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French and Hindi: Linguistic Similarities and Common Patterns between the two Languages

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Abstract		Original Research Article

This paper aims at highlighting the linguistic similarities between two languages which at first glance seem very different from each other for various reasons. These two languages are French and Hindi. There has been almost no comparative study between these two languages. The reason behind this is that there are probably very few speakers who have an adequate linguistic competence in both languages and even fewer who would think about undertaking linguistic research about how the two languages can be similar. In Mauritius, the linguistic situation is thriving thanks to its multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-religious status. While English and French are generally accepted as the country's official languages, the lingua-franca remains Mauritian Creole. Also, quite a few Asian languages and Arabic are taught up to secondary level in schools. Mauritians who speak French and learn Hindi at school are thus among the few privileged speakers who develop competency in these two languages and can draw parallels between the two. This paper tries to explore some very interesting similarities in terms of vocabulary, grammar and syntax that speakers of both languages can detect and future learners of these two language will be able to perceive. The findings in this paper are based upon qualitative research from data provided by speakers of all ages from the Mauritian context, who have almost equal competence in both languages.

Keywords: French, Hindi, similarities, linguistic, phonetic, grammatical, verbs, pronouns.

INTRODUCTION

The Proto-Indo European language (PIE) is widely acknowledged as being the ancestor of 445 present day Indo-European languages spoken mainly throughout Europe and Asia. Linguistic reconstruction of this language was possible through the comparative method which, as the term itself denotes, implies comparing the phonology, morphology, syntax and vocabulary of descendant languages. PIE is known to have branched out into two main groups of languages as a result of migration of this proto population to Europe and Asia. One of the daughter languages of PIE is Indo-European, which gave rise to Proto-Anatolian, Proto-Tocharian, Proto-Italic, Proto-Celtic, Proto-Germanic, Proto-Balto-Slavic, Proto-Armenian, Proto-Albanian and Proto-Greek. These Proto-Languages in turn branched into other groups of languages. The other daughter language, Proto-Indo-Iranian developed as the population migrated eastwards and this proto language equally gave birth to a large number of parent languages that branched out further with time. This paper aims to look at two languages which are distantly related because of the subsequent branching of their parental and ancestral language groups but nevertheless retain interesting similarities in terms of vocabulary - or rather the phonological form of their vocabulary, morphology and grammar. Linguistic study that closely compares these two languages is not available and so the findings in this paper will hopefully contribute in some novel way to the field of bilingualism.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

All data and material have been taken from speakers who are proficient both in Hindi and French, mostly from Mauritius although it would be relevant to mention that the speakers are much more fluent in French than in Hindi due to wider use and exposure to French. Proficiency in Hindi of the speakers who provided data (including the author herself), is nevertheless non-negligible since daily programmes in Hindi are available both on radio and on television and there are even dedicated Hindi television and radio channels. Examples are inspired both from audiovisual programmes and school textbooks.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

French forms part of the Romance languages which descend from Latin, which is itself a descendant of Italic. As for Hindi, this Indian language descends from Pali, itself derived from Sanskrit, which is the daughter language of Indo-Aryan, itself a descendant of Indo-Iranian. It is worth noting that there is a difference between Modern Standard Hindi and Hindustani (a mix of Hindi and Urdu), the former consisting of words mainly from Sanskrit and the latter drawing its vocabulary mostly from Persian. However the two languages sound almost identical when spoken, with differences in vocabulary which do not hamper communication.

Differences abound between the two languages. French uses Latin script while Hindi uses Devanagari script. Also the first one is a SVO language unlike the second which is SOV. The phonetic systems of the two languages are also vastly different from each other. The consonantal system in Hindi contains aspirated and retroflex consonants which are inexistent in French. On the other hand, native speakers of Hindi find it extremely difficult to pronounce the famous French voiceless and voiced uvular trills /ʀ/ and /ʁ/ or the consonant /ʒ/ as well as the French vowel sound /y/ or /œ/ because these sounds are inexistent in their mother-tongue. Apart from the different sets of phonemes, there are certainly many other differences in terms of parts of speech, lexicon, grammatical rules and the syntactic order of sentences. Yet both languages can be considered as being complex with linguistic features and grammatical rules that are inexistent in several other related languages such as English. What are these similarities? These can be observed in the root forms of many lexical items of both languages, formal and informal address, gender of inanimate, collective and uncountable nouns, agreement between nouns and other parts of speech, agreement between verb and subject/object and finally, modes and tenses of verbs.

