

Tracking Case Innovation: A Perspective from Marathi

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1 Introduction

- Overall interest: understand when, how, and why languages **innovate case marking**.
- This talk: study the innovation of case clitics recruited for **Differential Object Marking (DOM)** in **Marathi**.

1.1 Assumed Heroes: Agents and Patients

- Explanations of case innovation have been primarily couched in terms that focus on a **binary opposition** between **agent (A)** and **patient (P)** arguments.

General Idea:

- As languages lose case distinctions over time, new case markers emerge to mark the core distinctions between subjects and objects.
- This may have a **distinguishing** or an **identifying/indexing** function and generally involves issues of relative markedness (e.g., Aissen (2003), de Hoop and Narasimhan (2005), McGregor (2018), see Malchukov and de Swart (2009), de Hoop (2009) for some overviews).

Case innovation is functionally motivated by need to retain a contrast between the structural arguments of a clause or to identify a particular argument.

Related Idea:

- **Ergative** systems may develop (e.g., out of reanalyzed passive or participial structures).
- The **alignment** of which cases are marked differs from that of nominative-accusative systems, but the case marking on subjects and objects is assumed to align in synchrony with one another — they are assumed to be co-dependent (e.g., Dixon (1994), Harris and Campbell (1995)).
- So: Erg-Nom(Abs) or Nom-Acc, but Erg-Acc is unexpected.
- Analyses in terms of Dependent Case also focus on this assumed, basic binary opposition (Marantz 2000, Baker 2015, Baker and Bobaljik 2017, Baker 2019).

No functional motivation for languages with ergative marking in clauses to innovate accusative marking in this class of clauses.

1.2 But . . . Indo-Aryan

- Indo-Aryan is cited as a textbook example for a change in case alignment (Dixon 1994, Harris and Campbell 1995).
 - But data from Indo-Aryan consistently belies this structurally driven expectation of a co-dependent opposition between A and P.
 - Since Indo-Aryan languages represent the longest existing continuously attested historical record, diachronic Indo-Aryan findings should be taken to be highly informative for diachronic theory construction.
 - Old Indo-Aryan (Vedic, Sanskrit) had an inflectional case marking system (much like the sister language Latin).
 - The inflectional case markers underwent syncretism and erosion over the course of Middle Indo-Aryan (MIA).
 - New Indo-Aryan (NIA) saw the innovation and spread of new case markers from about 1100 CE on.
- A. Old Indo-Aryan (OIA)
1200 BCE — 600 BCE (Vedic)
600 BCE — 200 BCE (Epic and Classical Sanskrit)
- B. Middle Indo-Aryan (MIA)
(Aśokan inscriptions, Pāli, Prākritis, Apabhraṃśa—Avahaṭṭha)
200 BCE — 1100 CE
- C. New Indo-Aryan (NIA)
(e.g., Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi/Urdu, Marathi, Nepali, Punjabi)
1100 CE — Present

1.3 Differential object marking in NIA

Some (relatively recent) work implicates primarily a series of **individual lexical semantic** factors for a particular change – the emergence of differential object marking: Butt and Ahmed (2011), Beck and Butt (2021), Montaut (2018), Deo (2017).

- Middle Indo-Aryan syncretizes nominative and accusative case in most paradigms.
- There is very little overt marking distinguishing direct objects from subjects in non-ergative clauses.

- (1) a. #kiṃ **tamu** haṇ-ai ṇa vālu **ravi**#
 QUES darkness.NOM.SG destroy-IMP.3.SG NEG young sun.NOM.SG
 #kiṃ vālu **davaggi** ṇa ḍah-ai **vaṇu**# #kiṃ
 QUES young fire.NOM.SG NEG burn-IMP.3.SG forest.NOM.SG QUES
 kari dal-ai ṇa vālu **hari**# #kiṃ
 elephant.NOM.SG shatter-IMP.3.SG NEG young lion.NOM.SG QUES
 vālu ṇa ḍaīk-ai uragamaṇu#
 young NEG bite-IMP.3.SG snake.NOM.SG
 Does the young (rising) sun not destroy darkness? Does the young
 fire (spark) not burn down the forest? Does a young lion (cub) not
 shatter the elephant? Does the young snake not bite?
 (*Paumacariu* 2.21.6.9)

