

**LINGUISTICS 1: TYPOLOGY AND UNIVERSALS**

# **Paper Presentation**

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# THE STRUCTURE OF DIMASA AS AN SOV LANGUAGE

BY  
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# THE STRUCTURE OF DIMASA AS AN SOV LANGUAGE

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## DIMASA

- Dimasa belongs to the Bodo-Garo group of Tibeto-Burman family of languages.
- Spoken mainly in parts of Assam and Nagaland.
- According to Census of India 2001, total population of Dimasa speakers was 1,11,961

# THE STRUCTURE OF DIMASA AS AN SOV LANGUAGE

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## WORD ORDER

- Normal word order: SOV
- Alternative word order: OSV

Examples:

- **bo makam zi-du**  
*he rice eats* (SOV)
- **makam bo zi-du**  
*rice he eats* (OSV)

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## AGREEMENT

- Verbs do not show Gender, Number, Person agreement.

Examples:

- **an**      **pori-du**      *I read*
- **zin**      **pori-du**      *We read*
- **niŋ**      **pori-du**      *You read*
- **bo**      **pori-du**      *He/She reads*
- **bonsi** **pori-du**      *They read*

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## D-N-A ORDER

- In Dimasa, the order followed is  
DEMONSTRATIVE – NOUN – DESCRIPTIVE ADJECTIVE – NUMERAL

Example:

- **ebo matla məzaŋba sao-bri**  
DEM girl beautiful four [These four beautiful girls]

**Universal 20:** *"When any or all of the items (demonstrative, numeral, and descriptive adjective) precede the noun, they are always found in that order. If they follow, the order is either the same or its exact opposite."*

# THE STRUCTURE OF DIMASA AS AN SOV LANGUAGE

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## ADJECTIVES

- Adjective follows noun(NA) – not an SOV characteristic.

Examples:

- **bo alu simbi**  
DET cat black [The cat is black]
- **bo zubi**  
she tall [She is tall]

# THE STRUCTURE OF DIMASA AS AN SOV LANGUAGE

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## COMPARISON OF INEQUALITY

**Universal 22:** "If in comparisons of superiority the only order, or one of the alternative orders, is *standard-marker-adjective*, then the language is *postpositional*. With overwhelmingly more than chance frequency if the only order is *adjective-marker-standard*, the language is *prepositional*."

- Comparative marker: 'ta' meaning 'than'
- Follows standard-marker-adjective (agrees with Greenberg)

Example:

- **dhiraj ram ta ham-dao**

Dhiraj Ram than better is [Dhiraj is better than Ram]



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## PERSON AND NUMBER

**Universal 42:** *"All languages have pronominal categories involving at least three persons and two numbers."*

- Dimasa has pronominal categories and distinguishes 3 persons

First      aŋ[I] / ziŋ[We]

Second    niŋ[You] / nisi[You(pl.)]

Third      bo[He/She/It] / bonsi[They]

- Two number distinctions: singular and plural

# THE STRUCTURE OF DIMASA AS AN SOV LANGUAGE

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## GENITIVE

- Genitive follows the governing noun(NG) – not an SOV characteristic.
- Genitive marker – 'ni'

Examples:

- **alu-ni muthai**  
cat-GEN eye [cat's eye]
- **bo aŋ-ni repgoŋ kəma-ka**  
she I-GEN pen lost [she lost my pen]

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## CAUSATIVES

- Causative verbs are morphologically marked by adding *-ri* meaning 'give' to the verb root whether it is transitive or intransitive.
- Some verbs are lexically causative like *dain* 'kill'

Example:

Verb root	Gloss	Causative
○ zi	'eat'	zi-ri
○ tan	'go'	tan-ri
○ tu	'sleep'	tu-ri

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## INTERROGATION

- **Yes-No Questions** – formed by adding the question marker *-ti* to the verb

Examples:

- **nin taŋ-ma-ti**  
you go-FUT-Q [Will you go?]
- **nin zi-ya-ti**  
you eat-NEG-Q [Don't you eat?]

