

Individuality of Expressives in Bodo, Deori and Mising

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Abstract

This paper aims to provide a detailed description of the importance as well as the individuality of expressives in Bodo, Deori and Mising. By “individuality” what is meant here is their individual existence in the language where no other words when substituted with expressives give the same meaning i.e., it is only through expressives these language speakers can imply a particular feeling. These three languages belong to the Tibeto-Burman language family and are spoken in Assam, although one can still find a small amount of Mising population settling in Arunachal Pradesh. Expressives are non-dictionary words in Bodo, Deori and Mising that often remain neglected in formal speech. They fail to hold an individual identity in grammar books as well, and are often replaced by other dictionary words in formal writings. Through this paper an attempt has been made to show the individuality as well as the uniqueness of expressives that will be discussed with examples from the three languages. There are many words in the three languages that can only be made apparent to the sense through expressives therefore this paper aims to discuss how the expressives such as those related to the senses being replaced by dictionary words lose its original meaning and that lost meaning can never be compensated by any other dictionary in the way as the original meaning.

KEYWORDS: Bodo, Deori, Mising, expressives, individuality.

1 Introduction

Expressives are reduplicated words either fully and partially that form an essential part of almost all the South Asian languages. The expressives used here as examples consist of both partial and fully reduplicated expressives. Expressives act as an apparatus to adorn speech in socially and culturally appropriate and significant ways. Most of the expressives consist of reiteration of a meaningless syllable which then forms meaning together. They are one type of morphological reduplication that does not have an existence in the language individually i.e., when not repeated with the copied part for instance the Deori word *zin* does not mean anything in the language unless it is accompanied by the copied part *zin~zin* which is the “numb” sensation that one experiences in the legs. Expressives are part and parcel of many

South Asian languages. Diffloth in 1972 asserted that they are “the aesthetic complementary of grammar”. These forms adorn a language and make it more vibrant, but unfortunately these forms are trivialized and remain undocumented. Expressives are unsung heroes of any grammar of South Asian Languages (Abbi 2021:13). Expressives can perform the function of noun and verb and take normal affixations like a normal noun and verb that is allowed in a particular language. For instance, onomatopoeia in Bodo, Deori and Mising carry along with it many verbal affixations. For instance, the word for “buzzing” in Deori is *be~be-a-ni* i.e., *IMITATIVE-CONT-PRF*. Expressives are often considered as a separate class of words by several linguists.

1. Expressives are a distinct class of words which denote sensory perceptions of the speaker; describing visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, haptic, emotional or other types of perceptions in relation to particular phenomena (Tufvesson 2007:53). These five senses of perceptions or panchēndriya occupy the verbal slots in Bodo, Deori and Mising thus functioning as predicate. Also, syntactically they occupy the final position.
2. Again Abbi (2021:13) mentioned that “In earlier works, especially on African and South Asian languages, expressives have also been given labels such as ‘interjections’, ‘descriptive adverbs’, ‘picture words’, ‘adverbials,’ ‘intensives’, ‘emphatics’ and ‘impressifs’.

Expressives are interesting phenomenon that are loaded with intensity, and that are not synonymous with simple adjectives of the languages as they do not contain the “iconic value” of an expressive. In this sense while talking about reduplication corresponding to optimal degree gives the example of the ideal temperature for a good tea according to both the speaker and addressee said that “A simple adjective would simply indicate that the tea is neither cold nor lukewarm, but the reduplicated neutralizes the feature “differential” in the property in order to emphasize its manifestation: conformity with the typical ideal of good tea (nicely hot, quite hot, but precisely not too hot)” (see Montaut 2021:38). That is the individuality of expressives, they hold descriptive meaning in itself. The examples of expressives considered for this paper consist of -Onomatopoeia, sense of perception, and child expressives. They have been considered in terms of their morphological structure and grammatical function in the languages concerned.

A brief description

a) Onomatopoeia	The naming of things and actions by imitation. For instance, the call of a bird or an animal and sounds from the natural environment. Bodo, Deori and Mising are richly endowed with onomatopoeia. For instance <i>zi~zi</i> (cricket stridulating in Bodo), <i>tur~tur</i> (croaking of frog in Deori) <i>kuk~kuk</i> (cooing of cuckoo in Mising)
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2 Background of the languages

Bodo, Deori and Mising being the three Tibetan-Burman languages of Assam are distributed in several parts of Assam. They are spoken in various districts of Assam. The term “Bodo” is used to refer to both the community and the language. The population of Bodo is found to settle in both Upper Assam as well as Lower Assam. They are mainly scattered in the following districts of Assam- Kokrajhar, Udalguri, Baksa, Sirang, Sonitpur, Lakhimpur, Dhemaji, and Goalpara. The Indian constitution, have given them recognition as the plain tribes of Assam in the sixth schedule, and among the other twenty-two languages, Bodo holds a place in the eighth schedule. Bodo is a relatively large group with around 3,155,359¹ speakers in the Assam of the total population according to the 2011 census. Being plain tribes of Assam, Bodo people are in regular contact with various other language speakers apart from Assamese. Most of them are multilingual.