- b. **jo** ghañ **ṇisi-bhoyaṇu**
 who.REL.NOM.M.SG PTCL night.LOC-meal.NOM.M.SG
 ummah-ai **vimalattaṇu**
 give.up-IMP.3.SG spotless.body.NOM.M.SG
vimala-gottu lah-ai
 spotless.name.NOM.M.SG attain-IMP.3.SG
 One who gives up eating in the evening (he) attains a spotless body
 and name. (*Paumacariu* 2.34.8.8)

- Modern NIA languages generally have a robust DOM pattern, which is usually sensitive to the animacy and referentiality properties of direct object arguments.
- The following shows a typical example, drawn from Marathi.
 - (2) shows a non-perfective clause. This takes a nominative subject and can have either a nominative object or an accusative object, depending on the referentiality of the object.
 - (3) shows a perfective clause. This requires an ergative subject and can have either a nominative object or an accusative object, depending on the referentiality of the object.

- (2) a. *siṃha hattī mār-to*
 lion.M.NOM elephant.M= kill-PRES.3.M.SG
 ‘The lion kills an elephant.’
- b. *siṃha hattī=lā mār-to*
 lion.M.NOM elephant.M=ACC kill-PRES.3.M.SG
 ‘The lion kills the elephant.’
- (3) a. *siṃhā=ne hattī mār-lā*
 lionM=ERG elephant.M.NOM kill-PERF.3.M.SG
 ‘The lion killed an elephant.’
- b. *siṃhā=ne hattī=lā mār-le*
 lion.M=ERG elephant.M=ACC kill-PERF.3.N.SG
 ‘The lion killed the elephant.’

This talk: We investigate how and where this pattern emerges in the diachrony of one NIA language: Marathi.

1.4 Key points

- The Old and Middle Marathi DOM deviate from expectations of how “standard” DOM works.
 - Dative/locative case clitics are optionally used on animate denoting direct objects.
 - Dative/locative case clitics appear highly frequently with verbs whose direct objects are not typical undergoers in “highly transitive” verbs. Verbs of perception, cognition, verbs entailing contact, verbs with goal arguments
 - Within Marathi diachrony, **three distinct case clitics** have been recruited to mark direct objects.
- We suggest that **secondary objects provide the entry point for new dative/accusative markers.**
- These occur in verbs of communication/transfer of information, ditransitives, and a subset of causatives.
- Marking on secondary objects is extended to primary objects that are most like goal arguments (animate, referential), leading to DOM effects.

1.5 Language background

1.5.1 Marathi

- Marathi [mar] 8,30,26,680 (2011 Census)
- Standard language; fourth most widely spoken language in India
- Southern subgroup of Indo-Aryan
- A relatively unbroken diachronic record from 1278CE onwards. Some prose material from the early period (relatively unusual for New Indo-Aryan).
- Several non-nominative cases (dative, genitive, accusative) had syncretized into one form over the course of MIA (Masica 1991, Hewson and Bubenik 2006). Postpositional clitics appear optionally in the oldest texts to mark these semantic functions.

1.5.2 DOM in Marathi

Over the past millenium, Marathi shows three innovations in which a different marker is recruited as the preferred case clitic for with DOM function.

1. Old Marathi: Preferred DOM clitic =*teṃ*

Origin not clear: Middle Indo-Aryan has a form *taṇa* which is used as a possessive and continues on into early Marathi. Master (1964, §106) suggests =*teṃ* comes from Prakrit *tahiṃ* ‘there’.

2. Middle Marathi: Preferred DOM clitic =*si*

Bloch (1970, §198) sees this as being ultimately derived from Sanskrit *aśra* ‘side, edge’, Master (1964, 56) concurs.

3. Modern Marathi: Preferred DOM clitic =*la*

This is generally agreed to be derived from the gerund form of Skt. *lag* ‘touch, be stuck to’ > *lagiṃ* ‘for the sake of’ > *lai*, *lai/le*, *la* (e.g., Master 1964, Bloch 1970, Montaut 2018).

- =*teṃ* is primarily found in early Marathi texts and seems to alternate with the old oblique and infrequently with =*si*. Very infrequent in the representative Middle Marathi text.
- =*si* is frequent in the Middle Marathi text, with an infrequent form =*la* appearing as well.
- =*la* is the only acceptable DOM clitic in Modern Marathi, having completely replaced =*si* (cf. (2) and (3)).

We focus on understanding the earlier stages of the language, in which =*teṃ* and =*si* dominate.

