

The delay in the acquisition of Bangla politeness

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The Bangla anaphora system

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The five elicitation tasks

Children are impolite

Proximal e-pronouns for o-pronouns

Politeness in Bangla

Politeness in Bangla

- ▶ The politeness level of a conversation is encoded in Bangla morphology.
 - ▶ This is at both the **nominal level (pronouns)** and the clausal level (allocutive marking).
 - ▶ Politeness features also show up in agreement — nominal-verb and nominal-nominal.

Politeness features

- ▶ A combination of two features [FORMAL] and (Portner, Pak, & Zanuttini, 2019)'s STATUS.
- ▶ Three levels of Bangla politeness (Roy, 2020, 2022; Bhattacharjee & Roy, 2022)
 - (1) a. L(evel)1: $[S \geq A]$, 0
 - b. L(evel)2: $[S \leq A]$, 1
 - c. L(evel)3: $[S \leq A]$, 2

Politeness is context dependent — Case 1

Context: Person A and B are a couple (married) who work together and live in a large family

(2) At work (with colleagues)

apni ki kalke kaaje ashben
3SG.L3 QP tomorrow work-LOC come.FUT.L3

‘Will you (formal) come to work tomorrow?’

(3) At home (with family)

tumi ki kalke kaaje ashbe
3SG.L2 QP tomorrow work-LOC come.FUT.L2

‘Will you (non-formal) come to work tomorrow?’

(4) In private

tui ki kalke kaaje ashbi
3SG.L1 QP tomorrow work-LOC come.FUT.L1

‘Will you (intimate) come to work tomorrow?’

Politeness is context dependent — Case 2

Context: Person A and Person B are talking about Person A's grandfather, who is Person B's father.

dadu ✓
polite pronoun ✗

Why? Persons A and B do not share a formal relationship with each other OR with the referent

(5) a. Person B:

dadu kæmon achhen
grandfather how be.INDF.PRD.L2

‘How is Grandfather?’

b. Person A:

dadu /#uni bhalo-i achhe(#n)
grandfather /3.SG.L3 good-I be.INDF.PRS.L2

‘Grandfather is well.’

Aims

- ▶ Do children have knowledge of all the Bangla pronouns and reflexives?
 - ▶ Does the reflexive in Child Bangla obey Principle A?
 - ▶ Do the pronouns in Child Bangla obey Principle B?
 - ▶ At what age do children show complete knowledge of all the pronouns?

Experimental Design

Design

- Five picture description tasks woven around a narrative were conducted on the interactive whiteboard Explain Everything.

Task No.	Task type	Target position	Target linguistic item	Predicates
BAET1	Semi-structured Elicitation	Object	nidʒe-ke 'oneself', o-ke 'her/him (NF)', 'ona-ke' her/him (F)'	3
BAET2	Semi-structured Elicitation	Possessive (inalienable)	nidʒe-r 'oneself's', o-r 'her/his (NF)', 'ona-r' her/his (F)'	4
BAET3	Semi-structured Elicitation	Possessive (alienable)	nidʒe-r 'oneself's', o-r 'her/his (NF)', 'ona-r' her/his (F)'	6
BAET4	Semi-structured Elicitation	Possessive (inalienable)	nidʒe-r 'oneself's'	4
BAET5	Semi-structured Elicitation	Possessive (alienable)	nidʒe-r 'oneself's'	5

Table 1: The Bangla Elicitation Tasks

Table 2: Respondent numbers

	Total	Post Cleaning
Adults (27;0-88;0)	10	10
Children (2;8-6;11)	30	19

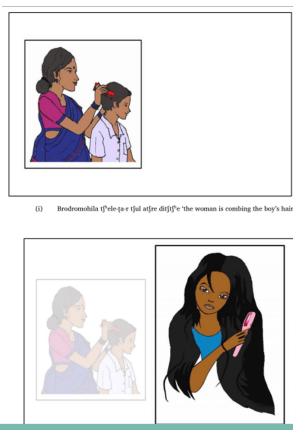
BAET2

Figure 2: Sample trial of the token *onar/nidzer pa g^hofa* ‘to scrub self’s/her/his leg/foot’, from BxET2: picture depicting action on inalienable possession