Deori being another indigenous community of Assam is distributed only in the Upper Assam i.e., in the Eastern portion of the Sonitpur district, in Jorhat, Tinsukia, Sibsagar, Dibrugarh, Dhemaji and Lakhimpur districts of Assam, one can also find Deori groups in Arunachal Pradesh. The language is now a mere Amalgamation of Deori and Assamese which is the majority language. Therefore, this paper makes an endeavor to preserve the language especially expressive among the new generations. Many non-native scholars have used the term “Chutiya” for Deori, one instance of which is “the Chutiya language, indeed, may fairly claim to be the language of the upper Assam” (Grierson 1903-1906). Apart from Grierson, another prominent scholar Brown (1895) has used this term in his *An Outline Grammar of Deori Chutiya Language Spoken in Upper Assam with an Introduction, Illustrative sentences, and Short Vocabulary*. Chutia is another name for Deori community Nath (2010:24). However, they like to be identified by the name *Jimosaya* which means “the children of the sun and the moon”. Among Deori speakers the language used in everyday conversation is an amalgamation of Deori and Assamese, however a good sum of the speakers have been using Deori in their everyday conversation and they belong to the Dibongias, among the other three groups i.e., Tengapania, Bargoyan, and Patorgoyan. The examples used for this paper consists of Deori data from the Dibongia group.

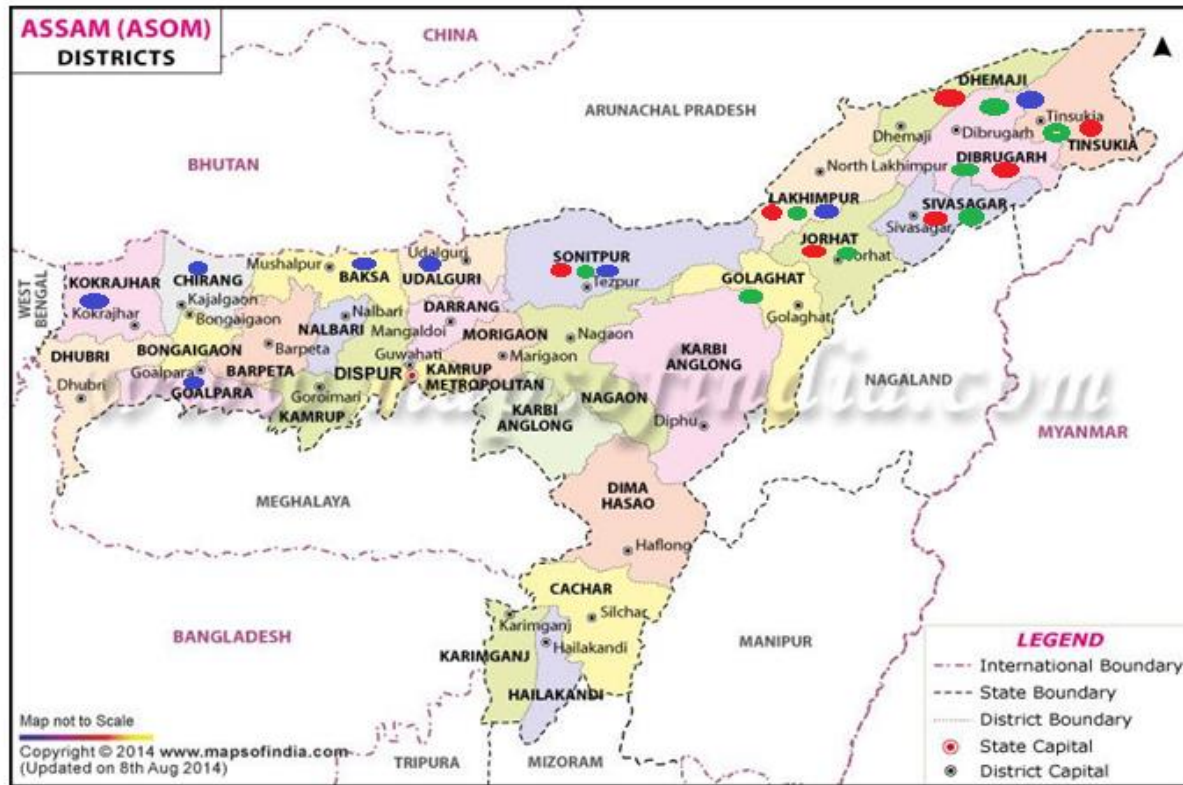
Mising like the other two languages is the name of both the language and the community. However, Mising are also termed as “Miri”. A scholar of the community N.C Pegu used the term “miri” in one of his books entitled *The Miris or Mishings of the Brahmaputra Valley* (1956). Mising is spoken in Golaghat, Jorhat, Lakhimpur, Dhemaji, Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Sonitpur and Sibsagar of Assam. Like Deori, there is a small population found in Arunachal. There exists some sub-groups in Mising dialects of Misings are - Pagro, Délu, Tayu-Tayé, Dambug, Doyid, Oyan, Sa:yang, and Moy:ing (Taid 2010:9).