# THE STRUCTURE OF DIMASA AS AN SOV LANGUAGE

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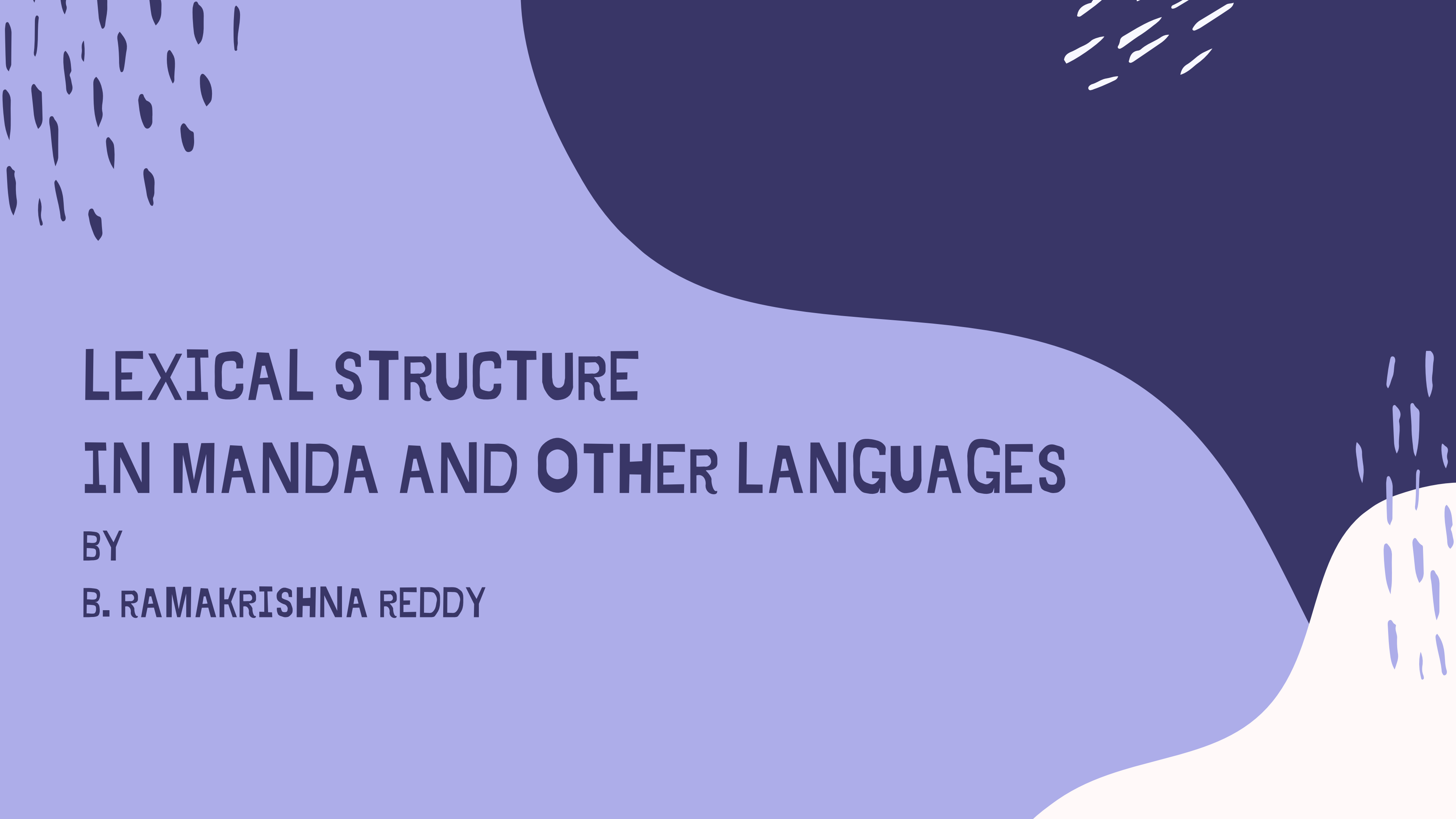
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## INTERROGATION

- **Wh- Questions** – substituting the constituent being questioned, by appropriate interrogative pronoun.

Example:

- **ani bumu ram**  
my name Ram [My name is Ram]
- niŋ bumu sumu**  
your name WH [What is your name?]



# **LEXICAL STRUCTURE IN MANDA AND OTHER LANGUAGES**

**BY**

**B. RAMAKRISHNA REDDY**

# MANDA

- South-central Dravidian
- spoken in parts of Odisha
- 5000 native speakers
- potentially endangered under areal pressure from dominating linguistic groups

## LEXICAL STRUCTURE IN MANDA AND OTHER LANGUAGES

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# DRAVIDIAN LANGUAGES

- Descriptive and referential information is stored in demonstratives, interrogatives and adverbs.

