(h)/lokain</i>
b.	<i>srot</i> 'audience'	<i>sab(h)/lokain</i>	<i>srot sab(h)/lokain</i>
c.	<i>yogi</i> 'sage'	<i>sab(h)/lokain</i>	<i>yogisab(h)/lokain</i>
But			
d.	<i>jan</i>	<i>sab(h)</i>	<i>jansab(h)</i> (not <i>janlokain</i>)
e.	<i>pothi</i>	<i>sab(h)</i>	<i>pothisab(h)</i> (not <i>pothilokain</i>)
f.	<i>cha r</i>	<i>sab(h)</i>	<i>cha r sab(h)</i> (not <i>cha r lokain</i>)

The plural morpheme *sab(h)* may also be placed before nouns. In such instances, *sab(h)* functions as an adjective, and translates into English as 'all the ...', e.g. ,

- (7) a. *sab* *jan* *e-l*
all laborer come-PT- (3NH)
'All the laborers came.'

- b. *sab* *g i* *cair* *rahal* *ai-ch*
 all cow graze PROG AUX-PRES-(3NH)
 ‘All the cows are grazing.’

Besides *sab(h)* and *lokain*, there are also some other optional plural markers like *gan*, *dal*, *sabahi* and *samuh* which are used to mark plural nouns. They are, however, used in very few situations. For examples,

Table 15. From singular to plural nouns

Singular nouns	Plural markers	Plural nouns
a. <i>ch tra</i> ‘student’ <i>ch tra</i> <i>ch tra</i> <i>ch tra</i>	<i>gan</i> <i>dal</i> <i>sabahi</i> <i>samuh</i>	<i>ch tragan</i> <i>ch tradal</i> <i>ch trasabahi</i> <i>ch trasamuh</i>
b. <i>pothi</i> ‘book’ <i>pothi</i>	<i>sab(h)</i> <i>samuh</i>	<i>pothisab(h)</i> <i>pothisamuh</i>
c. <i>yogi</i> ‘sage’ <i>yogi</i> <i>yogi</i> <i>yogi</i>	<i>gan</i> <i>dal</i> <i>sabahi</i> <i>samuh</i>	<i>yogigan</i> <i>yogidal</i> <i>yogisabahi</i> <i>yogisamuh</i>

(Jha 1989: 26)

It must be noticed that Maithili verbs do not show number verb agreement i.e., no number distinction is made in verb agreement. The same form of the verb is used for both singular and plural nouns, e.g.,

- (8) a. *mitra/mitrasab(h)* *kh -it* *ch-aiith*
 friend/friends eat-IMPER AUX-PRES-(3H)
 ‘Friend(s) is (are) eating.’
- b. *o/o lokain* *daur-l-ain(h)*
 he/they run-PT-(3H)
 ‘He/they ran.’
- c. *bhaiy /bhaiy lokain* *ham-r* *kah-al-k-ain(h)*
 brother/brothers I-ACC tell-PT-(3H)
 ‘Brother/brothers told me.’

2.1.1.1.2.3 Honorificity

The term ‘honorific’ refers to the special linguistic forms that are used as signs of deference or respect toward nominal referents or the addressee. Such linguistic forms sound polite and not offensive to the addressee.

The use of honorific particles in order to convey politeness and deference to the addressee is a common trait in Maithili. Proper and common nouns are marked by honorific (H) suffixes *ji*, *s heb*, and *b bu* (Yadav 1997:272; Yadava 2001: 444) and nonhonorific (NH) suffixes *-*, *-b*, *-m* triggering corresponding verb inflection (Yadava 2001:444). Without such marking, a name has a neutral or mid honorific value. For examples,

- (9) a. *r m* (neutral or midhonorific)
‘Ram’
b. *r m-ji* (honorific)
‘Ram-HP’
c. *ram-u-* (nonhonorific)
‘Ram-NHP’
- (10) a. *r dh* (neutral or midhonorific)
‘Radha’
b. *r dh -ji* (honorific)
‘Radha-HP’
c. *radha-b* (nonhonorific)
‘Radha-NHP’
- (11) a. *d ktar* (neutral or midhonorific)
‘Doctor’
b. *d ktar s heb* (honorific)
‘Doctor-HP’
c. *daktar-b* (nonhonorific)
‘Doctor-NHP’
- (12) a. *ga g* (neutral or midhonorific)
‘Ganga’
b. *ga g -b bu* (honorific)
‘Ganga-HP’

- c. *ga -m* (nonhonorific)
‘Ganga-NHP’
- (13) a. *mandal* (neutral or midhonorific)
‘Mandal’
- b. *mandal-ji* (honorific)
‘Mandal-HP’
- c. *mandal-b* (nonhonorific)
‘Mandal-NHP’
- (14) a. *m m* (neutral or midhonorific)
‘Maternal uncle’
- b. *m m -ji* (honorific)
‘Maternal uncle-HP’
- c. *mama-b* (nonhonorific)
‘Maternal uncle-NPH’

Sentences (9-14) demonstrate that the honorific and non-honorific particles may follow first names (9, 10,12), last names (13), occupational titles (11) and kinship terms (14).

A few honorific particles like *sri* ‘Mr.’ and *srimati* ‘Mrs.’ may precede the first names (when the last names also occur) or the last names. In both cases, the last names may already be suffixed with *-ji* (Yadav 1997:273). For examples,

- (15) a. *b sri sikendar s h-ji bol-t- h*
now HP Sikendra Sah-HP speak-FUT-(3H)
‘Now Mr. Sikendra Sah will speak.’
- b. *-u sri y dab-ji s paricay*
come-IMP(2H) HP yadav-HP to introduction
karb-ait chi
do-IMPER AUX-PRES (1)
‘Come, I will introduce you to Mr. Yadav.’

Sri may also be used for women holding high position, in which case it may not be necessary to highlight the marital status (Yadav 1997:273), e.g.,

- (16) a. *b prophesar sri min jh kiuch kaha*
 now professor HP Mina Jha something say-INF
c h-ait cha-ith
 want-IMPER AUX-PRES-(3H)
 ‘Now Professor Mina Jha would like to say something.’

For young unmarried girls, it is customary to use *kumari*, e.g.,

- (17) a. *kum ri mir baj-ait ch-ait*
 HP Mira speak-IMPER AUX-PRES-(3H)
 ‘Miss Mira is speaking.’

In order to show extreme politeness and deference, honorific particles may be used both before and after the first and last names (Yadav 1997:274), e.g.,

- (18) a. *b bu prem kum r y dab-ji*
 HP Prem Kumar Yadav-HP
 ‘Mr. Prem Kumar Yadav.’

Common nouns sometimes differentiate an honorific and a nonhonorific lexical form (Yadava 2001:444), e.g.,

- (19) a. *bau* (honorific)
 ‘Boy-H’
 b. *cha r* (nonhonorific)
 ‘Boy-NH’
 (20) a. *daiy* (honorific)
 ‘Girl-H’
 b. *cha ri* (nonhonorific)
 ‘Girl-NH’

Below is a brief description of the distributional semantics of the honorific particles:

A. *ji*

ji is the most famous honorific particle, and can allocate with almost all sort of terms (Yadav 1997:274). For examples,

Kin terms

- (21) a. *pit -ji*
father-HP
'Father'
- b. *m t -ji*
mother-HP
'Mother'

Personal names

- (22) a. *rames-ji*
Ramesh-HP
'Mr. Ramesh'
- b. *sanjay-ji*
Sanjay-HP
'Mr. Sanjay'

Occupational titles

- (23) a. *kir ni-ji*
clerk-HP
'Clerk'
- b. *puj ri-ji*
priest-HP
'Priest'

Last names

- (24) a. *d s-ji*
Das-HP
'Das'
- b. *y dab-ji*
Yadav-HP
'Yadav'

B. *s heb*¹

(I) *s heb* occurs mainly with professional occupations, e. g ,

- (25) a. *h kim s heb*
Boss-HP
'Boss'
- b. *bh is c nslar s heb*
vice chancellor-HP
'Vice Chancellor'

II. *s heb* is also used with a few kin terms (Yadav 1997:275), e.g.,

- (26) a. *bh i s heb*
brother-HP
'Brother'
- b. *sasur s heb*
father-in-law HP
'Father-in-law'

III. *s heb* can also follow a few feminine terms, especially those represented by borrowed English words (Yadav 1997:276), e.g.,

- | | | | | |
|------|----|-----------------------|----|-----------------------|
| (27) | a. | <i>d ktarni s heb</i> | b. | <i>mantr ni s heb</i> |
| | | doctor-F -HP | | minister-F -HP |
| | | ‘Doctor’ | | ‘Minister’ |

C. *b bu*

I. *b bu* (lit. father) collocates mostly with first and last names, and never with kin terms and professional titles using borrowed English words, e.g.,

- | | | | | |
|------|----|-------------------|----|-------------------|
| (28) | a. | <i>rames b bu</i> | b. | <i>y dab b bu</i> |
| | | Ramesh -HP | | Yadav -HP |
| | | ‘Mr. Ramesh’ | | ‘Yadav’ |

But not

- | | | | | |
|------|----|-----------------------|----|----------------------------|
| (29) | a. | <i>k k b bu</i> | b. | <i>m m b bu</i> |
| | | uncle -HP | | maternal uncle -HP |
| | | ‘Uncle’ | | ‘Maternal uncle’ |
| | c. | <i>d irektar b bu</i> | d. | <i>bh is c nsalar b bu</i> |
| | | director -HP | | vice chancellor -HP |
| | | ‘Director’ | | ‘Vice Chancellor’ |

II. Those professional occupations which use indigenous vocabulary as labels are followed by *b bu* (Yadav 1997:277). For examples,

- | | | | | |
|------|----|------------------|----|-------------------|
| (30) | a. | <i>okil b bu</i> | b. | <i>darog b bu</i> |
| | | lawyer -HP | | police officer-HP |
| | | ‘Lawyer’ | | ‘Police officer’ |

III. *b bu* never occurs with a feminine name or title, e.g.

- | | | | | |
|------|----|-------------------|----|------------------------|
| (31) | a. | * <i>sit b bu</i> | b. | * <i>d ktarni b bu</i> |
| | | Sita-F-HP | | doctor-F -HP |
| | | ‘Sita’ | | ‘Doctor’ |

Like in some other languages, in Maithili, too, both subjects and objects are marked for honorificity and nonhonorificity triggering the verb agreement. For examples,

- (32) a. *ham* *hari-ji-ke* *kaha-li-ain (h)*
 I Hari-HP-ACC tell-PT-(3H+1)
 ‘I told Hari.’
- b. *ham* *hari- -ke* *kaha-li-aik*
 I Hari-NHP-ACC tell-PT-(3NH+1)
 ‘I told Hari.’
- c. *d ktar s heb* *rames -b -ke* *kaha-l-thin*
 doctor-HP Ramesh- NHP-ACC tell-PT-(3H+3NH)
 ‘The doctor told him.’
- d. *daktar-b* *rames-b -ke* *kaha-l-k-aik*
 doctor-NHP Ramesh-NHP-ACC tell-PT-(3NH+3NH)
 ‘The doctor told him.’
- e. *daktar-b* *rames-ji-ke* *kaha-l-k-ain (h)*
 doctor-NHP Ramesh-HP-ACC tell-PT-(3NH+3H)
 ‘The doctor told Ramesh.’
- f. *d ktar s heb* *rames-ji-ke* *kaha-l-thin*
 doctor-HP Ramesh-HP-ACC tell-PT-(3H+3H)
 ‘The doctor told Ramesh.’