The population² of Mising in Assam according to the 2011 census is 680,424, and in Arunachal Pradesh are 7,412. Let us consider a map the speakers of these languages are shown in terms of their geographical distribution. Each marked with different coloured dots for the

¹https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bodoland_Territorial_Region

² The population of Mising in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh is accessed from the link-
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mising_people retrieved on 20-03-2021

convenient of the readers. The map below will show the geographical distribution of Bodo people in blue colour, red has been chosen for Deori and green for Mising.



Source: <https://www.mapsofindia.com/maps/assam/assam-district.htm> (Retrieved at 4.10 p.m on 21 January 2020)

Map1. The area of residence of Bodo, Deori and Mising speaker.

3 Aims and Objectives of this paper

Bodo, Deori and Mising are sumptuously imbued with expressives that convey the insight of a speaker and their emotions. Therefore, the following research objectives have been listed.

- To bring into light the individuality of expressive morphology in Bodo, Deori and Mising at length.
- To show how animals call form an integral part of these languages i.e., a specific expressive is attached to a particular animal which itself is that particular animal's identity.
- To make an endeavor to help these endangered forms in maintenance and revitalization.

4 Data collection process

The data were collected from informants of the three languages i.e., Bodo, Deori and Mising residing in Takankata of Baksa district (for Bodo), Bordeurigaon of Narayanpur in Lakhimpur district for Deori data and the Dui Nong Hati e Mara Saponi of Gogamukh in Lakhimpur district and Nahar Gezera, P.O: Jonkareng of Dhemaji district for Mising. Initially they gave me all sorts of reduplicated words such as - however later on with their help I filtered out expressives from other lexically reduplicated words. In that sense the data selected include only those words that are mostly vague and do not carry any meaning when they are not repeated. Initially the dictionary word such as – *laswi* which means slow in Bodo is a dictionary word and by using it twice such as *laswi-laswi* it gives the meaning “slowly”, and later on with further investigation it was replaced by expressive *riu~riu* (gently) where the stem and the base do not have any individual meaning when uttered alone. Again in Deori, *uko-pako* tall and good physique and replace by the expressive *toz-boz* which means a man with good physique but individually the stem and the base do not hold any meaning, which is again true for Mising and Mising word *zurpe* for “heavy” which is used in the context of rain and using *zurpe- zurpe* twice as reduplication would give heavily however used the expressive *dzur- dzur* was used instead where *dzur* does not have any meaning in isolation.

5 Discussion

Expressives have their own descriptive meanings and need no further elaboration. Those descriptive meanings associated with them make them unique. Following Akita (2017: 317-321), an attempt has been made to show the individuality of expressives in declarative, interrogative and negative sentences in Bodo, Deori and Mising. Let us consider some examples of onomatopoeia.

5.1 Onomatopoeia:

This discussion focuses on various calls of animals that hold importance in every language. There are certain expressives upon which the structure of the entire sentence depends i.e., without which the sentence doesn't carry any meaning. The sole importance of the expressives in a sentence can be checked on the basis of the frequency of their appearance in a particular context. Depending on the situation, these may vary in languages. Most of the onomatopoeias are similar across these languages i.e., Bodo, Deori and Mising as they imitate directly from the nature which is universal as rightly said by Bodomo (2006:204) “Ideophones are phonesthemes in function in the sense that they directly imitate sounds in nature”. Onomatopoeic words hold it them both the call as well as action of that particular animal or bird. [O]ne of a grammatically distinct class of words, occurring in certain languages, which typically express either distinctive sounds or visually distinctive types of action (Trask 1993: 131-132). Let us consider some examples in this regard to find the expressives that have their own individuality in certain contexts. Examples of animals' call are all fully reduplicated.

