

Diminutive and Augmentative System in Magahi

Lata Atreya

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

Indian Institute of Technology Patna, Patna, Bihar, India

E-mail: lata.atreya@gmail.com

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Abstract

Diminutive functions are grammatical primitives which seem to occur universally. Diminutives relate to semantic notions such as small size, affection, approximation, intensification, limitation and female gender (Jurafsky 1996). Associated with the concept of diminutives is the concept of augmentatives which is indicative of increase in degree of affection, endearment, respect, quality and sense of collectiveness. Jurafsky indicates that diminutives result due to shift in consonant, vowel or lexical tone, suffixation etc. Analogously, augmentatives are a result of compounding and reduplication. This article explores the phenomenon of diminutivization and augmentativization in Magahi. The article investigates the semantic notions associated with the phenomenon of diminutivization in Magahi and explores what are the syntactic categories that relate themselves with the phenomenon. The article also talks about pragmatics associated with the phenomenon of diminutivization and augmentativization in Magahi besides talking about various word formation processes resulting into augmentativization.

Keywords: Diminutivization, Augmentativization, Syntactic categories, Compounding and Reduplication

1. Introduction

Language helps us relate certain things with diminution and certain things with augmentation. Thus a language has a diminutive and an augmentative system. Diminutives are a complex semantic category which has a range of senses: small size, affection, approximation, intensification, limitation and female gender (Jurafsky 1996). Augmentatives increase the degree of affection, endearment, respect, quality and also denote prototypicality and sense of collectiveness. Associated with diminutives are pragmatic senses that co-occur with semantic ones. Pragmatic senses vary cross-linguistically which denote affection, contempt, playfulness, and pragmatic contexts involving children or pets or metalinguistic hedges (Jurafsky 1996). Jurafsky regards diminutive function as grammatical primitives which seem to occur universally or near universally. He talks about realization of diminutives which occur with morphological devices like affixes; shift in consonant, vowel or lexical tone; changes in noun class or gender.

We have a wide range of literature available on diminutive markers and augmentative markers. Bhat (n.d.) talks about diminutive and augmentative system in Hindi and Kashmiri. Hoek (2009), talks about Dutch diminutive suffixes. LeSourd (1995) has worked on diminutive verb in Passamaquoddy and Harris (1994) writes on Spanish diminutives. This article extensively talks about diminutive and augmentative system in Magahi. Magahi is an Indo-Aryan language which like other Indo-Aryan languages has SOV word order and exhibits scrambling. However, like other Indo-Aryan languages Hindi or Punjabi, it does not show ergativity. Magahi exhibits postpositions. Verb and subject in Magahi exhibit agreement only for Person feature and not for Number or Gender feature. In Magahi there is agreement between subject or object and verb for honorifics. The language exhibits agreement for Number and Gender features between Noun and Adjective.

Magahi has a fairly extensive system of diminution. There are diminutive forms of Nouns, Verbs, and Adjectives and even of some particles. A wide range of semantics is associated with diminutive markers in Magahi. Semantics ranges from temporal to locative deixis, from intensification, approximation to derogatory and from specificity to big/small distinction and to marginality. Augmentatives in Magahi are formed by various lexemes which combine with other lexemes to form compounds indicating augmentation. For example, when lexeme *baR* 'a lot' combines with other lexemes like *sundar* 'beautiful' or *badmaas* 'notty', it results into augmentation indicating *baR sundar* 'extremely beautiful' or *baR badmaas* 'veryotty'. Magahi also has certain reduplication indicative of augmentation. There are certain particles in Magahi which exhibit diminution and augmentation. The article is divided into four sections. Section 1 introduces the work undertaken in the article. Section 2 talks about diminutive markers in Magahi. This includes the semantics associated with the diminutive marker in Magahi, along with their syntactic category and pragmatics. Section 3 describes augmentative system in Magahi. Section 4 concludes the work done in the article.

2. Diminutive Markers in Magahi

Magahi has an extensive system of diminutive marker. A wide range of semantics is associated with diminutive markers in Magahi. The semantic senses associated with

diminutive markers are: temporal and locative diexis, the only sense, intensification, insignificant, big/small distinction, approximation, derogatory, affection, specificity marker and marginality. There are various syntactic categories which undergo diminutive formation in Magahi. The various syntactic categories are nouns, verbs and adjectives. In Magahi we have certain pragmatics associated with diminutive formation. The pragmatic senses are affection, contempt etc. In Magahi there are certain particles which have pragmatic importance as diminutive marker.

