Rājasthānī Features in Medieval Braj Prose Texts
The Case of Differential Object Marking and Verbal Agreement in Perfective Clauses

Andrea Drocco
(Università Ca’ Foscari Venezia, Italia)

Abstract  One of the few scholars who paid attention to the ‘dark’ period of the evolution of NIA from late MIA was Luigi Pio Tessitori. The studies of this scholar resulted in his well-known Grammar of the Old Western Rajasthani. In the introduction of his Grammar, Tessitori advanced the hypothesis that probably in this first period of NIA there was an intermediate form of speech that surely separated Old Western Rājasthānī from what he called an Old form of Western Hindī, but in which these two linguistic varieties of Western NIA merged together. Tessitori called Old Eastern Rājasthānī this old intermediate form of speech. As stated by himself, one of Tessitori’s future objectives would be to find some proof to demonstrate or to invalidate this hypothesis. However, due to his untimely death, he was not able to do this. Due to the fact that at the present there’s lack of specific studies on this topic, the present study intend to pursue Tessitori’s hypothesis using some medieval published texts in Braj-bhāṣā prose. Even if the language of this kind of texts could be classified as a form of Braj, we will see that these texts show a language different from classical Braj, where many examples of a typical characteristic of Māravāṛī (i.e. Rājasthānī) are attested: the agreement of O with main verb, in a perfective construction, even if O presents an overt marking with the DAT/ACC postposition. Therefore these texts show the existence of a feature of convergence between different varieties. In the last section I will conclude that this seems to be in agreement with Tessitori’s hypothesis, but a more detailed study on language contact involved in the evolution and formation of Western Hindī dialects is necessary to validate this hypothesis.


1 Introduction

Several authors, including Hock, Witzel, Lubotsky, Kulikov, Norman (1990-1996), Bubenik (1996, 1998) and Peterson (1998), amongst many others, have recently examined Old Indo-Aryan and Middle Indo-Aryan from a historical linguistic perspective. On the contrary the New Indo-Aryan languages have not received the same attention, even if in the last few years it is possible to see a renewed interest by part of the scientific community. Notwithstanding their scientific approach and contemporary usefulness, only works published at the end of nineteenth and the beginning of twentieth century are available (see, for example, Hoernle 1880; Bloch 1920; Chatterji 1926). As regards Hindī there has been considerable...
work on Hindi linguistics during the last sixty years in the form of books, research articles, monographs and dissertations. However, in recent times, there has been limited linguistic research on the varieties of Hindi, which, even if now classified as dialects, have been of primary importance in Indian linguistic analysis. This is especially true for the Braj language (often known as Braj-bhāṣā). The aim of this study is to address this deficit by presenting the analysis of one of some features of old NIA, which I commenced in 2008 in my study L’ergatività in hindī. Studio diacronico del processo di diffusione della posposizione ne, and continued with some other papers and talks (in particular Drocco 2016a, 2016b). At the same time the paper would like to offer a modest contribution to the study of Braj-bhāṣā from both a linguistic and philological point of view. In particular, this study investigates the details of a specific aspect of Braj-bhāṣā morpho-syntax, which has not received much attention; that is, the verbal agreement with O, the object-like argument of a transitive clause, in a perfective construction, especially when it is accompanied by an overt case-marker. As we well see even if the language of the texts analysed could be classified as a form of Braj, these texts show a language different from classical Braj, where many examples of a typical characteristic of Mārvāṛī (i.e. Rājasthānī) are attested: this characteristic is properly the verbal agreement with O in perfective clauses, even if followed by a postposition. In section 2, in support of our main point concerning its diachronic evolution, we will briefly describe Braj-bhāṣā’s literary tradition and its geographical location. Section 2.1 provides an overview of the Braj-bhāṣā texts, mostly in prose, analysed in this study. Section 3 describes the typological parameter of ergativity and in section 4 we introduce the Differential Object Marking in Early New Indo-Aryan, in particular in the IA languages considered in this study. In section 4.1, we first of all discuss the works of a few scholars who have examined this phenomenon not only in Braj-bhāṣā, but also in pre-nineteenth century Mārvāṛī. In sections 4.1.1 and 4.1.2 we present the constructions taken from the Braj prose texts examined, providing our conclusions in section 5.

2 The Braj Language

Braj-bhāṣā is the language of Braj, a region extending from the south of Delhi to western Uttar Pradesh and eastern Rājasthān. This language is known with various names: Gvāliyarī (the language of Gwalior; Hindi: Gvāliyar), Braj-bhāṣā, Braj-bhākhā or simply Bhāṣā/Bhākhā (McGregor 2003, 914; Bush 2010a, 85 and 2010b, 268 note 1). Grierson (1916, 69) adds that
Braj-bhāṣā is also known as Antarbēdī, that is the language of the Antarbēd or the doāb (‘a region lying between and reaching to the confluence of two rivers’) between the Ganges and the Jamna.