2.1.1.1.2.4 Case

The relation of a noun or a pronoun with other words in a sentence is called the case. In other words, the relation in which a noun or a pronoun stands to some other words is known as the case. According to David Crystal (1997:53), the case is a grammatical category used in the analysis of word classes (or their associated phrases) to identify the syntactic relationship between words in a sentence, through such contrast as nominative, accusative, instrumental etc.

In the context of Maithili language, Y.P. Yadava, in his book ‘*Issues in Maithili Syntax*’, views that, in some traditional grammars, it has been claimed that Maithili has eight cases: nominative, accusative, instrumental, dative, ablative, genitive, locative and vocative. But both Yadav and Yadava have claimed that, however, upon

scrutiny, this characterization of the Maithili case system proves to be inadequate. It is because:

- a. First, these descriptions tend to superimpose wholesale the Sanskrit case system upon Maithili without sufficient consideration of the facts of Maithili Grammar. For instance, the postulation of the vocative case is not well motivated for Maithili. What has traditionally been called vocative case form may, in fact, be viewed as a form of address. So, the vocative category is not a suitable case division in Maithili language.
- b. Second, these early descriptions retain two distinct case categories of accusative and dative. This case distinction is clearly meant to parallel the syntactic distinction between direct and indirect objects. But the morphological analysis of Maithili nouns does not support an accusative-dative contrast. Thus, from a formal point of view, the distinction posed between accusative and dative is a clear case of over differentiation.

By rejecting the aforementioned views on case system in Maithili language, Yadav (1997: 72-3) poses five cases in Maithili: nominative, accusative-dative, instrumental, genitive and locative. The present thesis, however, discusses 'ablative' as a separate and distinct case. Thus, there are altogether six cases, according to this thesis, in Maithili: nominative, accusative/dative, instrumental, genitive, ablative and locative.

It is not always easy to predict a case that a given noun takes, since several distinct factors may jointly determine a noun's case. It appears that cases are determined by (Yadav 1997: 72):

- a) The feature of the noun itself (e.g., human vs. nonhuman; animate vs. inanimate; specific vs. nonspecific etc.);
- b) The grammatical relations (e.g., subject, direct object, indirect object etc.) that may exist between one noun and the other; and
- c) The nature and quality of the verb in the sentence, which allow or disallow the occurrence of a particular case in the noun.

Case relation are expressed in the following ways (Yadava 2001: 445; Yadav 1997:72):

- i) By zero-making (ϕ) or absence of case markers, e.g., the nominative case;
- ii) By the clitics or by the suffixation of a case marker (-sa/-s , -ke/-k , -me, -par etc.), e.g., the genitive and the instrumental case (when the noun is not a human proper noun); and
- iii) By the use of a postposition, e.g., instrumental, locative and accusative case. For examples,

- (33)
- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| a. | <i>r m - ϕ</i> | | <i>padh-l-ak.</i> |
| | ram-NOM | | read-PT-(3NH) |
| | ‘Ram read.’ | | |
| b. | <i>sanjay-ϕ</i> | <i>binay-ke</i> | <i>mar-l-ak</i> |
| | sanjay-NOM | binay-ACC | beat-PT-(3NH) |
| | ‘Sanjay beat Binay.’ | | |
| c. | <i>ham-ϕ</i> | <i>paer-e</i> | <i>ae-l-ah</i> |
| | I-NOM | foot-INS | come-PT-(1) |
| | ‘I came on foot.’ | | |

The six types of cases in Maithili language are as follow:

A. Nominative Case

The nominative case in the Maithili language is marked by the zero marking (ϕ) or by the absence of any case marker. The noun in the nominative case generally performs the grammatical function of a subject. Some objects, however, are also marked by nominative case. For examples,

- (34).
- | | | | | |
|----|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| a. | <i>sunit -ϕ</i> | <i>m-ϕ</i> | <i>pasanda</i> | <i>kar-ai-ch</i> |
| | Sunita-NOM | mango-NOM | like | do-PRES-(3NH) |
| | ‘Sunita likes a mango.’ | | | |
| b. | <i>hari-ϕ</i> | <i>pustak-ϕ</i> | <i>de-l-ak</i> | |
| | Hari-NOM | book-NOM | give-PT-(3NH) | |
| | ‘Hari gave a book.’ | | | |

A.1. Use of the nominative case or zero marking (ϕ)

i) With the doer of an action, e.g.,

- (35) a. *r m- ϕ* *au-t- h*
Ram-NOM come-FUT-(3H)
'Ram will come.'

ii) With a cause of an action, e.g.,

- (36) a. *sumit- ϕ* *r m-s* *padh-ae-l-thin*
Sumit-NOM Ram-INS read-CAUS-PT-(3NH+3H)
'Sumit made Ram study.'

iii) With a subject of a passive voice, e.g.,

- (37) a. *pustak- ϕ* *kin-al* *ge-l*
book-NOM buy-PTPCL go-PT-(3NH)
'A book was bought.'

iv) With an object that is inanimate and non-human, e.g.,

- (38) a. *amit- ϕ* *kalam- ϕ* *kin-ait* *ai-ch*
Amit-NOM pen-NOM buy-IMPER AUX-PRES-(3NH)
'Amit is buying a pen.'

B. Accusative or Dative or Objective Case

The accusative-dative case in the Maithili language is marked by the postposition -*ke/-k*. This postposition, however, may or may not actually be present in a given instance. The noun phrase in the accusative case generally performs the grammatical function of an object – direct or indirect (Yadav 1997: 73-4). For instances,

- (39) a. *ham* *r m-ke* *pit-ai-chi*
I Ram-ACC beat-PRES (1)
'I beat Ram.'
- b. *mir - ϕ* *sanjay-ke* *pustak* *de-it* *ai-ch*
Mira-NOM Sanjay-ACC book give-IMPER AUX-PRES-(3NH)
'Mira is giving Sanjay a book.'

- c. *o* *kit b* *padh-l-ain(h)*
 he(H) book read-PT-(3H)
 ‘He read a book.’

B.1. Direct Object

The direct object is generally the name of a thing. In other words, the answer of the question *ki* ‘what’ is the direct object. The accusative case marking on the direct object depends on the features of the object itself.² Animacy³ and definiteness⁴, for example, are the two major factors that determine the use of case marking. For example,

- (40) a. *binay* *cithi* *likh-ait* *ai-ch*
 Binay(NH) letter-DO write-IMPER AUX-PRES-(3NH)
 ‘Binay is writing a letter.’
- b. *prem-ϕ* *s p* *m r-l-ain(h)*
 Prem-NOM snake-DO kill-PT-(3H)
 ‘Prem killed a snake.’

B.1.1 Use of the accusative case marker *-ke/-k* (with a direct object)

i) The postposition *-ke/-k* is obligatorily present when the direct object noun phrase happens to be a human proper name, e.g.,

- (41) a. *ah* *mohan- ke* *baj -u*
 you(H) Mohan-ACC call-IMP-(2H)
 ‘(You) call Mohan.’
- b. *ham* *jibach-ke* *dekh-ait* *chi*
 I Jibach-ACC look at-IMPER AUX-PRES-(1)
 ‘I am looking at Jibach.’

ii) When the direct object is a kin term, it is always marked by accusative case marker (Yadav 1997: 75), e.g.,

- (42) a. *o* *k k -ke* *sor* *p r-l-ain(h).*
 he(H) uncle-ACC noise do-PT-(3H).
 ‘he called the uncle.’

- b. *ham sasur- ke gor lag-l-ah*
 I father-in-law-ACC feet touch-PT (1)
 ‘I greeted (lit. touched the feet of) the father-in-law.’

iii) The accusative-dative case marker is used to turn the animate common noun (which is both indefinite and non-specific) into definite and specific, e.g.,

- (43) a. *ham g i tak-ait chi.* (indefinite)
 I cow look for-IMPER AUX-PRES -(1)
 ‘I am looking for a cow.’
- b. *ham gai-ke tak-ait chi*
 I cow-ACC look for AUX-PRES-(1)
 ‘I am looking for the cow.’

iv) All possessed object nouns (human and non-human, animate and inanimate, alienable and inalienable), preceded by a possessive modifier pronoun encoded by the morphological accusative-dative case, are obligatorily marked for the accusative-dative case (Yadav 1997: 80), e.g.,

- (44) a. *u ham-r k k -ke bol-ai-l-ak*
 he(NH) I-ACC uncle-ACC call-PT-(3NH)
 ‘He called my uncle.’
- b. *ah ok-r g i-ke m r-l-ah*
 you(H) he-GEN cow-ACC kill-PT-(3H)
 ‘You killed his cow.’

v) All object noun phrases (human and non-human, animate and inanimate) preceded by a determiner like demonstrative pronoun *ehi/ohi* ‘this/that one’ are obligatorily marked for the accusative-dative case (Yadav 1997:81). For examples,

- (45) a. *ham ehi/ohi m-ke tor-l-ah*
 I this/that mango-ACC pluck-PT-(1)
 ‘I plucked the mango.’
- b. *u ehi/ohi cha r -ke m r-l-ak*
 he (NH) this/that boy-ACC beat-PT-(3NH+3NH).
 ‘He beat that boy.’

B.1.2 Omission of the accusative case marker

The direct object is not marked with the accusative case marker in the following situations:

i) If the direct object is the name of an animal, e.g.,

- (46) a. *r m h thi-ϕ dekh-ne ai-ch*
Ram-(3NH) elephant-NOM see-PERF AUX-PRES-(3NH)
'Ram has seen an elephant.'
- b. *t b gh-ϕ chui-ne ch-ah?*
you(2MH) tiger-NOM touch-PERF AUX-PRES-(2MH)
'Have you touched a tiger?'

ii) If it is the name of a place, e.g.,

- (47) a. *ham janakpur-ϕ ge-l chi.*
I Janakpur-NOM go-PERF AUX-PRES- (1)
'I have gone to Janakpur.'
- b. *r j janak-ϕ janakpur-ϕ sahar basau-l-ain(h)*
King Janak-NOM Janakpur-NOM town establish-PT-(3H)
'King Janak established the Janakpur city.'

iii) If it is animate common noun, e.g.,

- (48) a. *o-ϕ d ctar-ϕ bol-ai-l-ain(h)*
he-NOM doctor-NOM call-PT-(3H)
'He called a doctor.'
- b. *r m-ϕ bh l-ϕ m r-l-ak*
Ram-NOM bear-NOM kill-PT-(3NH)
'Ram killed a bear.'

iv) If it is inanimate noun, e.g.,

- (49) a. *u-ϕ h l -ϕ kae-l-ak*
he-NOM noise-NOM do-PT-(3NH)
'He made a noise.'

- b. *t* - ϕ *dh n* - ϕ *kat-l-ah*
 you-NOM paddy-NOM cut-PT-(2MH)
 ‘You cut the paddy.’

v) The possessed nouns (alienable or inalienable) which are modified by possessive pronouns are not marked for the accusative case, e.g.,

- (50) a. *ham-ar* *deh*- ϕ *nai* *chu-u*
 I-GEN body-NOM not touch-IMP-(2H)
 ‘Please, don’t touch my body.’
- b. *ok-ar* *g i*- ϕ *car-ait* *ai-ch*
 he-GEN cow-NOM graze-IMPER AUX-PRES-(3NH)
 ‘His cow is grazing.’

vi) Non-human and inanimate object noun phrases preceded by a determiner like demonstrative pronoun are never marked with the accusative-dative case (Yadav 1997: 78), e.g.,

- (51) a. *ham*- ϕ *i* *g i*- ϕ *kin-l-ah*
 I-NOM this cow-NOM buy-PT-(1)
 ‘I bought this cow.’
- b. *t* *u* *dh n* *kat-l-*
 you-NOM that paddy-NOM cut-PT-(2NH)
 ‘You cut that paddy.’

vii) The indefinite object nouns preceded by the cardinal numeral *ek* ‘one’ followed by the classifier *-t* are not marked for accusative-dative case. For example,

- (52) a. *ham*- ϕ *ek-t* *g i*- ϕ *kin-ab*
 I-NOM one-CLAS cow-NOM buy-FUT-(1)
 ‘I will buy a cow.’
- b. *u*- ϕ *ek-t* *cor*- ϕ *pakar-l-ak*
 he-NOM one-CLAS thief-NOM catch-PT-(3NH)
 ‘He caught a thief.’