2 Initial Corpus Study

- For a first overview: **quantitative study** of the distribution of $=teṃ$ and $=si/sī$ in comparison to the inherited oblique and the modern $=la$ (Deo et al. 2016).
- Two different verb classes as particularly promising for finding marked arguments: **transitive theme/patient vs. possessor/goal object verbs**.

⇒ If the language distinguishes between accusative and dative marking, there should be clear distributional differences across these verb classes among endings.

- The study was based on an investigation of three representative texts — two from Old Marathi and one from Middle Marathi.

	Text 1 (Prose)	Text 2 (Poetry)	Text 3 (Verse)
Period	Old Marathi	Old Marathi	Middle Marathi
Name	Līlācaritra	Dnyāneśvari	Dāsabodha
Author	Mhaimbhaṭṭa	Dnyāneśvara	Rāmadāsa
Year	1278CE	1287CE	1654CE
Word count	~ 39,000 words	~ 107,815 words	~ 108,612 words

2.1 Methodology

- We worked with unannotated corpora and extracted the relevant data using our own Perl scripts.
- We searched for specific patterns in the texts within a five word window.
- Part of the extracted data was corrected manually.

2.2 Findings

2.2.1 Aspect

- The aspect of the clause had **no effect** on the overall distribution of object marking — at any stage of the language.
- This is unexpected from a markedness/identifying/dependent case perspective:
 - Imperfective transitives contain two nominatives presumed to be in dire need of distinction from one another.
 - Perfective transitives have a marked subject and an unmarked object — so no need for the introduction of a distinguishing marker.
- So we should have found an asymmetry in marking but did not.

2.2.2 Distribution of $=teṃ$ and $=si/sī$ in Old Marathi

- Objects of (di)transitive verbs in Old Marathi surface in one of four ways: $=teṃ$, $=si/sī$, (inherited) oblique or (inherited) nominative/unmarked
- **Theme/patient verbs:**¹
 - 72% of clitic case-marked arguments exhibit $=teṃ$
 - 28% have $=si/sī$ marking.
- **Possessor/goal verbs:**
 - In contrast, 73% of clitic marked arguments exhibit $=si/sī$
 - 27% have $=teṃ$ marking.
- This would seem to indicate a system that is evolving from one in which oblique marking is used to mark both theme/patients and possessors/goals to one in which distinct case-markers carry distinct loads.

Text	<i>n</i>	$=teṃ$	$=si/sī$	Oblique	Nominative
Dnyāneśvarī	4388	304	91	3786	207
Līlācaritra	1118	149	84	854	31
All	5506	453	175	4640	238

Table 1: Transitive object marking in Old Marathi with **theme/patient** verbs

Text	<i>n</i>	$=teṃ$	$=si/sī$	Oblique	Nominative
Dnyāneśvarī	466	10	27	409	20
Līlācaritra	7	0	0	6	1
All	473	10	27	409	21

Table 2: Transitive object marking in Old Marathi with **possessor/goal** verbs

2.2.3 Distribution of $=teṃ$ and $=si/sī$ in Middle Marathi

- Case endings in Middle Marathi: $=teṃ$, $=si/sī$, oblique, $lā$
- Oblique marking, the most frequent marking in Old Marathi, is virtually lost.
- **Theme/patient verbs:**
 - 3.7% of theme/patient verbs occur with $=teṃ$
 - 89% with $=si/sī$
 - 6% occur with the newest innovation $=lā$

Dāsabodha	<i>n</i>	<i>=teṃ</i>	<i>=si/sī</i>	<i>lā</i>	Oblique
Theme/patient verbs	486	18	434	30	4
Possessor/goal verbs	30	1	24	5	0

Table 3: Transitive object marking in Middle Marathi

- **Possessor/goal verbs** (small *n*) appear far more frequently (80%) with *=si/sī*.
- This suggests a change in the system where *=teṃ* has been **replaced** by the clitic *=si/sī* for DOM marking in theme/patient verbs.
- This type of change with attendant form-identity between datives and accusatives has been robustly attested elsewhere (e.g., von Heusinger and Kaiser 2005, von Heusinger 2018).
- However, in an unexpected twist, a new marker *=la* is getting recruited for DOM \implies this needs to be investigated further.

2.3 Summary

Old Marathi:

- Distinct markers for theme/patient (accusative) contexts and possessor/goal (dative) contexts:
 - Transitive objects of theme/patient verbs occur predominantly with *=teṃ*.
 - Transitive objects of possessor/goal verbs occur predominantly with *=si/sī*.
- Evidence for DOM, but not for a case-marking system in which a single form is used categorically in both DOM and dative contexts.