2.1 Semantics Associated with Diminutive Markers in Magahi

2.1.1 Temporal and Locative Diexis

In Magahi, we have lexemes indicative of time and location, which when emphasized, adds the connotation of exactness to them. This deictic exactness is an indicator of diminution as it reduces the time and space indicated by the emphasized form of such lexemes.

Original lexeme: Lexeme indicating temporal diexis (Diminutive form)

1. ab^{hi} ‘now’ : ab^{hi}-e ‘exactly now’

2. a. ej-a ‘here’ : ej-ai ‘exactly here’

 b. ojj-a ‘there’ : ojj-ai ‘exactly there’

Yet another example is of locative diexis in Magahi. In this case prefix *tar* which when attached to certain lexemes connotes ‘situated below’. Following are the illustrations.

Original lexeme : Lexeme indicating locative diexis (Diminutive form)

3. a. haat^h ‘hand’ : tar-hatt^{hi} ‘palm’

 b. goR ‘feet’ : tar-abbaa ‘sole’

2.1.2 The Only Sense

When we attach the suffix *-ye/-yie/-e* to noun, pronoun, adjective or numerals, it results into ‘the only sense’ associated with them. In following illustrations (4-7), the (ii)nd examples are indicative of the emphasized form (associated with them ‘the only sense’).

4. a. sundartaa ‘beauty’; sundartai-ye ‘only his/her beauty’

(i) okar sundartaa dek^he laik hai

 His/her beauty watchable is

 ‘His/her beauty is watchable.’

(ii) okar sundartai-ye dek^{he} laik hai
His/her beauty only watchable is
'Only his/her beauty is watchable.'

b. boli 'the way one talks' ; boli-ye 'only the way one talks'

(i) okar boli sune laik hai
His/her talk listenable is
'His/her talk is listenable.'

(ii) okar boli-ye sune laik hai
His/her talk only listenable is
'Only his/her talk is listenable.'

5. a. toraa 'you' ; tor-e 'only you'

(i) ham toraa pasand kara hiau
I you like do is
'I like you.'

(ii) ham tore pasand kara hiau
I only you like do is
'It is only you I like.'

6. a. c^hoT-k-aa 'Young one' ; c^hoT-k-e 'only the young one' (M)

b. c^hoT-ki 'Young one' : c^hoT-ki-e 'only the young one' (F)

(i) uu c^hoTkaa baabu ke bolailakai
He/she young child ACC invited
'He/she invited the young child.'

(ii) uu c^hoT-k-e baabu ke bolailakai
He/she only young child ACC invited

‘He/she invited only the young child.’

7. a. ek-go ‘one’ ; ekk-e go ‘only one’

(i) ham ek-go roTi k^hailiai

I one roti ate

‘I ate one roti.’

(ii) ham ekk-e go roTi k^hailiai

I only one roti ate

‘I ate only one roti.’

2.1.3 Intensification and Insignificant

Attachment of suffix *-be/-ye* to verb which forms a kind of diminution, results into the semantics of intensification in Magahi.

8. a. ham kah-be kailiai

I said-DIM did

‘I have said.’

b. uu kudi-ye gelai

he/she jumped-DIM went

‘He/she had jumped.’

c. uu beci-ye delkai

he/she sold-DIM did

‘He/she had sold.’

Here, the verb *kah*, *kud* and *bec* in their suffixed form are getting intensified.

When we attach suffix *-e* to numerals in Magahi, it leads to semantics of insignification.

9. a. ek ‘one’, du ‘two’

b. ekk-e go ‘only one’, dui-e go ‘only two’...(numerals-*e go*)

The suffixed form indicates as insignificant as one, two or any other numeral.

2.1.4 Big/Small Distinction

In Magahi, unlike Kashmiri or Hindi (Bhat n.d.), diminutive markers do not indicate gender change. We have examples like *naalaa-naalii*, where there is vowel raising in the terms (aa→ii), indicating masculine and feminine gender. But this vowel raising in Magahi, cannot be considered as diminutive marker indicating gender change, as individually these nouns take diminutive markers –*waa* and –*yaa* respectively. Moreover, the vowel raising happening in *naalii* when undergoing conversion from *naalaa* indicates big/small distinction. Following are few other illustrations in Magahi indicative of big/small distinction.

