

## Imperative Construction in Bodo: A Morphosyntactic Study

**Dr. Daimalu Brahma, M.A, NET, Ph.D.**

Assistant Professor  
Barama College, Barama  
Baksa-781346, Assam  
[daimalubrahma85@gmail.com](mailto:daimalubrahma85@gmail.com)

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### Abstract

The paper investigates the imperative construction in Bodo language, it's a Tibeto-Burman language primarily spoken in Northeast India. The imperative mood is a fundamental grammatical feature used to express direct commands, requests, or prohibitions. This analysis aims to provide a detailed structural and functional analysis of Bodo imperatives, focusing on their morphosyntax, subject realization, and the role of pragmatic context in their usage. The study reveals that Bodo uses various strategies for imperative formation, including verb suffixes, positive and negative commands, and inclusive imperatives by interjection. It also explores how person and number influence these forms, suggesting a rich and sensitive system influenced by social dynamics. The study analyzes imperative constructions in Bodo and cognate languages, focusing on affirmative and negative imperatives. It reveals shared linguistic ancestry and language-specific innovations in the imperative mood. The findings contribute to comparative Tibeto-Burman linguistics and the theory of imperative clauses, providing valuable data.

**Keywords:** The Language, Basic Characteristics, Imperative Constructions, Directives, Prohibitive and Interjectional Imperatives.

### 1. Introduction:

This study focuses on the imperative construction in the Bodo language, a significant member of the Bodo-Garo subgroup of the Tibeto-Burman branch of the Sino-Tibetan language family. Bodo is an officially recognized language of India, primarily spoken in Assam as well as some adjacent parts of Assam i.e. Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Meghalaya, West Bengal, some parts of Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan. Crucially, the Bodo-Garo languages, which include other significant speech communities like Dimasa, Garo, Rabha, and Kokborok, share a common linguistic ancestry. A comparative investigation of their grammatical features, particularly the imperative, is thus essential for reconstructing features of the ancestral language and charting their subsequent divergent development.

The Bodo people are officially recognized as a Scheduled Tribe in the state of Assam, India. They are primarily concentrated in the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) in Assam. The areas are administered by the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) under the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution.

The aims of the paper are to investigate the imperative construction of the Bodo language. It will describe the various forms and usages of the imperative and prohibitive constructions. It will try to identify the morphological markers of imperative mood in Bodo, focusing on both affirmative and prohibitive suffixes. It will analyze the structural patterns of direct commands versus polite requests and determine the syntactic rules governing their formation. It will be examined the role of sociolinguistics in Bodo imperatives.

### **1.1. Basic Characteristics of the Language**

Bodo is an agglutinative language; it has prefixing and suffixing system. Most of the grammatical morphemes are one by one suffixed to the base to form meaningful words in the sentences. Bodo has three kinds of major word formation processes i.e. affixation, compounding and reduplication processes. The language has case marking system; all the case markers are suffixed to the nominal words to form a sentence. Syntactically, the basic word order of the language is SOV type. It's a verb-final language. Bodo uses numeral classifiers and these are the prefix forms in the language.

## **2. Data Methodology**

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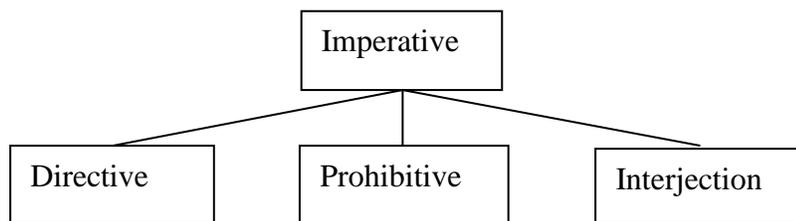
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The data of this paper are collected from the native speakers in standard variety of the Bodo language during the author's Ph.D. research from 2010 to 2016 and now, recently cross checked it. The data are collected from both male and female informants in different age groups. The author being a native speaker of the language, it becomes easy to collect data in the language. All the data again and again cross verified.

### 3. Imperative Construction of the Language

According to Crystal (1980) "An imperative usage refers to verb forms or sentence/clause types typically used in the expression of commands." In linguistics, the imperative is a fundamental grammatical mood and directive mechanism used to express commands, requests, warnings, and prohibitions. By directing a listener to perform or refrain from a specific action, it serves as a core element of discourse that reflects a speaker's socio-pragmatic intentions.

In Bodo, the imperative is characterized as both a morphological and syntactic process. Bodo utilizes three highly productive morphological markers to form imperatives i.e. the /-du/, /-do/ suffixes and the /da-/ prefix. Syntactically, the bare verb or derived verb can also be used to form direct command of the language. Based on these markers and their functional roles, imperative constructions in the Bodo Language are generally divided into three types:



Directive imperatives can be categorized in direct imperative, neutral or polite imperative, immediate imperative, causative imperative, definitive and emphatic imperatives. Prohibitive can be categorized direct prohibitive, emphatic prohibitive, direct confirmative prohibitive and neutral or polite confirmative prohibitive. There are two interjectional forms of words in Bodo i.e. /t<sup>h</sup>uu/ 'let's go' and /no/ 'here, take it' which function as an inclusive imperative and a presentative interjection, respectively. They are discussed below in details.