Perhaps surprisingly, Braj seems to be a mixed language lacking in homogeneity. This is true not only for the various spoken forms (cf. Grierson 1916, 70), but also for its literary variety adopted in the multilingual environment of Mughal India. In this regard Busch (2010a, 86) clearly maintains that, “we find considerable internal variation within the loosely-defined larger rubric of Braj Bhasha”. Indeed, from a linguistic point of view, Braj-bhāṣā covers considerable territory. In particular it is spoken in the nebulously defined region of Vraj Bhūmi, which was a political state in the era of the Mahābhārata wars. This region, though not defined politically, is very well demarcated culturally. The area stretches from Mathurā, Jalesar, Agra, Hathras and Aligarh right up to Etah, Mainpuri and Farrukhabad districts (Michelutti 2002, 49). The largest cities in which Braj-bhāṣā is spoken are Mathurā, Vṛndāvana, Gokula, and Govardhan. According to tradition these were the places in which Kṛṣṇa spent his childhood and youth (McGregor 1968, 3; Entwistle 1987, 1-21). For example in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa the kingdom of King Kamsa is described as spreading through the Vraja region (Hindi: Braj), where the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa was born and spent his childhood days. Before Modern Hindi became the primary literary language of North India, Braj-bhāṣā was very important (cf. Grierson 1916, 72; Chatterji 1926, 12 and 1960, 191-200; McGregor 1974, 62-3; Rai 1984, 101-10) thanks to its use to write Kṛṣṇaite devotional literature (see Varmā 1935; McGregor 1968, 3; Snell 1992, 9-10, 29-36). The prestige of this language, now classified as a western dialect of Modern Hindi, was also based on its influence on the linguistic development of Kharī-bolī Hindi, particularly during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, that is in the period between the 1566 and 1658. During this time Agra, the most important city of Braj, was the capital of the Muğal Empire (Masica 1991, 28) and Akbar, Emperor of Agra, composed some of his poems in Braj-bhāṣā. It is perhaps for this reason that Chatterji (1960, 200) chose to call this language bādˌsāhi bolī, ‘the Emperor’s language’, or darbārī zabān ‘imperial language’, ‘court language’. Similarly, according to Nesptital (1998), it is on this language that the so-called urban koinē of Agra was formed, which significantly influenced the zabān-e-urdū-e-mu’alla of the new capital Delhi. More recently, in three excellent and informative studies Bush (2010b, 2011, 2014) illustrated masterfully the rise of Braj-bhāṣā in the Early Muğal period.

The Braj word Antarbēd derives from Sanskrit Antarvēd literally meaning ‘the country within the sacrificial ground, i.e. the holy land, par excellence, of India’ (Grierson 1916, 69).
Moreover, it is important to highlight that what is called “Hindī”, “Hinduí” (Garcin de Tassy 1847) and “Hindavī” by some authors to designate the language of their works is, in the majority of cases, Braj-bhāṣā (cf. Bangha 2010, 35-6). Perhaps this is due to the fact that Braj-bhāṣā, as already said above, was the most important literary medium of northern India until the beginning of nineteenth century, especially for prose texts. Its prestige was so strong that it influenced both the linguistic and literary aspects of Khaṛī-bolī during most of nineteenth century (McGregor 1974, 67-8; Nespital 1998, 214-5).

Śiva Prasāda Simha (1958) carefully analysed the historical phase leading to the development of Braj-bhāṣā by attempting to draw a strict derivation of that language from its previous diachronic phase, i.e. Śaurasenī Apabhraṁśa. This thesis is possibly based on the fact that both languages developed during different ages, but in the same geographical area, the Madhyadesa, in particular, as said above, in the doāb Gaṅgā-Yamunā. Moreover, according to the majority of scholars (Tessitori 1913b, 64 and 1914, 22-3; Chatterji 1926, 11, 113-4; Simha 1958, 8; Rai 1984, 106, 110), Avahaṭṭha and Piṅgala are to be considered younger than Śaurasenī Apabhraṁśa but spoken in its same area: both these literary languages of early New Indo-Aryan show strong affinities to Braj-bhāṣā. In this respect Chatterji (1949, 65, taken from Rai 1984, 110) maintains that:

a newer, later form of Sauraseni Apabhramsa was taken up by the poets in Rajasthan and Malw, it was called Pingala. Pingala may be described as the intermediate language between the literary Sauraseni Apabhramsa and the medieval Brajbhasha.

The development of Braj-bhāṣā from Śaurasenī Apabhraṁśa probably occurred at the beginning of Hemacandra’s life (1087-1171 AD).10 Indeed,

8 For more on Avahaṭṭha or Abhibhraṣṭa see Sen (1973) and Nara (1979), who advance the hypothesis that Avaḥaṭṭha was, especially in the beginning, a popular form (laukika) of Apabhraṁśa.

9 Piṅgala was the main literary language of poetry in the first period of evolution of Western New Indo-Aryan. Indeed the bardic literature of Rājasthān, especially eastern Rājasthān, of this period, was composed in Piṅgala (cf. Tessitori 1914, 23; Chatterji 1960, 196). The most important bardic text available is Prthvirāja rāsau (circa twelfth century) (but about its authenticity cf. McGregor 1984, 19). Tessitori (1914, 23) maintains that the language of the Prthvirāja rāsau is a “distinct form of language [...] and which might well be called Old Western Hindī”. Regarding Dīṅgala, the other literary language of poetry in the same period, but in Western Rājasthān, see Smith (1975, 433-64).

10 Pischel (1965, 47) considers Hemacandra the most important of all the Prakrit grammarians. Hemacandra’s Prakrit grammar is the eighth chapter (adhyāya) of his Siddhahemasabdanusasana, of which the first seven chapters are devoted to Sanskrit; cf. Pischel (1965, 47-50) and Nitti-Dolci (1972, ch. 5).
the Śauraseni Aaphbraṁśa in the examples offered in the grammar of this important Jaina scholar shows strong linguistic affinities with the literary languages known as Avahaṭṭha and Piṅgala. As already noted, the latter became Braja-bhāṣā at the end of fourteenth century (Chatterji 1926, 12; Siṃha 1958, 49; Snell 1992, 3). Rāmacandra Śukla was probably the first person to note that “Śūrasāgar appears to be the final, developed form of some continuing tradition, even though only oral, rather than the beginning of a later tradition [...]”).11 Indeed Simha considers Sūradāsa’s text (XV-XVI century)12 the literary peak of this important early New Indo-Aryan language that was subsequently held in great esteem for many centuries (Siṃha 1958, 8; cf. also Grierson 1916, 74-5).

