Divisive Agenda of Dravidian Linguistics

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Abstract

TThe Dravidian Linguists claim that Tamil belongs to proto-Dravidian family of languages and has no kinship with Sanskrit and other North Indian languages of Indo-Aryan group of languages. The proposition may appear superficially correct. However, an in-depth analysis of the syntax, phonology and morphology of the IA languages and the enriched languages of the south, reveal some patterns or linguistic universals, that justify an assumption that all the Indian languages have sprung from the same source. The argument of Dravidian School is probably an off shoot of the discredited Aryan Invasion Theory. Even, Maharshi Aurobindo had repudiated this argument. In his opinion Tamil also belongs to the same language family as any other Indian language. This article attempts to examine whether Sanskrit in any manner has influenced Tamil and similarities in structure, syntax and vocabulary justify the claims of scholars that Sanskrit is the mother of all Indian languages. However it is limited to the study of the languages and is not examining the progression historically.

Keywords — Indo-Aryan group of languages, Proto-Dravidian languages, Phonological comparison of IA and Dravidian languages, Padam or idea as defined in logic, Taddhidhan, Intermediary particles or Vikarana Prathyaya, Inflectional language, Agglutinative language, Syntax, Phoneme, Syllable

1 Introduction

Corollary to the Aryan Invasion Theory is the propaganda of the Linguists that the Dravidian languages especially Tamil are structurally unrelated to Indo-Aryan languages. The School of Dravidian Linguistics repudiated the earlier claims of scholars like A C Burnel that Sanskrit is the mother of all Indian languages. There were even attempts to trace origin of Tamil to a defunct dialect named Elamite spoken in eastern regions of modern Iran, that too, before commencement of the Common Era. There is enough ground to challenge this argument, because, its main stay i.e. Aryan Invasion Theory has been discredited. Every right thinking intellectual whether Indian or European concede that this nation existed as a cultural entity for at least three thousand years, if not more and is bound by natural boundaries. The very concept of Aryan race is fallacious. It is the product of European notion of racial superiority. Sri Aurobindo had unambiguously stated: "The race of India may be all pure Dravidians, if indeed such an entity as a Dravidian race exists or ever existed, or they are pure Aryans, if indeed such an entity as an Aryan exists or ever existed, or they may be a mixed race with the predominant stain" [1]This article attempts to examine the validity of this assumption. Linguistics as a science is very young and its contribution is notable only in the field of comparative philology. This fillip they got when the European scholars learned Sanskrit and had a brush with Ashtadhyayi of Pa ini.

[1]Ghosh Aurobindo, Secret of Veda,2010, P/554

2 Phonology of Indian Languages

Indian languages that are derived from Sanskrit including South Indian languages Kannada, Telugu and Malayalam have followed the phonological scheme of "MaheswaraSutram" as mentioned in Ashtadhyayi

Ghosh Aurobindo, Secret of Veda,2010, P/554 of Panini (Pa ini). There are nine basic vowels including two liquids and twenty-nine consonants in Sanskrit. There are only eighteen consonants in Tamil. Voiced stops and sibilants are not included in Tamil phonological stock as described in tolkappiyam which is the most ancient treatise on Tamil grammar. Tolkappiyam provided "ayathm" in place of guttural "ha". This consonant is written simply by placing three dots in triangular form. However, in modern Tamil, this alphabet is not used. Consequently "maha" will be written as "maka" in Tamil script. Liquids "l" and "r" takes a prefix "u" and "l" respectively as provided in the above treatise:

लोकम्	उलक्म्	ulakam
राम:	इरामन	Iraman
रवि	इरवि	Iravi

Such embellishments also snap the link that actually existed with Sanskrit. Tolkappiyar had also included a retroflex sibilant "zha". This is pronounced by bending the tongue further backward than to pronounce "sha". Its alphabetical representation is like italic capital S. Modern Tamil has replaced it with"l" as in Palani. Only Malayalam still retains this phoneme. The total effect of these reformations that continued for several decades in the past is that the Tamil phonology is devoid of voiced stops and sibilants. Consequently it is difficult to trace adaptations from Sanskrit, e.g.

