Language and Linguistic Area

Essays by Murray B. Emeneau

Selected and Introduced by
Anwar S. Dil

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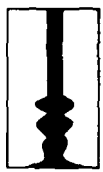

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India and Linguistics. Journal of the American Oriental Society 75.145-53 (1955), with permission of the American Oriental Society.

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Dravidian and Indo-Aryan: The Indian Linguistic Area. Symposium on Dravidian Civilization, ed. by Andrée F. Sjoberg (Austin and New York: Jenkins Publishing Co., Pemberton Press, 1971), pp. 33-68, with permission of the editor and the publisher.

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'Arm' and 'Leg' in the Indian Linguistic Area. "Felicitation Volume in Honour of Father X. S. Thani Nayagam," ed. by R. E. Asher. [We are grateful to Professor Asher of the University of Edinburgh for permission to include this article in the present book before the felicitation volume appears.]

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EDITOR'S NOTE

These essays have been reprinted from the originals with only minor changes made in the interest of uniformity of style and appearance. In cases where substantive revisions have been made, proper notation has been added. Misprints and mistakes appearing in the originals have been corrected in consultation with the author. In some cases references, notes, and bibliographical entries have been updated. Footnotes marked by asterisks have been added by the Editor.

Introduction

Murray Barnson Emeneau was born on February 28, 1904, in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, Canada. Soon after graduating with distinction from Dalhousie University, Halifax, in 1923, he was named a Rhodes Scholar and entered Balliol College, Oxford, where he earned a second bachelor's degree in 1926 (and was awarded the M. A. degree in 1935). From 1926 to 1931 he studied linguistics and anthropology under the guidance of Franklin Edgerton, E. H. Sturtevant, and Edward Sapir at Yale University, specializing in Sanskrit, Latin, and Greek and serving as an instructor in Latin. After receiving his Ph. D. degree in 1931, he remained at Yale studying linguistics with Sapir and doing research. He spent 1935-38 in the Nilgiris area of southern India, doing fieldwork among the Todas, Kotas, and Kodagu, and in central India, where he studied the Kolams. After his return he taught linguistics and carried on his research work at Yale, after which, in 1940, he joined the University of California, Berkeley, as Assistant Professor of Sanskrit and General Linguistics. For five years beginning in 1953 he served as Founder-Chairman of that university's Department of Linguistics. During this period he was instrumental in laying the foundation for the Survey of California Indian Languages, now a leading program in the field. Since his retirement in 1971 he has continued his association with the university as Professor Emeritus of Sanskrit and General Linguistics.

Emeneau has had a distinguished academic career. He was President of the Linguistic Society of America in 1949, and served the American Oriental Society as editor of its journal (1948-51), as President (1954-55), and as President of its Western Branch (1964-65). He was awarded Guggenheim Fellowships in 1949-50 and 1956-57, and has been elected to membership in the American Philosophical Society

(1952) and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (1970). He has been named an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society (1969), and is an honorary member of Phi Beta Kappa and Sigma Xi (1963), the Linguistic Society of India (1964), and the Linguistic Research Group of Pakistan (1971). He has been a Vice-President of the International Association for Tamil Studies since 1966. He has received honorary degrees from the University of Chicago (1968) and Dalhousie University (1970), the Wilbur Lucius Cross Medal of Yale Graduate School (1969), and citations from the University of California, Berkeley (1971), and the Linguistic Society of India (1978).

Emeneau's interest in Sanskrit dates back to his collaboration with Maurice Bloomfield and Franklin Edgerton on the third volume of the Vedic Variants (1931-32). His dissertation, Jambhaladatta's Version of the Vetālapañcavimśati, a critical edition and translation of the classic collection of short stories, was published in 1934. A year later he published his Union List of Printed Indic Texts and Translations in American Libraries, which remains to this date a valuable bibliographical aid to Sanskrit studies. In 1952 he published Sanskrit Sandhi and Exercises, a useful text for students and scholars of Sanskrit morphophonemics for descriptive and historical purposes. Among his other notable contributions to Sanskrit language and literature are The Sinduvara Tree in Sanskrit Literature (1944) and The Strangling Figs in Sanskrit Literature (1949). Perhaps the best-known of his Sanskrit work is Kālidāsa's Abhijñāna-śakuntala (1962), a brilliant translation of a classic Indian play into contemporary American English that is especially notable for faithfully conveying the shifts in different levels of Sanskrit usage.