### 3.1. Direct Imperative

In Bodo, the direct imperative or direct command is a syntactic form indicated by the use of the bare verb stem. While many grammatical moods in Bodo are morphosyntactic (formed by adding specific suffixes to a verb root), the direct command is unique because it is indicated by the bare verb stem alone, without any imperative markers.

When speaking to close friends, family members, or those who are younger or junior to them, direct commands are utilized in social situations.

Consider the following examples:

(1a) p<sup>h</sup>ui !            ‘Come! (Direct command for closed friend or younger person)’

(1b) bejao            p<sup>h</sup>ui  
here                come  
‘Come here!’ (Direct command)

(1c) bejao            danu            p<sup>h</sup>ui  
here                now            come  
‘Come here right now!’ (Direct command)

(2a) za !                ‘Eat! (Direct command for closed friend or younger person)!’

(2b) uŋk<sup>h</sup>am-k<sup>h</sup>uu            za  
rice-ACC                    eat  
‘Eat the rice!’ (Direct command)

(2c) t<sup>h</sup>ab-t<sup>h</sup>ab                za  
immediate-RED            eat  
‘Eat immediately! / Eat quickly!’ (Direct command)

- (2d)    uŋk<sup>h</sup>am-k<sup>h</sup>uu            t<sup>h</sup>ab-t<sup>h</sup>ab            za  
           rice-ACC                    immediate-RED        eat  
           ‘Eat the rice immediately/quickly!’ (Direct command)
- (3a)    mao!                    ‘do/work!’        (Direct command)
- (3b)    k<sup>h</sup>amani-k<sup>h</sup>uu            mao  
           work-ACC                    do  
           ‘Do the work!’ (Direct command)
- (3c)    guk<sup>h</sup>rui-guk<sup>h</sup>rui        mao  
           quick-RED                    do  
           ‘Do (the work) fast!’ (Direct command)
- (3d)    k<sup>h</sup>amani-k<sup>h</sup>uu            guk<sup>h</sup>rui-guk<sup>h</sup>rui        mao  
           work-ACC                    quick-RED                do  
           ‘Do the work fast!/ Do the work quickly!’ (Direct command)
- (4a)    luŋ !                    ‘drink !’ (Direct command)
- (4b)    saha-k<sup>h</sup>uu            lasui-lasui            luŋ  
           tea-ACC                    slow-RED                drink  
           ‘Drink the tea slowly!’        (Direct command)
- (4c)    saha-k<sup>h</sup>uu            lasui-juui            luŋ  
           tea-ACC                    slow-ADV                drink  
           ‘Drink the tea slowly!’        (Direct command)

### 3.2. Neutral or Polite Imperative

Morphologically, Bodo has neutral or polite imperative marker i.e. /-du/ which suffixes to the main verb or bare verb stem to do imperative construction in the language like in Kokborok /-di/ (Debbarma 2014). The polite imperative suffix /-du/ is most commonly used in Bodo language.

Consider the following examples:

Direct Command			Neutral Command or Polite Request		
(5a)	za!	‘Eat!’	(6a)	za-du eat-IMP	‘Please eat!’
(b)	t <sup>h</sup> aŋ!	‘Go!’	(b)	t <sup>h</sup> aŋ-du go-IMP	‘Please go!’
(c)	luŋ!	‘Drink!’	(c)	luŋ-du drink-IMP	‘Please drink’
(d)	hom!	‘Catch!’	(d)	hom-du catch-IMP	‘Please Catch!’

Table No. 1

(7a) आदा! साहाया लोंदो!

ada saha-ja lwŋ-du  
(elder)brother tea-NOM drink-IMP

‘Brother! Please have the tea!’ / (Elder brother! Please drink the tea!)

(7b) आब, नोंसोर थांग्रोदो!

abo nuŋ-suur t<sup>h</sup>aŋ-gru-du  
(elder)sister you-PL go-advance-IMP

‘Sister, please (you) go on ahead!’ / ‘Elder sister! Please you go on ahead!’

(7c) आइयै! ओंखाम संदो! आं उखैबाय।

aijui uŋk<sup>h</sup>am soŋ-du aŋ uk<sup>h</sup>ui-bai  
Mommy rice cook-IMP 1SG hungry-PRF

‘Mommy! Please cook the rice! I am hungry.’

(7d) ओंखामखौ जादो!

uŋk<sup>h</sup>am-k<sup>h</sup>uu za-du

rice-ACC                      eat-IMP  
'Please eat the rice!'

(7e) ओंख्रिखौ रानदो!

uŋk<sup>h</sup>ri-k<sup>h</sup>uu                  ran-duu  
curry-ACC                      distribute-IMP

'Please serve the curry! / Please distribute the curry!'

In Bodo, the distinction between a direct command and a polite request is defined by both the linguistic structure and the social hierarchy of the speakers. Direct command is mostly used to command a younger or junior person. In contrast, the polite command (or polite request) is a morphosyntactic form used to show respect or maintain formal social boundaries; Bodo requires the addition of imperative suffix /-duu/ to the verb root. This form is essential when speaking to elderly persons or superiors, strangers or in a formal environment.