Bodo:

- (1) *mauzì-ja* *meu~meu* *gáb-dúŋ*
 cat-NOM IMI sound of mewing cry-ASP
 Cat is mewing.
- (2) *suima-ja* *b^hwu~b^hwu* *suŋ-dúŋ*
 dog-NOM IMI sound of barking bark-ASP
 Dog is barking.
- (3) *guma-ja* *zi~zi* *gáb-dúŋ*
 cricket-NOM IMI cry of a cricket cry-ASP
 Cricket is crying.
- (4) *mainau-a* *t^hik~t^hik* *gáb-dúŋ*
 lizard-NOM IMI sound of clicking cry-ASP
 Lizard is clicking.
- (5) *haŋsu-a* *hak^hor-ao* *geb~geb* *gábgasinu*
 duck-NOM pond-LOC IMI sound of quacking cry-PROG
 Duck in the pond is quacking.
- (6) *embu-wa* *eb~eb* *gáb-dúŋ*
 frog-NOM IMI sound of croaking cry-ASP
 Frog is croaking.

In Bodo except for bark i.e.,-*suŋ* there is no separate word to refer to the calls of animals. The term *-gab* which means “cry” in Bodo is used to refer to the different cries or calls of various animals and birds. *-gab* is used in the context of barking of a dog, mewing of a cat, stridulating of a cricket, quacking of a duck or croaking of a frog. Therefore, in this context, the expressives referring to the different calls of animals have an important to play. The examples mentioned above would seem so plain or dull without the varied expressives used for different animals. This is what makes the expressives unique. They have their own individuality, as reflected in case of the five examples, there are five different expressives used.

If we consider the above sentences by replacing the expressives with other words in dictionary we will find that the words that are capable of filling the slots of expressives are adjectives. Let us consider one example.

- (7) *mauzì-ja* *gwsa-t^har* *gáb-dúŋ*
 cat-NOM loud-SUP cry-ASP
 Cat is mewing loudly.

The word category that can fill the slot of animal call is adjective, which is further supported by the fact that it is accompanied by the superlative *-t^har*. For instance, we can say that instead of the *meu~meu* in sentence (1) we can replace that by *-gwsa-t^har* which is true in case of the other

examples from (2) to (6), they can all be replaced by the adjectives *gwsa-t^har* (loudly) or *laswi-t^har* (slowly) which are adjectives.³

If we consider the following examples, we will find that the essence of expressives is so much felt in each of these sentences mentioned below. Let us consider them.

(8) *mauzì-ja gáb-dúnj*
cat-NOM cry-ASP
Cat is mewling.

(9) *guma-ja gáb-dúnj*
cricket-NOM cry-ASP
Cricket is crying.

(10) *mainau-a gáb-dúnj*
lizard-NOM cry-ASP
Lizard is clicking.

(11) *haṅsu-a hak^hor-ao gáb-gasinu*
duck-NOM pond-LOC cry-PROG
Duck in the pond is quacking.

(12) *embu-wa gáb-dúnj*
frog-NOM cry-ASP
Frog is croaking.

As seen in the examples from (8) to (12) it seems as if the sentences are repetition of the same thing with different subjects in each case, whereas in the previous examples i.e., from examples (1) to (6) with each new subject different expressives (animals cries) have been used thus giving a voice and identity to the respective animals in each case, as if adding an essence to the voice of each animal.

Deori:

(13) *zeti-ja tik~tik-a-ri*
lizard-NOM IMI sound of lizard clicking-CONT-IPFV
The lizard is clicking

(14) *si-ja bou~bou tfa su-ri*
dog-NOM IMI noise of barking way bark-IPFV
The dog is barking loudly.

**si-ja bou~bou-a-ri*
dog-NOM IMI noise of barking-IPFV
The dog is barking loudly.

³ Further discussion is in preparation for a publication which is on progress.

(15) *sitami-ja* ***be~be-a-ni***
 fly-NOM IMI sound of buzzing-CONT-PRF
 The fly has been buzzing.

(16) *bekula-wa* ***tur~tur-a-ri***
 frog-NOM IMI sound of frog croaking-CONT-IPFV
 The frog is croaking.