10. a. juutaa ‘bigger shoes’ – juut-ii ‘smaller shoes’

b. suup ‘a kitchen appliance (bigger in size)’ - suup-tii ‘a kitchen appliance (smaller in size)’

c. baTTaa ‘a kind of basket (bigger in size)’ – baTar-ii ‘a kind of basket (smaller in size)’

d. pot^haa ‘bigger book’ - pot^h-ii ‘smaller book.’

e. t^haar ‘bigger plate’ – t^haar-ii ‘smaller plate’

2.1.5 Approximation

In Magahi, when we attach suffix –*aal* to certain adjective indicating certain state, signifies approximation to that state. The suffix adds diminutive sense to the exactness of such adjectives.

11. a. garam ‘hot’ : garm-aal ‘approximately hot’

b. T^hanDaa ‘cold’ : T^hanD-aal ‘approximately cold’

In Magahi, there exist certain lexemes, which on emphasis signify the state of approximation. Following are illustrations. Illustrations (12 c and d) and (13 c and d) indicates emphasized form of lexeme (in 12 a and 13 a) signifying the state of approximation.

12. a. k^hatam ‘finished’

b. kaamaa k^hatam ho gelai

job finish happened

‘Job got finished.’

c. k^hatamm-e ‘approximately finished’

d. kaamaa k^hatamm-e ho gelai
 job approximately finished happened
 ‘Job got approximately finished.’

13. a. pahuNc ‘reach’

b. ham iskuulwaa pahuNc geliai
 I school reach went
 ‘I reached school.’

c. pahuNc-e ‘approximately reached’

d. ham iskuulwaa pahuNc-e geliai
 I school approximately reach went
 ‘I approximately reached school.’

2.1.6 Derogatory and Affection

When a noun is suffixed with diminutive marker /-waa/ or its allophones (/ -yaa/, /-yaaN/, /-aa/ or /-maa/), it may be both affectionatory or derogatory in nature. For instance, when we attach suffix /-yaa/ to the lexeme *maa* ‘mother’, resulting into *mai-yaa*, it indicates affection. At the same time when allophone /-aa/ is suffixed to lexeme *baap* ‘father’, resulting into *bapp-aa*, the result is derogatory in nature. Similarly, we have *baauu – bau-aa* ‘child’, *butruu- butaruu-aa* ‘child’, where the first one is affectionatory while the second one is derogatory in nature. Thus, addition of suffix /-waa/ or its allophones to a lexeme has different semantic roles, derogatory or affection, depending on the nature of mother lexeme to which the suffixes are attached i.e. the lexemes which are associated with deference or affection, when attached with diminutive marker, results into an affectionatory remark. On the other hand, if a lexeme is not associated with deference, when attached with the diminutive marker, results into a derogatory remark.

2.1.7 Specificity Marker

In Magahi, diminutive markers on Noun, /-waa/ or its allophones, also play a role of specificity marker. Following are illustrations:

14. a. rohit ke kitabiaa cuhaa kutar delkai
 Rohit GEN book rat cut gave
 ‘It is a rat which cut Rohit’s book.’

b. rohit ke kitabiaa cuha-waa kutar delkai

Rohit GEN book rat cut gave

‘The rat cut Rohit’s book.’

In illustration (14 a) the lexeme *cuhaa* ‘rat’ has a generic implication, where as in illustration (14 b) the diminutive form *cuh-waa* is a specificity indicator i.e. it is some specific rat (already seen or found) one is talking about. The diminutive form cannot be freely used with the non- diminutive form because of the connotation of specificity attached with the diminutive form. Illustration (15) and (16) indicates the use of diminutive form and non-diminutive form.

15. a. ham ego suggaa ke dek^haliai

I one parrot ACC saw

‘I saw a parrot.’

b. * ham ego sug-waa ke dek^haliai

I one parrot ACC saw

‘I saw a parrot.’

In illustration (15) we find lexeme *ego* has a generic implication, so, when used with diminutive (specific) form ‘*sug-waa*’ results into ungrammaticality. We can find the same implication in the following illustration (16). Pronoun *uu* is indicative of specificity, so cannot be used with generic form *suggaa* resulting into ungrammaticality as in (16 a). Pronoun *uu* has specificity connotation, so can be used with the specific form ‘*sug-waa*’ as in (16 b).

16. a. *ham uu suggaa ke dek^haliai

I that parrot ACC saw

‘I saw that parrot.’

b. ham uu sug-waa ke dek^haliai

I that parrot ACC saw

‘I saw that parrot.’

2.1.8 Marginality

In Magahi, there exists diminutive marker which when attached to the name of a place indicates marginal members belonging to the category along with small size. Following example illustrates this.