Note: The vocabulary section in this paper is about comparisons between French and the standardised version of Hindi which is Sanskrit based, not Hindustani. In other parts of the paper, both Modern Standard Hindi and Hindustani will be used as examples.

1. VOCABULARY

French and Hindi do not have the same phonemic base although both are known to have about 38 phonemes. Yet part of their vocabulary is phonemically very similar as both languages have conserved at least part of the pronunciation as it would have been in its original form. Table 1 below provides cognate words in French and Hindi.

Table-1

	French		Hindi		Meaning
Pronouns	moi	[mwa]	main	[mɛ:]	me
	toi	[twa]	tu	[tu:]	you (Singular)
Relationship	papa	[papa]	pita	[pɪta]	father
	maman	[mamã]	mata	[mata]	mother
Food items	ananas	[anana]	anaanas	[əna:nas]	pineapple
	concombre	[kõkõbʀ]	kakri	[kəkrɪ]	cucumber
	miel	[mjɛl]	madhu	[mədʰu]	honey
Body parts	nez	[ne]	naak	[na:k]	nose
	oeil	[œj]	ankh	[ãkʰ]	eye
	pied	[pje]	peyr	[pɛjr]	foot
	dent	[dã]	dant	[dɑ̃t]	tooth
	os	[ɔs]	asthi	[əstʰɪ]	bone
	organe	[ɔʀgan]	ang	[əŋ]	organ
Nature	soleil	[solɛj]	suraj	[su:rjə]	sun
	vent	[vã]	vaayu	[va:ju]	wind
	bambou	[bãbu]	bans	[bɑ̃s]	bamboo
Verbs	donner	[done]	dena	[dena]	give
	mourir	[muʁi:ʀ]	marna	[mərna]	die
	couper	[kupe]	katna	[ka:ʈna]	cut
Adverbs/pronouns	ici	[ɪsɪ]	idhar	[ɪdʰər]	here
	qui	[ki:]	kaun	[kɔ:n]	who
	quoi	[kwa]	kya	[kja]	what
	quand	[kã]	kab	[kəb]	when
	non	[nõ]	nahin/na	[nəhĩ]/ [na]	no/not
	deux	[dø]	do	[do]	two
	sept	[sɛt]	saat	[sa:t]	seven

Numbers	neuf	[nœf]	nau	[nɔw]	nine
	dix	[dʒɪs]	dus	[dəs]	ten
	cent	[sɑ̃]	sau	[sɔw]	hundred
Adjectives	neuf	[nœf]	naya	[nəja]	new
	long	[l�õ]	lamba	[ləmba]	long
	paisible	[pezi:bl]	prashaant	[prəʃɑ̃t]	peaceful
Other words	progrès	[pʁogʁℇ]	pragati	[prəgətɪ]	progress

Nevertheless it should be noted that despite some obvious similarities between a few French words and their Hindi counterparts, the likeness is not due to the common root that they share. The resemblance may be due to foreign lexicon which has been absorbed by either language and phonetically altered over time. A few examples of words which are very similar but are not cognates are 'tomate' [tomat] and 'tamaatar' [ʈəma:ʈəɽ], 'papaye' [papaj] and 'papeeta' [pəpi:ta],

'maïs' [majɪs] and 'makkai' [məkəɪ]. These words have been imported and phonetically adapted to the local context.

A few interesting transformations that may not be random, can also be observed regarding French and Hindi words that share the same root. Table 2 takes a look at such transformations.