2.1 Braj-bhāṣā Prose Texts

The majority of Braj-bhāṣā works are in verse governed by strict metrical rules (cf., among others, McGregor 1968, 3). This makes linguistic analysis particularly difficult, since it is difficult to distinguish between words chosen for metrical reasons and those chosen for grammatical reasons. Moreover, it is important to add that Grierson (1916, 75) clearly maintains that the first recognition of Braj-bhāṣā as a distinct dialect was Lallū Lāl’s grammar (1811); however this text is of no more help in studying the grammatical feature here taken into examination. As a consequence, the present study is based primarily on the analysis of excerpts from the few extant prose texts composed between the seventeenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century, namely:

i. the prose commentary of Indrajit of Orchā on the Nītiśataka of Bhartrhari, composed around the beginning of the seventeenth century, edited and analyzed by Ronald Stuart McGregor (1968, 3, 5-8);

ii. the entire Prabodha nāṭaka (PN) of the Mahārājā Jasvant Siṃha (1626-1678), whose rule of Jodhpur began in 1638,13

11 For this English translation, see Rai 1984, 101-2. The original Hindi version is taken from Śukla 1973, 168.
12 Sūrdās is reputed as the most important author of Braj literature. He is known as an author of the Aṣṭachāpa, the eight krṣnaite poets of Vallabhācārya’s puṣṭi-mārga. Sūrdās’s work is called Śūrasāgara, a well-known poem in the Braj language which describes Kṛṣṇa’s childhood.
13 Little has been written about this author (but see Snell 1992, 43). Jasvanta Simha is known for his Bhāṣā-bhūṣaṇa. This text, written in dohā – the most common couplet metre of early Hindi poetry (for its explanation see Snell 1992, 20) –, deals with rhetoric. He also wrote smaller works in Braj prose, including Siddhātambodha, Bhagavada gītā tiṭā bhāṣā and Prabodha nāṭaka. All these works are included in Javantsimha granthāvalī (cf. Miśra 1972). Much of this paper’s analysis is based on the Prabodha nāṭaka (pages 81 to 111), which is a Braj translation of the famous Sanskrit drama Prabodhacandrodaya by Kṛṣṇamiśra (on
iii. the *Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā*,\(^\text{14}\) in particular the four hagiographical stories, or *vārtā*, included in this text describing the most influential of the eighty-four Vaiṣṇava followers of Vallabha: the poets Sūradāsa, Kumbhanadāsa, Paramānandadāsa and Kṛṣṇadāsa, known also as the first of *Āṣṭachāpa* (McGregor 1974, 83-8; Grierson 1916, 74; Barz 1976), the well-known school of Braj poetry. The *vārtā* pertaining to these four poets are respectively 81, 82, 83 and 84;\(^\text{15}\)

iv. the *Do sau bāvana vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā*.\(^\text{16}\)

### 3 Ergativity: Some Introductory Remarks

In this section we describe the fundamental principles of ergativity and its role in NIA. As we will see, this paper’s argument rests on these principles. Ergativity has been explained in quite distinct ways. In the present paper the term describes a cross-linguistically recurring case marking and agreement pattern, expressing, formally, the syntactic relation between the core arguments of one- and two-place verb sentences. Consequently, if we use the well-known symbols A and O to identify the two fundamental arguments of a transitive construction and S to identify the fundamental argument of an intransitive construction with single argument,\(^\text{17}\) it is cor-

---

\(^\text{14}\) The *Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā* is the most important Braj-bhāṣā text in prose from the Vallabhācārya’s *sampradāya* (1478-1530 AD) (for details of his life, see Barz 1976, 20-56), the *puṣṭi-mārga*. This work is an easy and colloquial text, where the life description of eighty-four (caurāsī) vaiṣṇava (introduced into *bhakti* by Vallabhācārya) is narrated to train followers. According to Vallabhācārya’s *sampradāya* tradition, the *Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā* was written by Gokulanātha (1552-1641 AD), Viṭṭhalanātha’s fourth son (1515-1564 AD). Viṭṭhalanātha was the son of Vallabhācārya. Gokulanātha collected his grandfather’s and his eighty-four followers’ experiences, together with those of his father Viṭṭhalanātha and his two hundred and fifty two followers (*do sau bāvana*). He drew on these when teaching the *puṣṭi-mārga* practice. According to tradition, Gokulanātha wrote them down in Braj-bhāṣā in his older age and used Braja-bhāṣā for both spiritual and ordinary life. Gokulanātha’s work was collected in the *Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā* and in the *Do sau bāvana vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā*. His nephew Harirāya (1590-1715 AD) subsequently wrote a commentary on these *vartā* called *Bhāva prakāśa*. For further information, see Ṭaṇḍana (1960); Nagendra, Gupta (eds.) (1973, 404-8); McGregor (1984, 131-2, 208-14) and Entwistle (1987, 261-4).

\(^\text{15}\) For our analysis cf. Parīkh D. (ed.) VS 2027 (1970). This edition, considered *standard*, was firstly published in 1948 and is based on a manuscript dated 1695 AD (VS 1752) (cf. Barz 1976, 49), from a private collection in Sidhpur, in the district of Patan, in Gujarāt; cf. Ṭaṇḍana (1960, 50-1, 107-9).

\(^\text{16}\) For our analysis cf. Śarmā B., Parīkh D. (eds.) 1951-1953.