Example (14) is exceptional in Deori because there is a separate word for bark which is *-su* in addition to the word *bou~bou* which is the imitative sound of a dog's call. Unlike other cases where there is no separate word to represent "animal calls" apart from the expressives therefore in that case the structure is same in examples (13) (15) and (16). However, since there is a separate word for "bark" therefore the structure is different in example (14) which requires a manner adverb before the imitative sound of animal. In the above examples it has been seen that unlike Bodo, in Deori to represent the cries or the calls of most of the animals, the sentence can go well without the additional word for "cry" which is *uga* in Deori as in (14), (15) and (16) i.e. *tik~tik* for the clicking of a lizard, the buzzing of a fly as *be~be*, the croaking of a frog as *tur~tur*.

In Deori however the word *uga* can sit well in the sentence in addition to the imitative sounds of animals like Bodo, but the structure is different from Bodo because in Deori they function as manner adverbs. In Deori *-tfa* which is word for manner expressives in Deori precedes *uga* in each case. Thus, we have seen how Bodo and Deori differ in this case. Despite this dissimilarity, even in Deori, the word *uga* which implies "cry" can be used in some cases to represent the cries or calls of the animals. Let us consider some examples in this regard.

(17) *zeti-ja* ***tik~tik*** *tfa* *uga -ri*
 lizard-NOM IMI sound of lizard clicking way cry-IPFV
 The lizard is crying.

(18) *midige-wa* ***meu~meu*** *tfa* *uga-ri*
 cat-NOM IMI sound of mewling way cry-IPFV
 The cat is mewling.

(19) *bekula-wa* ***tur~tur*** *tfa* *uga-ri*
 frog-NOM IMI sound of frog croaking way cry-IPFV
 The frog is croaking

(20) **si-ja* ***bou~bou*** *tfa* *uga-ri*
 dog-NOM IMI noise of barking way bark-IPFV
 The dog is crying.

- (21) **sitami-ja* ***be~be*** *tfa* *uga-ri*
 fly-NOM IMI sound of buzzing way cry-IPFV
 The fly is buzzing.

From these examples, we have seen that although there is more than one way of representing the calls or cries of each animal, yet there are some exceptions, as Deori doesn't have a separate word to refer to the buzzing of a fly and the word for cry in Deori i.e., *uga* neither sits with *be~be* in example (21) nor with *bou~bou* like example (20). Therefore, it can be said that to refer to the buzzing of a fly Deori speakers use *be~be-a-ni* see example (15) In the Deori examples we have seen that there are two ways of referring to the same things. However, there are some exceptions; we will find that although in some examples we have seen that there are two ways of saying the same thing. Yet, in some cases as for instance in example (20) and (21) which have been marked with asterisks, we have seen that this is not the case. Since there is a separate word for “bark” and “buzzing” i.e., *su* and *be~be* respectively in Deori, these words can never be substituted for the word cry i.e., *uga* in Deori.

In case of Deori, the syntactic categories of these expressives are verbs and manner of adverbs. It is evident that the expressives in example (15) is a verb *be~be* which means buzzing in Deori take the verbal inflections i.e. *be~be* followed by *-a-ni* which are continuous and tense marker. Again example (17) to (19) are manner adverbs as the expressives are followed by the manner adverb - *tfa* in Deori.

Mising:

- (22) *mekari-dé* ***meuj~meuj*** *əmna* *kab-la-duŋ*
 cat-DEF IMI sound of mewing manner cry-NF-EXIST
 The cat is mewing.
- (23) *éki-ko* ***gag~gag*** *əmna* *ra-duŋ*
 dog-INDEF IMI sound of barking manner bark-PROG
 A dog is barking.
- (24) *dʒɔdʒi-dé* ***tik~tik*** *əmna* *kab-la-duŋ*
 lidzard-DEF IMI sound of lizard's clicks manner cry-NF-EXIST
 The lizard is clicking.
- (25) *sɔju-bí* ***kuk~kuk*** *əmna* *kab-la-duŋ*
 cuckoo-CLF IMI sound of cooing manner cry-NF-EXIST
 The cuckoo is singing.
- (26) *ek-dé* ***kuwek~kuwek*** *əmna* *kab-la-duŋ*
 pig-DEF IMI sound of grunting manner cry-NF-EXIST
 The pig is crying gruntingly