Table-2

French		Hindi		Meaning
fleur	[flœ:ʀ]	pushp	[puʃp]	flower
faune	[fo:n]	pashu	[pəʃu]	fauna
fondre	[fõdʀ]	pighalnaa	[pigʰəlna]	melt
fade	[fad]	pheeka	[pʰi:ka]	bland
fruit	[fʀwi]	phal	[pʰəl]	fruit
fortune	[fɔ:ʀtʃyn]	bhaagya	[bʰa:gjə]	fate
futur	[fytʃyʀ]	bhavishya	[bhəviʃyə]	future
frayeur	[fʀejœ:ʀ]	bhay	[bʰəj]	fear
foret	[foʀℇ]	van	[vən]	forest
fort	[fɔ:ʀ]	veer	[vi:r]	strong
promesse	[pʀɔmℇs]	vachan	[vətʃən]	promise
parole	[paʁɔl]	vaartaalaap	[va:rta:la:p]	word/converse
phrase	[fʁa:z]	vaakya	[va:kjə]	sentence
orge	[ɔ:ʀʒ]	jau	[dʒəu]	barley
eau	[o]	jal	[dʒəl]	water
avoine	[avwan]	jaeeka	[dʒajka]	oats

Many French words starting with the fricative /f/ either transform into the voiceless plosive /p/, the aspirated voiceless plosive /pʰ/, the aspirated voiced plosive /bʰ/ or the voiced fricative /v/ in their Hindi counterparts. Interestingly, the Hindi counterparts of some French words starting with a vowel sound such as /ɔ/, /o/ and /a/ start with the consonant sound /dʒ/ as shown in the table. Phonetic changes such as /v/ transforming into /b/ or /kʃ/ transforming into /ʃ/ or /kʰ/ from Sanskrit/Pali to Hindi have been extensively studied (Ruwali K, 1982). It would be interesting to see whether French phonemes have undergone similar underlying transformations from their parent languages.

2. Pronouns: formal and informal

One of the most interesting and obvious similarities between the two languages is the use of formal and informal pronouns when addressing another person. French second person pronoun 'tu' meaning 'you' is equivalent to Hindi 'tuu' to indicate intimacy and 'tum' for familiarity. Both languages also have a

completely different lexeme for the honorific or formal 'you', used while addressing a person who is older, of a higher status or is a stranger with limited degree of familiarity. French word 'vous' and Hindi word 'aap' serve this purpose. Both the formal and informal forms are the basis of derivative words that may belong to other parts of speech. Thus French words 'ton' (your) and 'tien' (yours) are derived from 'tu'. Similarly, in Hindi 'tumhai' (to you) and 'tumhara' (your/yours) are derived from 'tuu'. Note that the formal forms 'vous' and 'aap' in both languages are equally used as the second person plural in their respective languages.

3. Grammatical gender of nouns

Unlike English which has three genders (masculine, feminine and neuter), both French and Hindi have only two genders. All nouns within these two languages are either masculine or feminine. It is commonly agreed that there are no set rules that determine the gender of nouns in French. In fact the gender may change depending on which part of the

world it is being spoken. The same applies in the case of Hindi. There are no hard and steadfast rules that determine the gender of a Hindi noun, specially in the case of inanimate objects. But as a general rule, names of days, months, mountains, trees, flowers, fruits, countries, metals, planets are mostly in the masculine gender. Names of dates, rivers, languages and scripts are usually in the feminine gender in Hindi. In French however, this rule is not applicable although abstract words referring to qualities are always feminine. In reality, in Hindi, synonyms pose a problem as the gender may or may not change with each synonym. Many nouns in Hindustani, generally of Persian origin are feminine while the synonym of these nouns in Modern Standard Hindi is masculine. The opposite is also true. Here are a few examples:

Table-3

Meaning	French	Gender	Hindi	Gender	Hindustani	Gender
river	rivière	F	sarita	M	nadi	F
sky	ciel	M	aakash	M	aasmaan	M
help	aide	F	sahayta	F	madad	F
book	livre	M	pustak	M	kitaab	F
house	maison	F	ghar	M	makaan	M
beauty	beauté	F	soundarya	F	khoobsurati	F

Concerning transforming masculine animate nouns into their feminine counterpart, both Hindi and French generally rely heavily on derivation or morphological inflections as is the case in many other languages. Examples are:

FRENCH chanteur /ʃɑ̃tœʀ/ → chanteuse /ʃɑ̃tøz/   'singer'(m.s) → 'singer'(f.s)
       lion   /lyõ/ → lionne /lijən/   'lion'   → 'lioness'
HINDI gaayak /ga :jək/ → gaayika /ga:jika/   'singer'(m.s) → 'singer'(f.s)
       sinh /sĩhə/ → sinhni /sĩhənɪ/   'lion'   → 'lioness'

4. AGREEMENT
4.1. Agreement between noun and determiner/adjective/pronoun

Since both French and Hindi nouns are either masculine or feminine, determiners, adjectives and pronouns agree with the gender of the nouns they are referring to, describing or replacing. In the case of noun phrases which contain a possessive adjective, the latter agrees with the gender of the nouns they are associated with, instead of agreeing with the gender of the owner as is the case in English noun phrases that contain a noun and a possessive pronoun. Consider the following examples:

(i)   **HINDI** Yaha uss larke ki   behen hai. Yaha uski   hai.
             this that boy of-FS   sister is. this hers-FS is
             DET   PRO
'This is that boy's sister. This is his.'

(ii)   Yaha   larke ka   bhai   hai. Yaha uska   hai.
        this   boy   of-MS   brother is. this his-MS is
        DET   PRO
'This is the boy's brother. This is his.'

(iii)   Meri   maa   acchi   hai. Mera baap   accha   hai.
        my-FS   mother good-FS is. my-MS father good-MS is
        ADJ   ADJ   ADJ   ADJ
'My mother is good-natured. My father is good-natured.'

(i)   **FRENCH** Voici la   soeur du   garçon. C'est la   sienne.
               here the-FS sister of   boy.   it's the-FS his-FS
             DET   DET   PRO
'Here is the boy's sister. It's his.'

(ii)   Voici   le   frère   du   garçon.   C'est   le   sien.
         here the-MS brother   of   boy.   it's   the-MS his-MS
               DET   DET   PRO

'Here is the boy's brother. It's his.'

(iii)   Ma   mère est bonne.   Mon   père   est   bon.
         my-FS mother is good-FS.   my-MS father is   good-MS
         ADJ   ADJ   ADJ   ADJ

'My mother is good-natured. My father is good-natured.'

In the above examples agreement within noun phrases also takes number into consideration. To put it simply, French and Hindi nouns, determiners, adjectives, and pronouns undergo morphological transformations that indicate both gender and number. However in the case of uncountable and collective nouns, the noun or noun phrase will have the usual gender assigned to it but will retain its singular form. The following table takes a look at how words from the above-mentioned parts of speech change morphologically according to gender and number.

Table-4

Part of Speech	French	Hindi	Gender/ Number	Meaning
Noun	instituteur	adhyaapak	MS	teacher-M
	institutrice	adhyaapikaa	FS	teacher-F
	instituteurs	adhyaapakgan/ adhyaapakon (when foll by PREP)	MP	teachers-M
	institutrices	adhyaapikayein/ adhyaapikawon(when foll by PREP)	FP	Teachers-F
Demonstrative adjectives	ce/cet	yaha	MS	this
	cette	yaha	FS	this
	ces	ye	MP	these
	ces	ye	FP	these
Qualifying Adjectives	long	lamba	MS	long
	longue	lambi	FS	long
	longs	lambe	MP	long
	longues	lambĩ	FP	long
Possessive Adjectives	son	uska	MS	his/her/its
	sa	uski	FS	his/her/its
	ses	uske	MP	his/her/its
	ses	uskĩ	FP	his/her/its
Pronouns	le tien	tumhara	MS	yours
	la tienne	tumhari	FS	yours
	les tiens	tumhare	MP	yours
	les tiennes	tumharĩ	FP	yours