### 3.3. Immediate Imperative

An immediate imperative or command is a directive issued to express an action that must be performed instantaneously. It is characterized by its temporal directness and urgency. In Bodo, this is a distinct morphosyntactic category where the suffix /-do/ is attached to the verb stem. Examples are given below-

(8a) t<sup>h</sup>aŋ-do                      'Go now!'  
go-IMM.IMP

(8b) p<sup>h</sup>uii-do                      'Come now!' or 'Come immediately!'  
come- IMM.IMP

(8c) za-do                          'Eat now!'  
eat- IMM.IMP

### Difference Between /-duu/ and /-do/

In Bodo, the polite imperative marker /-du/ and the immediate imperative marker /-do/ are both common, yet they are distinguished by their temporal constraints and pragmatic force. The suffix /-du/ is used for neutral or polite imperative construction and is not restricted by a specific time frame; it can comfortably refer to actions happening now or in the future. In contrast, the suffix /-do/ is a morphosyntactic form used for immediate imperative constructions. It is strictly time-bound, requiring the action to be performed instantaneously or within a very short period. Because of this urgency, it is grammatically incompatible with future temporal adverbs.

Consider the following examples:

Polite Imperative		Immediate Imperative	
(9a)	t <sup>h</sup> aŋ-du go-IMP 'Please go!'	(10a)	t <sup>h</sup> aŋ-do go-IMM.IMP 'Go now!'
(9b)	danu            t <sup>h</sup> aŋ-du now            go-IMP 'Please go now!'	(10b)	danu            t <sup>h</sup> aŋ-do now            go-IMM.IMP 'Go right now!'
(9c)	gabun            t <sup>h</sup> aŋ-du tomorrow    go-IMP 'Please go tomorrow!'	(10c)	<b>*gabun            t<sup>h</sup>aŋ-do</b> tomorrow    go-IMM.IMP 'Ungrammatical'
(9d)	dahai            t <sup>h</sup> aŋ-du after sometime    go-IMP 'Please go after sometime!'	(10d)	<b>*dahai            t<sup>h</sup>aŋ-do</b> after sometime    go-IMP 'Ungrammatical'
(9e)	soŋp <sup>h</sup> ur            t <sup>h</sup> aŋ-du day after tomorrow    go-IMP 'Please go day-after-tomorrow!'	(10e)	<b>*soŋp<sup>h</sup>ur            t<sup>h</sup>aŋ-do</b> day after tomorrow    go-IMP 'Ungrammatical'

Table No. 2

In the above examples (10c), (10d) and (10e) are the ungrammatical sentences in Bodo language, because the suffix /-do/ is grammatically incompatible with future temporal adverbs.

### 3.4. Causative Command

A causative command is a directive in which a speaker instructs one individual to cause another individual to carry out an activity. A causative command includes a third person, as opposed to a straight forward command like /undu/ ‘sleep!’ that is given directly to you. In Bodo, causative command is formed by adding causative suffix /-huu/. These are discussed below with the help of examples.

#### 3.4.1. Direct Causative Command

Causative verbs in Bodo function as direct command when the causative stem (verb + /-huu/) is used alone. This syntactic form is appropriate for addressing juniors or people with whom the speakers shares a close relationship.

(11a) bi-k<sup>h</sup>uu      uŋk<sup>h</sup>am      za-huu  
3SG-ACC      rice      eat-CAUS  
‘Let him eat rice!’

(11b) bi-k<sup>h</sup>uu      t<sup>h</sup>aŋ-huu  
3SG-ACC      go-CAUS  
‘Let him go!’

(11c) bi-suur-k<sup>h</sup>uu      bol      gele-huu  
3SG-PL-ACC      football      play-CAUS  
‘Let them play football!’

#### 3.4.2. Polite Causative Command

The polite causative command is a morphosyntactic form in Bodo used to request that someone cause an action to happen. It combines the causative marker with a polite imperative suffix to show respect to the listener. It is used when asking an elderly person or a superior or formal acquaintance to perform a causative action. Consider the following examples:

(12a) bi-suur-k<sup>h</sup>uu      uŋk<sup>h</sup>am      za-huu-duu

3SG-PL-ACC            rice            eat-CAUS-IMP  
 ‘Please, let them eat rice!’/ ‘Please allow them to eat rice!’

(12b) bi-k<sup>h</sup>uu            t<sup>h</sup>aŋ-huu-duu  
 3SG-ACC            go-CAUS-IMP  
 ‘Please, let him go!’

(12c) bi-suur-k<sup>h</sup>uu    bol            gele-huu-duu  
 3SG-PL-ACC    football            play-CAUS-IMP  
 ‘Please, let them play football!’

### 3.5. Definitive or Confirmative Imperative

Bodo has a definitive morpheme i.e. /de/, which is attached to the verb base to form the confirmative or definitive command, for examples (13a) to (13d). This definitive morpheme /de/ can be added to the verb base by preceding the polite imperative marker /-duu/ shown in the examples (14a) to (14d). The morpheme /de/ is used sometime as an interjectional form shown in the examples (15a) and (15b).