In these five examples, we have seen that the calls or cries of each animal vary in respect to the subject. However, there is a common thing here i.e., the word *-kab* which is the word for

cry in Mising. In all the five instances the word *-kab* is seen to occur along with the onomatopoeic words. As already seen in case of Bodo and Deori that except for the bark i.e., *-suŋ* and *-su* respectively the other calls are represented by the single word *-gab* in each case for Bodo and *-uga* for Deori. This is true in this case as well, i.e., Mising also shares a similar aspect with Bodo and Deori in this regard. The word *-kab* is used in each case to imply “crying” except for the word *-ra* in example (23), which is used to refer to the barking of a dog. If we consider each of these five examples without the expressives associated with each animal or birds mentioned above these would rather seem like mere repetition of the same thing with different subjects in each case. Moreover, these onomatopoeic words are the essence of each animal as a different call or cry is associated with animal or a bird is associated with each new animal. The sound is the identity of the animals in each case. For instance, when the expressive *kuwek~kuwek* is heard no one will mistake it for a cuckoo. The speakers of the language would immediately link the animal “pig” with the sound of grunting, not a lizard or a crow.

In Mising if we consider the examples (22) to (26) the syntactic category of the expressives are manner adverbs as in each case the expressives are followed by the manner adverb *-əmna* in Mising.

In addition to the examples cited above that were onomatopoeic words in Bodo, Deori and Mising, there are other examples related to the senses. Let us consider examples of expressives related to the sense in Bodo, Deori and Mising.

5.2 Sense of perceptions in Bodo:

Bodo:

- | | | | |
|------|----------------------------------|---|--|
| (27) | <i>aŋ-ni</i>
1SG-GEN
My | <i>p^hoŋbai-a</i>
brother-NOM
brother | <i>raŋt^heŋ~t^heŋ</i>
EXP for thinness
is lean and thin. |
| (28) | <i>aŋ-ni</i>
1SG-GEN
My | <i>p^hoŋbai-a</i>
brother-NOM
brother | <i>hamk^hreŋ</i>
thin
is thin. |
| (29) | <i>nuŋ-ni</i>
you-GEN
Your | <i>dok^hona-ja</i>
traditional attire-NOM
dokhona | <i>zep~zep-t^har</i>
EXP for wetness-INT
is drenched. |
| (30) | <i>nuŋ-ni</i>
you-GEN
Your | <i>dok^hona-ja</i>
traditional attire-NOM
dokhona | <i>gisi</i>
wet
is wet |

The Bodo examples (27) and (29) are clear indication of expressives relating to sense of vision, and touch. In example (28) we could see that substituting the expressive with a dictionary word *-hamk^hreŋ* meaning “*thin*” in Bodo does not give the same meaning. The words used

instead of the expressives in example (28) and (30) are dictionary words of Bodo which have meaning quite nearer to the expressives, but exactly the same. The expressives occur in the predicate position and take affixation like an adjective. These expressives are capable of conveying the meaning independently without any adjectives as used after the oblique mark.

Let us now consider some Deori examples in this regard that relates to the sense of organs where the expressives have their individual existence in the language. These words can never be substituted for any other words to mean the same thing. For instance,

Deori:

- (31) *gumo-wa* ***tiŋ~tiŋ-a-ni***
 head-NOM EXP for twinge-CONT-PRF
 My head has twinged.

The expressive in this example have no other alternative words to be replaced with. In order to explain the twinging of the head the word that native speaker of Deori is *tiŋ~tiŋ* which describes a sudden strong pain in the head, if the word *tiŋ~tiŋ* is substituted with *sari* then it would mean “paining i.e., there is a different way to refer to pain in Deori which is not an expressive word.

For instance,

- (32) *a-ĩ* *gumo-wa* *sa-ri*
 1SG-GEN head-NOM pain-IPFV
 My head is aching.

Let us consider some more instances relating to the sense where expressives have their own individuality in the language.

- (33) *a-ĩ* *ut^hu-wa* ***bom~bom-a-ni***
 1SG-GEN hand-NOM EXP for burning sensation-CONT-PRF
 My hand has been having a burning sensation.

- (34) *a-ĩ* *ut^hu-wa* *sowã-ri*
 1SG-GEN hand-NOM burn-IPFV
 My hand is burning.

- (35) *a-ĩ* *ut^hu-wa* ***sek~sek-a-ri***
 1SG-GEN hand-NOM EXP for acidic sensation-CONT-IPFV
 My hand is having an acidic sensation.

- (36) *a-ĩ* *ut^hu-wa* *sa-ri*
 1SG-GEN hand-NOM pain-IPFV
 My hand is paining.