17. a. paTani-yaa ‘a marginal member of Patna’

b. Mumbai-yaa ‘a marginal member of Mumbai’

This metaphoric reading is in contrast with the suffix *walaa* or *walii*, which when attached to the name of place marks centre or prototype of a social category (discussed in section 3.1).

2.2 Syntactic Categories and Diminutive Markers in Magahi

Noun, verb, adjective, adverb and adpositions are different syntactic categories found in a language. Magahi has a fairly extensive system of diminution. There are diminutive forms of noun, verbs, adjectives and even of some particles. Nouns take diminutive suffix */-waa/* which in turn has various allophones */-yaa/*, */-yaaN/*, */-aa/* and */-maa/*. The existence of these allophones depends on various phonetic environments.

In Indo-Aryan languages like Hindi and Kashmiri (Bhat n.d.), the verb does not reflect the diminutive status of subject or object. We find the assignment of diminutive reading to arguments of the verb in Italian (Grandi 2009, Fradin 2012) and in Passamaquoddy (Le Sourd 1995). In Magahi, verbs are marked for diminutive marker. Verbs are marked either with the diminutive marker *-kaa* or various honorific markers. It is the non-finite form of verb which attaches to itself the diminutive marker *-kaa*. It is the status of subject which determines the attachment of diminutive marker on the non-finite verb. When the verb is finite, its diminutive or augmentative nature depends on the honorific marker on the concerned finite verb. There are three categories of honorific marker on the finite form of verb in Magahi: Non Honorific, Mid-Honorific and High Honorific (for details see Atreya 2016). While non-honorifics are diminutive marker, mid-honorifics and high-honorifics are augmentative markers.

In Magahi, adjectives take suffixes *-kaa* or *-aal* as diminutive marker. Adjectives when compounded with lexeme *baR* have augmentative effect.

This section talks about syntactic categories, noun, verb and adjective along with diminutive marker on them in Magahi.

2.2.1 Nouns and Diminutive Markers in Magahi

In Magahi, diminutive marker on noun is */-waa/*. It has various allophones. The allophones are */-yaa/*, */-yaaN/*, */-aa/* and */-maa/*. The occurrence of these allophones depends on their phonological environment. Following are illustrations.

18. a. riksaa : riksaa-waa ‘rikshaw’

b. aadmi : adami-yaa ‘man’

c. soni : soni-yaaN ‘Soni’

d. caur : caur-aa ‘rice’

e. paTnaa : paTan-maa ‘Patna’

2.2.2 Verbs and Diminutive Markers in Magahi

In Magahi, there exists diminutive marker on verb unlike in other Indo-Aryan languages, Hindi and Kashmiri (Bhat n.d.). The diminutive form of verbs depends on the finiteness of the verb. When a verb is non-finite, the suffix *-kaa* gets attached to it to mark the diminutive form of the verb which instead agrees with the subject of the sentence. When the verb is finite, it attaches with itself an honorific marker. The honorific markers belong to different levels indicating different levels of deference. These levels are non-honorific, mid-honorific and high-honorific. While non-honorific level does not show any deference for either the subject or the addressee, mid-honorific and high-honorific show **medium level and high level** of deference respectively either to the subject or to the object or to the listener.

2.2.2.1 Nonfinite Verbs and Diminutive Markers in Magahi

Following illustrations indicate non-finite verb suffixed with diminutive marker *-kaa* as per subject of the sentence. The subject of the verb with diminutive marker *-kaa* (sentence 20) is not held with the same degree of honor as those with the verb without the diminutive marker *-kaa* (sentence 19 a and b).

19. a. ii baabuuji ke k^haridal kitabiaa hai
 this father GEN purchase-INF book is
 ‘This is a book purchased by father.’

b. hamar k^haridal kitabiyaa raam rak^h lel kai
 I-GEN purchase-INF book Ram keep took
 ‘Ram kept the book purchased by me.’

20. hamar k^haridal-kaa kitabiyaa raam rak^h lel kai
 I-GEN purchase-INF-DM book Ram keep took
 ‘Ram kept the book purchased by me.’

Comparing sentence (19b) and (20), we find the subject *hamar* ‘mine’ is held with more deference when the nonfinite verb is not suffixed with the diminutive marker *-kaa*, as in the former sentence. In sentence (19 a), the agent *baabuuji* is held with reverence resulting into nonfinite verb *k^haridal* without diminutive marker *-kaa*.