Cot	खट्वा	कट्टिल्
Metro-city	महानगारम्	मानकरम्
God	देव:	तेवर्, तैवम् (तेय्यम्)
Merchant	वणिक्	वन्नियार्
Fort	कोटा:	कोट्टा
Blessing	मङ्गलम्	मन्कलम्
District	महावृत्त	मावट्टं
Anger	कोप	कोपम्

Even there are instances of the proper nouns being translated to suit the alphabetical structure, e.g. "Shunmukha" becomes "Aarumukan" in Tamil, because the consonant "sh" cannot be represented in Tamil script. Nevertheless, there are borrowings from Sanskrit to Tamil with suitable modifications to suit the Tamil orthography as permitted vide Sutram 402 of Tolkāppiyam. Immediate successor of vedic language i.e. Prakrit had many dialetical varients. Damil was one amongst them. Perhaps it is the immediate ancestor of Tamil.The progression from Vedic Sanskrit to Prakrit can be assessed from the following examples: Bharya - bhariya , atra – atta , raja – raya, bhavan – bhavam, hruday – hiyea, krn – karia,yajna – yajju, ārya – ajja*, meela – meedhe, varenyam – vareniyam. The Prakrit equivalent of Arya is Ajja. In Tamil it becomes Ayya and later Aiyar. From the above it follows that ancestry of Tamil can be traced to Prakrit. In Tamil literature of Sangam Era, especially in Tirukkural, we can find many Sanskrit words . The very first kural or verse is an apt example: अकरमुतलेएलुत्तेल्लम् आतिपकवान्मुतलेउलकम (All writings start with "akara" (Sanskrit). The world is emnated from the god). What is to be noted is that for want of voiced bi-labial plosives "Bhagvan" becomes "Pakavan" in Tamil. Sanskrit Lokam becomes ulakam because liquid "l" is to be prefixed with vowel"u" as per the grammar rules. There are many more such adaptations e.g. "kshana"becomes"kana" and guna–kuna in Tamil. "Thirumoolamanthram" of Thirumoola Nayanar is an ancient Tamil devotional work, next only to Thirukkural in importance. In its introductory chapter, there is a sub-heading at sl 9 "chetta-kanittamurai" (elder-younger order). Chetta and Kanitta are corrupted forms of Sanskrit Jyesht and kanisht respectively. From the above literary evidence we can definitely assume that Tamil like the other three South Indian languages, has unmistakeable affinity to Sanskrit. Pa ini defined word (term) . Here the word "Padam" should be understood as defined in logic. It means an idea and therefore there can be more than one word in a of english language. The following example illustrates this point:

Idea	Sanskrit	Hindi	Malayalam
Son of Kunti	कौन्तेय	कुन्तिपुत्र	कुन्तिपुत्रन्

Three words are used to convey the idea in English. In Hindi and Malayalam there are two words albeit by omitting genitive case. In Sanskrit simply by inserting one particle ( ) the entire idea is conveyed. The particle inserted

is called "taddhidhan" तद्धितः. This is the beauty and vitality of Sanskrit. It is neither inflection nor agglutination in the usual sense as understood in Linguistics. It also explains where other languages stand in terms of vitality and scientific perfection in comparison to Sanskrit. However "sup" or "tip" सुप्,तिप् are not directly glued to the stem. In between them an intermediary particle विकरण्प्रत्यय is added. The verbal roots are classified into ten distinct categories and for each category there are separate intermediary particles. There are also instances where the intermediary particle is altogether ignored, e.g. "adadi". The following first person, singular, parasmepada conjugation may be seen:

	भव्+शप्+ति	भवति
	दिव+य्+ति	दिव्यति
	अद्+न+ति	अत्ति

It follows from the above examples that the particle and tense ending are glued to the root and inflection is exceptional. This method gives the speaker unlimited choice of vocabulary as the same root with different paJrticle convey distinct ideas.