\(^\text{17}\) For a synthesis on this argument cf. Drocco (2008, 18-26).
rect to say, according to Dixon (1994, 22)\textsuperscript{18} that “the term ‘ergativity’ will be used in the standard way, for referring to S and O being treated in the same way, and differently from A. Ergative is then used in relation to A, the marked member of such an opposition, and ‘absolutive’ in relation to S and O, the unmarked term”. Dixon (1994, 9) proposes this scheme to illustrate his definition of ergativity:

```
  
  nominative   \rightarrow \text{ergative} \\
  S \quad \downarrow \\
  A \quad \downarrow \\
  O \quad \downarrow \\
  \rightarrow \text{absolutive} 
```

Generally speaking, ergativity relates to two different parameters: morphological and syntactical. Morphologically speaking, in an ERG-ABS system, S = O in terms of the case-marking system and/or the verbal agreement (Comrie 1978, 336-42; Dixon 1994, 39). In this paper we will focus on this type of ergativity, since syntactical ergativity is not attested in modern IA (cf. Drocco 2008, 110-2). The majority of, if not all, the world’s languages which use the ERG-ABS system present alongside this system of case marking and/or verbal agreement also the NOM-ACC system (characterized by S = A, both distinct in respect of O): the resulting system is often described as a \textit{split ergative system} (cf. Comrie 1978; Dixon 1994, 70; Plank 1995, 1184-5). The main factors determining the different split-ergative systems are (i) the location of A on the animacy hierarchy; (ii) the clause type (main vs. dependent); (iii) the semantic nature of the main verb, and (iv) the tense/aspect/mode of the main verb (Dixon 1994, 70-110).

3.1 Ergativity in Indo-Aryan

In most modern IA languages, the ERG-ABS system is attested in perfective clauses. As a consequence these languages are characterized by a split-ergative system, which is conditioned by the tense and aspect of the main verb. The following perfective clauses illustrate how this phenomenon is attested in Modern Hindī and Modern Māravārī:\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{18} See Drocco (2008, 53-5) and notes to find bibliographic references about interpretations and/or definitions of ergativity and Dixon’s definition used in functional and typological studies in \textit{Role and reference grammar}.

\textsuperscript{19} For the transliteration of devanāgarī script, the \textit{International Alphabet of Sanskrit Transliteration (I.A.S.T.)}, based on a standard established by the International Congress of Orientalists at Geneva in 1894, is used.
Hindi

(1) sāvitrī kala sārā dina mere pāsa rahī.

Sāvitrī (S) kala sārā dina m-e-r-e pāsa rah-hī (V).
Sāvitrī(F) yesterday all day 1.SG GEN OBL near stay PERF.F
Yesterday Sāvitrī stayed at my house for the whole day. (Caracchi 2002, 119)

(2) gopāla ne cāya chānī (V).

Gopāla (A) ne cāya (O) chān-i (V).
Gopāla(M) ERG tea(F) pour PERF.F
Gopāla poured tea. (Priyamvadā 2000, 42)

Māravāṛī

(3) sītā athe kale āī.

Sītā (S) athe kale ā-ī (V).
Sītā(F) here yesterday come PERF.F
Sītā came here yesterday. (Magier 1983, 248)

(4) sītā eka sogro jimaliyō.

Sītā (A) eka sogro (O) jimaliy-o (V).
Sītā(F) one (a piece of) bread(M) eat PERF.M.SG
Sītā ate (a piece of) bread. (Magier 1983, 248)

In (1), S, in the direct case and not followed by a postposition, governs the gender and number of the main verb, while (2) shows a perfective transitive clause using the ERG-ABS system in respect to case marking and verbal agreement: A is followed by a specific case-marker, which is ne in Hindi, and main verb shows agreement with O in gender and number (cf., among many others, Matthews 1952, 394; Pandharipande, Kachru 1977, 219-20, 223-4). The ERG-ABS system of Māravāṛī is different from that of Hindi and the majority of modern NIA languages. Indeed, in this language S ≠ A, as typical of an ERG-ABS system, but this is true only for some pronouns and some nouns (Magier 1983, 244-5; Khokhlova 2001, 167; cf. also Khokhlova 2006). For example, in (4) A is not followed by any case-marker, because it is a proper noun. When a proper noun is used in Māravāṛī, S = A, even in perfective clauses. As in (2), the main verb is in agreement in gender and
number with O, which is a genuine ERG-ABS system.

What it is true for Hindī and Māravāṛī it is also true for all modern IA languages showing the typological parameter of split-ergativity. Although there are variations of the case-marking rules of A in perfective clauses (sometimes S = A, as in Māravāṛī), their verbal agreement, in the majority of cases, is aligned according an ERG-ABS system if O is not followed by any postposition.

3.2 Ergativity and Differential Object Marking in Indo-Aryan

An intriguing feature of modern IA with ergative and non-ergative constructions alike, but of particular interest in those languages showing split-ergativity, is the marking of O when it is either animate or ‘definite’ (i.e. one that is already known) (cf. Comrie 1979, 212-5; Klaiman 1987, 76-7; Masica 1991, 365-9). This is normally done with the dative postposition, called for this reason the DAT/ACC postposition (Masica 1991, 365).

In an IA ergative construction the case-marking of O is very important, even if done for a reason other than that under examination, for the resulting verbal agreement (cf. Klaiman 1987, 77-93; Masica 1991, 342). Consider the following Hindī perfective clause:

20 In Nepālī, A is always in agreement with main verb in perfective clauses, even if in the latter is followed by the ergative case-marker le (cf. Klaiman 1987, 78; Masica 1991, 343).

21 See Dahl, Stroński 2016 for a recent and detailed account of ergativity in IA; cf. also the papers included in Dahl, Stroński (eds.) (2016).

22 In Kāśmīrī, where is also present an ERG-ABS system in perfective tenses, O is followed by a specific case-marker only in non-perfective clauses (cf. Klaiman 1987, 77). In contrast, as Hook and Koul (2002, 143) have pointed out, explicit marking for direct object is not required “in the simple past and perfect tenses”. Even if Verbeke, De Clercq (2016, 47) assert that this construction occur only in Kāśmīrī and Pogulī (the latter also a Dardic language spoken in Jammu and Kashmir state and resembling Kāśmīrī), Zoller (2007) and recently Drocco (2016c) showed that also in the endangered language Baṅgāṇī (spoken between the Pabar and Tons rivers in the Uttarkāśī district of the Uttarākhaṇḍ state), where is also present an ergative-absolutive case-marking and verbal agreement system in perfective constructions, O is never marked in ergative clauses.