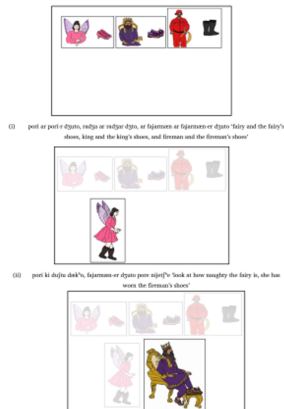
BAET4

Figure 4: Sample trial of the token *nidger tful atfrano* ‘to comb self’s hair’, from BxET4 (i) Introductory picture (ii) Target picture



BAET5

Figure 5: Sample trial of the token *nidger dzuto pora* ‘to wear self’s shoes’, from BxET5 (i) First introductory picture (ii) Second introductory picture (iii) Target picture



More evidence of impoliteness

(Wrong) *je* in the elicitation data

- ▶ No child produced a *je*-set pronoun.
- ▶ There were instances where the adult produced the *je*-set pronoun. Yet children in these cases too ‘switched’ to the *o*-set.
- ▶ There was one child, bch04 (6;2), who used *je* from the *je*-set, **but not as a pronoun, and rather as an utterance starter**. This was sometimes preceded by the researcher having used *je* to introduce the characters that the child was required to talk about, and sometimes not.

je errors bch04 (6;2)

(6) *Pictorial context: A doctor massaging his own head* (BCET2)

- RE:ki kort^{he} **ta-r** dzone
... what do.PROG.PRS.3.L2 3SGL2-GEN for
... So, what is he doing (for his headache)? Pic: BCP16-1
- CH: ta-i dzone math^a-je hat dije at^{he}
that-I for head-LOC hand give.NF stay.PROG.PRS.3.L2
That's why (he) has put (his) hand on (his) head
- RE: kar math^a-je hat dijet^{he}
whose head-LOC hand give.PRF.PRS.3.L2
On whose head has (he) put (his) hand?
- CH: o-r nidze-r
3SG.L2-GEN REFL.GEN
His own (head)
- CH: **je** ... oi daktar-ta o-r math^a-r modd^{he} o-r
he ... that doctor-CLF 3SG.L2-GEN head-GEN middle.LOC 3SG.L2-GEN
nidze-r hat-ta dijet^{he}
REFL.GEN hand-CLF give.PRF.PRS.3.L2
He ... the doctor has put his own hand on his head

More ʃe errors

- (7) bch04 (6;2) *Pictorial context: An old man scrubbing his own foot*
BCET2

RE: kar pa-je ʃop makʰʃʰe ... toma-r
whose foot-LOC soap apply.PROG.PRS.3.L2 ... 2.SG.L2-GEN

On whose feet is he applying soap? Your feet?

CH: na o-r nidʒe-r
no 3SG.L2-GEN REFL.GEN

No his own

RE: atʃʃʰa amake puro puro sentens-ʈa æk-bar bolo
okay 1SG.ACC-DAT whole whole sentence-CLF one-time say.IMP.L2
... amar na mone tʰake na adʒkal
... 1SG-GEN NEG mind.LOC stay.INDF.PRS.3.L2 NEG now-a-days

Okay, tell me the whole sentence once. I keep forgetting now-a-days.

CH: ʃe ... o pa-je-r moddʰe ʃop makʰʃʰe
3SGL2 ... 3SGL2 foot-GEN middle.LOC soap apply.PROG.PRS.3.L2

He ... he is applying soap on (his) feet.

On *je*

There are various flavours of politeness that the *je*-set imparts to conversations and narrations. The *je*-set pronouns are known to be politer than the L2 *o*-set ones.

- (8) a. *profesar daʃ adʒ klas nebe-na #o*
Professor Das today class take.INDF.PRS.3.L2-NEG 3SG.L2.NOM
confarens-er priparaʃon nije bæsto
conference-GEN preparation with busy
Intended: 'Professor Das will not take class today. #She (L2) is busy preparing for the conference.'
- b. *profesar daʃ adʒ klas nebe-na tini*
Professor Das today class take.INDF.PRS.3.L2-NEG 3SG.F.NOM
confarens-er priparaʃon nije bæsto
conference-GEN preparation with busy
'Professor Das will not take class today. She (F) is busy preparing for the conference.'

Demonstratives in the elicitation data

(9) *Pictorial context: A little girl tickling her brother*

BCET1, bch21: 3;6

RE: ʃurʃruʃi diʈʰe
 tickle give.PROG.PRS.L3

Tickling?