- (37) *a-ĩ* *sou-wa* ***pir~pir-a-ri***
 1SG-GEN body-NOM tickle-IPFV
 My body is tickling.
- (38) *a-ĩ* *sou-wa* *mudu-ri*
 1SG-GEN body-NOM EXP for tickle-IPFV.
 My body is itching.
- (39) *a-ĩ* *apa-su-wa* ***zin~zin-a-ni***
 1SG-GEN leg-CLF-NOM EXP for numb-CONT-PRF
 My leg is in pain.
- (40) *a-ĩ* *apa-su-wa* *sa-ri*
 1SG-GEN leg-CLF-NOM pain-IPFV
 My leg is paining
- (41) *a-ĩ* *utuŋ-wa* ***gur~gur-a-ri***
 1SG-GEN stomach-NOM IMI sound of grumbling-CONT-IPFV
 My stomach is growling/rumbling.
- (42) *a-ĩ* *utuŋ-wa* *sa-ri*
 1SG-GEN stomach-NOM pain-IPFV
 My stomach is paining

In each example these words perfectly fit the contexts, if these words are replaced by any other word, then it would mean something else as we have seen in example (32) where the expressive *tiŋ~tiŋ* is replaced by the word *sa* and this has altogether changed the meaning from “twinging” to “aching” and the word used for aching is not an expressive, whereas the word used for twinging is an expressive. Again, in example (33) the expressive *bom~bom* has been replaced by the dictionary Deori word *sowāin* example (34) which means “burn”. It is only through expressive that particular sensation can be expressed; replacing the expressive with other dictionary word can also lead to change in meaning. This is true in case of the other examples as well, there is no other dictionary words with the same meaning to replace the expressive from (35) to (38) i.e., *sek~sek*, *pir~pir*, *zin~zin*, *bom~bom*, *sek~sek*, *pir~pir*, and *gur~gur*. Although there are no other dictionary words having similar meanings like these expressives, however, if we replace them with the Deori word for “pain” i.e., *sa* in example(36), (40) and (42) and the word *-mudu* which means “itching” in Deori as in example (38). We will find that they behave like verbs taking normal verbal affixations. Although in some cases the expressives can be replaced with some other expressives belonging to the same semantic field. For instance, the expressive *gur~gur* which is used to mean the growling or rumbling of the stomach can be replaced with the expressive *guruŋ~guruŋ* which is used in case of rumbling of the clouds. There is a connection between *gur~gur* and *guruŋ~guruŋ* as these words as the former refers to the sound made by the stomach, while the latter refers to the sound made by clouds, thus forming an

association between two different things one being animate, and the other being inanimate through one common connection i.e., their meaning or the concept of “rumbling”.

Let us consider some examples from Mising.

Mising:

(43) *teda-teda-la* *alən* *sipit~sitap-kaŋ*
 sitting and sitting-ADV leg EXP for a prickling sensation-PST
 Prolonged sitting made my leg numb.

(44) *tjublait-dé* *mitji~mitsal* *duŋ*
 tubelight-DEF EXP for flickering EXIST
 The tubelight is flickering.

(45) *ŋo-ké* *tukku-sí* *jik~jik* *əila* *ki-la-duŋ*
 1SG-GEN head-CLF EXP for twingeing manner pain-NF-EXIST
 My head is twinging”.

Again, these three examples are all related to the senses and the expressives used in each case cannot be replaced for any other expressives in the language i.e., there is no alternative for the word *sipit~sitap*, *mitji~mitsal* or *jik~jik*. If we replace the word by some non-expressive words, the meaning of the sentence changes altogether.

For instance, the word for twinging in Mishing is *jik~jik*, if we replace this expressive for the word “pain” which is *-ki* in Mising, for instance,

(46) *ŋo-ké* *tukku-sí* *ki-duŋ*
 1SG-GEN head-CLF pain-PROG
 My head is aching.

We have seen in this example that it changes the meaning of the sentence to some extent as there is a difference between the two words “pain” and “twinge” where the twinge means a sudden sting of pain. The expressive *jik~jik* carries a sense of pain that is stinging or pricking at the same time.