23 According to Masica (2001, 243-6) the marking of definiteness (as he called it) by the use of the ACC (or DAT/ACC) marker on direct objects is a typical feature of the South Asia seen as a linguistic area. As regards India reputed a good example of a linguistic area see also Masica 1976.

24 In the absence of explicit reference, the extract is drawn from the interviews conducted with mother-tongue speakers.
In (5), the main verb is not in agreement with O, a feminine noun (= laṛakiyoṁ, F), but is masculine and singular. Since both A and O in this Hindī construction are followed by a postposition, the main verb cannot agree with either and, consequently, is always in the masculine singular. This form of the verb has been called the ‘neutral’ form by several scholars (cf. Matthews 1952, 394; Masica 1991, 342; Palmer 1994, 59). Therefore in Hindī if A is followed by ne and O is followed by ko the standard ERG-ABS agreement is blocked.

Before continuing it is important to point out that in Hindī if O is ‘definite’ (i.e. one that is already known) thus, even if non-human, the DAT/ACC postposition ko is present, exactly as in the following constructions:

Hindī

(6) āja merī bahana isa kahānī ko nahīṁ paṛhegī.

(7) bhikṣuka ne gaṭharī ko ājamāyā.
In Hindī perfective clauses, the verb does not agree with O (thereby showing its ‘neutral’ form), not only if O is followed by ko, but also if O is a subordinate object clause, as in the reported speech, or if no specific O is expressed or implied (cf. Matthews 1952, 393-4; Caracchi 2002, 80-1).

The DAT/ACC postposition follows O also in Gujarātī and Māravāṛī. In both languages this case-marker is represented by the postposition ne. But in Gujarātī and Māravāṛī the verbal agreement is aligned differently to Hindī. This is an example of a Gujarātī perfective clause:

Gujarātī

(8) *chokarāṁe strī ne joī.*

In this example A is followed, as expected, by an ergative case-marker, namely the suffix -e, and O is followed by the DAT/ACC postposition ne. But, as we can see, the main verb is in concord with O, despite the DAT/ACC case-marker following O (cf. Cardona 1964, 270; Lambert 1971, 89; Comrie 1979, 214-5). The same phenomenon occurs in Māravāṛī (cf. Allen 1960, 9-13; Magier 1983, 252-3). In short, in both languages verbal agreement is always organized according an ERG-ABS system, even when O is followed by case-marker.

The Hindī ERG-ABS system is attested in all perfective sentences, that is in all clauses where the verb is constructed with the past participle of main verb and an auxiliary verb of *honā* (cf. Matthews 1952; Caracchi 2002, 80). In these clauses the auxiliary *honā* is in agreement with O if the latter is in the direct case, but if O is followed by the DAT/ACC postposition the auxiliary *honā* is 3rd singular person, as in (9):

Hindī

(9) *prasāda ne una laṛakoṁ ko dekhā thā.*

In this example A is followed, as expected, by an ergative case-marker, namely the suffix -e, and O is followed by the DAT/ACC postposition ne. But, as we can see, the main verb is in concord with O, despite the DAT/ACC case-marker following O (cf. Cardona 1964, 270; Lambert 1971, 89; Comrie 1979, 214-5). The same phenomenon occurs in Māravāṛī (cf. Allen 1960, 9-13; Magier 1983, 252-3). In short, in both languages verbal agreement is always organized according an ERG-ABS system, even when O is followed by case-marker.

The Hindī ERG-ABS system is attested in all perfective sentences, that is in all clauses where the verb is constructed with the past participle of main verb and an auxiliary verb of *honā* (cf. Matthews 1952; Caracchi 2002, 80). In these clauses the auxiliary *honā* is in agreement with O if the latter is in the direct case, but if O is followed by the DAT/ACC postposition the auxiliary *honā* is 3rd singular person, as in (9):

Hindī

(9) *prasāda ne una laṛakoṁ ko dekhā thā.*
However, as described earlier, the situation is different in Gujarātī:

Gujarātī

(10) *mem tama ne mārayā che.*

In (10), contrary to Hindī (cf. example 9), the main verb agrees with O, while auxiliary is in the 'unmarked form' showing concord with no nominal at all (cf. Cardona 1964, 270; Magier 1983, 251).25 In Māravāṛī, depending on the tense of the auxiliary after the past participle of the main verb, two different compound past tenses can be formed, namely the present perfect and past perfect. According to Magier (1983, 248-50), in this language the main verb is in agreement with O in the present perfect, even if O is followed by postposition, and, in contrast to Gujarātī, the auxiliary agrees with A (cf. example no. 11). If the verb is in past perfect, both the main verb and auxiliary follow the standard ERG-ABS system, even if O is followed by the DAT/ACC marker *ne* (cf. example no. 12).26

Māravāṛī

(11) *mhaiṁ sītā ne dekhī hūṁ.*

(12) *mhe sītā ne dekhī hī.*

25 This kind of verbal agreement is not only attested in Gujarātī, but also in Mevāṛī, a dialect of Rājasthānī; see Magier (1983, 251).

26 We use this gloss for the 1st person singular pronoun of Māravāṛī because in the contemporary form of this language the instrumental suppletive form is sometimes used, instead of the nominative one, for S and A in perfective clauses; cf. Drocco (2008, 94-5).
Khokhlova’s studies on modern Māravārī (1992, 89-90 and 2001, 168) seem to confirm Magier’s work (1983). However, she adds that this specific kind of verbal agreement in the present perfect is particularly frequent when A is the first person singular pronoun (cf. also Allen 1960 note 13). With examples from contemporary Māravārī prose, Khokhlova further notes that in present perfect sentences with A as a first person singular pronoun, both the main and auxiliary verbs agree with O, following the standard ERG-ABS system, as in the past perfect (cf. example no. 12).