#### 3.5.1. Direct Definitive or Confirmative Command:

(13a) za-de                            ‘Do eat!’ (Direct and Confirmative Command)  
 eat-DEF

(13b) uŋk<sup>h</sup>am-k<sup>h</sup>uu            za-de  
 rice-ACC                            eat-DEF  
 ‘Do eat the rice!’ (Direct and Confirmative Command)

(13c) p<sup>h</sup>tui-de                        ‘Do come!’ (Direct and Confirmative Command)  
 Come-DEF

(13d) zuuŋ-ni            no-wao            p<sup>h</sup>tui-de ‘  
 2SG-GEN            house-LOC            Come-DEF  
 ‘Do come to our home!’ (Direct and Confirmative Command)

### 3.5.2. Polite Definitive Command or Request:

(14a) undu-duu-de            ‘Do sleep, please!’ (Polite Definitive Command)  
sleep-IMP-DEF

(14b) mao-duu-de            ‘Do work, please!’ (Polite Definitive Command)  
work-IMP-DEF

(14c) uŋk<sup>h</sup>am-k<sup>h</sup>uu            za-duu-de  
rice-ACC                    eat-IMP-DEF  
‘Do eat the rice, please!’ (Polite Definitive Command)

(14d) zuuŋ-ni            no-wao            p<sup>h</sup>ui-duu-de  
2SG-GEN            house-LOC            Come-IMP-DEF  
‘Do come to our home, please!’ (Polite Definitive Command)

(15a) दे! फैदोदे।  
de    p<sup>h</sup>ui-duu-de  
def    come-imp-def  
‘Ok! Do come, please!’

(15b) दे! आं थानोसै।  
de    aŋ    t<sup>h</sup>aŋ-nuusui  
DEF    1SG    go-IMM.FUT  
‘Ok! I am going (sure).’

### 3.5.3. Definitive Causative Command

The definitive causative command is used when a speaker issues a confirmed, conclusive order for an action to be caused or permitted. It is denoted by the causative verb by addition of the definitive morpheme /de/.

(16a) bi-nuu            za-huu-de  
           3SG-DAT        eat-CAUS-DEF  
           ‘Do let him eat!’

(16b) bi-nuu            k<sup>h</sup>amani-k<sup>h</sup>uuu            mao-huu-de  
           3SG-DAT        work(N)-ACC            work(V)-CAUS-DEF  
           ‘Do let him work!’

(16c) bi-nuu            gaik<sup>h</sup>er-k<sup>h</sup>uuu            luuŋ-huu-de  
           3SG-DAT        milk-ACC                drink-CAUS-DEF  
           ‘Do let him drink the milk!’

### 3.5.4. Polite Definitive Causative Command

In Bodo, the polite definitive causative command is a morphosyntactic form used when a speaker wants to issue a firm, conclusive, yet respectful order for an action to be caused. It combines the causative suffix, polite imperative suffix and the definitive morpheme /de/.

(17a) bi-nuu            za-huu-du-de  
           3SG-DAT        eat-CAUS-IMP-DEF  
           ‘Please, do let him eat!’

(17b) bi-nuu            k<sup>h</sup>amani-k<sup>h</sup>uuu            mao-huu-du-de  
           3SG-DAT        work(N)-ACC            work(V)-CAUS-IMP-DEF  
           ‘Please, do let him work!’

(17c) bi-nuu            gaik<sup>h</sup>er-k<sup>h</sup>uuu            luuŋ-huu-du-de  
           3SG-DAT        milk-ACC                drink-CAUS-IMP-DEF  
           ‘Please, do let him drink the milk!’

### 3.6. Emphatic Imperative

An emphatic imperative is a grammatical construction used to add force, urgency, or special importance to a command. In Bodo, the emphatic imperative is formed through the complete reduplication of the bare verb stem or derived verb. This morphological process is used to highlight the speaker's insistence and to intensify the imperative force of the command. They are discussed below-

### 3.6.1. Direct Emphatic Imperative

Direct emphatic commands are used with close friends or juniors by reduplicating the bare verb stems. Consider the following examples:

(18a) जा-जा! लाजि नाडा।

za-za	lazi	naŋ-a
eat-RED	shy (V)	need-NEG

'Eat! Don't feel shy. / Eat! No need to be shy.' (Direct Emphatic Command (to juniors))

(18b) जा-जा! रावखौबो नेनाडा।

za-za	raok <sup>h</sup> uubuu	ne-naŋ-a
eat-RED	anybody	wait-need-NEG

'Eat! (You) don't need to wait for anybody. / Eat! No need to wait for anyone'

(18c) जा-जा! थाइजौवा गोदैसो।

za-za	t <sup>h</sup> aizuu-wa	gudui-suu
eat-RED	mango-NOM	sweet-UNP

'Eat! The mango is sweet.' (Suddenly, command to someone for eating mango)

(18d) थां-थां! गारिया दानो बारगलांगोनसो।

t <sup>h</sup> aŋ-t <sup>h</sup> aŋ	gari-ja	danuu	bargolaŋ-guun-suu
go-RED	train-NOM	now	leave away-FUT-UNP

'Go! The train is leaving (away) right now.' (Direct Emphatic Command (to juniors))

(18e) लौं-लौं! साहाया गोथावथार।

luŋ-luŋ saha-ja guut<sup>h</sup>ao-t<sup>h</sup>ar

drink-RED tea-NOM tasty-SUP

‘Drink up! The tea is very tasty.’ / ‘Drink up! The tea is most tasty.’