4.2 Agreement between verb and subject/object

Syntactically, both languages do not belong to the same group as French is a Subject-Verb-Object language whereas Hindi is a Subject-Object-Verb language. However, since in both languages gender and number play a grammatically significant role, the latter feature heavily influences conjugation of verbs. Hindi verbal inflections indicate both gender and number and generally agree with the subject which can be a noun/noun phrase/pronoun. Thus the verb agrees with the noun/pronoun in the *nominative* case. But the verb will agree with the object if the noun/pronoun the verb refers to, is in the *dative* or *ergative* case in the *indicative* mood. This also happens when the verb is in the *contrafactual* mood. French verbal inflections indicate number but not gender while always agreeing with the subject. However, as in Hindi, the verb does agree with the object or the noun in the *accusative* case in exceptional circumstances. Consider the following examples:

(i)   **FRENCH** La   fille   a   mangé   des   pommes.
                the-FS girl   has eaten-S   some-FP   apples.
'The girl has eaten some apples.'

The verb agrees with the subject.

(ii)   Les   pommes   que   la   fille   a   mang**ées**.
        the-FP   apples   which   the-FS girl has eaten-FP
'The apples which the girl has eaten.'

The verb agrees with the object which has been placed before it and because of the relative pronoun 'que'. Note that French has both direct and indirect object. In a case like this one, if the object

(i)   **HINDI** larki   lichiyan   khaati   hai
         girl-FS litchis-FP   eats-FS   is
'The girl eats litchis.'

The verb agrees with the subject.

(ii)   larki   ne   lichi   khayi
        girl-FS PT   litchi-FS   eaten-FS
'The girl has eaten a litchi.'

(iii)   larki   ne   lichiyan   khayĩ
        girl-FS PT   litchis-FP   eaten-FP
'The girl has eaten litchis.'

(iv)   lichiyan   jo   larki   ne   khayĩ
        litchis-FP   which girl-FS PT   eaten-FP
 'Litchis which the girl has eaten'

In the last 3 examples above, the verb agrees with the object because of the ergative case marker 'ne' which has the grammatical function of indicating the perfective aspect in the past tense.

5. VERBS: MOODS, TENSES, AUXILIARIES AND COPULAE
5.1. Moods and tenses

French verbs can be categorised into **six** moods, among which four are personal (they indicate the subject/subjects and their 'mood'). These are: *indicative, subjunctive, conditional* and *imperative*. The remaining two moods, *participle* and *infinitive* are impersonal as they do not refer to any specific subject. Hindi is generally considered as having **five** moods which include *indicative, subjunctive* and *imperative* as in French and two other moods generally called *presumptive* (implying presumption or indifference) and *contrafactual* (both conditional and subjunctive in the past). The inflectional endings of the word clearly indicate the subject's gender and number in Hindi and subject's number in French. Hindi also has participles and infinitives but they are not categorised as moods.

French verb moods further divide into tenses. The *indicative* mood alone sub divides into eight tenses, the *subjunctive* and *conditional* moods into three tenses while the *imperative, participle* and *infinitive* moods

'pommes' is replaced by an indirect object which necessitates the use of a preposition before the object, agreement will not take place between verb and object.

sub divide into two tenses. Hindi *indicative* has four tenses, *presumptive* has three tenses while the remaining three moods (*contrafactual, participle* and *infinitive*) have two tenses each. In fact, in Bhojpuri, a sister language of Hindi, the *contrafactual* mood can have up to seven tenses, each having their own inflections indicating number and gender as well as the specific tense. These tenses are the simple present, present perfect, present anterior, simple past, imperfect, past perfect and past anterior, all indicating doubt, apprehension or probability in relation to another action (Neerputh N., 1986). Of course, all the moods, whether in French or Hindi, can be broadly classified into past, present and future. The inflectional endings of the verbs also indicate the three common aspects which are simple/habitual, progressive/continuous and perfect in Hindi. In French, aspect does not exist, except in one particular tense, the imperfect tense in the past. The latter is the only tense denoting continuity in French.

The present tenses of both verbs do not show much in common, nevertheless the past tenses of the indicative mood of both languages do show some interesting parallels. In his Hindi Language Blog, Nitin Kumar distinguishes between seven types of past, putting aside the grammatical distinction between definite/indefinite and perfect/progressive. These may roughly have their counterparts in French as shown below:

1. samaanya bhoot: past indefinite tense ⟶ French : passé simple
    meine khat likhi ⟶ j'écrivis une lettre
'I wrote a letter.'