The first major publication resulting from Emeneau's extensive collections of Indian linguistic materials and oral texts, the four-part Kota Texts (1944-46), was widely recognized as a model of linguistic and sociocultural description. Zellig S. Harris welcomed this work in Language as an excellent linguistic analysis of a culturally isolated member of the Dravidian language family; Clyde Kluckhohn saluted it as another fine product of the brilliant group of young scholars associated with Sapir; and the work was widely recognized for its insightful contribution to our understanding of the historical processes of culture contact and diffusion among languages of different stocks. Twenty-five years later, Emeneau's Toda Songs (1971) completed this phase of

his work, integrating theoretical and methodological insights from linguistics, folklore, ethnology, and related disciplines in studying the cultural heritage of a people notable for their distinctive poetical style.

Emeneau's second major work in the field of Dravidian linguistics, Kolami, a Dravidian Language (1955), helped to establish Kolami, as spoken in the Madhya Pradesh region of India, as an independent Dravidian language and impressively analyzed its affinities with other languages and dialects in that region. F. B. J. Kuiper, among others, welcomed the book as the most important contribution to Dravidology in recent times, and it did in fact give rise to a new era of comparative Dravidian studies. But the work for which Emeneau may well be remembered longest is his Dravidian Etymological Dictionary (1961), coauthored with Professor Thomas Burrow of Oxford University. This pioneering work presents comprehensive vocabularies covering some five thousand groups of etymologically relatable words from nineteen Dravidian languages and almost as many Indo-Aryan languages, totaling about 33,000 Dravidian words. A 1968 Supplement updated the work by incorporating materials from previously unreported languages such as Pengo and Manda, as well as new materials made available on literary languages like Telugu. A completely revised edition of the Dictionary is being prepared by the authors.

Perhaps the most fruitful concept developed in Emeneau's ground-breaking work in Dravidian and Indo-Aryan comparative studies is that of a "linguistic area," defined by Emeneau as an area wherein languages belonging to two or more families have traits in common that do not belong to the other members of at least one of the families. Borrowing the term from H. V. Velten's 1943 usage in his translation of the German term Sprachbund, as used in 1931 by Nikolaj Trubetzkoy and Roman Jakobson, Emeneau brought together related concepts developed by Jules Bloch and other European linguists to frame the definition first set forth in his classic article "India as a Linguistic Area" (1956). Since then he has been adding new theoretical and methodological dimensions to the concept in a series of research reports (many of them included in this volume) on linguistic and sociolinguistic phenomena found across dialects, languages, and

language families in South Asia. Throughout this work he has been particularly sensitive to the historical facts and sociolinguistic issues behind questions of phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic development. The effect of this comprehensive approach to understanding the processes of language and culture contact has been to add a new dimension to our awareness of the historical interdependence of world society.

Viewed in this context, Emeneau's work is important not only to scholars of Dravidian linguistics in India and of Brahui language in Pakistan, but for bringing the Indian linguistic area to the attention of the world scholarly community as an example of how new insights into the process of culture contact can be gained from a careful study of the dynamics of linguistic areas. The work presented in this volume is of worldwide significance. It deserves the attention of all scholars engaged in the challenging task of understanding the processes of sociocultural change and development.

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Contents

Part I. Language and Linguistic Area: General

1 Linguistic Area: Introduction and Continuation

Linguistic areas, i.e. areas in which 'languages belonging to more than one family show traits in common which do not belong to the other members of (at least) one of the families,' have been recognized for a very long time. The term was not invented until 1943 by H. V. Velten (see Chapter 6). He used it as a translation of the German term Sprachbund, which had been popularized (if not invented) by Trubetzkoy and Roman Jakobson as early as 1931 in their discussions of long-recognized linguistic areas such as the languages of the Caucasus or of the Balkans. I adopted and defined the term 'linguistic area' in 1956, and it has been generally used since by various scholars. Bloomfield, in his wide-ranging sketch of such matters in 1933 (468-71), used no term, but recognized pertinent phenomena in several parts of the world—Balkans, Caucasus, the Indian languages of the northwest coast of America, the languages of Western Europe (we may recall the Standard Average European of some later scholars), and (most pertinently for us) the Indian subcontinent. He was led to this last by Konow in the fourth volume (1906) of the Linguistic Survey of India; there had been earlier notice of the Indian phenomena, in, e.g., the writings of Caldwell, Kittel, and others, but Konow's is, I think, the first systematic attempt at statement. Jules Bloch in the 1920's and 1930's developed the thesis and added several more areal traits to the discussion; his final treatment was published in 1934 in his book L'indo-aryen du Véda aux temps modernes.