4 Differential Object Marking in Early New Indo-Aryan

As we said in the introduction of this paper, little attention has been devoted to the evolution and the formation of the main NIA languages, especially from a syntactic and morpho-syntactic perspective. For example, there are few works examining the evolution of the original IA ERG-ABS system in NIA. Some recent examples are those of Khokhlova (1992, 1995, 2001), Drocco (2008, 2016a, 2016b), Montaut (2007, 2016) and Stroński (2011). However, although these works examine the dissolution and restoration of the ERG-ABS system, they focus on the case-marking of A. They dedicate little attention to the morpho-syntactic coding of O, in terms of case-marking and verbal agreement.27 The rest of this paper aims to fill this gap28 by analysing sentences from the texts mentioned above.29 Since we will focus on medieval Māravārī and especially on Braj, we think it is useful to mention the findings of those scholars who have studied this topic.

Tessitori’s work (1913a, 553-67; 1914, 216) was especially concerned with the etymology of the dative marker naiṁ, which is mostly used to mark O. He asserts that the use of this postposition is regular in this function; however, he does not explain in which tenses this postposition is generally employed. Furthermore he does not illustrate the verbal agreement patterns found in perfective sentences when O is followed by naiṁ. Therefore

27 The case-marking of O with a specific postposition, if human/animate and/or definite, seems to be an NIA innovation. In pre-nineteenth century studies, it was proposed that the argument in the O role is variably marked by the oblique case and/or by a postposition. However, it remains unclear how and when this innovation took place in modern IA languages, especially in those varieties characterized by an ERG-ABS system.

28 A very recent contribution devoted to the diachronic analysis of this important feature of NIA languages is the talk titled “Dative/accusative syncretism in New Indo-Aryan” presented by Ashwini Deo, Christin Schätzle and Miriam Butt at the workshop “Middle and Early New Indo-Aryan: a crucial period for linguistic development?” in the context of the 49th Annual Meeting of the Societas Linguistica Europaea (see note 6 above).

29 In the texts examined, ne is used as an ergative case-marker in the perfective. In this study, we only consider those sentences in which this postposition is present, because genuine ergative constructions.
the diachronic development resulting in the agreement patterns of present-day Māravāṛī have not been described (cf. § 3.1 and § 3.2 above). Like Tessori, Khokhlova (2001) examined pre-eighteenth century Māravāṛī, but focused her attention on the attrition of the original ERG-ABS system of IA. She (2001, 167) says, “The ‘accusative’ postposition appeared first in constructions with verbs in imperfective tenses and later penetrated also into the perfective domain”. Khokhlova (2001, 182 note 5) also adds that, in regards to the imperfective tenses, “the accusative postposition has been used since the fifteenth century”, but only since the seventeenth century in perfective tenses. Smith (1975, 449), also focusing on early Māravāṛī, says that, “If the logical object of a transitive verb is followed by the objective postposition nai/nūṁ, the verb and auxiliary show the form expected if there were no such postposition”. However, this author does not give examples which illustrate this. Moreover, he does not illustrate the evolution of this particular morpho-syntactic phenomenon. Consequently, there remains a lack of evidence showing Māravāṛī’s agreement pattern in ergative constructions where O is followed by the DAT/ACC postposition.

As regards verba dicendi it is interesting to examine the following ergative construction taken from a Māravāṛī prose text:

Medieval Māravāṛī

(13) pābūjī kahī [...]  

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
\text{Pābūjī (A)} & \text{kahī (V)} & \ldots \\
\text{Pābūjī (M)} & \text{say-PERF.F} \\
\text{Pābūjī said [...]}
\end{array}
\]

(Naiṇā, Muṁhato, Muṁhatā Naiṇāsīṛī Ḫhyāṭa III.66.3x, adapted from Smith 1975, 450)

In (13), despite A being masculine,\(^{30}\) the verb is feminine. This is typical not only in Māravāṛī (Smith 1975; Hāṛautī, a Rājasthānī dialect cf. Allen 1960, 10), but also in Braj-bhāṣā (McGregor 1968, 85, 94, 224, note 3) when is present a reporting speech. The verb appears to agree with the noun bāta (F) ‘the thing said’, which is not mentioned. However, it is important to point out that in some cases sentences with the argument in A role show ‘neutral/impersonal’ form agreement, akin to that in Modern Standard Hindī; that is, masculine and singular, as in the following construction:

\(^{30}\) In medieval and modern Māravāṛī (as regards the latter cf. § 4.) proper nouns does not present any case-marker and/or inflection when they occur as A of perfective constructions; as a consequence in these clauses they show S = A.
Medieval Māravāṛī

(14) pābūjī kahyo […]

Data illustrating the case-marking of O in Braj-bhāṣā perfective clauses and the associated agreement patterns are scantier than those of Māravāṛī. Indeed, in Varmā (1935) and Snell (1992), it is not possible to find any evidence about this particular topic. The same is true for the introductory linguistic notes to the editions of the devotional poems of Svāmī Haridās, of Kevalarāma’s Rāsa māna ke pada and of Hita Harivamśa’s Caurāsī pada, published by Ludmila L. Rosenstein (ed. 1997), Alan W. Entwistle (ed. 1993) and Rupert Snell (ed. 1991), respectively. To my knowledge, the only scholar who has analyzed this phenomenon seems to be McGregor (1968): we will review his work in the following section.

4.1 Differential Object Marking in Early Braj-bhāṣā Prose Texts

In the prose text of Indrajit of Orchā, ergative constructions, called perfective-agentive by McGregor (1968, 224), are normally used. In these sentences O agrees with main verb (sometimes followed by an auxiliary), while A, if a noun, takes the oblique case (if different from the direct one); in case it is a pronoun, it shows either the oblique case or a case other than the direct. Both arguments are never followed by any postposition. Indeed, in this text the typical ergative case-marker of Hindī, the postposition ne, is not attested (129-130, 224-5). In regards to the verbal agreement pattern of perfective clauses with ko after O, McGregor (1968, 225) says:

It is noteworthy that there are no examples clearly parallel to the common impersonal perfective-agentive construction of mod.(ern) st.(andard) H.(indī), which shows obl.(ique) case nominal form + ko with perfective participle in concord […] [and] which is found wherever a ‘definite object’ would have been semantically appropriate in conjunction with a non-perfective verbal form.