B.2 Indirect Object

Indirect objects are more likely to be personal pronouns, proper names, and animate common noun phrases. In other words, the indirect object denotes persons or animals to whom (or which) something is given or for whom (or which) something is done. The indirect object is obligatorily marked with the accusative-dative postposition. Needless to say, once the indirect object is case-marked, the direct object remains unmarked (Yadav 1997: 82). Inanimate indirect objects are unusual, but when they do occur, they tend to be marked with accusative postposition. For examples,

(53) a. *nandu-ϕ* *binay-ke* *pustak* *de-l-ak*
Nandu-NOM Binay-ACC book give-PT-(3NH)

‘Nandu gave Binay a book.’

b. *kulisabh-ϕ* *sarak-ke* *pic* *kae* *rahal* *ai-ch*
coolie-PL-NOM road-ACC pitch do PROG AUX-PRES-(3NH)

‘The coolies are blacktopping the road.’ (Yadav 1997: 82)

C. Instrumental Case

The instrumental case in Maithili is marked by the use of the postposition *-sa/-s*, and optionally by the suffixation of the case marker *-e/-* (Yadav 1997: 84). The noun marked with the instrumental case functions as a means to do an action. Something, that is to say, is done with the help of such a noun. For example,

(54) a. *sumit-ϕ* *lathi-sa* *s p* *m r-l-ak*
Sumit-NOM stick-INS snake kill-PT-(3NH)

‘Sumit killed a snake with a stick.’

b. *o-ϕ* *kamal-s* *cithi* *likh-b-ait* *ch-aith*
he-NOM kamala-INS letter write-IMPER AUX-PRES-(3H)

‘He is getting Kamala write a letter.’

C.1. Use of the instrumental case (*-sa/-s* or *-e/-*)

I. With the noun that is an instrument to do an action, e.g.,

- (55) a. *mohan-ϕ* *kalam- s* *likh-l-ain(h)*
 Mohan-NOM pen-INS write-PT-(3H)
 ‘Mohan wrote with a pen.’
- b. *m e-ϕ* *caku- s* *m* *soh-l-ain(h)*
 mother-NOM knife-INS mango peel-PT-(3H)
 ‘The mother peeled a mango with a knife.’ (Yadav 1997: 85)

II. To express reason or cause (Jha 1997: 33), e.g.,

- (56) a. *bridh -ϕ* *punya-sa* *sworga* *pr pt* *kae-l-ain(h)*
 old lady-NOM virtue-INS heaven get do-PT-(3H)
 ‘The old lady got the heaven by her virtue.’
- b. *shatrut - sa* *dwesh* *badh-ai-ch*
 enmity-INS jealousy grow-PRES-(3NH)
 ‘Jealousy grows due to enmity.’

III. With the subject of the passive voice, e.g.,

- (57) a. *r m-sa* *r van-ϕ* *m r-al* *ge-l*
 Ram-INS Ravan-NOM kill-PCL go-PT-(3NH)
 ‘Ravan was killed by Ram.’
- b. *mehm n-sa* *kh e-l* *nai* *ge-l-ain(h)*
 guest-INS eat-PCL not go-PT-(3H)
 ‘It could not be eaten by the guest.’ (Yadav 1997: 86)

IV. In the direct causative construction, when the action of the causative verb is beneficiary to the motivator, the logical agent becomes only an instrument and is marked by the postposition *-sa/-s* (Yadav 1997: 85), e.g.,

- (58) a. *m lik-ϕ* *nokar-sa* *m ch* *mar-au-l-ain(h)*
 master-NOM servant-INS fish kill-CAUS-(3H)
 ‘The master caused the servant to catch fish. (Yadav 1997: 85)
- b. *theked r-ϕ* *jan-sa* *it* *dho-au-l-ain (h)*
 contractor-NOM laborer-INS brick carry-CAUS-PT-(3H)
 ‘The contractor caused the laborers to carry the bricks.’

V. In the indirect causative construction, both motivated agents are marked by the instrumental postposition (Yadav 1997: 85-6), e.g.,

- (59) a. *m lik-ϕ theked r-sa jan-sa it dho-bau-l-ain(h)*
 master-NOM contractor-INS laborer-INS brick carry-CAUS-PT-(3H)
 ‘The master caused the contractor to have the brick carried by the laborers.’
- b. *ham-ϕ nokar-sa m e-sa rupaiy ma -bau-l-ah*
 I-NOM servant-INS mother-INS rupees ask-CAUS-PT-(1)
 ‘I caused the servant to have the money asked for by the mother.’

VI. The instrumental case in Maithili may be marked optionally by the suffixation of the case marker *-e/-* to the noun, provided that the latter is not animate, e.g.,

- (60) a. *b y h th-e likh-u*
 left hand-INS write-IMP-(2H)
 ‘Please, write with (your) left hand.’
- b. *ham paer- ab-ait chi*
 I foot-INS come-IMPER AUX-PRES-(1)
 ‘I come on foot.’
- c. *dahin h th-e kh -u.*
 right hand-INS eat-IMP(2H)
 ‘Please eat with (your) right hand.’ (Yadav 1997: 89)

VII. To show the lack or scarcity of something (Jha 1989: 32), e.g.,

- (61) a. *naresh- bidy - sa hin ch-aith*
 Naresh-NOM knowledge-INS lack AUX-PRES-(3H)
 ‘Naresh does not have knowledge.’
- b. *u dhan- s garib ai-ch.*
 he(NH) wealth-INS poor AUX-PRES-(3NH)
 ‘He lacks wealth.’

VIII. With the words like *j ti* ‘caste’, *prakriti* ‘nature’, *kriti* ‘shape’, *n m* ‘name’ (Jha 1989: 32), e.g.,

- (62) a. *ajay-ϕ j ti-sa y dab ch-aiṭh*
 Ajay-NOM caste-INS yadav AUX-PRES-(3H)
 ‘Ajay is yadav as a caste.’
- b. *ganesh-ϕ prakriti-sa krodhi ai-ch.*
 Ganesh-NOM nature-INS angry AUX-PRES-(3NH)
 ‘Ganesh is angry by nature.’

IX. To give the sense of possession, *nipun* ‘skilful’, *purna* ‘perfect’ etc, e.g.,

- (63) a. *ham dhan-sa purna ch-i.*
 I wealth-INS perfect AUX-PRES-(1)
 ‘I am satisfied with wealth.’
- b. *r m gun-sa nipun ai-ch*
 Ram-(3NH) virtue-INS skilful AUX-PRES-(3NH)
 ‘Ram is skilful.’

D. Ablative Case

Like the instrumental case, the ablative case is also marked with the postpositions -*sa/-s*. The ablative case marker generally shows the relation broken between two nouns, that is, one noun is separated from the other, e.g.,

- (64) a. *g ch-sa p t-ϕ khas-al*
 tree-ABL leaf-NOM fall-PT-(3NH)
 ‘A leaf fell from the tree.’ (Yadav 2055: 12)
- b. *ah g m-sa ae-l-aun(h)*
 you(2H) village-ABL come-PT-(3H)
 ‘You came from the village.’

D.1. Use of the Ablative Case -sa/-s

I. To express removal or separation (Yadav 1997: 86), e.g.,

- (65) a. *shatru-sa* *baci*
 enemy-ABL save-INF
 ‘One should keep away from the enemy.’
- b. *ak sh-sa* *p in* *par-al*
 sky-ABL water fall-PT-(3NH)
 ‘The water fell from the sky.’

II. To express the notion of source or origin (Jha 1989: 34), e.g.,

- (66) a. *him laya-sa* *gang* *nikal-al* *ch-aith.*
 Himalaya-ABL Ganga come out-PCL AUX-PRES-(3H)
 ‘Ganga has come out of Himalaya.’
- b. *pandit-sa* *pur n* *sun-u*
 priest-ABL puran hear-IMP-(2H)
 ‘Please, listen to the Purana from the pandit.’ (Yadav 1997: 87)

III. To show/indicate comparison (Jha 1989: 34), e.g.,

- (67) a. *ah* *k k -sa* *chot* *chi*
 you(H) uncle-ABL small AUX-PRES-(2H)
 ‘You are younger than the uncle.’ (Yadav 1997: 87)
- b. *son* *c ni-sa* *mulyaw n* *ho-i-ch*
 Gold silver-ABL valuable AUX-PRES-(3NH)
 ‘Gold is more valuable than silver.’

IV. To express association, antagonism, terror or safe (Yadav 1997: 87; Jha 1989: 34), e.g.,

- (68) a. *bh i-sa* *jhagar* *nai* *kar-i*
 brother-ABL quarrel not do-INF
 ‘One should not quarrel with one’s brother.’ (Yadav 1997: 87)
- b. *b dh -sa* *darab* *ucit* *nahi* *ai-ch*
 obstacle-ABL fear-INF good not AUX-PRES
 ‘It is not good to be feared with obstacle.’ (Jha 1989: 34)

V. To express continued duration (Yadav 1997: 87), e.g.,

- (69) a. *bhikh ri tin din-sa bhukh-al ai-ch.*
beggar three day-ABL hungry AUX-PRES-(3NH)
'The beggar is hungry for the last three days.'

VI. To show direction (Jha 1989:34), e.g.,

- (70) a. *ghars purab ek pokhair ai-ch*
house-ABL east one pond AUX-PRES-(3NH)
'There is a pond to the east of the house.'
- b. *kh t-sa p chu r m ai-ch*
cot-ABL behind Ram AUX-PRES-(3NH)
'There is Ram behind the cot.'

VII. To express distance (Yadav 1997:87), e.g.,

- (71) a. *sahar-sa dur rahab ucit ai-ch*
town-ABL far remain good AUX-PRES
'It is good to be far away from the town.'
- b. *bindhi janakpur-sa tin kilometer ai-ch*
Bindhi Janakpur-ABL three kilometer AUX-PRE-(3NH)
'Bindhi is 3km far away from Janakpur.'

VIII. To form manner adverbials (Yadav 1997:87), e.g.,

- (72) a. *o bad kathn i-sa padh-l-ain (h)*
he(H) much difficulty-ABL study-PT-(3H)
'He studied with great difficulty.'
- b. *mon-s padh-u*
mind-ABL read-IMP-(2H)
'Please, read with attention.'

E. Genitive or Possessive case

The genitive case in the Maithili language is marked by the case marker *-ak* when the noun phrase ends in a consonant and by *-k* when it ends in vowels. The noun phrase in

the genitive case basically performs an adjectival function and qualifies the noun to which it bears the case relationship (Yadav 1997:90). In other words, the genitive or possessive case usually denotes relationship or ownership of something. For instance,

- (73) a. *ganesh-ak* *bet*
 Ganesh-GEN son
 ‘Ganesh’s son.’
- b. *r j -k* *ghar*
 king-GEN palace
 ‘King’s palace.’

E.1 Use of the Genitive case (-ak or -k)

I. To show kinship relation (Yadav 1997:90), e.g.,

- (74) a. *r m-ak* *pot* *ae-l-ak*
 Ram-GEN grandson came-PT-(3NH)
 ‘Ram’s grandson came.’
- b. *sit -k* *bh i* *padh-ait* *ch-aith*
 Sita-GEN brother read-IMPER AUX-PRES-(3H)
 ‘Sita’s brother is reading.’