My own interest in the matter began as soon as I undertook to add knowledge of Dravidian languages to my previous study of Sanskrit and Indo-European. In a paper read in 1937 at the All-India Oriental Conference at Trivandrum and published in 1938 in vol. 1 of New Indian Antiquary, I described "Echo-words in Toda," but also

noted that echo-words were pan-Indic and that they had been discussed in circulars of the Linguistic Society of India in 1928; the term 'echo-words' was used in the circulars, and Bloch in 1934 used the phrase 'les mots doubles et à écho.' It was not until nearly twenty years later that in 1956 I published my first paper on "India as a linguistic area" (Chapter 6), pulling together all that I knew at that time, adopting the term 'linguistic area' and a methodology, which, implicitly or explicitly, was followed in all my later studies. In this paper I again took up echo-words, treated now according to this methodology.

The methodology is a bifurcate one. The first necessity is to establish a typological feature as pan-Indic and at the same time not extra-Indic. Once several features have been established as having the same boundaries, so that there is an approximation to a 'bunching of isoglosses,' the linguistic area can be considered to be typologically established. Inquiry may stop at this point, and must do so no doubt in some areas, as, to take a hypothetical example, it would perforce do so if a group of languages were being examined which were all isolates, not related to one another or to any other languages outside the group. However, in all the actual areas mentioned above, the languages involved are not isolates, or (at least) not all of them are, and historical considerations intrude themselves on one's attention and may in fact be the center of one's interest. The second part of the methodology is then the historical one. It is an investigation into the language of origin of the feature in question, its direction of diffusion throughout the languages of the linguistic area, pertinent questions of phonological, syntactic, morphological, and semantic development, sociolinguistic questions that may arise, etc.

It will be noticed that lexical diffusion is not central to the investigation of linguistic areas. It is undoubtedly one factor in the total picture, but cannot be the central one, since lexical items are found to diffuse between any two languages, whether or not they are parts of a linguistic area in the sense in which we are interested (e.g. the words squash, skunk, succotash, raccoon, opossum, wigwam, toboggan do not create a linguistic area including American English and the Algonquian languages). The Indian linguistic area is a concept arrived at on other grounds; nevertheless, study of lexical items has formed part of the inquiry, and Chapters 5 and 8 have dealt with this topic, the latter attempting to arrive at a list, however short, of

items that can be incontrovertibly accepted as early borrowings from Dravidian into Sanskrit of the Vedic period.

The inquiry usually concerns a feature, i.e. phonological, syntactic, semantic, or even morphological, found throughout the languages of the area. These include a language or languages that belong to a family (F_1) whose languages outside the area do not have the feature, the feature in question not being reconstructable as belonging to the proto-language of that family. If the feature is found in languages of a second family (F_2) in the area and is to be considered a part of the reconstructable proto-language of that family F_2, the assumption can then, it seems, be safely made that there has been diffusion from the family F_2 into the language or languages of family F_1 within the area. In the Indian linguistic area F_1 is the historically intrusive Indo-Aryan, a member of the wider Indo-European family, and F_2 is frequently Dravidian. However, Munda, or even the wider Austroasiatic family of which Munda is a subfamily, has sometimes figured as F_2. Occasionally too it is possible to suggest that Dravidian is F_1 and Indo-Aryan F_2, i.e. that diffusion has proceeded from Indo-Aryan into Dravidian; but it is rarely possible to demonstrate this direction (except for diffusion of lexical items), and I can refer only to the hypocoristics in -ũ in my 1978 paper on the onomastics of India. When smaller subareas are investigated, diffusions are demonstrable in numerous directions; e.g. the Dravidian Brahui figures as F_1 at the receiving end of diffusion from Iranian and/or Indo-Aryan as F_2.

In the earlier work on the Indian linguistic area a number of typological features were suggested as fulfilling the first requirement, viz. that they were pan-Indic and at the same time not extra-Indic. It seemed that a primary need was to expand the list of such features. A number of features were investigated.