(18f) माव-माव! खामानिया थाब-थाब जोबनायनि।

mao-mao khamani-ja t<sup>h</sup>ab-t<sup>h</sup>ab zuub-nai-ni

do-RED work-NOM immediate-RED finish-NOMZ-GEN

‘Do the work to finish it immediately!’

### 3.6.2. Polite Emphatic Imperative:

Polite commands in Bodo are created by appending the imperative suffix /-du/ to the verb base, as seen in /mao-du/ ‘please do’ and /k<sup>h</sup>ar-du/ ‘please run’. These forms can then be reduplicated to express a sense of polite urgency, forming what is known as a polite emphatic imperative.

Consider the following examples:

(19a) mao-du ‘Please do!’ (Polite Command)

do-IMP

(19b) maoduu-maoduu t<sup>h</sup>ab-t<sup>h</sup>ab hanai-ni t<sup>h</sup>ak<sup>h</sup>ai

Please do-RED immediate-RED finish-GEN for

‘Please do it to finish immediately!’ (Polite Emphatic Command)

(19c) k<sup>h</sup>ar-du ‘Please run!’ (Polite Command)

run-IMP

(19d) k<sup>h</sup>arduu-k<sup>h</sup>arduu honwui pulis p<sup>h</sup>wui-guu

please run-RED look(expressive) police come-IMM.FUT

‘Please run! Look, the police are coming.’ (Polite Emphatic Command)

(19e)  $gak^h u-duu$                       ‘Please get up!’ (Polite Command)  
get up-IMP

(19f)  $gak^h uduu- gak^h uduu$      $garija$                        $k^h ar-nuusui$   
please get up-RED    train                      run-IMM.FUT  
‘Please get up! The train is about to depart.’ (Polite Emphatic Command)

### 3.6.3. Direct Emphatic Causative Command

Direct Emphatic causative command is characterized by the reduplication of causative verbs in Bodo. This form is used to convey a sense of urgency or an immediate requirement for an action to be caused or permitted. The structure of the repetitive pattern is-

**[Verb Stem +  $huu$ ]+ [Verb Stem +  $huu$ ] = Direct Emphatic Causative Command**

Consider the following examples:

(20a)  **$zahu-zahu$**                        $u\eta k^h am-a$                        $zubb-nuusui$   
let (3) eat-RED                      rice-NOM                      finish-IMM.FUT  
‘Let (them) eat! The rice is about to finish (right now).’

(20b)  $lu\eta hu-lu\eta hu$                        $saha-ja$                        $gu\eta hao-t^h ar$   
let (3) drink-RED                      tea-NOM                      tasty-SUP  
‘Let (him/her) drink! The tea is very tasty.’

(20c)  $lirhu-lirhu$                        $bi-juu$                        $gu\eta ru\eta-t^h ar$   
let (3) write-RED                      3SG-NOM                      expert-SUP  
‘Make (him/her) write! He/she is very expert.’

### 3.6.4. Polite Emphatic Causative Command

The polite immediate causative command is a complex morphosyntactic form that blends respect with urgency. It is also characterized by the reduplication of causative verbs, followed by the addition of the polite imperative suffix /-du/. The structure of the repetitive pattern is-

**[Verb Stem+hui+du] + [Verb Stem+hui+du] = Polite Immediate Causative Command**

(21a) za+hui+du + za+hui+du > zahudu-zahudu  
 eat+CAUS+IMP + eat+CAUS+IMP ‘Please let (him) eat (now)!’

(21b) zahudu-zahudu uŋk<sup>h</sup>am-a zuub-nuusui  
 please let (3) eat-RED rice-NOM finish-IMM.FUT  
 ‘Please let (them) eat! The rice is about to finish.’

(21c) luŋhudu-luŋhudu saha-ja guthao-t<sup>h</sup>ar  
 please let (3) drink-red tea-nom tasty-SUP  
 ‘Please let (him/her) drink! The tea is very tasty.’

(21d) lirhudu-lirhudu bi-juu guruuŋ-t<sup>h</sup>ar  
 please let (3) write-RED 3SG-NOM expert-SUP  
 ‘Please let (him/her) write! He/she is very expert.’

**3.7. Prohibitive or Negative Imperative**

In Bodo, prohibitive imperatives can be categorized such as direct prohibitive, definitive prohibitive, neutral or polite prohibitive, polite definitive prohibitive and emphatic prohibitive.

**3.7.1. Direct Prohibitive Imperative**

Morphologically, Bodo has a most productive negative imperative prefix i.e. /da-/. It prefixes to the main verb to form the direct prohibitive command in the language.