II. To show ownership or possession (Jha 1989:34), e.g.,

- (75) a. *ham* *r m-ak* *ghar* *dekh-l-ah*
 I Ram-GEN house see-PT-(1)
 ‘I saw Ram’s house.’ (Yadava 2001: 445)
- b. *h thi-k* *d t* *bahumulya* *ho-i-ch*
 elephant-GEN tooth valuable AUX-PRES-(3NH)
 ‘The tusk of an elephant is valuable.’ (Jha 1989:34)

III. To show part-whole relationship (Yadav (1997:91), e.g.,

- (76) a. *roti-k* *khar* *ham* *kha-el-ah*
 bread-GEN piece I eat-PT-(1)
 ‘I ate the piece of the bread.’

- b. *hari-ϕ* *g ch-ak* *d ir* *kat-l-ak*
hari-NOM tree-GEN branch cut-PT-(3NH)
‘Hari cut the branch of a tree.’

IV. To show location (Jha 1989:34), e.g.,

- a. *ghar-ak* *g* *g ch* *ai-ch*
hosue-GEN front tree AUX-PRE-(3NH)
‘There is a tree in front of the house.’
- b. *tabul-ak* *upar* *diy* *ai-ch*
table-GEN over lamp AUX-PRES-(3NH)
‘There is a lamp over the table.’

V. To express the idea of English ‘made of’ (Yadav 1997:91), e.g.,

- (78) a. *shish -k* *th ri* *l -u*
glass-GEN plate bring-IMP-(2H)
‘Please, bring the plate of glass.’
- b. *son -k* *b l* *lag -u*
gold-GEN bracelet wear-IMP-(2H)
‘Please, wear a bracelet of gold.’

VII. To show a source, e.g.,

- (79) a. *ham* *dh r -k* *p in* *pi-ai-chi*
I tap-GEN water drink-PRES-(1)
‘I drink the water of a tap.’
- b. *yadab-ak* *likh-al* *pustak* *padh-u*
Yadava-GEN write-PCL book read-IMP-(2H)
‘Please, read the book written by Yadava.’

VIII. To express the idea of English ‘for’ (Yadav 1997:91), e.g.,

- (80) a. *bac* *haej -k* *dab i* *khaj-l-ak*
child cholera-GEN medicine eat-PT-(3NH)
‘The child ate the medicine for cholera.’

- b. *khae-b -k* *m* *p k-al* *ai-ch*
 eat-INF-GEN mango rip-PCL AUX-PRE-(3NH)
 ‘The mango for eating is ripen.’

IX. To express the idea of chief characteristic (Yadav 1997:92), e.g.,

- (81) a. *ham* *m e-k* *mamat* *pae-l-ah*
 I mother-GEN love get-PT-(1)
 ‘I got the love of my mother.’
- b. *bac -k* *swabh b* *ach* *ai-ch*
 child-GEN nature good AUX-PRE-(3NH)
 ‘The nature of the child is good.’

X. To show the idea of cumulation (through reduplication), e.g.,

- (82) a. *g m-ak g m*
 ‘A lot of villages.’
- b. *bath n-ak bath n*
 ‘A lot of flocks.’

XI. To show the relation of the words like *abhy s* ‘exercise’. *prak r* ‘kind’, *bishesht* ‘feature’ etc. with other words, e.g.,

- (83) a. *tahalb -k* *abhy s* *lag- e-b* *nik* *thik*
 walk-GEN habit have-INF nice AUX-PRES-(3NH)
 ‘To have the habit of walking is good.’

XII. To show distance, time etc. (Jha 1989:35), e.g.,

- (84) a. *satak-ak* *samaya* *samip* *ai-ch*
 century-GEN time near AUX-PRES-(3NH)
 ‘The century is near.’
- b. *naw* *kosh-ak* *duri* *kam nai* *ai-ch*
 nine kosh-GEN distance less not AUX-PRES-(3NH)
 ‘The distance of nine *kosh* is not less.’

F. Locative Case

The locative case in Maithili is marked by the use of postpositions *-me* ‘in’ or *-par* ‘at or on’. It expresses location. The noun that is marked by the locative case markers generally functions as a foundation on (or in) which something exists. For examples,

- (85) a. *ham bidy laya-me padh-ait chi*
I school-LOC study-IMPER AUX-PRES-(1)
‘I study in a school.’
- b. *pustak kh t-par ai-ch*
book cot-LOC AUX-PRES-(3NH)
‘The book is on the cot.’

F.1 Use of the locative case marker *-me* ‘in’

I. To show the location within or inside something, e.g.,

- (86) a. *caur bor -me ai-ch*
rice sack-LOC AUX-PRES-(3NH)
‘The rice is in the sack.’ (Yadav 1997:93)
- b. *ham kothari-me chi*
I room-LOC AUX-PRES-(1)
‘I am in the room.’

II. To show the price of a thing, e.g.,

- (87) a. *amit bis-t k -me ek-t pustak kin-l-ak*
Amit-(3NH) twenty-rupees-LOC one-CLAS book buy-PT-(3NH)
‘Amit bought a book for twenty rupees.’

III. To show specific through comparison (Jha 1989:35), e.g.,

- (88) a. *kabi-me k lid s shrestha cha-l- h*
poets-LOC Kalidas great AUX-PT-(3H)
‘Kalidas was great among poets.’
- b. *mir larki sabh-me sundar ch-aith*
Mira girl-PL-LOC beautiful AUX-PRES-(3H)
‘Mira is the most beautiful of all the girls.’

IV. To express duration (Yadav 1997:93), e.g.,

- (89) a. *p c s l-me ham-ar k m pur bhe-l*
five year-LOC I-GEN work complete become-PT-(3NH)
'My work was completed in five years.'
- b. *ham i pustak du din-me khatam kae-l-ah*
I this book two day-LOC finish do-PT-(1)
'I finished this book in two days.'

V. To show the relation of the words like *nipun* 'skilful', *kushal* 'clever' etc. with other words (Jha 1989:35), e.g.,

- (90) a. *n r yan ganit-me nipun ai-ch*
Narayan math-LOC skilful AUX-PRES-(3NH)
'Narayan is skillful in maths.'
- b. *dinesh k bya kal -me kushal cha-l- h*
Dinesh poetic art-LOC perfect AUX-PT-(3H)
'Dinesh was perfect in poetic art.'

F.2 Use of the Locative case marker *-par* 'at or on'

I. To show a location at or on something (Yadav 1997:94), e.g.,

- (91) a. *pustak kursi-par ai-ch*
book chair-LOC AUX-PRES-(3NH)
'The book is on the chair.'
- b. *ham kh t-par bais-l-ah*
I cot-LOC sit-PT-(1)
'I sat on the cot.'

II. To show point of time or place (Yadav 1997:94), e.g.,

- (92) a. *apne jagah-par bais-u*
REFL place-LOC sit-IMP-(2H)
'Please, take your respective seats.'
- b. *t im-par k j kar-u*
time-LOC work do-IMP-(2H)
'Please, do your work on time.'

III. To show anger, faith, mercy etc., e.g.,

- (93) a. *hun-k* *bhagw n-par* *bishw s* *ch-ain (h)*
 he-ACC god-LOC faith AUX-PRES-(3H)
 ‘He has faith in God.’
- b. *ok-r* *bhikh r-par* *day* *lag-l-aik*
 he-ACC beggar-LOC mercy feel-PT-(3NH)
 ‘He felt mercy towards the beggar.’

IV. To show the aftermath of an action, e.g.,

- (94) a. *khae-l -par* *bujh e-t*
 eat (verbal noun)-LOC feel-FUT-(2H)
 ‘You will feel it after having eaten (it).’
- b. *gel -par* *bhet* *hoe-t*
 go (verbal noun) LOC meet AUX-FUT-(2H)
 ‘You will meet (him) after going there.’

Non-Nominative Subjects

(1) A nominative nominal can be the subject of a clause, but it can also function as the object of a verb in another construction. On the other hand, though the subject is typically coded with nominative case, it can also be realized with other case markings. In other word, Maithili clauses involve non-nominative subjects also, apart from the nominative one. There are five types of non-nominative subjects in the Maithili language; accusative, instrumental, locative, genitive and ablative (Yadava 2004:253-63), e.g.,

- (95) a. *r m-ke* *bhukh* *l g-al* (Accusative)
 Ram-ACC hungry feel-PT-(3NH)
 ‘Ram felt gungry.’
- b. *hari-s* *i* *k j* *nai* *bhel* (Instrumental)
 Hari-INS this work not become-PT-(3NH)
 ‘This work could not be done by Hari.’ (Yadava 2004:258)
- c. *hari-me* *tmabishw s* *ai-ch* (Locative)
 Hari-LOC self-confidence AUX-PRES-(3NH)
 ‘Hari has self-confidence.’ (Yadava 2004:258)

- d. *pustak-ak atyant kam mulya ai-ch* (Genitive)
 book-GEN extremely less price AUX-PRES-(3NH)
 ‘The price of the book is extremely less.’ (Yadava 2004:259)
- e. *sahar-sa dur rah-ab ucit ai-ch* (Ablative)
 town-ABL far away remain-INF good AUX-PRES
 ‘It is good to be far away from the town.’

The markers of non-nominative subjects in Maithili are given in the table below:

Table 16. Non-nominative subjects and their morphological markings and semantics. (Yadava 2004: 256)

Cases	Morphology	Semantics
a. Accusative/Dative		Experiencer, compulsion, possession patient
Noun	<i>-k /ke</i>	
Pronoun	<i>-r /k</i>	
b. Instrumental	<i>-sa/s</i>	Cause or intermediary agent
c. Locative	<i>-me/par</i>	Spatial/temporal relations
d. Genitive		Possession
Noun	<i>-ak/k</i>	
Pronoun	<i>-ar</i>	
e. Ablative	<i>-sa/s</i>	separation

(2) The accusative-dative postposition *-ke/-k* is also used in those constructions which express subjective experience, such as ‘liking and disliking, state of health and sickness, happiness and unhappiness, dreaming, feeling, remembering, thinking, pity, embarrassment, doubt, pain, thirst, hunger, sleepiness, anger, urgency and knowing itself’ (Yadav 1997: 83), e.g.,

- (96) a. *b bu-ke bokh r l ig ge-l-ain(h)*
 father-ACC fever attach go-PT-(3H)
 ‘Father caught fever.’
- b. *r m-ke bhukh l ig ge-l*
 Ram-ACC hunger feel go-PT-(3NH)
 ‘Ram felt hungry.’

Maithili sentences with so-called dative subjects express possession when they contain an auxiliary used as the main verb. For examples,

- (97) a. *bh i-ke* *krodh* *ai-ch*
 brother-ACC anger AUX-PRES-(3NH)
 ‘Brother feels angry.’
- b. *nokar-ke* *bokh r* *ch-aik*
 servant-ACC fever AUX-PRES-(3NH)
 ‘The servant has fever.’

2.1.1.1.2.5 Classifier

There are two classifiers *-t* and *-got* in the Maithili language. They are used interchangeably with numerals to show the number of noun. They take a numeral prefix to form a word, which functions as an adjective to the noun that follows it. Thus, classifiers suffixed with numeral always precede nouns. The main function of the classifier is to classify the certain group of noun according to their number. For examples,

- (98) a. *ham* *du-t* *m* *khae-l-ah*
 I two-CLAS mango eat-PT-(1)
 ‘I ate two mangoes.’
- b. *t* *p c-got* *dmi* *dekh-l-*
 you(NH) five-CLAS man see-PT-(2NH)
 ‘You saw five men.’