Middle Marathi:

- Transitive objects of theme/patient verbs and transitive objects of possessor/goal verbs occur overwhelmingly with *=si/sī*.
- Dative clitic (*=si/sī*) is extended to marking arguments of theme/patient verbs, i.e., a “classic” DOM system is established in which datives and DOM accusatives are form-identical.

2.4 A Closer Look

- So far so good — but a closer look at the verbs involved shows that one needs a more fine-grained look at the lexical semantics.

¹We have further cleaned and corrected our data since the initial SLE presentation and present the updated numbers here.

- Across all texts, the verbs in Table 4 showed up again and again with the innovated case markers.
- The instances of these 18 verbs represent 82% of the overall hits with overt case clitics in the corpus.

Verb Type	Verbs	Total Hits with Clitics
Verbs of Perception	pāh ‘see’	180
	dekh ‘see’	122
	avadhār ‘listen’	12
Verbs entailing Contact	dhar ‘hold, grasp, catch’	64
	pāv ‘obtain’	54
	ṭhev ‘place, keep, put’	22
	kādh ‘take out’	10
	mār ‘hit’	29
	joḍ ‘connect, join’	13
	bhed ‘pierce’	7
Experiencer Verbs	jāṇ ‘know’	112
	neṇ ‘not know’	41
	bhog ‘experience’	31
	bhul ‘forget’	6
Verbs of Communication	bol ‘speak’	108
	pus ‘ask’	86
	sāṅg ‘tell, recite’	57
	varṇ ‘describe’	9

Table 4: Verbs appearing with innovated case markers across texts

- **Note:** Our results are imprecise (patterns extracted from unannotated texts).
- However, it is suggestive that the verbs which predominantly occur with the innovated markers are **not canonical transitive verbs**, but mainly **verbs of perception, verbs of communication and experiencer verbs**.
- These results fit with the findings from Deo (2017) that it is mainly secondary objects (including addressees in verbs of communication) that are overtly marked in the inherited MIA pattern.
- So the inherited pattern overtly marked (mostly) secondary objects.

- **Hypothesis:**

- The NIA pattern innovates case markers with original spatial/goal semantics on the inherited pattern for secondary objects.
- These innovated case markers also begin appearing on direct objects with goal semantics (e.g., arguments of perception verbs).
- And from there develop into a DOM pattern.

Will a close, qualitative look at the data bear this hypothesis out?

3 Delving into the Marathi Diachrony

3.1 The DOM pattern

Old Marathi shows some evidence for DOM in both ergative and non-ergative clauses. It is unclear whether the pattern is sensitive to referentiality, but it is at least animacy-sensitive. Examples in (4) all contain a canonical transitive main verb *neṇe* ‘take’ with the theme argument marked accusative (postposition =*teṃ*) or nominative.

- (4) a. *āmhīm tuma=teṃ ne-unuṃ*
 I.PL.NOM you.PL.OBL=TEM take-FUT.1.PL
 We will take you (to Varanasi). (LC 1.6.10)
- b. *aiseṃ mhaṇ-auni yā=teṃ śrīkarī-m dhar-ūni āpuleyā*
 thus speak-GER he.OBL=TEM hand-M.SG.INST hold-GER self.OBL
gharā=si ne-leṃ
 house.OBL=DAT take-PERF.N.SG
 Having spoken thus, taking him by the hand, (she) took him to her house.
 (LC 1.34.14)
- c. *he koṇa=ci vaṭī neta*
 this.F.SG.NOM whose bowl.F.SG.NOM take.IMPF.2.PL
 Whose bowl are you taking? (LC 2.428.31)

3.2 Old Marathi

3.2.1 The most frequent DOM marker: =*teṃ*

=*teṃ* is found on direct objects of transitives with theme/patient arguments and themes of ditransitives: (5).