## LEXICAL STRUCTURE IN MANDA AND OTHER LANGUAGES

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# DEMONSTRATIVES

## (1) COMPONENTIAL DESCRIPTION OF DEMONSTRATIVES IN MANDA

Locational information	Semantic information					
	+Human				- Human	
	Male		Female		Sg.	Pl.
	Sg.	Pl.	Sg.	Pl.		
+ Proximate	<i>ivan</i>	<i>ivar</i>	<i>idel</i>	<i>ivahin</i>	<i>idi</i>	<i>ive</i>
[- proximate + visible]	<i>uvan</i>	<i>uvar</i>	<i>udel</i>	<i>uvahin</i>	<i>u:di</i>	<i>u:vi</i>
[-proximate -visible]	<i>e:van</i>	<i>e.var</i>	<i>e:del</i>	<i>e.vahin</i>	<i>e:di</i>	<i>e:vi</i>

## (2) COMPONENTIAL DESCRIPTION OF DEMONSTRATIVES IN TELUGU

Locational information	Semantic information				
	+Human			- Human	
	Sg.		Pl.	Sg.	Pl
	+ Masculine	- Masculine			
+ Proximate	<i>vi:du</i>	<i>i:me</i>	<i>vi:l̥lu</i>	<i>idi</i>	<i>ivi</i>
- Proximate	<i>va:du</i>	<i>a:me</i>	<i>va:l̥lu</i>	<i>adi</i>	<i>avi</i>

## LEXICAL STRUCTURE IN MANDA AND OTHER LANGUAGES

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# INTERROGATIVES

## (3)(a) MANDA INTERROGATIVES EQUIVALENT TO 'WHO'

*inan*  
Question  
Human  
Masculine  
Singular

*inar*  
Question  
Human  
Masculine  
Plural

*indel*  
Question  
Human  
Feminine  
Singular

*inahin*  
Question  
Human  
Feminine  
Plural

LEXICAL  
STRUCTURE IN  
MANDA AND  
OTHER  
LANGUAGES

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# KINSHIP TERMS

- reflection of sociocultural norms
- kinship terms incorporate gender, age and status

Example:

- **akka** 'elder sister'
- **celle** 'younger sister'
- **anna** 'elder brother'
- **tammudu** 'younger brother'
- Synonyms – selected depending upon social status of referent, speaker's attitude, context of utterance etc.

## LEXICAL STRUCTURE IN MANDA AND OTHER LANGUAGES

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# NOUN CLASSIFIERS (MANDA)

Noun			
(+ )Count			(-)Count
(+ )Animate		(-)Animate	-
(+)Human	(-)Human	gote	
jan	mund		

- Noun Phrase -> Numeral + Classifier + Noun
- Examples:
  - four boys -> sa:ri-jan kadder
  - four goats -> sa:ri-mund ude
  - four trees -> sa:ri-gote marke

## LEXICAL STRUCTURE IN MANDA AND OTHER LANGUAGES

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# LEXICAL DOUBLETS

- Copulative compounds
- Examples:
  - kadde-ga:rhi [ladka-ladki]

## LEXICAL STRUCTURE IN MANDA AND OTHER LANGUAGES

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# LEXICAL DOUBLETS

## Morpho-syntactic properties

- **Constraint 1:** The fixed order of W1 and W2 is essential and the reversed order is not acceptable to the native speakers. Example:
  - u:ru wa:da [village-suburb] – \*wa:da u:ru
  - ma: ba:p [mother father] – \*ba:p ma:
- **Constraint 2:** Identical morpho-syntactic category of W1 and W2. Examples:
  - pa:ta kotta [old-new]
  - alasi solasi [tired-exhausted]

## LEXICAL STRUCTURE IN MANDA AND OTHER LANGUAGES

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# LEXICAL DOUBLETS

- Lexical doublets vs Conjoined NP – agreement test
  - ✓ ○ i:du: jo:du: kudirindi [the age and pair is well matched]
  - ✗ ○ i:du: jo:du: kudirinaayi
    - verb agrees with singular subject

## Semantic relations

- Meaning of LD is not the sum total of meaning of the two members. Example: wanta wa:rpu [cooking – straining]

## LEXICAL STRUCTURE IN MANDA AND OTHER LANGUAGES

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# LEXICAL DOUBLETS

- **Constraint 3:** W1 shares a particular sense relation with W2 but is also different from it in some semantic detail. The notion of oppositeness appears to be a central figure here:
  - Body parts:
    - ki ka:l [hand leg]
  - Kin:
    - a:ba aya [father mother]
    - dukra dukri [husband wife]
  - Food items:
    - pa:l dayi [milk yoghurt]
    - ga:ra ugeri [fried-rice plain-rice]

## LEXICAL STRUCTURE IN MANDA AND OTHER LANGUAGES

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The background features abstract organic shapes in light purple and dark blue. The top-left purple shape contains a pattern of dark blue raindrops. The bottom-right blue shape contains a pattern of white raindrops. The central area is white and contains the text.

**Thank You!**