Both the classifiers have the same meaning and are used interchangeably with all the countable nouns – human or nonhuman, animate or inanimate. But they are not used with uncountable nouns. For examples,

- (99) a. *das-got/t* *lark*
 ten-CLAS boy
 ‘Ten boys’
- b. *s t-got/t* *g i*
 seven-CLAS cow
 ‘Seven cows’

- c. *c r-t /got* *kursi*
 four-CLAS chair
 ‘Four chairs’

The classifiers along with their numeral prefixes may work independently in reference. That is to say, when the context is clear, they function without the nouns that follow them. For examples,

- (100) a. *kae-t /got* *laddu* *le-b*
 how-CLAS laddu take-FUT-(2H)
 ‘How many laddu would you take?’
 b. *tin-got/t* *di-u*
 three-CLAS give-IMP-(2H)
 ‘Please, give me three (laddus).’

Classifiers also work as pseudo-classifiers, which don’t appear on the surface; they are just understood. Their presence, however, is realized. For examples,

- (101) a. *ek-0* *gil s* *p in* *pi-u*
 one glass water drink-IMP-(2H)
 ‘Please, drink one glass of water.’
 b. *p c-0* *kilo* *m* *kin-l-ah*
 five kg mango buy-PT-(1)
 ‘I bought five kgs of mangoes.’

In the above examples (4a-b), the classifiers *-t* and *-got* don’t appear, they are just understood. Here, they work as pseudo-classifiers.

Phonologically, both the classifiers are monophthong. They contain a single vowel. From the morphological point of view, they are bound morphemes, which don’t have any independent meaning. They give meanings only when they are used with numerals.

Notes

¹ Unlike *ji, s heb* can stand on its own and not have the occupational title or the last names precede it. In such instance, *s heb* may be constructed as representing a contracted form of 'title+*s heb*', e.g.,

- | | | | | | |
|----|----|---------------------------|---------------|------------------|-----------|
| 1) | a. | <i>s heb</i> | <i>cail</i> | <i>gelah</i> | <i>ki</i> |
| | | officer | walk | go-PT-3H | what |
| | | 'Has the officer left?' | | | |
| | b. | <i>s heb</i> | <i>bhitre</i> | <i>ch-athunh</i> | |
| | | doctor | inside-EMPH | Aux-PRES-3H | |
| | | 'Is the doctor still in?' | | | |

² The object marking strategy in Maithili is determined by a set of two extralinguistic criteria– namely animacy and definiteness. As a matter of fact, in Maithili a more relevant characteristic is not so much definiteness as specificity/individuation (Yadav 1997:74)

³ Under animacy, Maithili makes finer distinction between human vs non-human, and animate Vs inanimate. (Yadav 1997:74)

⁴ Maithili has no indefinite article comparable to English 'a/an'. The cardinal numeral *ek* 'one' followed by the classifier *-t* is used to denote indefinite (but specific) objects. Maithili has no definite article comparable to English 'the', either. Consequently, a number of linguistic devices are used to uniquely identify the referent of the direct object noun phrase. One device is the use of the demonstrative pronouns, which have the function of marking definiteness through their deictic or article-like functions, e.g., *u dmi* 'that man', *i pustak* 'this book' etc.

2.1.2 Pronouns

Pronoun is a term used in a grammatical classification of words, referring to the closed set of items which can be used to substitute for a noun or a noun phrase (Crystal 1997: 312). Thus, pronoun is a word used in place of a noun or a noun phrase. Its number is limited in a language. The number of pronouns differs from language to language. The major features of pronouns are given below:

- a. It contains among its most central number those words that are used in place of nouns referring to persons, things and places;
- b. It functions as a subject or an object;
- c. It is the class to which the categories of number, gender and case have their primary application in languages which have these grammatical categories;
- d. It is the closed set of terms;
- e. It has its own honorific forms in some languages.

2.1.2.1 Types of Maithili Pronouns

In Maithili language, there are eight types of pronouns. The pronouns are marked for honorificity, number and case, but not for gender (Yadav 1997: 103). The followings are the kinds of pronouns and their respective honorific forms¹, and number² system:

2.1.2.1.1 Personal Pronouns, Honorificity and Number system

Personal pronouns are used for persons. There are three persons – first, second and third. Personal pronouns, their honorificity and number system in Maithili are given below:

Table 17. Personal Pronouns, Honorificity and Number

	Singular	Plural
1st Person	<i>ham</i>	<i>ham sab/lokain</i>
2nd person		
High honorific	<i>apne</i>	<i>anpe sab/lokain</i>
Honorific	<i>ah</i>	<i>ah sab/lokain</i>
Mid honorific	<i>t</i>	<i>t sab/lokain</i>
Nonhonorific	<i>t</i>	<i>t sab</i>
3rd person		
Remote, honorific	<i>o</i>	<i>o sab/lokain</i>
Proximate, honorific	<i>i</i>	<i>i sab/lokain</i>
Remote, Nonhonorific	<i>u/o</i>	<i>u/o sab</i>
Proximate, nonhonorific	<i>i</i>	<i>i sab</i>

(Yadava 2001: 444; Yadav 1997: 105)

From the above list, a few of the chief characteristics of the Maithili personal pronouns can be mentioned:

- a. The first person and the second person midhonorific and nonhonorific pronouns do not make pronominal distinction between honorific and non-honorific forms. In such a situation, the verbal inflections make up for this by marking the honorific distinction clearly (Yadav 1997: 106). For examples,

- (102) a. *ham* *ae-l-i*
I came-PT-(1NH)
‘I came.’
- b. *ham* *ae-l-ah*
I come-PT-(1H)
‘I came.’
- (103) a. *t* *ae-l-ah*
you(MH) come-PT-(2MH)
‘You came.’
- b. *t* *ae-l-*
you(NH) come-PT-(2NH)
‘you came.’

b. The second person has a four fold honorific distinctions: (i) high honorific (HH), (ii) honorific (H), (iii) midhonorific (MH), and (iv) nonhonorific.

(i) *apne* (HH) is the pronoun of the highest conceivable honor and respect and is used for persons of high rank, coupled with old age and for the in-laws. However, there is a growing tendency to substitute *apne* for *ah* .

(104) a. *apne* *bais-al* *j -e*
 you(HH) sit-PTPCL go-IMP-(2HH)
 ‘Please, be seated?’

(ii) *ah* (H) is the safest and the most frequently used pronoun in Maithili. It is used for person to whom the speaker wants to pay respect or should pay respect under social obligations. It is also used between friend and colleagues, between husband and wife, between relatives, and between strangers to avoid offense. Of late, there is a growing tendency on the part of (educated) elders and superiors to use *ah* for younger children in place of *t* (NH) (Yadav 1997: 107).

(iii) *t* (MH) is used for elders and for such kins as father, uncle, elder brother etc. In villages, generally, even an uneducated untouchable will receive *t* (MH) from a younger educated person of high caste and high status. In a similar vein, a junior educated untouchable will receive *t* (MH) or even *ah* (H) from the high caste elders – thereby implying that personal attributes (e.g. job, position, education etc.) may prevail over age and caste in the determination of deference in the Maithili pronominal system (Yadav 1997:107).

(iv) *t* (NH) is used for mother and sister (both married and unmarried), for younger children by elder kinsmen, for junior servants by masters [a senior servant will receive *t* (MH)], and by intimate young children for one another. *t* is viewed as uncouth and impolite.

2.1.2.1.2 Demonstrative Pronouns (Third Person Pronouns), Honorificity and Number

The third person pronoun and the demonstrative pronouns are the same. The proximate demonstrative pronouns refer to the person or object which is near and

within sight, while the remote demonstrative pronouns refer to the person or object which is either far and within sight or not necessarily within sight. These are shown below (Yadav 1997: 110):

Table 18. Demonstrative Pronouns, Honorificity and Number

	Singular	Plural
Honorific		
Proximate	<i>i</i>	<i>i sab/lokain</i>
Remote	<i>o</i>	<i>o sab/lokain</i>
Nonhonorific		
Proximate	<i>i</i>	<i>i sab</i>
Remote	<i>u/o</i>	<i>u/o sab</i>

Non-honorific demonstrative pronouns are not marked by *lokain* for plural.

- (105) a. *i/o* *ke* *ch-aith*
 this/that (H) who AUX-PRES-(3H)
 ‘Who is this/that person!’
- b. *i/o* *ki* *thik*
 this/that (NH) what AUX-PRES-(3NH)
 ‘What is this/that thing?’

The demonstrative pronouns in Maithili perform the following three functions (Yadav 1997:113)

(I) Deictic

- (106) a. *i* *s p* *k ri* *ai-ch*
 this snake black AUX-PRES-(3NH)
 ‘This snake is black.’

(II) Anaphoric

- (107) a. *ham ek-t* *pustak kin-li* *u* *pustak nik ai-ch*
 I one-CLAS book buy-PT-(1) that book good AUX-PRES-(3NH)
 ‘I bought a book which is a good one.’

(III) Cataphoric

- (108) a. *o-k-re* *g i u* *ch-al* *je* *mair* *ge-l*
 he-GEM(NH) cow that AUX-PT-(3NH) which die go-PT
 ‘It was his cow that died.’

2.1.2.1.3 Interrogative Pronouns, Honorificity and Number

There are two interrogative pronouns in Maithili: *ke* ‘who’ and *ki/kathi* ‘what’. *ke* alone is human in reference, and thus has both honorific and nonhonorific forms to be shown distinctly in the verbal agreement but also, and most importantly, in the morphology of the form themselves. *Ki/kathi*, on the other hand, is used for nonhuman (and inanimate) objects and naturally does not have honorificity distinction (Yadav 1997: 115)

Table 19. Interrogative Pronoun, Honorificity and Number

	Singular	Plural
Human		
Honorific	<i>ke</i>	<i>ke sab/lokain</i>
Nonhonorific	<i>ke</i>	<i>ke sab</i>
Nonhuman	<i>ki/kathi</i>	<i>ki/kathi sab</i>

- (109) a. *ah* *ke* *chi*
 you(H) who AUX-PRES-(3H)
 ‘Who are you?’
- b. *ke* *ch-aith*
 who AUX-PRES-(3H)
 ‘Who is (he)?’
- c. *t* *ke* *ch-*
 you-(NH) who AUX-PRES-(2NH)
 ‘Who are you?’
- d. *ki/kathi* *le-b*
 what take-FUT-(2H)
 ‘What do you want?’

2.1.2.1.4 Relative Pronouns, Honorificity and Number

The relative pronoun in Maithili is *je* ‘who/what’. *je* ‘who’ is used for humans with both honorific and nonhonorific. *je* ‘what’ is non-human with no honorific-nonhonorific distinction.

Table 20. Relative Pronouns, Honorificity and Number

	Singular	Plural
Human		
Honorific	<i>je</i>	<i>je sab/lokain</i>
Nonhonorific	<i>je</i>	<i>je sab</i>
Nonhuman	<i>je</i>	<i>je sab</i>

2.1.2.1.5 Correlative Pronouns, Honorificity and Number

The correlative pronoun in Maithili is *se*. The various *j*-forms of the relative pronoun, when followed in the main clause of their corresponding correlative pronoun forms (*s*-/*t*- base) of *se*, serve as relative clause markers. Like *je*, *se* has distinct forms depending on whether it is human or nonhuman in reference.

Table 21. Correlative Pronouns, Honorificity and Number

	Singular	Plural
Human		
Honorific	<i>se</i>	<i>se sab/lokain</i>
Nonhonorific	<i>se</i>	<i>se sab</i>
Nonhuman	<i>se</i>	<i>se sab</i>

- (110) a. *je dmi e-l rah-aith se cail ge-l-ah*
REL man come-PTPCL AUX-PT-(3H) COREL walk go-PT-(3H)
‘The man who had come went away.’
- b. *je m ham kin-li se sar-al cha-l*
REL mango I buy-PT-(1) COREL rot-PTPCL AUX-PT-(3NH)
‘The mango that I had bought was rotten.’

