



The Active Vocabulary Of Assamese Language (Chalti) : A Discussion

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Abstract: Language is a medium of expression. People use language to exchange their thoughts and feelings with each other. Words are the root of any language which further makes sentences, which helps in the exchange of thoughts. This implies that words determine the pace of a language and also the future of the language. The word fixes its position according to the period and space. The word which is explosively in use at present time may be obsolete in the near future as the language dwells in the society and it is constantly changing. Society changes from time to time. Hence, words also change its forms with the changes occurring in the society. The form of words that are accepted and used by the changing society are considered to be “the Chalti” form of words. It indicates the form of an active vocabulary.

Key Words : Language, Word, Chalti, Assamese.

Research Methodology : The paper is prepared using an analytical methodology. In addition, the paper is discussed on the basis of primary and secondary sources.

Introduction : The word “Chalti” means to proceed along with the flow of current thoughts, present model and modern form. It also means what is going on or what is happening. A form of “Chalti” can also be traced in case of language. The society changes with time and this change affects the field of language at maximum. It is because the mutated society expresses their changes their changed feelings and thoughts with the help of language. It has already been mentioned that the root of language in its words, therefore, the study of the “Chalti” form of words is extremely essential.

The reasons of commencement of the form “Chalti” : Assam is a land of multiple languages, traditions and cultures. Many different communities belonging to many different cultures and languages settled into the place at various points of time, which continue till the present. The Assamese community is created by the idea of “give and take” among all these different communities from different periods. Hence, the Assamese Language at present is seen to develop into a new form. Great changes have occurred in the field of Assamese language, few reasons of which are mentioned below.

1)Immigration : Assam is a land of diverse languages and cultures. People of different languages and cultures migrated to Assam from different corner of the world in different periods. This practice is still prevailing. The migrants basically use their own language and at the same time use Assamese language sporadically. Besides the Hindi and English language were introduced in syllabus of the schools in Assam. As a result, a multilingual environment has developed among the people of Assam. In this manner various words of different language has invaded the field of Assamese language.

2)Necessity of learning of second language : People have to learn another second language due to the restriction and necessity of social communication (Rabha Hakasam 16). Geadually the second language become more powerful in comparision to the first language or mother toungue. As a result the words of second language are imported to the vocabulary of the first language.

3)Impact of Globalization : Nowadays a splendour change is seen in economic functionality or externally in the initiative of the World Bank and International Monetary Policy, this is globalisation (Rabha Hakasam 20). In our country, the globalisation policy has emerged potentially since 1990. It has impacted significantly in case of language. The field of Assamese Words became rich by the creation and addition of new words. At the same time, the word of other language is seen to have a heartful affect on the Mother Language.

4)Abstraction of Words : Words are considered as the ‘Bulding Blocks’ of language. Probably for this reason the mainstream language is seen to abstract words more than the phonological and morphological characteristics from another language (Rabha Hakasam 27). Such tendency result in creation of the new terminologies. However, many words of the mother language are seen to be diminished with the creation of new words.

5)Neologism : It is a new word, phrase or expression or it may be a new meaning to an existing word that is being used in the mainstream language. The Greek word “Veo(-Neo) means New and Logoc (-Logo) means pronunciation or sentence. Similarly, in Greek language “Neolexia (a new word or the act of creating new word) is its total reflection (Rabha Hakasam 28). In order to acclimatize with the transitional period, usually some primeval vocabularies that are prevailing, modifies its morphology accordingly and accepted with a new configuration possessing a new meaning to the mainstream language, instead of creating a new non - existing word. This is termed as Neologism (Dutta Baruah, 110-116). Mist languages that are in used today has transitioned from its older form by neologism.

Besides these, there are a few more reasons for which the “Chalti” form has developed. There is the need of detail study on this matter. Here some “Chalti” form of Assamese language are mentioned.

Chalti Words used in the context of food items : Rice is the primary food of Assamese people. Assamese people used different types of rice in earlier days; for example - Aahu, Shali, Joha, Bora etc. However, there are various rice varieties available in the market nowadays, for example, Ranjit, KRT, Biplab, Basmati etc.

The fish is one of the favourite food item of Assamese people. Various types of fishes were available before, for example, Rohu, Borali, Puthi, Kholihona, Kawoi, Goroi etc. Nowadays, besides all those some other types of fishes are available in the market, such as Briked, Grasscarp, Commoncarp, Japanese kawoi, Thailand magur etc.

Meat and egg are also included in this list of favourite food in this region. Although, Assamese people consumes traditional mutton curry, chicken curry or fish tenga, nowadays they consumes chicken roast, mutton korma, omelet, anda bhujia, half boil, full boil, pouch etc.

Assamese people consumed various types of dail (Lentils) along with different types of vegetables, for example, Masur dail with Jika (yellow lentils with Ridge gourd), aalu (potato),Bhol (sponge gourd), Naransingha (curry

leaf), Bulahi (tomato) etc. Now they eat vegetables like France bean, Shimla mirch, Capsicum, Brocoli, Red cabbage etc.