For example:

(22a) da-buŋ ‘Don’t say!’ (Prohibitive Command)

NEG.IMP-say

(22b) da-t<sup>h</sup>aŋ ‘Don’t go!’ (Prohibitive Command)

NEG.IMP-go

(22c) da-p<sup>h</sup>uut<sup>h</sup>ai ‘Don’t believe’ (Prohibitive Command)

NEG.IMP-believe

(22d) be dui-k<sup>h</sup>uu da-luŋ

this water-ACC NEG.IMP-drink

‘Don’t drink this water!’ (Prohibitive Command)

(22e) bui uŋk<sup>h</sup>ri-k<sup>h</sup>uu da-za

that curry-ACC NEG.IMP-eat

‘Don’t eat that curry!’ (Prohibitive Command)

(22f) आदा, आंनो गस्ला दालाबो, दखनाखौ लाबो।

ada aŋ-nuu gosla da-labu dok<sup>h</sup>ona-k<sup>h</sup>uu labu

brother 1SG-DAT blouse NEG.IMP-bring dokhona-ACC bring

‘Brother, don’t bring me a blouse; bring me a dok<sup>h</sup>ona!’

(Prohibitive Command: Sister forbade me from bringing a blouse and ordered me to bring a *dokhona* instead. (*dokhona* is a Bodo traditional female dress))

### 3.7.2. Definitive Prohibitive Command

The definitive prohibitive command is a morphosyntactic form in Bodo, it combines negative imperative prefix /da-/ + verb stem + /de/ definitive morpheme.

For example:

(23a) nuŋ da-t<sup>h</sup>aŋ-de



### 3.7.4. Polite Definitive Prohibitive

The neutral prohibitive can take the definitive morpheme /de/ to form a polite definitive prohibitive command in Bodo. The structure of this command is:

**‘Verb Stem + Auxiliary /naŋ/ + Definitive /de/’.**

(25a) luŋ-naŋ-a-de                      ‘Please don’t drink!’ / ‘Don’t drink, please!’  
drink-need-NEG-DEF

(25b) suŋ-naŋ-a-de                      ‘Please don’t ask!’ / ‘Don’t ask, please!’  
ask-need-NEG-DEF

(25c) t<sup>h</sup>aŋ-naŋ-a-de                      ‘Please don’t go!’ / ‘Don’t go, please!’  
go-need-NEG-DEF

(25d) uŋk<sup>h</sup>ri-k<sup>h</sup>uu                      za-naŋ-a-de/  
curry-ACC                      eat-need-NEG-DEF  
‘Please don’t eat the curry!’ / ‘Don’t eat the curry, please!’

### 3.7.5. Emphatic Prohibitive Command

An Emphatic Prohibitive Command is a directive used to halt an action instantly. In Bodo, the sense of urgency is expressed through reduplication; the standard prohibitive command is repeated to form an emphatic prohibitive command, signaling that the action must stop without delay. Examples are given below-

(26a) daza-daza      be      mujaŋ      noŋ-a  
don’t eat-RED    it      good      be-NEG  
‘Stop! Don’t eat! It is not good.’ (Emphatic Prohibitive Command)

(26b) dap<sup>h</sup>ui-dap<sup>h</sup>ui      nuŋ      p<sup>h</sup>ui      naŋ-a

don't come-RED      2SG      come      need-NEG

‘Stop! Don’t come! You don’t need to come.’ (Immediate Prohibitive Command)

### 3.8. Inclusive Imperative

In Bodo, inclusive imperative is indicated by the word /t<sup>h</sup>uu/. It is an interjection form of word that function a joint action both speaker and the listener (like the English “Let us”). It signifies that the speaker will also participate in the action; it is a kind of collaborative imperative.

The inclusive imperative can be divided into four types of the language viz.

1. Direct Inclusive
2. Polite Inclusive
3. Immediate Inclusive
4. Polite Immediate Inclusive

#### 3.8.1. Direct Inclusive Imperative

The Direct Inclusive Imperative is denoted by the interjection word /t<sup>h</sup>uu/. It is a kind of grammatically free word in the language which indicates a joint action imperative.

For example:

(27a) थौ! नवाव थानोसै।

t<sup>h</sup>uu    no-wao      t<sup>h</sup>aŋ-nuusui  
let us    home-NOM    go-IMM.FUT

‘Let’s go home!’ (Direct Inclusive Imperative)

(27b) नवाव थानि, थौ!

no-wao      t<sup>h</sup>aŋ-ni      t<sup>h</sup>uu  
home-NOM    go-COH      let us

‘Let’s go home!’ (Direct Inclusive Imperative)

(27c) थौ! ओखाम जानि।

t<sup>h</sup>uu    uŋkham      za-ni  
let us    rice      eat-COH

‘Let’s have rice!’ (Direct Inclusive Imperative)

### 3.8.2. Polite Inclusive Imperative

The word /t<sup>h</sup>uu/ is an interjectional form in the language; it can take polite imperative marker /-du/ to form polite inclusive imperative for example.