2.1.2.1.6 Possessive Pronouns, Honorificity and Number

The possessive pronoun shows possession. All the three persons have their respective possessive pronouns. They are given below:

Table 22. Possessive Pronouns, Honorificity and Number

	Singular	Plural
First person	<i>ham-ar</i>	<i>ham-ar sabh-ak</i>
Second person		
High honorific	<i>apne-k</i>	<i>apne sabh-ak</i>
Honorific	<i>ah -k</i>	<i>ah sabha-ak</i>
Mid+nonhonorific	<i>toh-ar</i>	<i>toh-ar/to-r sabh-ak</i>
Third person		
- Remote		
Honorific	<i>hun-k-ar/hun-ak</i>	<i>hun-k-ar / hun-ak sabh-ak</i>
Nonhonorific	<i>ok-ar</i>	<i>ok-ar/ok-r sabh-ak</i>
- Proximate		
Honorific	<i>hin-k-ar</i>	<i>hin-k-ar/hin-k sabh-ak</i>
Nonhonorific	<i>ek-ar</i>	<i>ek-ar/ek-r sabh-ak</i>

- (111) a. *i* *kit b* *hun-k-ar* *ch-ainh*
 this book he-GEN(H) AUX-PRES-(3NH+3H)
 ‘This is his book.’
- b. *ham-ar* *kalam* *di-u*
 I-GEN pen give-IMP-(2H)
 ‘Please, give me my pen.’
- c. *toh-ar* *ghar* *kata* *ch-auk*
 you-GEN(NH) house where AUX-PRES-(3NH)
 ‘Where is your home?’

2.1.2.1.7 The Reflexive Pronouns, Honorificity and Number

The reflexive pronoun in Maithili is *apne* ‘self’. Its emphatic form is *apnahi*, i.e., *apne + hi* ‘self + EMPH). The same form *apne* is used both for human and nonhuman references.

Table 23. Reflexive Pronouns, Honorificity and Number

	Singular	Plural
Human		
Honorific	<i>apne</i>	<i>apne sab/lokain</i>
Nonhonorific	<i>apne</i>	<i>apne sab</i>
Nonhuman	<i>apne</i>	<i>apne sab</i>

- (112) a. *t* *apne* *ge-l-*
you(NH) REFL go-PT-(2NH)
‘You went yourself.’
- b. *pustak* *apne* *khas-al*
book REFL fall-PT-(3NH)
‘The book fell itself.’

2.1.2.1.8 Indefinite Pronouns, Honorificity and Number

The indefinite pronouns in Maithili are *keo* ‘someone, anyone’ and *kichu* ‘something’, *keo* is used for human nouns alone and has honorificity distinctions. *kichu* or *kiuch* is used for inanimate objects and consequently does not have honorific-nonhonorific distinctions.

Table 24. Indefinite Pronouns, Honorificity and Number

	Singular	Plural
Human		
Honorific	<i>keo</i>	<i>keo sab/lokain</i>
Nonhonorific	<i>keo</i>	<i>keo sab</i>
Nonhuman	<i>kiuch (kichu)</i>	<i>kiuch sab</i>

- (113) a. *k ilh* *keo* *e-l* *rah-aith*
yesterday someone(H) come-PTPCL AUX-PT-(3H)
‘Someone had come yesterday.’
- b. *ghar me* *keo* *ai-ch*
home-LOC someone(NH) AUX-PRES-(3NH)
‘There is someone in the house.’

- c. *kiuch* *kh -l-u*
 something eat-IMP-(2H)
 ‘Please, eat something.’

2.1.2.2 Case

The case system of the pronoun is more complex than that of the noun. While it is true that more or less the same case markers are used, their use in expressing various case relationships is different for the pronouns. Some pronouns have their own forms of case and are not marked by any case markers. All the pronouns with their case markers are given below in the tables:

2.1.2.2.1 Nominative Case

As a nominative case, a pronoun is marked by zero marking and functions as a subject.

Table 25. Pronouns and Nominative Case Marker

	Personal Pronoun		Possessive Pronoun	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1st Person	<i>ham</i>	<i>ham sab</i>	<i>ham-ar</i>	<i>ham-ar/ham-r sabh-ak</i>
2nd Person				
Highhonorific	<i>apne</i>	<i>apne sab</i>	<i>apne-k</i>	<i>apne sabh-ak</i>
Honorific	<i>ah</i>	<i>ah sab</i>	<i>ah -k</i>	<i>ah sabh-ak</i>
Mid honorific	<i>t</i>	<i>t sab</i>	<i>to-har</i>	<i>toh-ar/to-r sabh-ak</i>
Non honorific	<i>t</i>	<i>t sab</i>	<i>to-har</i>	<i>toh-ar/to-r sabh-ak</i>
3rd Person				
Remote, H	<i>o</i>	<i>o sab</i>	<i>hun-k-ar/ hun-ak</i>	<i>hun-k-ar/hun-ak sabh-ak</i>
Proximate, H	<i>i</i>	<i>i sab</i>	<i>hink-er</i>	<i>hin-k-ar/hin-k sabh-ak</i>
Remote, NH	<i>u/o</i>	<i>u/o sab</i>	<i>ok-ar</i>	<i>ok-ar/ok-r sabh-ak</i>
Proximate, NH	<i>i</i>	<i>i sab</i>	<i>ek-ar</i>	<i>ek-ar/ek-r sabh-ak</i>

	Interrogative Pronoun		Relative Pronoun		Correlative pronoun	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
Human						
Honorific	<i>ke</i>	<i>ke sab</i>	<i>je</i>	<i>je sab</i>	<i>se</i>	<i>se sab</i>
Non honorific	<i>ke</i>	<i>ke sab</i>	<i>je</i>	<i>je sab</i>	<i>se</i>	<i>se sab</i>
Non-human	<i>ki/kathi</i>	<i>ki/kathi sab</i>	<i>je</i>	<i>je sab</i>	<i>se</i>	<i>se sab</i>

	Demonstrative Pronoun	
	singular	Plural
Human		
Proximate, H	<i>i</i>	<i>i sab</i>
Remote, H	<i>o</i>	<i>o sab</i>
Proximate, NH	<i>i</i>	<i>i sab</i>
Remote, NH	<i>u/o</i>	<i>u/o sab</i>
Nonhuman		
Proximate	<i>i</i>	<i>i sab</i>
Remote	<i>u</i>	<i>u sab</i>

	Indefinite Pronoun	
	Singular	Plural
Human		
Honorific	<i>keo</i>	<i>keo sab</i>
Nonhonorific	<i>keo</i>	<i>keo sab</i>
Inanimate		
	<i>kichu</i>	<i>kichu sab</i>
	<i>kiuch</i>	<i>kiuch sab</i>

	Reflexive Pronoun	
	Singular	Plural
Human		
Honorific	<i>apne</i>	<i>apne sab</i>
Nonhonorific	<i>apne</i>	<i>apne sab</i>
Nonhuman	<i>apne</i>	<i>apne sab</i>

For examples,

- (114) a. *o-ϕ* *ab-ait* *cha-ith*
he-NOM(H) come-IMPER AUX-PRES-(3H)
'He is coming.'
- b. *u-ϕ* *ke* *ai-ch*
he-NOM who AUX-PRES-(3NH)
'Who is he?'

- c. *ham-ϕ* *khae-l-ah*
 I-NOM eat-PT-(1)
 'I ate.'

2.1.2.2.2 Accusative Case

Accusative case is marked by *-ke/-k*. The pronoun which is marked by an accusative case marker works as a subject or an object in a sentence.

Table 26. Pronouns and Accusative Case Marker

	Personal Pronoun		Possessive Pronoun	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1st Person	<i>ham-r</i>	<i>ham-r sab-ke</i>	<i>ham-r (NP)-ke</i>	<i>ham-r sabh-ak (NP)-ke</i>
2nd Person				
High honorific	<i>apne-ke</i>	<i>apne sab-ke</i>	<i>apne-k(NP)-ke</i>	<i>apne sabh-ak (NP)-ke</i>
Honorific	<i>ah -ke</i>	<i>ah sab-ke</i>	<i>ah -k (NP)-ke</i>	<i>ah sabh-ak (NP)-ke</i>
Mid honorific	<i>to-r</i>	<i>to-r sab-ke</i>	<i>to-r (NP)-ke</i>	<i>to-r sabh-ak (NP)-ke</i>
Non honorific	<i>to-r</i>	<i>to-r sab-ke</i>	<i>to-r (NP)-ke</i>	<i>to-r sabh-ak (NP)-ke</i>
3rd Person				
Proximate, H	<i>hin-k</i>	<i>hin-k sab-ke</i>	<i>hin-k (NP)-ke</i>	<i>hin-k sabh-ak (NP)-ke</i>
Remote, H	<i>hun-k</i>	<i>hun-k sab-ke</i>	<i>hun-k (NP)-ke</i>	<i>hun-k sabh-ak (NP)-ke</i>
Proximate, NH	<i>ek-r</i>	<i>ek-r sab-ke</i>	<i>ek-r (NP)-ke</i>	<i>ek-r sabh-ak (NP)-ke</i>
Remote, NH	<i>ok-r</i>	<i>ok-r sab-ke</i>	<i>ok-r (NP)-ke</i>	<i>ok-r sabh-ak (NP)-ke</i>

	Interrogative Pronoun		Relative Pronoun		Correlative pronoun	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
Human						
Honorific	<i>kin-k</i>	<i>kin-k sab-ke</i>	<i>jin-k</i> <i>jani-k</i>	<i>jin-k sab-ke</i> <i>jani-k sab-ke</i>	<i>tin-k</i> <i>tani-k</i>	<i>tin-k sab-ke</i> <i>tani-k sab-ke</i>
Non honorific	<i>kek-r</i> <i>kak-r</i>	<i>kek-r sab-ke</i> <i>kak-r sab-ke</i>	<i>jek-r</i> <i>jak-r</i>	<i>jek-r sab-ke</i> <i>jak-r sab-ke</i>	<i>tek-r</i> <i>tak-r</i>	<i>tek-r sab-ke</i> <i>tak-r sab-ke</i>
Nonhuman	<i>kathi-ke</i>	<i>kathi sab-ke</i>	<i>j hi-ke</i>	<i>j hi sab-ke</i>	<i>t hi-ke</i>	<i>t hi sab-ke</i>

	Demonstrative Pronoun	
	singular	Plural
Human		
Proximate, H	<i>hin-k</i>	<i>hin-k sab-ke</i>
Remote, H	<i>hun-k</i>	<i>hun-k sab-ke</i>
Proximate, NH	<i>ek-r</i>	<i>ek-r sab-ke</i>
Remote, NH	<i>ok-r</i>	<i>ok-r sab-ke</i>
Nonhuman		
Proximate	<i>ehi-ke</i>	<i>ehi sab-ke</i>
Remote	<i>ohi-ke</i>	<i>ohi sab-ke</i>

	Indefinite Pronoun
Human	
Honorific	<i>kin-ko</i>
Nonhonorific	<i>kak-ro</i> <i>kek-ro</i>
Inanimate	
	<i>kichu-ke</i> <i>kiuch-ke</i>

Reflexive Pronoun	
singular	Plural
<i>apn -ke</i>	<i>apn sab-ke</i>

For example,

- (115) a. *ham ah -ke dekh-l-ah*
I-NOM you-ACC see-PT-(1)
'I saw you.'
- b. *ok-r bhukh lag-al*
he-ACC hunger feel-PT-(3NH)
'He felt hungry.'
- c. *ham to-r g i-ke pit-l-i-auk*
I-NOM you-GEN cow-ACC beat-PT-(1)
'I beat your cow.'