2. aasan bhoot : recent past tense ⟶ French : passé composé
    meine khat likhi hai ⟶ j'ai écrit une lettre
'I have written a letter.'

3. poorna bhoot : past perfect tense ⟶ French : plus-que-parfait
    meine khat likhi thi ⟶ j'avais écrit une lettre
'I had written a letter.'

4. apoorna bhoot: past continuous tense ⟶ French : imparfait
    mein khat likh rahi thi ⟶ j'écrivais une lettre
'I was writing a letter.'

5. sandigdha bhoot: presumptive ⟶ French: passé composé + 'must/might'
    meine khat likhi hogi ⟶ j'ai dû écrire une lettre
'I must/might have written a letter.'

6. hetuhetumad bhoot: conditional past tense ⟶ French: conditionel passé
     agar mein chahata, meine khat likhi hoti ⟶ si je l'avais voulu, j'aurais écrit une lettre
'If I had wanted, I would have written a letter.'

7. abhyasta bhoot: habitual past tense ⟶ French: imparfait + adverb showing repetition
8. mein khat likhta tha ⟶ j'écrivais régulièrement une lettre
'I used to write a letter.'

5.2   Auxiliaries and copulae

French has two main auxiliary verbs 'avoir' (to have) and 'être' (to be) which are heavily used in compound conjugations where the main verb requires support to indicate mood, tense, and number. The same may be said of Hindi verb 'hona' (to be/become) which is heavily used either as a copula or an auxiliary in several verbal constructions to indicate mood, tense, aspect, gender and number. In French there are few verbs which use the 'être' auxiliary as compared to verbs which use 'avoir' auxiliary. The former is mostly used with intransitive verbs of movement and pronominal verbs while the latter is used with the remaining verbs. It is quite interesting how these two auxiliaries translate into Hindi. In the simple present tense in both languages, the 'avoir' auxiliary is translated as the invariable form of Hindi predicate 'hai'(is) while the 'être' auxiliary is translated as the variable form of 'hai' as in the following examples:

- Vous   avez   faim ⟶ aap   ko bhukh hai
  you-FOR or 2P have-2P hunger ⟶ you-FOR or 2P to hunger is
'You are hungry.'
- J'ai   beaucoup à faire ⟶ mujh ko bahut kaam hai
  I have-1S much   to do ⟶ me   to much work is
'I have much to do'
- Je suis fatiguée ⟶ mein thaki   houn
  I   am   tired-1FS ⟶ I   tired-1FS   am
'I am tired'
- Vous êtes   affamés ⟶ aap log   bhukhe   hain
  you-P are-2P hungry-2MP ⟶ you people-2P hungry-2MP are
'You are hungry.'

French verbs which use 'être' auxiliary during compound conjugation, use the Hindi copular verb 'jana' (to go). Some examples are as followed:
- Il est   allé   ⟶ wah   chala   gaya
  he is   gone ⟶ he   gone   went-MS
'He went.'
- Elle se   sera enfuie   ⟶ wah bhaag   jayegi

    she   PRON-FS will run away PAR-FS   ⇢   she   run away will go-FS
'She will have run away.'

- Je me   suis souvenue.   ⇢   mujhe yaad   aa   gaya
  I PRON-1S am remembered PAR-FS ⇢   to me memory come went-MS

'I remembered'

- Nous étions   revenus   ⇢   ham vaapas aa   gaye the
  we   were-1P came back PAR-MP ⇢   we   back   come   went were-MP

'We had come back.'

- Les   vêtements se   sont mouillés   ⇢ kapre   gile   ho   gaye
  the- MP clothes   PRON-3P are wet PAR-MP ⇢ clothes wet-MP be went-MP

'The clothes got wet.'

- L'   enfant   se   sera calmé   ⇢ baccha shaant ho jayega
  the- MS child   PRON-3S will calmed PAR-MS ⇢ child-MS calm   be will go-MS

'The child will become calm.'