Among the fruits earlier, they enjoyed Aam (mango), kol (banana), Jaam (Black Berry), Leteku (Burmese Grape), Poniyal (Scam Berry), Anaras(Pineapple), Kothal (Jackfruit), Dalim (Pomegranate), Bogori (Jujuba), Jalphai (Olive), Amlokhi (gooseberry), Kardoi (Star fruit), Jora Tenga (Rough Lemon), Robab Tenga (pomelo), Mirika Tenga (Silver Berry), Thekera (False Mangos Teen), Amora (Hong Plum) etc. But nowadays, favourite fruits of Assamese people are Apple, Grapes, Mousumi (Sweet Lime), Plum, Kaju, Kismis etc.

Besides, the different types of Pitha (Pancake), Laddu (Sweet Ball), Akhoi (Puffed Rice), Chir (Flatted Rice), Bora Choul, Komal Choul, Shandoh etc. are replaced by Maggie, Chow - Chow, Cornflakes, Dosa, Burger, Roll, Naan, Momo etc. at present in Assamese society.

On discussion, we shall get more such example of words which are absolutely new to the Assamese society. The changed vocabularies are a proof and witness to the changed in food habits of Assamese people.

Chalti words used in respect to the costume : The primary outfits of Assamese woman were Chador, Mekhela, Riha which at present is changed to Churidar, Trouser, Kurti, Frock, Shorts, Nighty etc. nowadays. similarly, male outfits like Dhuti, Piron, Payjama, are replaced by Pant, Shirt, T-Shirt, Sporting etc. Nowadays, Towel or Toiliya is used in place of Gamosa. These change indicate the change in the lifestyle and the society.

Chalti Words used in respect of construction : Traditional Assamese people earlier used Bamboo strips, Kami, Kathi, Tomal, Ruwa, Kher (straw) etc. to build an Assamese house, but nowadays these have changed. In modern days they are seen to use Sand, Gravel, Rod, Cement, Bricks, Marbal, Tyles etc. for building houses. According to the application, the name of different rooms are Randhoni Shal, Borghar, Buloni Ghor, Sora Ghor, Gohali Ghor, Dhekisha etc. Now they are replaced by Kitchen, Bedroom, Livingroom, Drawingroom, Diningroom etc. The things found in the Kitchen includes Gas Stove, Micro - oven, OTG, Freeze, Wall - hanger etc. Similarly in livingroom the TV, Tape recorder, Sound Box, Home Theatre, Laptop, Pendrive etc. are used. Kahi, Berha Kahi, Bati, Baan Bati, Hati Khujia Bati, Lota etc. were used for having a meal; now the dish, bowl, hot case, case roll, teaspoon, table spoon, napkin takes their place.

Makeup products : Earlier Assamese women used Coconut oil, Kajol produced at home, Sindoor, Jetuka, Kharoli, Barhamthuri etc. At present, these are replaced by Dabur Amla, Hair and Care, Kesh King, etc. for hair care. Women has stopped using powdered sindoor and started liquid sindoor from various companies. For body care, Body lotion, and Dove, Vivel and other liquid soaps are used for bathing.

These substitutions indicate the change in the way of sustaining our livelihood. It seems to be highly dependent on other in order to adjust with the fast growing lifestyle. Apparently, this dependency is leading to discourtesy towards the language.

Conclusion : it is noticed that a number of words are entering to our vocabulary along with the changing lifestyle. Moreover, these words are able to occupy a significant position in our language and society.

It is to be mentioned that the Chalti form is able to change the structure of sentences. Hence, we must be sincere. A language survives in the speech of people. So, if we are not sincere while using the Chalti vocabularies, the language may be at risk. In case of Assamese language such incidents are noticed. Specially, the new generation and social media are seen to be insincere while using the language. In many times it is seen that those words with no proper meaning replace the mainstream language, and are being used. Explosively, such as kailoi (ahakali) - Tomorrow, Puwa (Ratipuwa) - Morning, Jalpan - breakfast, Abeli/ Sandhiya or Godhuli - Evening,

Khuri, Mahi, Pehi, Mami - Aunty, Khura, Mama, Peha, Moha - Uncle, Poduli, Nangla, Batchora - Gate, kitap/ Grantha - Book, Kalam - Pen, Bohi - Copy, Adesh/Krom- Order etc.

There are two concerns that plays significant role while using these vocabularies - The attitude of proclaiming oneself as superior against other and the usages of such words insincerely.

In the end, we need to be sincere enough while using these words. Otherwise, it may bring adversity to our societal life. Eventually, we should be aware in creation of terminological words and neologism. In the tempestuousness of time we should pay attention in the prosperity of the language by preserving our diverse culture and tradition.

Foot Notes :

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- 1) Amar Axom (The most prevalent Assamese News Paper).
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Other Sources :

- 1) Various episodes published in television.
- 2) Verbal discussion with the community people.
- 3) The Google Sources.