2.1.2.2.3 Genitive Case

The marker of the genitive case is *-ak/-k*. *-k* is used when the pronoun ends in a vowel, otherwise *-ak* is used. The possessive pronouns are themselves marked for the genitive case.

Table 27. Pronouns and Genitive Case Marker

	Personal Pronoun	
	Singular	Plural
1st Person	<i>ham-ar</i>	<i>ham-ar/ham-r sabh-ak</i>
2nd Person		
High honorific	<i>apne-k</i>	<i>apne sabh-ak</i>
Honorific	<i>ah -k</i>	<i>ah sabh-ak</i>
Mid honorific	<i>toh-ar</i>	<i>toh-ar sabh-ak</i>
Non honorific	<i>toh-ar</i>	<i>toh-ar sabh-ak</i> <i>tor sabh-ak</i>
3rd Person		
Proximate, H	<i>hin-k-ar/hin-ak</i>	<i>hin-k-r sabh-ak</i> <i>hin-k-ar sabh-ak</i>
Remote, H	<i>hun-kar/hun-ak</i>	<i>hun-k-ar sabh-ak</i> <i>hun-k-r sabh-ak</i>
Proximate, NH	<i>ek-ar</i>	<i>ek-ar sabh-ak</i> <i>ek-r sabh-ak</i>
Remote, NH	<i>ok-ar</i>	<i>ok-r sabh-ak</i> <i>ok-r sabh-ak</i>

	Interrogative Pronoun		Relative Pronoun		Correlative pronoun	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
Human						
Honorific	<i>kin-k-ar</i>	<i>kin-k sabh-ak</i>	<i>jini-k-ar</i>	<i>jini-k sabh-ak</i>	<i>tin-k-ar</i>	<i>tin-k sabh-ak</i>
	<i>kin-ak</i>		<i>jani-k-ar (jani-k)</i>	<i>jani-k sabh-ak</i>	<i>tani-k-ar</i>	<i>tani-k sabh-ak</i>
Non honorific	<i>kek-ar</i>	<i>kek-r sabh-ak</i>	<i>jek-ar</i>	<i>jek-r sabh-ak</i>	<i>tek-ar</i>	<i>tek-r sabh-ak</i>
	<i>kak-ar</i>	<i>kak-r sabh-ak</i>	<i>jak-ar</i>	<i>jak-r sabh-ak</i>	<i>tak-ar</i>	<i>tak-r sabh-ak</i>
Nonhuman	<i>kathi-k</i>	<i>kathi sabh-ak</i>	<i>j hi-k</i>	<i>j hi-sabh-ak</i>	<i>t hi-k</i>	<i>t hi sabh-ak</i>
			<i>jak-ar</i>	<i>jak-r sabh-ak</i>	<i>tak-ar</i>	

	Demonstrative Pronoun			Indefinite Pronoun
	singular	Plural		
Human			Human	
Proximate, H	<i>hin-k-ar</i>	<i>hin-k sabh-ak</i>	Honorific	<i>kin-ka-ro</i>
	<i>hin-ak</i>	<i>hin-k-ar sabh-ak</i>	Non honorific	<i>kek-ro</i>
Remote, H	<i>hun-k-ar</i>	<i>hun-k sabh-ak</i>		<i>kak-ro</i>
	<i>hun-ak</i>	<i>hun-k-ar sabh-ak</i>		
Proximate, NH	<i>ek-ar</i>	<i>ek-ar sabh-ak</i>		
		<i>ek-r sabh-ak</i>		
Remote, NH	<i>ok-ar</i>	<i>ok-er sabh-ak</i>		
		<i>ok-r sabh-ak</i>		
Non-Human			Inanimate	
Proximate	<i>ek-ar</i>	<i>ek-ar sabh-ak</i>		<i>kichu-k</i>
		<i>ek-r sabh-ak</i>		<i>kathu-k</i>
Remote	<i>ok-ar</i>	<i>ok-ar abh-ak</i>		
		<i>ok-r sabh-ak</i>		

Reflexive Pronoun	
singular	Plural
<i>apan</i>	<i>apn sabh-ak</i>

For examples,

- (116) a. *r j -k* *ghar* *ch-ain(h)*
king-GEN home AUX-PRES-(3H)
'The king has a home.'
- b. *toh-ar* *g i* *car-ait* *ch-ah*
you-GEN cow graze-IMPER AUX-PRES (2MH)
'Your cow is grazing.'
- c. *kathi-k* *k gaj* *ai-ch*
what-GEN paper AUX-PRES-(3NH)
'What is the paper of?'

2.1.2.2.4 Instrumental Case

The pronoun marked by the instrumental case markers *-sa/-s* works as an agent to do an action.

Table 28. Pronouns and Instrumental Case Marker

	Personal Pronoun		Possessive Pronoun	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1st Person	<i>ham-r -sa</i>	<i>ham-r -sab-sa</i>	<i>ham-r (NP)-sa</i>	<i>ham-r sabh-ak (NP)-sa</i>
2nd Person				
High honorific	<i>apne sa</i>	<i>apne sab-sa</i>	<i>apne-k (NP)-sa</i>	<i>apne sabh-ak (NP)-sa</i>
Honorific	<i>ah sa</i>	<i>ah sab-sa</i>	<i>ah -k (NP)-sa</i>	<i>ah sabh-ak (NP)-sa</i>
Mid honorific	<i>to(h)- r -sa</i>	<i>to(h)-r sab-sa</i>	<i>to-r (NP)-sa</i>	<i>to-r sabh-ak (NP)-sa</i>
Non honorific	<i>to-r -sa</i>	<i>to-r sab-sa</i>	<i>to-r (NP)-sa</i>	<i>to-r sabh-ak (NP)-sa</i>
3rd Person				
Proximate, H	<i>hin-k - sa</i>	<i>hin-k sab-sa</i>	<i>hin-k (NP)-sa</i>	<i>hin-k sabh-ak (NP)-sa</i>
Remote, H	<i>hun-k -sa</i>	<i>hun-k sab-sa</i>	<i>hun-k (NP)-sa</i>	<i>hun-k-ar sabh-ak (NP)-sa</i>
Proximate, NH	<i>ek-r sa</i>	<i>ek-r sab- sa</i>	<i>ek-r (NP)-sa</i>	<i>ek-r -sabh-ak (NP)-sa</i>
Remote, NH	<i>ok-r sa</i>	<i>ok-r sab- sa</i>	<i>ok-r (NP)-sa</i>	<i>ok-r sabh-ak (NP)-sa</i>

	Interrogative Pronoun		Relative Pronoun		Correlative pronoun	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
Human						
Honorific	<i>kin-k -sa</i>	<i>kin-k sab-sa</i>	<i>jīn-k - sa</i> <i>jani-k - sa</i>	<i>jīn-k sab- sa</i> <i>jani-k sab- sa</i>	<i>tin-k - sa</i> <i>tani-k - sa</i>	<i>tin-k sab -sa</i> <i>tani k sab- sa</i>
Non honorific	<i>kek-r -sa</i> <i>kak-r -sa</i>	<i>kek-r sabh-sa</i> <i>kak-r sabh-sa</i>	<i>jek-r - sa</i> <i>jak-r - sa</i>	<i>jek-r sab- sa</i> <i>jak-r sab- sa</i>	<i>tak-r - sa</i> <i>tek-r - sa</i>	<i>tek-r sab -sa</i> <i>tak-r sab-sa</i>
Non human	<i>kathi-sa</i>	<i>kathi sabh-sa</i>	<i>j hi- sa</i>	<i>j hi sab- sa</i>	<i>t hi- sa</i>	<i>t hi sab- sa</i>

	Demonstrative Pronoun	
	singular	Plural
Human		
Proximate, H	<i>hin-k -sa</i>	<i>hin-k sab-sa</i>
Remote, H	<i>hun-k -sa</i>	<i>hun-k sab-sa</i>
Proximate, NH	<i>ek-r -sa</i>	<i>ek-r sab-sa</i>
Remote, NH	<i>ok-r -sa</i>	<i>ok-r sab-sa</i>
Non human		
Proximate	<i>ehi-sa</i>	<i>ehi sab-sa</i>
Remote	<i>ohi-sa</i>	<i>ohi sab-sa</i>

	Indefinite Pronoun
Human	
Honorific	<i>kin-ka-sa</i>
Nonhonorific	<i>kek-ro-sa</i> <i>kak-ro-sa</i>
Inanimate	<i>kichu-sa</i> <i>kathu-sa</i>

Reflexive Pronoun	
singular	Plural
<i>apne- sa</i>	<i>apne sab- sa</i>

For examples,

- (117) a. *hun-k -sa i k j nai bhel-ain(h)*
 he-GEN-INS this work not become-PT-(3H)
 'The work could not be done by him.'
- b. *ham-r -sa jhagr nai kar-u*
 I-GEN-INS quarrel not do-IMP-(2H)
 'Please, don't quarrel with me.'
- c. *to-r kit b- sa ham-r matlab nai ch-aik*
 you-GEN book-INS I-GEN meaning not AUX-PRES-(1)
 'I don't have anything to do with your book.'

2.1.2.2.5 Locative Case

The pronoun marked with the locative case markers *-me/-par* expresses location or foundation of something.

Table 29. Pronouns and Locative Case Marker

	Personal Pronoun		Possessive Pronoun	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1st Person	<i>ham-r - me</i>	<i>ham-r sab- me</i>	<i>ham-r (NP)-me</i>	<i>ham-r sabh-ak (NP)-me</i>
2nd Person				
High honorific	<i>apne- me</i>	<i>apne sab- me</i>	<i>apne-k (NP)-me</i>	<i>apne sabh-ak (NP)-me</i>
Honorific	<i>ah - me</i>	<i>ah sab- me</i>	<i>ah -k (NP)-me</i>	<i>ah sabh-ak (NP)-me</i>
Mid honorific	<i>to(h) -r - me</i>	<i>to(h)- r sab- me</i>	<i>to(h)-r (NP)-me</i>	<i>to(h)-r sabh-ak (NP)-me</i>
Non honorific	<i>to-r -me</i>	<i>to-r sab -me</i>	<i>to-r (NP)-me</i>	<i>to-r sabh-ak (NP)-me</i>
3rd Person				
Proximate, H	<i>hin-k - me</i>	<i>hin-k sab- me</i>	<i>hin-k (NP)-me</i>	<i>hin-k sabh-ak (NP)-me</i>
Remote, H	<i>hun-k - me</i>	<i>hun-k sab -me</i>	<i>hun-k (NP)-me</i>	<i>hun-k-ar sabh-ak (NP)-me</i>
Proximate, NH	<i>ek-r - me</i>	<i>ek-r sab-me</i>	<i>ek-r (NP)-me</i>	<i>ek-r sabh-ak (NP)-me</i>
Remote, NH	<i>ok-r - me</i>	<i>ok-r sab- me</i>	<i>ok-r (NP)-me</i>	<i>ok-r sabh-ak (NP)-me</i>

	Interrogative Pronoun		Relative Pronoun		Correlative pronoun	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
Human						
Honorific	<i>kin-k - me</i>	<i>kin-k sab-me</i>	<i>jin-k - me</i> <i>jani-k - me</i>	<i>jin-k sab -me</i> <i>jani-k sab- me</i>	<i>tin-k - me</i> <i>tani-k - me</i>	<i>tin-k sab -me</i> <i>tani- k sab- me</i>
Non honorific	<i>kek-r -me</i> <i>kak-r -me</i>	<i>kek-r sab-me</i> <i>kak-r sab-me</i>	<i>jek-r - me</i> <i>jak-r - me</i>	<i>jek-r sab- me</i> <i>jak-r sab- me</i>	<i>tak-r - me</i> <i>tek-r - me</i>	<i>tek-r sab- me</i> <i>tak-r sab-me</i>
Non human	<i>kathi-me</i>	<i>kathi sab-me</i>	<i>j hi -me</i>	<i>j hi sab -me</i>	<i>t hi -me</i>	<i>t hi sab- me</i>

	Demonstrative Pronoun	
	singular	Plural
Human		
Proximate, H	<i>hin-k - me</i>	<i>hin-k sab-me</i>
Remote, H	<i>hun-k -me</i>	<i>hun-k sab -me</i>
Proximate, NH	<i>ek-r - me</i>	<i>ek-r sab- me</i>
Remote, NH	<i>ok-r -me</i>	<i>ok-r sab-me</i>
Non human		
Proximate	<i>ehi- me</i>	<i>ehi sab-me</i>
Remote	<i>ohi -me</i>	<i>ohi sab-me</i>

	Indefinite Pronoun
Human	
Honorific	<i>kin-ko- me</i>
Nonhonorific	<i>kek-ro- me</i> <i>kak-ro- me</i>
Inanimate	<i>kichu- me</i> <i>kathu- me</i>

Reflexive Pronoun	
singular	Plural
<i>apne-me</i>	<i>apne sab- me</i>

For example,

- (118) a. *to-r - par* *das* *rupaiy* *ch-auk*
you-GEN-LOC ten rupee AUX-PRES-(2NH)
‘You owe my ten rupees.
- b. *bag-me* *pustak* *ai-ch*
bag-LOC book AUX-PRES-(3NH)
‘The book is in the bag.’
- c. *r m-ϕ* *ghar-me* *ch-aith*
Ram-NOM home-LOC AUX-PRES-(3H)
‘Ram is inside the house.’