We can thus conclude that, in the language used in the prose of Indrajit of Orchā a case-marking system of O in perfective clauses, which influences verbal agreement as in Modern Hindī, had not developed. McGregor
makes some very interesting arguments about the occurrence of this kind of construction in other Braj-bhāṣā literature. He (1968, 225) asserts:

Sūr’s use of perfective-agentive constructions appears to agree substantially with that of this text. His perfective forms predominantly show concord with unsuffixed subs., even where there would be scope for regarding these as ‘definite objects’ in terms of the mod.(ern) st.(andard) H.(indī) construction.

This is confirmed by some ergative clauses found in the Sūrasāgara, as in example (15) and (16) below:31

(15) prathama karī hari mākhana corī.

As we can see, in both constructions O is in agreement with the verb. In particular this is true also for construction in (16) where O is a proper noun referring to a human argument: in a similar Modern Hindī construction O would certainly have been followed by the DAT/ACC postposition ko, the latter neutralising the verbal agreement according an ERG-ABS system.

4.1.1 Differential Object Marking in the Prabodha nāṭaka

In the Prabodha nāṭaka, unlike in Indrajit’s text, A is followed by ne, but only in perfective sentences. It is important to note that the use of this postposition as the ergative case marker of A is not obligatory, as in Mod-

31 In this example Syāma shows plural agreement with the verb, probably because it is an honorific. The same is true for Modern Standard Hindī, especially when are used titles and/or honorific prefixes/suffixes (cf. Caracchi 2002, 30-2).
ern Standard Hindi (Drocco 2008, chapter 6). In a perfective clause with A followed by ne but with O in the direct case, the latter agrees with the main verb in both gender and number. In the few instances in which there are human and/or definite Os (e.g. proper nouns and first and second person pronouns), the DAT/ACC postposition kom/kauṁ is present. Nevertheless, verbal agreement is not always clear, as in the following sentence:

(17) Bastubicāra nai Kāma kauṁ māryau […]

In (17), it is not possible to determine whether the main verb māranā is masculine and singular, because O is marked by the postposition kauṁ. The verb could be either in the ‘neuter form’, as it would be in Hindi, or in agreement with O, as it would be in Māravārī and Gujarāṭī. This is because O is masculine, singular, and a 3rd person. Similar observations can be made about (18), since the past participle of pathā- is masculine and singular and the same is true for O, a 1st singular person pronoun related to Bairaga, occurring in the previous construction, also masculine and singular. However, the auxiliary honā, here in the 3rd person singular, does not agree with O, but is surely in the ‘neuter form’.

(18) mo kauṁ devi āsatikatā nai paṭhayo hai […]

Consequently, with regard to the morpho-syntactic feature under examination, examples (17) and (18) do not provide sufficient data to establish whether Braj behaves like Hindi or Māravārī/Gujarāṭī. However, if we look at the following sentence (i.e. 19), it is interesting to observe how

32 As such, in 17, as well as in some of the following examples, we have shown the various possibilities by marking them with “?”.

Drocco. Rājasthānī features in medieval Braj prose texts
example (18) is given in a different manuscript of the *Prabodha nāṭaka*:

(19) *mo kaum devi āsatikatā naim paṭhayau hauṁ.*

As we can see, example (19) is very similar to (18). The only difference in the reading is the form of the auxiliary. In (19), there is agreement of the auxiliary with the first singular person pronoun, that in the construction is O + *kaum*: as we have mentioned above, this is a characteristic of present-day Māravāṛī (cf. Khokhlova’s arguments above).

Now we offer another example:

(20) *mo kom devi āsatikatā nai paṭhaī hai [...]*

In (20) O is a 1st person singular pronoun referring to feminine noun. Consequently, in this example, the main verb *paṭha*- seems to be in agreement with O, even if followed by the DAT-ACC postposition *kom*, while the auxiliary is in the 3rd person singular, that is, the ‘neutral form’. This construction (20) is thus morphosyntactically very similar to other constructions in Gujarāṭī (cf. example no. 8) and Mevāṛī, the latter being a dialect of Rājasthānī (cf. note no. 25). Ultimately, it is not possible to advance conclusive arguments concerning agreement patterns in the *Prabodha nāṭaka*’s perfective sentences which introduce reported speech. This is due to the fact that in this text a reported speech is introduced through
the verb *bola*: the latter always agrees with its subject and thus follows a NOM-ACC pattern (cf. Drocco 2008, 230 note 28).

### 4.1.2 Differential Object Marking in vārtā Literature

In the *Caurāsi vaisṇavaṇa ki vārtā* perfective clauses following an ERG-ABS alignment are very frequent, but, as in the *Prabodha nāṭaka*, the use of the ergative case-maker *ne* is not fixed (see Drocco 2008, ch. 6 and Drocco 2016a). In perfective clauses, when A is followed by *ne* and O is not followed by any case marker, verbal agreement typically follows an ERG-ABS pattern (cf. 21).