2.2.2.2 Finite Verbs and Honorific Markers

Just as non-finite verbs are marked with diminutive marker *-kaa*, indicating the status of agent, so is finite verb marked with suffixes denoting different level of deference associated with the arguments of the verb. Following are the illustration for finite verb and honorific marker. In sentence (21 a), the form of verb indicates no deference to the addressee. In other words it can be said that the relation between the addressee and the speaker is casual or frank. On the other hand, in illustrations (21 b and c), subject is held with deference indicative of honorific marker resulting into augmentation.

21. a. *tuu k^hai-nhi*

you eat-PST-N.Hon

‘Did you eat?’

b. *tuu k^hai-laa*

you eat-PST-M.Hon

‘Did you eat?’

c. *apne k^hai-lk^hin*

you-H.Hon eat-PST-H.Hon

‘Did you eat?’

2.2.2.3 Verbs and Diminutive Marker *-yaa*

There are dialects of Magahi which uses lexeme *rah* to represent progressive aspect. For the same there are certain verbs which use lexeme *kar* along with *rah*. When diminutive marker *-yaa* is attached to such verbs, *kar* gets deleted and the verb gets converted into gerund. Thus, in Magahi, diminutive marker *-yaa* converts certain verbs into gerund. Following are illustrations.

22. a. *ham baat kar rahalie ha*

I talk do PROG is

‘I am talking.’

b. *ham baati-yaa rahalie ha*

I talk-GRND PROG is

‘I am talking.’

23. a. *kauci gap kar rahni ha*

what gossip do PROG is

‘What are you gossiping?’

b. *kauci gapi-yaa rahni ha*
 what gossip-GRND PROG is

‘What are you gossiping?’

In the above illustrations (22 and 23), verbal complex *baat kar* and *gap kar* gets converted to gerund *batiyaa* and *gapiyaa* respectively when suffixed with diminutive marker *-yaa*.

2.2.2.4 Verbs and Lexeme ‘Tanisuk’

The lexeme *tanisuk* in Magahi is analogous to Greek lexeme *liyo* (Canakis 2012) and acts as verbal diminutivizer. The following illustrations indicate *tanisuk* as verbal diminutivizer in Magahi.

24. a *uu tanisuk k^haa hai*
 he a little eat is

‘He eats a little.’

b. *ham tanisuk paD^haliai*
 I a little read

‘I read a little.’

c. *raam jokwaa par tanisuk haNslai*
 ram joke-DIM on a little laughed

‘Ram laughed a little on the joke.’

2.2.3 Adjectives and Diminutive Marker in Magahi

The diminutive forms of adjectives in Magahi can be formed by addition of suffix *-kaa* or *-aal*. Adjectives with diminutive suffix *-aal* are discussed in section (2.1.5.) Morpheme *-kaa*, when suffixed to an adjective signifies ‘the one who/which is’. Following are illustrations.

25. a. *baR-kaa baabuaa* ‘the child who is elder’

b. *lal-kaa kapaaRwaa* ‘the cloth which is red’

c. *c^hoT-kaa kitabiyaa* ‘the book which is small’

When diminutive marker *-kaa* is suffixed to an adjective then the noun, which gets modified by the adjective, is in its diminutive form. In other words, diminutive form of adjective modifies diminutive form of noun. Following are illustrations.

26. a. *ham puuraan kapRaa nai lebo*
 I old cloth not take

‘I will not take old cloth.’

b. ham puuran-kaa kapaR-waa nai lebo

I old-DIM cloth-DIM not take

‘I will not take old cloth.’

In illustration (26 a) adjective is not suffixed with the diminutive marker *-kaa*, so is used with non-diminutive form of noun *kapRaa*. It is not so in illustration (26 b) where diminutive form of adjective *puuran-kaa* is used with diminutive form of noun *kapaR-waa*.

2.3 Pragmatics Associated with Diminutive Markers in Magahi

2.3.1. Pragmatics and Lexeme ‘Tani’

The Magahi lexeme *tani* is analogous to Japanese lexeme *c^hotto*, which corresponds to a pragmatic diminutive.

Following is an illustration from Japanese (Matsumoto 1985 as cited by Jurafsky 1996):

27. Taroo wa c^hotto iji ga warui

Taroo TP character SB bad

Following is an illustration for lexeme *tani* from Magahi.

28. bau-aa tani badmaash hai

child notty is

Just as sentence (27) in Japanese is ambiguous between approximative hedge and a pragmatic hedge, so is the sentence (28) in Magahi. Sentence (27) means in the approximative sense ‘Taroo is somewhat/kind a nasty’, in the pragmatic hedge sense the speaker is not doubting Taroo’s nastiness. Analogously, sentence (28) in Magahi, means that ‘the child is notty’. Along with this it also indicates speaker’s attitude of not being rude by saying that ‘the child is notty’. The lexeme *tani* is also a means of expressing politeness in Magahi (Singh et al 2014).