2.1.2.2.6 Ablative Case

As an ablative case, a pronoun is marked by ablative case marker *-sa/-s* . It shows separation.

Table 30. Pronouns and Ablative Case Marker

	Personal Pronoun		Possessive Pronoun	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1st Person	<i>ham-r -sa</i>	<i>ham-r sab- sa</i>	<i>ham-r (NP)-sa</i>	<i>ham-r sabh-ak (NP)-sa</i>
2nd Person				
High honorific	<i>apne- sa</i>	<i>apne sab- sa</i>	<i>apnek (NP)-sa</i>	<i>apne sabh-ak (NP)-sa</i>
Honorific	<i>ah - sa</i>	<i>ah sab- sa</i>	<i>ah -k (NP)-sa</i>	<i>ah sabh-ak (NP)-sa</i>
Mid honorific	<i>to(h)- r - sa</i>	<i>to(h)-r sab- sa</i>	<i>to(h)-r (NP)-sa</i>	<i>to(h)-r sabh-ak (NP)-sa</i>
Non honorific	<i>to-r - sa</i>	<i>to-r sab- sa</i>	<i>to-r (NP)-sa</i>	<i>to-r sabh-ak (NP)-sa</i>
3rd Person				
Proximate, H	<i>hin-ka-r - sa</i> <i>hin-k - sa</i>	<i>hin-ka-r sab- sa</i> <i>hin-k sab- sa</i>	<i>hin-ka-r (NP)-sa</i> <i>hin-k (NP)-sa</i>	<i>hin-ka-r sabh-ak (NP)-sa</i> <i>hin-k sabh-ak (NP)-sa</i>
Remote, H	<i>hun-ka-r - sa</i> <i>hun-k - sa</i>	<i>hun-ka-r sab- sa</i> <i>hun-k sab- sa</i>	<i>hun-ka-r (NP)-sa</i> <i>hun-k (NP)-sa</i>	<i>hun-ka-r sabh-ak (NP)-sa</i> <i>hun-k-ar sabh-ak (NP)-sa</i>
Proximate, NH	<i>ek-r - sa</i>	<i>ek-r sab- sa</i> <i>ek-er sab- sa</i>	<i>ek-r (NP)-sa</i>	<i>ek-r sabh-ak (NP)-sa</i> <i>ek-er sabh-ak (NP)-sa</i>
Remote, NH	<i>ok-r - sa</i>	<i>ok-er sab- sa</i> <i>ok-r sab- sa</i>	<i>ok-r (NP)-sa</i>	<i>ok-er sabh-ak (NP)-sa</i> <i>ok-r sabh-ak (NP)-sa</i>

	Interrogative Pronoun		Relative Pronoun		Correlative pronoun	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
Human						
Honorific	<i>kin-k - sa</i> <i>kin-ka-r - sa</i>	<i>kin-k sab-sa</i> <i>kin-ka-r sab-sa</i>	<i>jin-k - sa</i>	<i>jin-k sab -sa</i> <i>jani-k sab- sa</i>	<i>tin-k - sa</i> <i>tani-k -sa</i>	<i>tin-k sab- sa</i> <i>tani k sab- sa</i>
Non honorific	<i>kek-r -sa</i> <i>kak-r -sa</i>	<i>kek-r sab-sa</i> <i>kak-r -sab-sa</i>	<i>jek-r - sa</i> <i>jak-r - sa</i>	<i>jek-r sab- sa</i> <i>jak-r sab- sa</i>	<i>tak-r - sa</i> <i>tek-r - sa</i>	<i>tak-r sab- sa</i> <i>tek-r sab-sa</i>
Non-human	<i>kathi-sa</i>	<i>kathi sab-sa</i>	<i>j hi- sa</i> <i>jak-r - sa</i>	<i>j hi sab-sa</i> <i>jak-r sab- sa</i>	<i>t hi- sa</i> <i>tak-r - sa</i>	<i>t hi sab -sa</i> <i>tak-r sab- sa</i>

	Demonstrative Pronoun			Indefinite Pronoun
	singular	Plural		
Human				
Proximate, H	<i>hin-k - sa</i> <i>hin-ka-r - sa</i>	<i>hin-k sab- sa</i>		<i>kin-ko- sa</i> <i>kek-ro- sa</i> <i>kak-ro- sa</i>
Remote, H	<i>hun-k - sa</i> <i>hun-ka-r -sa</i>	<i>hun-k sab-sa</i>		
Proximate, NH	<i>ek-r - sa</i>	<i>ek-r sab-sa</i>		
Remote, NH	<i>ok-r - sa</i>	<i>ok-r sab-sa</i>		
Non human				
Proximate	<i>ek-er- sa</i>	<i>ek-er sab- sa</i> <i>ek-r sab- sa</i>		
Remote	<i>ok-er- sa</i>	<i>ok-r sab- sa</i> <i>ok-er sab- sa</i>		
			In animate	<i>kichu- sa</i> <i>kathu- sa</i>

Reflexive Pronoun	
singular	Plural
<i>apne- sa</i>	<i>apne sab- sa</i>

For example,

- (119) a. *ham-r -sa* *dur* *j -u*
I-GEN-ABL far away go-IMP-(2H)
‘Please, go away from me.’
- b. *ham* *ah -sa* *ma -l-ah*
I you-ABL ask (for)-PT-(1)
‘I asked you for.’

2.1.2.3 Classifier

In some contexts, classifiers *-t* /-got are also used with pronouns. But it is restricted to very few situations. Generally, classifier is not used with pronouns. Some examples of pronouns with classifier are given below:

- (120) a. *ek-t* *o* *ch-aith* *je* *bhair*
one-CLAS he(H) AUX-PRES-(3H) REL whole
din *roit* *ch-aith*
day cry-IMPER AUX-PRES-(3H)
‘He is the one who has been crying the whole day.’

b. *ek-t* *t* *nai* *ae-l-*
 one-CLAS you(NH) not come-PT-(2NH)
 ‘Only you did not come?’

c. *ek-got* *u-he* *ta* *hero* *ai-ch*
 one-CLAS he(NH) EMPH hero AUX-PRES-(3NH)
 ‘Only he is the hero.’

From the above examples, it is noticed that when a classifier is used with a pronoun, it takes the numeral *ek* ‘one’, not other numerals. Generally, a classifier is used with a pronoun to emphasize the latter (pronoun).

Notes

¹ The first person is indeterminate as to honorificity. The second and third persons, however, show forms, which contrast in honorificity, showing honorific and nonhonorific. In addition to the personal pronouns, other types of pronouns also have honorific and nonhonorific forms.

² Like nouns, Maithili pronouns may also be made plural by the addition of a following morpheme: *sab(h)* ‘all’, or *lokain* ‘people’. *Lokain* is used when the pronoun is both animate and honorific in reference. Maithili verbs, however, inflect identically for singular and plural pronoun forms. For examples:

(1)	a.	<i>t</i> you-(NH) ‘You came.’	<i>ae-l-</i> come-PT-(2NH)	
	b.	<i>t sab(h)</i> you(NH)-PL ‘You all came.’	<i>ae-l-</i> come-PT-(2NH)	
(2)	a.	<i>ah</i> You(H) ‘You will go.’	<i>j e-b</i> go-FUT-(2H)	
	b.	<i>ah sab(h)</i> you(H)-PL ‘You (all) will go.’	<i>j e-b</i> go-FUT-(2H)	
(3)	a.	<i>ham</i> I ‘I am going.’	<i>j -it</i> go-IMPER	<i>chi</i> AUX-PRES-(1)
	b.	<i>ham sab(h)</i> I-PL ‘We are going.’	<i>j -it</i> go-IMPER	<i>chi</i> AUX-PRES-(1)

CHAPTER – THREE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Maithili belongs to the Eastern subgroup of the Indo-Aryan group within the Indo-Iranian branch of the European language family. The main focus of this study is to analyze the nominal morphology – noun and pronoun – of the Maithili language mainly spoken in the north eastern part of the Indian state of Bihar, and the eastern part of Nepal's Terai region, namely, the districts – Sarlahi, Mahottari, Dhanusha, Siraha, Saptary, Sunsari and Morang. The whole thesis is divided into three chapters which can be summarized as below:

The chapter one is the general introductory part of the whole study. It gives the background of Maithili language, review of the earlier literature, major objectives of the research, methodology, justification of the study and the organization of the research. This chapter has shown the outline of this research work as a whole.

The second chapter is the main chapter of this work. This part is the centre of this study in which the nominals in the Maithili language have been presented in detail. The Maithili nouns are divided on the basis of two aspects – derivation and inflection. Maithili nouns are of two types – basic and derivative. They inflect for gender, number, case, honorificity and classifier. Gender is very much restricted to a limited number of nouns and it triggers in the verb agreement in the past and future tenses. Number is marked by absence and presence of the number markers *lokain* and *sab(h)*. The singular number is left unmarked while the plural nouns are marked by *sah(h)* and *lokain*, which is used for human honorific nouns. Noun is also marked by case markers. There are six types of cases – nominative (ϕ), accusative (*-ke/-k*) genitive (*-ak/-k*), instrumental (*-sa/-s*), ablative (*-sa/-s*) and locative (*-me/-par*) in Maithili. Similarly, noun also inflects for honorificity markers (*-ji*, *-s heb* and *b bu*) and non-honorific markers (*-b*, *-m*, *-*).

There are eight types of pronouns in the Maithili language – personal, demonstrative, possessive, interrogative, relative, correlative, reflexive and indefinite. Personal pronouns include three persons first, second and third person. All the pronouns are marked by plural markers, case markers. Pronouns have their own honorific

forms. But they do not have gender distinction. The same pronoun is used for both masculine and feminine genders.

To conclude, the nouns and pronouns are the nominals in the Maithili language. This study is a preliminary attempt to analyze the nominal morphology of Maithili. Verb morphology and syntax in Maithili are equally interesting fields for further researches. Maithili also shows influence of many other languages on it. In this reference, sociolinguistic research of Maithili is the interesting and challenging as well. Although this work itself is very small and limited and has not covered the area what is needed, it will certainly, as I hope, be helpful for further works in Maithili.

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