3 Syntax

Let us now compare these two languages at the level of syntax. English has a rigid SVO - (subject,verb,object) word order, whereas Sanskrit allows its speaker to use either SVO or SOV or even OVS. This is because in Sanskrit what is important is not the positioning of the word but the case endings. Such freedom is available to speakers of Tamil language also. It is easy for a Tamil speaker to translate from Sanskrit to Tamil or vice versa, without disturbing the word order of the source language, whereas such an attempt from English to Tamil is impossible. In Linguistics grammar or syntax is the surface structure. This discipline is still in pursuit of a universal grammar or deep structure. Such a chase is unnecessary for Indian languages, because even at the surface level the syntactical rules are more or less universal, but for variations on account of georgrphical distribution and progression of time. In any case we can safely conclude that at the level of syntax South Indian languages including Tamil are closely related to Sanskrit. Over-emphasised dissimilarity 4 Linguists claim that the major difference between a Dravidian language and Sanskrit is that while the forrmer is aggultinative, the latter is inflectional, Here we should remember that no language is fully agglutinative nor inflectional, There are overlapping. Linguists classify agglutinative languages into three categories i.e. (a) prefix agglutinating,(b) suffix aggutinating and (c) partially aggluttinating, Tamil is suffix aggluttinating and also Malayalam which has umblical relationship with Tamil. Is it materially so different from other Indian languages of the Indo-Aryan group of languages on this count? Let us examine it with the following examples:

Subject	Sanskrit	Hindi	Malayalam
Ram + genitive + plural	रामेण	Ramomke	Ramnmarude
Ram + genitive, singular	रामस्य	Ramka	Ramante
Ram + plural + instrumental	रामेण	Ramanonne	Ramanmaral

In the case of Sanskrit, we can clearly delineate the stem from the suffix (case endings). Here one suffix stands both for number and the case. In Hindi, another Indo-Aryan language, which of course is derived from Sanskrit, there are two particles i.e. one for the number and another for the case. Malayalam which is also a Dravidian language – if there is any such language group – is not different from Hindi on this count. In other words, in Sanskrit inflection takes place at particle level and not the stem. One more example may suffice to justify this assumption. The particle for nominative, singular "Akaranta" M gender is "s"( )which when glued to the word Ram becomes "ha". Thus Ram + s = Ramah. In fact, agglutination is the process in Sanskrit too. The only difference from other Indian languages, including Tamil is that while latter take separate particles to indicate case and number, in Sanskrit the case endings stand for both. Bishop Coldwell who studied Tamil grammar and differentiated Dravidian Languages from Sanskrit pointed out one more difference. He and other Dravidian linguists claim that Tamil has more retroflex consonants than Sanskrit and a few that are available in classical Sanskrit are actually borrowings from Tamil. This is quite unacceptable. There are many retroflex phonemes in the Vedic language. Even Maheswarasutram as reproduced by Pa ini in Ashtadhyayi lists six retroflex stops and fricatives. Ashtadhayi is at least four centuries earlier to the oldest Tamil work. Maharshi Aurobindo had stated: "But here also my preconceived ideas were disturbed and confounded. For, on examining the vocables of the Tamil language, I

yet found myself continually guided by the words or by families of words supposed to be pure Tamil. In establishing new relation between Sanskrit and its distant sister Latin and occasionally, between Greek and Sanskrit, sometimes the Tamil vocables not only suggested connection, but proved the missing link in a family of connected words. [2]This assertion is correct. We can find many Sanskrit routes adapted to Tamil:

4 Conjugation

धातु वस्= vazhvu in Tamil and Malayalam .वस् +लट्लकर् = वसति = In Tamil it means comfortable living. In Malayalam residence.वासल् ans the door inTamil. Thus not only one but several words are formed to convey connected ideas from the same root. In the following examples the routes are adapted to mean the same idea. धातु विद्- विद्वान in Sanskrit becomes Vaadyar or venthan in Tamil धातु पठ- पठति in Sanskrit, Padhikkaruthu in Tamil धातु कृ- Karya = Kariyam in Tamil, Karyam in Malayalam धातु अन्- Annam (food) both in Sanskrit and Tamil. In this conjugation i.e. "adaadi" the particle disappears. Incidentally this word is used in all the four South Indian languages. धातु पा= to protect = patukappu in Tamil.Parveपार्वे is also in use. धातु मान्= to respect= maanam both in Tamil and Malayalam धातु मन = to think= Manithan in Tamil men human being. Conjugation of verbs in Tamil favorably compare with Hindi and not with another South Indian language Malayalam: Subject Tamil Hindi Malayalam Mas Gen,Singular Ile Avan vantaan वह् आया Avan vannu Fem Gen,Singular,She Aval vanthaal वह्आयि Aval vannu