RE: kake
 whom

Whom?

CH: eʈa-ke
 this-DAT
 This one

Demonstratives lower politeness levels

- ▶ The demonstrative pronouns in Bangla have morphology different from that of personal pronouns.
- ▶ They have a classifier suffixed, unlike personal pronouns.
 - ▶ *e-ta-ke*
3.PROX-CLF-DAT
 - ▶ *-ta* is an inanimate singular marking classifier
- ▶ Demonstrative pronouns may be used to refer to human referents when the speaker wishes to convey disrespect or disdain towards the referent

Demonstratives for personal pronouns

(10) *Context: Person A and Person B are gossiping about their friends' sons.*

A: ratul-er tʃ^hele ki kore re
Ratul-GEN son what do.NF RE

‘What does Ratul’s son do?’

B: o sektar faiv-e kadʒe kore k^hub kuʃe
3.SG.L2.NOM Sector V-LOC work do.PROG.PRS.3.L2 very lazy

‘He works in Sector V. He is very lazy.’

A: ar tutul-er tʃ^hele
and Tutul-GEN son

‘And Tutul’s son?’

B: oʃa hotʃtʃ^he arækʃa od^hb^hut tʃ^hele k^hub kipte
that be.INDEF.PRS another weird boy very stingy

‘That is another weird boy. He is very stingy.’

Child proximal pronoun errors — Case 1

The F-error is due to incorrect coreference between the dropped subject — the R-expression *tʃele-ta* ‘the boy’ or the deictically neutral *o* ‘he’ — and the proximal pronoun *er* ‘his’.

- (11) *Pictorial context: A boy leaving a kiss on his own hand*

BCET1, bch12: 3;2

RE: o ei tʃ^hele-ta-ke dæk^ho ki kortʃtʃ^he
o this boy-CLF-ACC-DAT see.2.L2 what do.PROG.PRS.3.L2

Oh look at what this boy is doing!

RE: kake ditʃtʃ^he
whom give.PROG.PRS.3.L2

Whom is he giving the kiss/it to

CH: hat^h-ke
hand-DAT

To the hand

RE: kar hat^h-ke
whose hand-GEN

To whose hand?

CH: **e-r hat^h-ke**
3SG.L2.PROXGEN hand-DAT

(He_i is giving a kiss) to this one_i’s hand

Proximal pronouns are unlike “distal”/deictically neutral ones

- ▶ proximal pronouns can only be resolved in situational context not in the linguistic context.

- ▶ they cannot be bound

- (12) kamini_i er_{*i/j} boi-ta harijetʃʃe
Kamini 3.SG.PROX.L2-GEN book-CLF losePRF.PRS.3
'Kamini_i has lost her_{*i/j} book.'

- ▶ they cannot have a covariance/coreference interpretation

- (13) a. kamini-r_i maa e-ke_{*i/j} boi kine dilo
Kamini-GEN mother 3.SG.PROX.L2-DAT book buy.NF give,PFV
'Kamini's_i mother bought a book for her_{*i/j}.'
- b. kamini_i boi pejetʃʃe e_{*i/j} kʰub kʰuʃi
Kamini book get.PRF.PRS.3.L2 3.SG.PROX.NOM very happy
'Kamini_i got a book. She_{*i/j} is very happy.'

Data coding

- ▶ **STRICT VALID RESPONSE** — response matched the target exactly.
- ▶ **OTHER VALID RESPONSE** — response did not match the target utterance but was still a grammatical and felicitous response in the given context.
 - ▶ If the participant dropped the subject/possessor and produced L2 verbal agreement, the response was still considered an “other valid response” since it was not known if the participant had dropped a nominal phrase like ‘the grandpa’ or an L2 pronoun. In case it was the former, the response would be felicitous.
- ▶ **INVALID RESPONSE** — response was ungrammatical or infelicitous i.e., unacceptable under the given context.
- ▶ **Categories of VALID and INVALID responses** — Reflexive, Pronoun, Pron-Refl (Pronoun followed by Reflexive structures), Proper noun, PropN-Refl (Proper Noun followed by Reflexive structures), Bare nouns, Pronoun-Classifier, Noun-Classifier, Noun-(Clf)-Accusative, Proximal personal pronoun, Dem N (Demonstrative followed by Noun-(Classifier)), Demonstrative pronoun

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