(21) [...] *mathurā teṁ pāmcasau manuṣya birabala ne paṭhāye*

A verb introducing reported speech (for example, *kaha-, pucha-*), if perfective and with A followed by *ne*, is frequently in the feminine, as in medieval Māravārī and other Braj-bhāṣā texts. Consider the following example:

(22) *so [...] desādhipati nem sūradāsa som kahī [...]*

However, as illustrated in (23), the same verbs in the perfective may be masculine and singular, as in Modern Standard Hindī:

(23) *so desādhipati ne sūradāsa som kahyo [...]*
In the *Caurāśī vaisnavana kī vārtā* the use of the DAT/ACC postposition after O in an ergative construction is infrequent. When it occurs, O is always human and definite. However, in such cases, verbal agreement is always according an ERG-ABS system. For example:

(24) *hama kom śrīacāryajī ne [...] rākhe hate, [...]*

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
\text{hama (O)} & \text{kom} & \text{Śrīacāryajī (A)} & \text{ne [...] rākhe (V)} \\
1PL.DIR & DAT/ACC & Ācāryajī & ERG & put-PERF.M.PL \\
\end{array}
\]

The same is true for these common and proper nouns occurring as O (cf. 25), sometimes followed by the honorific suffix -jī (cf. 26): with this kind of nominals the typical ‘honorific plural’ (cf. note no. 31) is normally adopted and, as a consequence, the verb shows plural agreement:

(25) * [...] śrīgusāmījī ne sūradāsa kom [...] na dekhe.*

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
\text{Śrīgusāmījī (A)} & \text{ne} & \text{Sūradāsa (O) kom} & \text{ [...] na dekhe (V)} \\
\text{ERG} & \text{DAT/ACC} & \text{NEG} & \text{PERF.M.PL} \\
\end{array}
\]

(26) * [...] taba Śrīgiradharajī ne sūradāsa jī kom bulāye [...]*

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
\text{taba Šrīgiradharajī (A) ne} & \text{sūradāsa (O) kom} & \text{bulā-ye (V)} \\
\text{thus Śrī Giradharajī (M) ERG} & \text{Sūradāsa DAT/ACC} & \text{call-PERF-M.PL} \\
\end{array}
\]

The situation described so far is very similar to the situation of *Do sau bāvana vaisnavana kī vārtā* that, even if also ascribed to Gokulanātha, it has a different manuscript tradition compared to *Caurāśī vaisnavana kī vārtā*; see examples in (27) and (28) below very similar to (22) and (23) above:
In regard to the topic of the present study, it is possible to find perfective clauses with A followed by the ergative postposition *ne* and O in agreement with main verb also in the *Do sau bāvana vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā*, even if marked with the DAT/ACC postposition *koṁ*, exactly as the other Braj constructions presented below and, as already said, similarly to the situation found in present-day Māravārī.

(29) [...] tāhī samaya bhītariyā āyo [...] kānhabāī koṁ dekhī.

(30) tuma koṁ śrīgusāṁījī ne bulāe haim.
the postposition *kom*, with the main verb certainly in the unmarked form, i.e. masculine and singular and the auxiliary in the third person. This is the situation found in Modern Standard Hindī. For example:

(31) *hama kom corana nem lūtyo hai.*

(32) *tuma kom kinane bulāyo hai?*

5 Conclusion

Until now, the morpho-syntax of verbal agreement in Braj-bhāṣā perfective sentences, especially when O is followed by a case-marker, has received little attention from scholars. The main aim of the paper was to contribute in filling this gap. The aforementioned examples from the texts of the few available Braj-bhāṣā prose works, which are reliable for the purpose of linguistic analysis, show that Braj-bhāṣā and other NIA languages and/or dialects related to Rājasthānī and/or to Gujarātī behave quite similarly in respect to the phenomenon under investigation. It is interesting to note that Tessitori (1913b), although focusing on other phenomena, advanced some arguments about the relatively similar language of the Digambara version of *Karakuṇḍa kī kathā*. According to the writer from Udine, that language seemed classifiable as ‘Jaipurī’; however, this Jaipurī is distinct from Modern Jaipurī, since the language was at an earlier stage of development and showed similarities with both Māravāṛī and Braj-bhāṣā (Tessitori 1913b, 63). In fact the Jaipurī language of the *Karakuṇḍa kī kathā*
is more similar to Western Hindi than Modern Jaipurī. The latter is now considered a linguistic variety of Māravāṛī and therefore very similar to Gujarātī (cf. Tessitori 1913b, 63) and this, according this Italian scholar (1913b, 64), is:

according to the hypothesis [...] that the dialects of eastern Rajasthani and those of Western Hindī would be derived from a single language that I would call ancient eastern Rajasthani, to distinguish it from the ancient western Rajasthani that [...] is the mother of Maravari and Gujarati. (1913b, 64)

We believe that this paper has further evidenced Tessitori’s hypothesis, which is not yet fully developed. Indeed we propose that both Karakuṇḍa kī kathā and the texts in Braj prose examined in this paper show evidence of common features shared by different varieties. As already pointed out, according to Tessitori this is probably the result of the origin of these varieties from an old vernacular form of Eastern Rajputana – whether Old Eastern Rajasthānī or Old Western Hindī – “in origin more closely allied to the language of the Gangetic Doab than to that of Western Rajputana and Gujarat, and [...] only afterwards differentiated from the former under the influence of the latter” (Tessitori 1914, 23). However a more detailed analysis, taking into account the studies on contact linguistics (cf., for example, Thomason, Kaufman 1988; Thomason 2001; Winford 2003), should be done to validate Tessitori’s hypothesis.

In conclusion, a study of the major dialects of Rājasthānī, especially the eastern ones, and those of Western Hindī could help to understand and define more precisely the development of the current ERG-ABS system of Modern Hindī. This is particularly true if this study is coupled with an analysis of the possible mutual influence between them, of which, it should be remembered, significant written evidence exists, though most remains unexamined in manuscript.

34 Translation of the following original Italian text: “in pieno accordo coll’ipotesi [...] secondo cui i dialetti della rājasthānī orientale e quelli della hindī occidentale sarebbero derivati da un unico ceppo e cioè da quella lingua, che io chiamerei antica rājasthānī orientale, per distinguerci dall’antica rājasthānī occidentale che [...] è la madre della māravāḍī e della gujarāṭī” (Tessitori 1913b, 64).
Bibliography