Some, as it turned out, were features that were found only in some part of the Indian area which was, however, part of a larger, extra-Indic area; e.g., the feature of a complex set of numeral classifiers was found in the Indo-Aryan languages of the eastern end of the Ganges valley (e.g. Bengali, Assamese) and in several Dravidian and Munda languages included geographically in that part of the Indo-Aryan area (e.g. Dravidian Kuṛux and Malto, Munda Santali and Korwa), but

the languages with the best parallels for complexity in this feature are the languages of Southeast Asia, of several families, and the eastern Ganges valley is interpreted as marginal to Southeast Asia (Chapters 6 and 7; also Emeneau 1978: 202). Another marginal region in which it turned out that some Indian languages showed features connecting them with an extra-Indic linguistic area, is the northwestern border between Indo-Aryan and Iranian, which contains also the Dravidian Brahui language and the isolate Burushaski. Much effort was spent on delimiting the occurrence of features on this border, e.g. retroflex consonants, pronominal suffixes (not being verb inflections) as found in Iranian, Brahui, and several Indo-Aryan languages, gender systems, etc. (Chapter 7).

In a small series of papers features were investigated that it was thought did satisfy the areal requirement. Synchronic analysis of the functor Sanskrit api (and its Indo-Aryan descendants) and the parallel Dravidian *-um seem to determine that we have here a good candidate; historical analysis makes what seems to be a good case for diffusion from Dravidian to Indo-Aryan (Chapter 9). In the same paper the pairs of lexical items, masculine and feminine, for members of the various castes look to the Indianization of the Indo-Aryan language component in the sociolinguistic complex; a stylistic trait is based on this feature, as early as the Sanskrit epic. The semantic structure of words for 'upper limb' and 'lower limb' and their parts seems to have peculiarly Indian features in languages of all the families of the area, and Indianization of the Indo-Aryan component is probable (Chapter 11). The paper on onomastics referred to above is exploratory; one type of hypocoristics, those with suffix -ŭ, is found in Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, and Munda, and may have an Indo-Aryan (i.e. ultimately Indo-Iranian/Indo-European) origin. The paper on onomatopoetics (Chapter 10) examines a formation of a highly specific type and finds about 40 areal etymologies involving Indo-Aryan and Dravidian, with the original impetus probably coming from the Dravidian side; when one examines onomatopoetics (or 'expressives') in general, India is only part of a much larger area, and studies of subtypes and subareas are in order (see end of this chapter). Chapter 8 has a slight study of causative formations, mainly historically oriented; but a definitive study of causatives, which we do not yet have, must go far beyond the limits of the Indian linguistic area.

Since 1956 there has been much work by others on linguistic areas. Work on other areas than India need not be mentioned here, with the exception of that on Southeast Asia. The two areas show many links, sometimes the Indian area appearing as a western extension of the Southeast Asian area. It was as such that Eugénie N. A. Henderson included data from India in a typological paper (1965b). A. K. Ramanujan and Colin Masica in 1969 made a searching study "Toward a phonological typology of the Indian linguistic area." Colin Masica in 1971 wrote a doctoral dissertation on syntactic and semantic typology of the area; it formed the basis of his 1976 book Defining a linguistic area: South Asia. The features treated are: word order, causative verbs, conjunctive participles, explicator compound verbs, the dative construction; the work is strictly typological and establishes much theoretical basis and methodology. Most other publications have included both typological and historical investigation. In 1974 volume 3 of International Journal of Dravidian Linguistics (ed. V. I. Subramoniam, Trivandrum) was devoted to Contact and convergence in South Asian languages (also published as a separate volume with this title; editors Franklin C. Southworth and Mahadev L. Apte); its contents included several papers on special problems (including my Chapter 9 in this volume), and also an important historical paper by Southworth, "Linguistic stratigraphy of North India." F. B. J. Kuiper's important paper "The genius of a linguistic area," which had appeared first in 1967, was reprinted in this volume. In 1975 Shapiro and Schiffman completed a survey of earlier work on Language and Society in South Asia; this report included a chapter on "South Asia as a linguistic area" (153-94) and reviewed both the typological and historical work through 1974. Weightily skeptical criticism of the object and procedure in these inquiries has not been lacking. Hans Henrich Hock (1975) in general strives to find more Indo-European antecedents or parallels for some of the alleged areal features, and would attribute Indo-Aryan developments (in the Dravidian direction) to these Indo-European antecedents or to native Indo-Aryan developments, uninfluenced by substratum contacts. This is to downgrade the striking Indianization which Indo-Aryan has undergone, and in at least the case of retroflex consonants to find perverse a century and a half of scholarly endeavor. This endeavor was continued by Madhav Deshpande in a very substantial contribution in 1978, in which the chronological period 'pre-Indo-Aryan,' previously suggested for the introduction of contrasting retroflexes, was judiciously replaced by