Note that in the Hindi counterpart of pronominal verbs, the auxiliary 'hona'(to be/become) is used in conjunction with 'jaana'(to go) in compound forms. These are mostly used for French verbs that have no direct counterpart in Hindi.

The imperfect is the only tense in French to clearly indicate the progressive aspect but it may also show a habitual action. The imperfect denoting progression is translated using the Hindi copula 'rehna'(to stay) while the imperfect which denotes a habitual action is translated using the Hindi copula 'karna'(to do) as shown below:

- Il marchait   ⇢ wah chal raha   tha
  he was walking ⇢ he   walk staying-MS was-MS

'He was walking.'

- Il marchait   souvent ⇢ wah aksar chala   karta   tha
  he was walking often   ⇢ he often walked doing-MS was-MS

'He used to walk.'

How are the two French auxiliaries in the imperfect tense translated in Hindi?
The 'avoir' auxiliary is translated using the copula 'lagna'(to feel) when referring to habitual past but 'lagna' and 'rehna'(to stay) jointly when referring to continuity if it is used intransitively.

- Nous avions peur ⇢ hamain dar lagta   tha
  we had-1P fear ⇢ to us   fear feeling was-MS

'We were scared.'

- Nous avions   peur ⇢ hamain dar lag raha   tha
  we had-1P   fear ⇢ to us   fear feel stayed was-MS

'We were feeling scared.'

When used transitively, the 'avoir' auxiliary is translated using the auxiliary 'hona'(to be) when referring to a habitual past but 'hona' or 'hona' and 'karna' jointly when referring to continuity.

- Nous avions de l'   or   ⇢ hamaare paas sona tha
  we   had-1P some-MS gold   ⇢ our-MP   near gold was-MS

'We had gold.'

- Nous avions de l'   or ⇢ hamaare paas sona hota   tha
  We had-1P some-MS gold ⇢ our-MP   near gold would be was-MS

'We used to have gold'

ALSO hamaare paas sona houwa   karta tha
        Our-MP near gold been-MS   doing was-MS
'We used to have gold.'

As for the 'être' auxiliary, it is used exactly as the 'avoir' auxiliary when the latter is used transitively.

- J'étais   malade ⇢   main bimaar thi
  I was-1S sick   ⇢   I-FS sick   was-FS

'I was sick.'

- J'étais   malade ⇢ main bimaar hoti   thi

    I was-1S   sick   ⟶ I-FS   sick   would be-FS   was-FS
'I used to be sick.'

- J'étais   malade ⟶ main bimaar houwa   karti   thi
  I was-1S   sick   ⟶ I-FS   sick   been-MS   doing-FS   was-FS

'I used to be sick.'

CONCLUSION

It can be seen that despite having evolved in a geographically and culturally diverse context, French and Hindi still retain traces of a common ancestor language not only in vocabulary, but also grammatically. In the case of French, Germanic languages have added variety to this Romance language while in the case of Hindi, a strong Persian influence has modified Modern Standard Hindi to Hindustani which thus incorporates features that are originally from both Indo-Aryan and Indo-Iranian languages. French and Hindi have also absorbed vocabularies from each other. This has not been discussed here because loan words have become an extremely common feature in an increasingly globalised world. This paper has tried to explore some similarities but this is not an exhaustive list. Upon deeper analysis, fluent speakers of both French and Hindi will definitely find more in common. The final goal of this paper is not only to present these findings but also to bring insight to learners of French and Hindi in the hope that the findings here will facilitate acquisition of either language, at least to some extent.

Note

Transcription in this paper has been done following the International Phonetic Alphabet available at https://easypronunciation.com/en/french-letters-pronunciation-ipa-chart and at https:www.google.com/amp/s/hindibyvivek.blog/2020/07/30/phonetic-symbols-of-in-hindi/amp/

Abbreviations

ADJ: adjective	1: First person
DET: determiner	2: Second person
F: feminine	3: Third person
Foll: followed by	
FOR: formal	

M: masculine
P: plural
PAR: participle
PREP: preposition
PRO: pronoun
PRON: pronominal form
PT: past tense
S: singular

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