5.3 Expressives used in case of children:

Like many languages of world Bodo, Deori and Mising have a small subset of the lexicon used only by the children as shown in table 5, 6 and 7. These expressions are labeled under the term “baby-talk” in this paper. Abbi (2018:14) and (2021:17) presented expressions from Trangkhul Naga used in quieting babies. There are several expressions used in case of children in Bodo, Deori and Mising. In case of Bodo, they are fully reduplicated and most of the expressions are aspirated. These expressions can never be described in an alternate way by a child, as that

would in a way be lengthy and difficult for a child who has been adapting a new language. However, these terms are also used by adults while dealing with children who are adapting a new language. Therefore, in this sense this aspect used by a child is expressive in nature and can be considered as being individual feature that these languages have. Let us consider some instances in Bodo, Deori and Mising.

Bodo baby-talk	Gloss
1. t ^h liŋ~t ^h liŋ	bell ringing
2. k ^h riŋ~k ^h riŋ	phone/ phone ringing
3. t ^h ik~t ^h ik	lizard and its clicking
4. z ^h e~z ^h e	prohibit from touching something dirty
5. g ^h o~g ^h o	expressive for water
6. g ^h a~g ^h a	used for naming crow
7. g ^h up~g ^h up	imitation for boxing
8. ohohoho	expression used in quieting babies

Table 5: Baby-talk in Bodo

In table (5) we have considered some expressions used by Bodo children specifically. Those are mostly monosyllable. Let us consider some expressions used by children in Deori.

Baby-talk in Deori	Gloss
1. zok~zok	running train (often found in kids rhymes book)
2. bo~bo	expressive for naming bike
3. te~te	expressive for sleepiness
4. ma~ma	expressive for food
5. gu~gu	expressive for bike
6. ta~ta	expressive for naming duck
7. tik~tik	expressive for naming lizard

Table 6: baby-talk in Deori

From the above examples it is seen that baby-talk in Deori follow the CVC or the CV pattern. Let us consider some Mising expressions used by children.

1. bum~bum	expressive for motor vehicle
2. kiki~ri	expressive for naming cock
3. kok~kok	expressive for naming hen
4. dap~dap	expressives for baby footsteps
5. bor~bor	expressives for teardrops of baby
6. haum~haum	expressive for naming a lion and his call.
7. Ombe~ombe	expressive for naming a cow and its call

Table 7: Baby-talk in Mising.

Baby talk in Bodo Deori and Mising not only depict the action but also used in naming certain objects by a child. Therefore, in this regard as well the individuality of expressives is to be considered as significant.

Conclusion:

From the above discussion it can be concluded that

- Expressives can never be replaced with dictionary words by keeping the same meaning intact. If replaced, it may fail to give complete sense or the exact meaning as seen in case of examples (26), (27) and (29) in Bodo, again (30) to (34) in case of Deori and (39) in Mising.
- Bodo differs from Deori, in terms of not having a separate word for manner adverbs i.e., *tfa* which is followed by the word *uga* meaning “cry” in Deori. Again, the call of animals can be shown in two different ways in Deori but not in Bodo. First by the manner of calling of the animals. Second, by the call of the animal itself.
- In Deori, words expressing the sense of perception, where we have found that replacement of those expressive with other dictionary word of the language seems to wane the original meaning of expressives i.e the prickling sensation, the numb sensation, the acidic sensation can only be expressed by expressives which make them unique.
- In the three languages, we have seen that the word for cry is constant in case of other animals, but not for dog.
- Again, Mising shares similar feature with Bodo in terms of onomatopoeic words, where the expressive show the manner but the calls are represented by the word “kab” which means “cry” in Mising.
- In Bodo, Deori and Mising, the word for cry is *gab*, *uga* and *kab* respectively which is used in cases of all the animals except for dog. In case of dog, it is *sunη*, *su*, and *ra in*

- Bodo, Deori and Mising respectively. This probably might be the degree of proximity or closeness with dogs which might have possibly resulted in an independent word for dogs' crying in all the three languages.
- A salient feature of Deori onomatopoeia is that they take affixation like other normal words, whereas this feature is absent in case of Bodo and Mising onomatopoeia.
- In case of expressions used by child, the animal is often identified and named by its call or cry. Again, child expressions are not only used by children, but also by adults to communicate with them.
- In the examples mentioned above one can find that most of the sentences are used in the informal sense. It can also be said that idiophones in Bodo, Deori and Mising are also used in informal conversations.

Abbreviations:

ADV	adverb	EXIST	existence
ASP	aspect	GEN	genitive
CLF	classifier	IMI	imitative
CONT	continuous	INDEF	indefinite
DET	determiner	IPFV	imperfective
EXP	expressives	LOC	locative
NOM	nominative	PST	past
NF	nonfinite	SG	singular
PROG	progressive		
PRF	perfective		

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