Plural They Avar vanthaar वे आये Avar vannu

What is crucial is that particles of verb change in Tamil and Hindi so as to agree with number and gender of the subject. In Malayalam no such change takes place. In Sanskrit Tip (verb particles) change only to agree with Sup (in numbers). In short, we can definitely conclude that Tamil has strong kinship with Sanskrit and other languages derived from it.

5 Views of Aurobindo Ghosh on origins of language

Maharshi Aurobindo in his philological notes on Vedic language has given a cogent explanation on origins and growth of language. His view is that when human being learnt to make meaningful sounds with his vocal cord, each combination represented not one but several ideas. Thus, the ancient seers who composed the Vedas had several choices to choose and sharpen their expression. We should also not forget the fact that they were in a deep state of meditation and their revelations is the record of cognition of knowledge absolute or Brahman. Language to them was a living organism because at that time the language was not finally developed, dictionaries (niruktams)were not existing. Thus "agni" is not merely fire but, a divinity, guide and teacher, and preceptor for the Rishis. Later when Niruktams etc. were scripted, the meanings became restricted to them. Vedic Sanskrit being the forerunner, other languages spoken within India and without, borrowed words that suited them to express any one of the several ideas. That is how we find Sanskrit roots in IE languages with slight modifications: Father धातु - पा - पालने Motherमा - मान् Brother We should also note that these Dhatus became words of expression in English through Latin, German and Old Norse. While the Sanskrit word for father mean not only parentage but also protection, heritage, lineage etc, the English word only mean the former. Nominative duel form of Sanskrit also indicate mother. Same is the case with the word mother. Mother is an object of worship because she has given birth and nourished the child. The Sanskrit equivalent signifying maternal status is प्रसुन् माता. From this it follows that these are borrowings and are yet not indicative of language kinship. This also proves Maharshi Aurobindo is correct.

6 Tolkāppiyam and the controversies

There is a proem (preface in verse) written by Panampernar who was a poet of the first Tamil Sangam. First Tamil Sangam was 1 to 3rd Century AD. As prefaces are written when the work is published for the first time, it is safe to assume that Tolkāppiyum is a product of first century AD. Claim of some Dravidian