Verbs: *grasp, fill, pierce, bring, save, see, give*

- (5) a. ekīm ākāśīm sūryā=**tem** dhar-ileṃ ekīm
 one.ERG sky.LOC sun.OBL=TEM grasp-PERF.N.SG one.ERG
 cuḷīm=ci sāgarā=**tem** bhar-ileṃ
 mouthfulINST=EMPH ocean.OBL=TEM fill-PERF.N.SG
 One (of them) has grasped the sun in the sky; one of them has filled the
 ocean with just a mouthful (of water). (Dny. 10.192)
- b. taisā hr̥dayā=**tem** bheda-itu kauravāṃ=ciyā
 Thus, heart.OBL=TEM pierce-IMPF.M.SG Kaurava.OBL=GEN.OBL
 Thus, (he) pierces the heart of the Kauravas. ((Dny. 1.872)
- c. maṇḍalikā=**tem** kāse lā-uni ghe-uni
 Mandalika.OBL=TEM attachment.N.SG.NOM attach-GER bring-GER
 yā
 come.IMP
 Bring the Mandalika, with the help of an attachment. (LC 2.96.35)
- d. prabandhavyājem jagā=**tem** rakṣ-ileṃ jāṇa
 literary.work.INST world.OBL=TEM save-PERF.N.SG know.IMP.2.SG
 Know that (the Guru) has saved the world through this literary work.
 (Dny. 18.78.1765)
- e. mhaṇoni prakāśā=ce=ni=hi dehabal-ēṃ na dekh-atī
 therefore light.OBL=OF=BY=PTCL strength-INS.SG NEG see-IMPF.3.PL
mā=tem****
 I.OBL=TEM
 Therefore, even by the strength of light, they do not see me. (Dny. 7.882)
- f. maga te tumham īpsita arthā=**tem**
 then they.NOM you.PL.OBL desired.OBL objective.M.SG.OBL=TEM
 de-ti
 give-IMPF.3.PL
 Then they (the Gods) will give you the desired objective. (Dny. 3.11.95)

It is also found to mark the higher argument (secondary object) with verbs of communication: (6).

Verbs: *ask, say*

- (6) a. maga gosāvīm tayāṃ=**tem** pus-ileṃ
 then gosavi.ERG he.OBL=TEM ask-PERF.N.SG
 Then the Gosavi asked him... (LC 2.487.2)

b. maga saṃjāyo mhāṇe rāyā=teṃ
 then Sanjaya.M.SG.NOM say.IMP.3.SG king.M.SG.OBL=TEM
 Then Sanjaya said to the king... (Dny. 2.1.1)

It is very rarely used to mark the possessor argument in ditransitives: (7).

(7) maga bāisām=teṃ māgauni eku dāmu
 then Baisa.F.SG.OBL=TEM afterwards one coin.M.SG.NOM
 dīdha-lā
 give.PERF.M.SG
 Then (the Gosavi) afterwards gave one coin to Baisa. (LC 1.265.34)

Upshot: =teṃ seems to have a specialized DOM function at the Old Marathi stage.

3.2.2 The most frequent form in dative function: =si

Goals in directed motion verbs and goal/possessor/location arguments in other transitive and ditransitive verbs tend to be marked with =si/sī, as in (8) and (9).

Verbs: *come, depart, show, give*

(8) a. navagāvi=cā brāhmaṇu devate=si
 Navagav.OBL=GEN.M.SG brahmin.M.SG.NOM goddess.OBL=SI
 ā-lā
 come.PERF.M.SG
 The brahmin of Navagava came to the goddess. (LC 1.560.2)

b. maga gosāvīm vāvya koṇi=cīe gumphe=si bījeṃ
 then gosavi.ERG northwest direction.OBL=GEN cave.OBL=SI departure
 keṃ
 do-PERF.N.SG
 Then the Gosavi departed towards the cave in the northwest direction.
 (LC 1.588.1)

(9) a. devate=si guḷubhelīe=cā nīvadū
 goddess.OBL=SI jaggery.puffed.rice.F.SG.OBL=GEN offering.M.SG.NOM
 dākhav-ītī
 show-IMP.3.PL
 They showed an offering of jaggery and puffed rice to the goddess.
 (LC 1.581.7)

b. tari teyaṃ=si gosaviṃ kai dīdh=aleṃ jī?
 then he.M.SG.OBL=SI gosavi.M.SG.ERG what give-PERF.N.SG VOC
 Then what did the Gosavi give him? (LC 1.25.71)

- c. **tyā=sī** bhātempotem didha-lem
 he.OBL=SI food.clothes.N.SG.NOM give-PERF.N.SG
 (She) gave him food and clothing. (Pan 2.7.12 (1378 CE))

But =*si* sometimes marks the higher argument (secondary object) with verbs of communication : (10).