2.3.2 Pragmatics and Particles

In Magahi we have particles which are indicative of diminutive status of noun with which they are attached. Such particles are *age* and *are*. These particles have another form *ge* and *re*, which are formed by initial vowel getting elision from the mother lexeme *age* and *are*. These particles are also indicative of affection when modifying certain lexemes representing certain relationship. For example we have *age maiyaa* ‘o! mother’, *baabuu re* ‘dear child’ or *age beTi* ‘dear daughter’. Thus particles *age* and *are* and their forms are pragmatically diminutive and endearing particles.

3. Augmentative System in Magahi

Augmentatives are linguistic component which indicates an increase in the sense associated with the semantics of the original lexeme. In Magahi, augmentatives are a result of certain compounds and particles. A category of reduplication is also indicative of augmentatives.

3.1 Augmentatives and Compound Form in Magahi

Augmentatives in Magahi are formed by various lexemes which combine with other lexemes and form a compound indicating augmentation. These augmentative lexemes are *baR*, *maiyya* and *walaa/walii*. When lexeme *baR* ‘a lot or significantly’ is compounded with adjectives, the result is augmentation of the adjective. Following are illustrations:

29. Original lexeme : Compounded Form
- a. *sundar* ‘beautiful’ : *baR sundar* ‘very beautiful’
 - b. *badmaas* ‘notty’ : *baR badmaas* ‘very notty’
 - c. *moTaal* ‘fat’ : *baR moTaal* ‘very fat’
 - d. *dubbar* ‘lean’ : *baR dubbar* ‘very lean’
 - e. *bes* ‘good’ : *baR bes* ‘very good’
 - f. *c^hoT* ‘young’ : *baR c^hoT* ‘very young’

In Magahi, when we add lexeme *maiyya* to a certain feminine noun, it results into augmentation in the sense of affection and respect associated with such noun. Following are illustrations:

30. a. *gangaa maiyya*
b. *c^haTT^hi maiyya*

In Magahi, when lexeme *walaa/walii* is used with the name of a place, the resulting compound represents a prototypical member of a category to large size. Following are the examples:

31. a. *biharaa walaa/walii* ‘the person belonging to Bihar’
b. *paTnaa walaa/walii* ‘the person belonging to Patna’
c. *nawaadah walaa/walii* ‘the person belonging to Nawadah’

The lexeme *walaa/walii* augments the status of the person by associating them with the place to which they belong. The compound (place+*walaa/walii*), marks the person (indicated by the compound) as the central person of the area indicated by the name of the place.

3.2 Reduplication as Augmentatives in Magahi

In Magahi, there is a category of reduplication which semantically results into augmentation, by associating the lexeme with collectiveness. Following are illustrations:

32. a. *pore-por* ‘all the aspects of someone’s nature’

b. nase-nas ‘all of the behavior’

c. pot^haa-pot^{hii} ‘all the study material’

3.3 Particles as Augmentatives

In Magahi, we have particles which when used with certain nouns, result into augmentation of respect associated with such nouns. The particles are *aji* and *ji*. *Ji* has two forms: one is formed by elision of ‘a’ from the particle ‘*aji*’; the other form is originally ‘*ji*’. The former one is used at the beginning of a noun as in *aji/ji baabaa* and the latter one is used at the end of the noun it is associated with as in *baabu ji*, *maataa ji* or *Ram ji* resulting into augmentation of deference associated with such nouns.

4. Conclusion

Diminutivization and augmentativization are a very productive phenomenon in Magahi. While semantics associated with diminutivization in Magahi are temporal and locative diexis, the only sense, intensification, insignificant, big/small distinction, approximation, derogatory, affection, specificity marker and marginality, it is not only the syntactic category of noun that undergoes diminutivization (like Hindi and Kashmiri), but also verbs, adjectives and certain particles undergo this phenomenon. It is generally assumed that particles like (*a*)*ge*/*(a)**re* are associated with derogation, however, in this article I tried to show that these particles along with derogative connotation are also endearing particles. Like many other languages, Magahi too relates the phenomenon of compounding and reduplication with augmentation. There are particles like *aji/ji*, which increases the deference associated with the noun they are attached to. Thus, these particles are augmentative in nature.

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