(28a) थौदो! नवाव थानोसै।

t<sup>h</sup>uu-du      no-wao      t<sup>h</sup>aŋ-nuusui  
let us-IMP      home-NOM      go-IMM.FUT

‘Please, let’s go home!’ (Polite Inclusive Imperative: Going is just within short time)

(28b) थौदो! ओखाम जानोसै।

t<sup>h</sup>uu-du      uŋk<sup>h</sup>am      za-nuusui  
let us-IMP      rice      eat-IMM.FUT

‘Please, let’s have rice!’ (Polite Inclusive Imperative: Eating is just within short time)

(28c) थौदो! ओखाम जादिनि।

t<sup>h</sup>uu-du      uŋk<sup>h</sup>am      za-di-ni  
let us-IMP      rice      eat-IMP-COH

‘Please, let’s have rice!’ (Polite Inclusive Imperative: Just request for eating)

### 3.8.3. Direct Emphatic Inclusive Imperative

The direct emphatic inclusive command in Bodo is formed by the reduplication of the interjection /t<sup>h</sup>uu/. While the single form suggests a collaborative action, the reduplicated form /t<sup>h</sup>uu-t<sup>h</sup>uu/ ‘let’s go (right now)’ intensifies the utterance, signaling urgency and a demand for immediate participation.

For example:

(29a) थौ-थौ! नवाव थानोसै।

t<sup>h</sup>uu-t<sup>h</sup>uu      no-wao      t<sup>h</sup>aŋ-nuusui  
let us-RED      home-NOM      go-IMM.FUT

‘Let’s go home (right now)!’ (Direct Emphatic Inclusive Command)

(29b) थौ-थौ! ओखाम जादिनि।

t<sup>h</sup>uu-t<sup>h</sup>uu      uŋk<sup>h</sup>am      za-di-ni

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let us-RED      rice                      eat-IMP-COH

‘Let’s have rice (right now)!’ (Direct Emphatic Inclusive Command)

### 3.8.4. Polite Emphatic Inclusive Imperative

The polite inclusive imperative is formed by adding /-duu/ (polite imperative marker) to the interjection /t<sup>h</sup>uu/, for example /t<sup>h</sup>uu-duu/ ‘please, let’s go’. The polite inclusive imperative /t<sup>h</sup>uu-duu/ can also be reduplicated to form polite emphatic inclusive request.

Consider the following examples:

(30a) थौदो-थौदो! नवाव थांनोसै।

t<sup>h</sup>uuudu-t<sup>h</sup>uuudu      no-wao                      t<sup>h</sup>aŋ-nuusui  
let us-IMP                      home-NOM                      go-IMM.FUT

‘Please, let’s go home now!’ (Emphatic Polite Inclusive Imperative)

(30b) थौदो-थौदो! साहा लोनोसै।

t<sup>h</sup>uuudu-t<sup>h</sup>uuudu      saha      luŋ-nuusui  
let us-IMP                      tea                      drink-IMM.FUT

‘Please, let’s have tea now!’ (Emphatic Polite Inclusive Imperative)

### 3.9. Presentative Interjection

In Bodo, the interjection /no/ functions as a presentative imperative or deictic imperative. It functions as a verbal command used specially while handing an object to someone, effectively meaning ‘here, take it’ or ‘take this’. It carries the grammatical weight of a verb (commanding and action) but lacks standard verb morphology. It is categorized as a minor sentence type or a functional category. It combines the act of showing with the act of ordering in to a single. It is like a sentence-word, as the single interjection /no/ constitutes a complete.

Consider the following examples:

(31a) no!                      ‘Here, take this!’ or ‘Take the object’

(31b) न’ !                      फैसाया                      लादो !  
no                      p<sup>h</sup>uisa-ja                      la-duu

PRES.INTJ      money-NOM    take-IMP  
'Here, take this money!'

(31c) न' !            साहाया            लौंदो !  
no                saha-ja            luŋ-duu  
PRES.INTJ      tea-NOM            drink-IMP  
'Here, take this! (And) drink the tea!'

#### 4. Conclusion

Bodo is a Tibeto-Burman language, primarily spoken in Assam as well as some adjacent parts of Assam i.e. Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Meghalaya, West Bengal, neighboring countries in Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan. Typologically, Bodo is an agglutinative language. It has three kinds of major word formation processes: affixation, compounding and reduplication. It has case marking system and syntactically SOV type of basic word order.

In Bodo, the imperative is characterized as both a morphological and syntactic process. Syntactically, the bare verb or derived verb can also be used to form direct command of the language. Based on imperative markers and their functional roles, imperative constructions of the Bodo language are generally divided into three types:

1. Directive Imperative
2. Prohibitive Imperative
3. Interjectional Imperative

Directive imperatives can be categorized direct imperative, neutral or polite imperative, immediate imperative, causative imperative, definitive imperative, definitive causative imperative and emphatic imperative.

Prohibitive imperative can be found direct prohibitive, definitive prohibitive command, neutral or polite prohibitive imperative, polite definitive prohibitive and emphatic prohibitive command.

Interjectional imperative can be found inclusive imperative and presentative interjection. The inclusive imperative is indicated by the interjectional word /t<sup>h</sup>uu/ meaning represents 'let's go'.

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It can be divided into four types of the language viz. direct inclusive, polite inclusive, direct emphatic inclusive and polite emphatic inclusive. The presentative interjection is denoted by the interjection /no/ meaning represent ‘here, take it’ or ‘take this’.