Verbs: *ask, invite, say*

- (10) a. māhādāiseṃ... **gosāvīyā=si** pusi-lem
 Mahadaisa.F.SG.ERG gosavi.M.SG.OBL=SI ask-PERF.N.SG
 Mahadaisa asked the Gosavi. (LC 3.4.2)

- b. maga tyāṃ baṭika pāṭh-unī **tayā=sī** bolāv-ileṃ
 Then she.ERG servant.M.SG.OBL send-GER he.OBL=SI invite-PERF.N.SG
 Then she, having sent a servant, invited him. (Pan 2.7.11 (1378 CE))

- c. maga **tyā=sī** mhaṇītalem
 Then he.OBL=SI say-PERF.N.SG
 Then she said to him... (Pan 2.7.13 (1378 CE))

It is rare to find =*si* in canonical transitives to mark DOM but see (11).

Verbs: *see, grasp/hold*

- (11) a. tavaṃ **gosāvīyāṃ=si** sādḥīm dekh-ileṃ
 Then Gosavi.OBL=SI sadha.ERG see-PERF.N.SG
 Then Sadha saw the Gosavi. (LC 2.265.16)

- b. maga gosāvīm eku śrīkarū
 then gosavi.M.SG.ERG one.INST hand.M.SG.NOM
 khanda=vari ṭhev-ila : ekeṃ śrīkareṃ
 shoulder.M.SG.OBL=upon place-PERF.M.SG : one hand.M.SG.INST
hanavaṭie=si dhar-ileṃ
 chin.F.SG.OBL=SI grasp-PERF.N.SG
 Then the Gosavi put one hand on (his) shoulder. (He) held at (his) chin.
 (LC 1.120.7)

Upshot: =*si* has a dative-like function in Old Marathi and fails to occur in classic DOM contexts, where we see =*tem*.

3.2.3 A purposive benefactive form: =lagim̄

=*lāgim̄/lāgauni* is a purposive/benefactive case marker. It never appears with direct or indirect objects in Old Marathi.

- (12) a. aiseyā **kaja=lāgim̄** avatareṃ mī
 such.OBL work.OBL=LAGIM incarnate.IMPF.1.SG I.NOM
 yugim̄-yugim̄
 era.LOC-era.LOC

In order to do such work, I incarnate myself in each era. (Dny. 4.8.57)

- b. tari **ya=ci=lāgim̄** tuma=teṃ myām
 Then this.OBL=EMPH=LAGIM you.PL.OBL=TEM I.M.SG.ERG
 rauḷa=si vinav-ileṃ hote
 lord.M.SG.OBL=SI request-PERF.N.SG be.PST.N.SG

Then, for this very (thing) (LAGIM), I had requested (pleaded) to you (TEM), to the lord (SI) (Dny. 5.1.5)

- c. āḍikā **telā=lāgim̄** dīdh-alā : maga
 coin.M.SG.NOM oil.N.SG.OBL=LAGIM give-PERF.M.SG : then
 hāṭā gele
 market.M.SG.OBL go.PERF.M.PL

(She) gave (him) a coin for oil. Then (he) went to the market. (LC 2.331.15)

3.3 Middle Marathi

In Middle Marathi, we see a sharp change in the preferred form for DOM marking. Old Marathi =*teM* is infrequently found, =*si/sa* is the DOM marker of preference, and =*la* (cognate to the purposive/benefactive of Old Marathi =*lāgim̄/lāgauni*), is beginning to be found on secondary objects.

3.3.1 The most frequent DOM marker: =si/=sa

=*si/sa* appears on direct objects of canonical transitives with theme/patient arguments: (13).

Verbs: *pierce, kill, strike, affect.negatively*

- (13) a. parī na thir-e nimīṣha.bharī : **bhūmī=sa**
 but NEG stay-IMPF.3.SG moment.long : earth.F.SG.ONL=SI
 bhed-e
 pierce-IMPF.3.SG

(It) does not stay still (even) for a moment; it pierces (is absorbed in) the earth. (Das 16.9.7)

b. kāyesi mātā vadhī **bālakā=si**
 QUES mother.F.SG.NOM kill.IMP.3.SG child.N.SG.OBL=SI
 vipattikālīm
 calamity.time.LOC
 Does a mother kill her baby at a time of calamity? (Das. 4.8.24)

c. lem̄kīm **bāpā=sa** mār-ileṃ
 son.M.SG.ERG father.M.SG.OBL=SI strike-PERF.N.SG
 The son struck the father. (Das 3.5.19)

d. mīpaṇā **dhartyā=sa** bādh-ī
 Egoism.M.SG.NOM holder.M.SG.OBL=SI affect.IMP.3.SG
 Egoism negatively affects its holder. (Das. 7.6.58)

It appears regularly with perception verbs: (14).