[2]Ghosh Aurobindo,India's Rebirth,1993,p/109

Linguists that this work is anterior to Ashtadhyayi of Panini is therefore preposterous. Panini ived in fourth Century BC. The prefacer mentions southern boundary of Tamilnad as Kumari (Kanyakumari) the southern most tip of the country. The Dravidian School interprets that the allusion in the preface is to the lost continent - mythological Kumarikandam. This argument is not correct. History reveals that eastern coast including the city of Poompahar was submerged by the sea before 1500 BCE . Kanyakumari continued to exist at least from the vedic times. This is perhaps a subtle attempt to justify unrealistic claim of antiquity of Tolkâppiyam. The prefacer clearly states that the treatise was introduced in the assembly of the soverign and the scholar who presided over,was Atankote Aasaan (Teacher from Atankote) who is well versed in four Vedas (Nanmarai). Nanmarai in Tamil literally means the four vedas. Dravidian linguists assert that the word means the four elements. Their argument is that one who is well versed in the vedic texts of the Aryans might not have been allowed to preside over the function. This argument is fallacious to the core. For centuries Hindus maintain that the five elements (fire,water,air,earth and ether) is the cause of the universe. The sovereign who convened the assembly was Pandian of Madurai. The root "paandh" पाण्ड in Sanskrit means learning or knwledge. One who is learned is Pande in Hindi, Panditha in Sanskrit and Paandian is therefore its Tamil equivalent. Thus, even the name of the dynasty of the Soveriegn is Sanskritic. Similar is the case with the term "aasaan" (teacher). आसन् in Sanskrit means "seat" and one who occupies the seat of distinction or eminence is आशान्. Philologists all over the world acknowledge that comparative philology as a science, emerged only because in nineteenth century European scholars discovered this marvelous treatise. It is unrivalled for brevity and perhaps the only transformative generative grammar ever written for any language. Tolkappiyam onthe otherhand also contains instructuion on rhetorics etc. We should also appreciate the ingenuity of Tolkappiyar. He names vowels as "uyir" (the vital air or Pran) and consonants as "mei" (the body). Breathe of pran is the sign of life without which, body is a corpse. So his aphorism: "Meiniyakkamakaramoducheeyanam" (consonants of function with short vowel "a"(Sutram 46,Tolkappiyum. Incidentally the word "uyir" is derived from Sanskri root उहिर्.The guttaral "ha" is substituted by liquid "ya". This is also the rule prescribed in Ashtadhyayi:(Ikaraadishvakaruchharanaarth.(3rd Panini Sutra appearing in Laghu Kaumudi). Both Acharyas state that consonant can only be pronounced with a shortvovel "a". This is a linguistic universal for all the Indian languages. On the other hand, the Roman alphabet e.g."p" only represents an unvoiced and bilabial eggression of breathe. The Roman alphabets represents a phoneme, often more than one. On the contrary, each of the Indian alphabets represent a syllable. It is strange that such a strong similarity that is obvious is ignored by the Dravidian linguists. The Editor continues:"The fact that Tolkappiyum is not indebted to Panini in anyway and that is really anterior to the latter so terribly disappointed Burnell that he was on wild goose chase till he came across the references to Indran Grammar which he assumed to be an existing grammar or a school of grammar in order to content that Tolkappiyum was indebted to some

7 Sanskrit grammar or atleast some Sanskrit grammatical tradition."

[3] Probably the prefacer referred "Aindram"so that the new treatise is accepted by the learned assembly. It therefore follows that Tolkappiyar modelled his treatise on the existing Grammatic traditions of IA languages. There is enough evidence to support this view. It is also pertinent to note that in that age, the Dravidian theory was not invented and all languages spoken north of Tirupathy are known as Vada Mozhi (Northern language) .Tamil is probably an offshoot of a distinct branch of Prakrit i.e. Damil. We may also note the word used in the preface. It is AINDRAM. This is clearly a Sanskritic construction namely Taddhidhan. The pure Tamil word, should have been INDRANNUDE(Indran + Gen case "ude") as Tamil language being agglutinative as claimed by the Dravidian linguists, cannot take a tadhidhan particle.Therefore the prefacer referred the title as it existed for credibility. What is apparent in this case is that languages no tonly borrow vocabulary but also the syntactical norms. Tolkappiyar himself clearly mentions in the chapter on phonology vide Sutram 102that vedas [4] described the origin as well as escape of breathe through the organs from navel to lips, nose, etc, and classified them accordingly. Definitely he is referring to a work on Sanskrit Grammar or Vedangas which included amongst other branches of knowledge, grammar also. The legend is that in the hoary past there were nine grammar

[3]Marudanayakam Ed, The Earliest Complete Grammar Studies Tolkappyam, Ed1,P/33

[4]ElayaPerumal,Comentary on Tolkapopiyum in Malayalam,1961,P/21

texts and Hanumanji alone was able to master them all. In any case it is safe to assume that some existing grammatical work of Sanskrit or Prakrit, might have helped Tolkppiyar to frame the grammar rules forTamil.

8 Conclusion

Sanskrit is the common heritage of India and is the treasure house of Indian culture and Hindu philosophy. Every Indian have reason to be proud of such a versatile and beautiful language. With less than 2000 stems or Dhatus, we can coin any number of words to suit any occasion. Its lexicon Amarakosam can be committed to memory. The later classical version is

the optimum level of perfection it achieved through a process of reformations introduced by the Munithrayam; perhaps, it is the only scientific language of the world. Instead of feeling proud of such a rich heritage, Dravidian School of Linguistics deny it for reasons other than philological. Their argument is political, probably to support the Aryan Invasion Theory which has now been disproved.

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