The imperative constructions of the Bodo language are given below with the help of bare verb stem /za/:

<b>Directive Imperatives:</b>	<b>Bodo</b>	<b>English</b>
Direct Imperative	<i>za!</i>	‘Eat!’
Neutral or Polite Imperative	<i>za-du!</i>	‘Please eat!’
Immediate Imperative	<i>za-do!</i>	‘Eat now!’
Direct Causative Command	<i>za-huu !</i>	‘Let him eat!’
Polite Causative Command	<i>za-huu-du!</i>	‘Please, let him eat!’
Direct Definitive Imperative	<i>za-de!</i>	‘Do eat!’
Polite Definitive Imperative	<i>za-du-de</i>	‘Do eat, please!’
Definitive Causative Imperative	<i>za-huu-de</i>	‘Do let him eat!’
Polite Definitive Causative Command	<i>za-huu-du-de!</i>	‘Please, do let him eat!’
Direct Emphatic Imperative	<i>za-za!</i>	‘Eat! (Emphatic)’
Polite Emphatic Imperative	<i>za-du-za-du!</i>	‘Please eat! (Emphatic)’
Direct Emphatic Causative Command	<i>za-huu za-huu!</i>	‘Let him eat!’ (EMP)
Polite Emphatic Causative Command	<i>za-huu-du- za-huu-du!</i>	‘Please let him eat (now)!’ (EMP)
<b>Prohibitive Imperative:</b>		
Direct Prohibitive Imperative	<i>da-za!</i>	‘Don’t eat!’
Definitive Prohibitive Command	<i>da-za-de!</i>	‘Don’t eat (ok)!’
Neutral/ Polite Prohibitive Imperative	<i>za-nan-a!</i>	‘Don’t need to eat!’
Polite Definitive Prohibitive	<i>za-nan-a-de!</i>	‘Don’t eat, please!’
Emphatic Prohibitive Command	<i>da-za da-za!</i>	‘Stop! Don’t eat’ (EMP)
<b>Interjectional Imperative:</b>		

Direct Inclusive Imperative	<i>t<sup>h</sup>uu!</i>	‘Let’s go!’
Polite Inclusive Imperative	<i>t<sup>h</sup>uu- du!</i>	‘Please, let’s go!’
Direct Emphatic Inclusive Imperative	<i>t<sup>h</sup>uu-t<sup>h</sup>uu!</i>	‘Let’s go (right now)!’
Polite Emphatic Inclusive Imperative	<i>t<sup>h</sup>uu- du-t<sup>h</sup>uu- du!</i>	‘Please let’s go (right now)!’
Presentative Interjection	<i>no!</i>	‘Here, take it!’ or ‘Take this’

Table No.3

The direct imperative or direct command is a syntactic form indicated by the use of the bare verb stem in Bodo. It has neutral or polite imperative marker /-du/ which suffixes to the main verbs or bare verb stems to form imperative construction. An immediate imperative is characterized by its temporal directness and urgency. In Bodo, this is a distinct morphosyntactic category where the suffix /-do/ is attached to the verb stem.

The imperative suffix /-du/ and /-do/ are both common, yet they are distinguished by their temporal constraints and pragmatic force. The /-du/ is used for neutral or polite imperative construction and is not restricted by a specific time frame; it can comfortably refer to actions happening now or in the future. In contrast, the suffix /-do/ is a morphosyntactic form used for immediate commands. It is strictly time-bound, requiring the action to be performed instantaneously or within a very short period. Because of this urgency, it is grammatically incompatible with future temporal adverbs (see in the above examples (9) to (10)).

The emphatic imperative or emphatic command is formed by the complete reduplication of the bare verb stem or derived verb. This morphological process signals the speaker’s insistence and intensifies the imperative force of the command. For example the direct emphatic commands: /za-za lazi naŋ-a/ ‘Eat! Don’t feel shy!’ and polite emphatic commands: /za-du za-du lazi naŋ-a/ ‘Please eat! Don’t feel shy!’ It expresses a sense of polite urgency. It is hoped that this analysis will help us to understand the imperative construction of the Bodo language in particular and other Bodo groups in general.

## Abbreviations

N	:	Noun	V	:	Verb base
PL	:	Plural Marker	1SG	:	1 <sup>st</sup> Person Singular
3SG	:	3 <sup>rd</sup> Person Singular	2SG	:	2 <sup>nd</sup> Person Singular
ACC	:	Accusative Case	COH	:	Cohortative Mood
CAUS	:	Causative	DAT	:	Dative Case
DEF	:	Definitive	FUT	:	Future Tense
GEN	:	Genitive Case	IMP	:	Imperative
IMM.FUT	:	Immediate Future	LOC	:	Locative Case
IMM.IMP	:	Immediate Imperative	NEG	:	Negative
NEG.IMP	:	Negative Imperative	NOM	:	Nominative Case
NOMZ	:	Nominalizer	PRF	:	Perfective
RED	:	Reduplication	SUP	:	Superlative
UNP	:	Unexpected Marker	EMP	:	Emphatic
PRES.INTJ	:	Presentative Interjection			

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Full Address:

Dr. Daimalu Brahma

Assistant Professor

Barama College, Barama

PO & PS:-Barama, 782346

Dist:-Baksa, BTR, Assam, India

Email: [daimalubrahma85@gmail.com](mailto:daimalubrahma85@gmail.com)