Verbs: *see, hear*

- (14) a. kṣhaṇabharī **māte=sa** na dekh-e : tarī
 moment.long mother.F.SG.OBL=SI NEG see-IMP.3.SG : then
 ākraṃd-eṃ rudana kar-ī duḥkheṃ
 cry.out-IMP.3.SG crying.N.SG.NOM do-IMP.3.SG grief.N.SG.INST
 (If) (the baby) does not see its mother for (even) a moment, it cries out,
 cries with grief. (Das. 3.2.10)
- b. gata **goṣṭī=sa** aik-ileṃ : teṇeṃ kāye
 past story.F.SG.OBL=SI hear-PERF.N.SG : that.N.SG.ERG what
 hātā=sa āleṃ
 hand.M.SG.OBL=SI come-PERF.N.SG
 If one hears stories from the past, what benefit is it (lit. what has come to
 hand)? (Das. 17.3.9)

It continues to mark goals in directed motion verbs and goal/possessor arguments in transitives and ditransitives: (15).

Verbs: *come, give*

- (15) a. praṇī **saṃsārā=sa** ā=lā
 being.M.SG.NOM world.M.SG.OBL=SI come-PERF.M.SG
 A being came to the world (somewhat wise). (Das. 20.4.13)
- b. **bhāvā=sa** bhāū upadeśa
 brother.M.SG.OBL=SI brother.M.PL.NOM advice.M.SG.NOM
 de-tī
 give-IMP.3.PL
 Brothers give advice to (their) brothers. (Das. 19.6.6)

Upshot: *śi/śa* is a dative that has extended to regularly marking DOM, having replaced the original *ṭem*. The Middle Marathi system seems to have a single dative/accusative marker.

3.3.2 Extension in functions for =la

=lāgīṃ/lāgauni, the purposive/benefactive case marker from Old Marathi, starts to infrequently appear in a shortened form (*=la*) to mark secondary objects and goals in Middle Marathi.

Verbs: *search* (DOM verb), *strike*

(16) a. kityeka loka **tayā=lā** shodhī-ta
 several people.M.PL.NOM it.M.SG.OBL=LA search.PRES.PART
 phiratī
 wander-IMPF.3.PL
 Many people go around looking for him (a noble man). (Das 12.10.29)

b. ḍar-ī dhoṃḍā mār-ilā **ākāśā=lā** ...
 If.REL=EMPH stone.M.SG.NOM strike-PERF.M.SG sky.OBL=LA ...
 tar=i teṃ tuṭe=nā
 then.COREL= that.N.SG.NOM break-IMPF.3.SG=NEG
 Even if one strikes/casts a stone at the sky (or one spits on it), it does not
 break. (Das. 10.4.13)

Upshot: Some evidence for extension of a purposive/benefactive marker to dative function.

Synchronic update: *=la* has fully replace *=si/=sa* in Modern Marathi. This single form occurs in all dative uses and for DOM marking.

4 Conclusion

- There are three forms recruited for DOM marking in the history of Marathi.
- In each case, the recruited form is compatible with marking goals/possessors and secondary objects.
- In the case of *=si* and *=la*, such uses are the first-attested uses before they become the default DOM markers at later stages.

The observed changes relate in a central way to the lexical semantics of particular verbs and arguments (and not globally to issues of indexing or markedness of patients).

In particular, DOM is not observed in themes/patients in the early stages, but in verbs that can be better understood as having goal arguments.

DOM appears to be unstable in the sense that dative markers “push” existing DOM markers out of the system. The rate of lexical replacement is high.

Some thoughts:

The observed **cyclicality** in the development of DOM marking raises new questions about the function of DOM. In particular, it is not clear how cyclicity is reconcilable with markedness or indexing accounts of DOM, which restrict their attention to patientive/theme arguments.

Variability in DOM marking (multiple possible case markers with some subclasses of verbs) raises questions about subtle interpretive differences that may be lost in a system where dative and DOM marking is form-identical (i.e. almost all standard NIA languages).

Our investigation of the development of new dative/accusative markers in Marathi is an initial attempt to help raise and substantively answer these questions.

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