

STUDY 56

GRAMMAR 56.1

Word Forms Indicating Gender

Bengali words for persons or animals are assigned either Masculine or Feminine Gender. Things are neuter. Feminine words can be related or derived from masculine words by the five methods given below.

a) Unique Terms

Sometimes the words for the masculine form correspond to a very dissimilar feminine form:-

| | | |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| ছেলে -- মেয়ে | chele -- meye | son, boy -- daughter, girl |
| ভাই -- বোন | bhaai -- bon | brother -- sister, girl |
| পুরুষ -- স্ত্রী | puruṣ -- strii | male, man -- female, woman |

b) Gender Specifier

In a few cases a word used specifically to emphasize gender is inserted in front of a generalized word:-

| | | | | | | | |
|----------------|----|----------------|-----------------|----|----------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| পুরুষ মানুষ | -- | মেয়ে মানুষ | puruṣ maanus | -- | meye maanus | man of male gender | man of female gender |
|----------------|----|----------------|-----------------|----|----------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|

In other cases, the common word for the male can be modified by adding a feminine ending:-

c) Adding a feminine ending after a final consonant:-

Append "-l -aa"; or "-ী -ii"; or "-নী -aani"; or "-নি -ini"

| | | |
|---------|-------------|----------------|
| মহাশয় | mahaashay | gentleman |
| মহাশয়া | mahaashayaa | lady |
| ছাত্র | chaatra | male student |
| ছাত্রী | chaatrii | female student |
| মেথর | methar | sweeper |
| মেথরানী | metharaanii | sweepress |
| বাঘ | baagh | tiger |
| বাঘিনি | baaghini | tigress |

d) Adding a feminine ending after a final vowel:-

Append "-নী -nii"

| | | |
|--------|---------|-------------|
| জেলে | jele | fisherman |
| জেলিনী | jelenii | fisherwoman |

e) Changing an ending to feminine form:-

Amend final "- l -aa" to "-ী -ii"; or "- ক -ak" to "-িকা -ikaa".

| | | |
|------------|------------|-------------------------------|
| শিক্ষক | shiksak | male teacher |
| শিক্ষিকা | shiksikaa | female teacher |
| বুড় | buraa | old man |
| বুড়ী | burii | old woman |
| জ্যেষ্ঠা | jyethaa | father's older brother |
| জ্যেষ্ঠীমা | jyethiimaa | father's older brother's wife |

GRAMMAR 56.2**Titles, Other Terms of Address, and Letter Writing**

The common terms Mister and Misses [Mistress] placed in front of the surname are widely borrowed just as they are from English. These are sometimes mimicked by using words of Sanskrit background such as "শ্রী shrii" for Mr. [মিঃ]; and "শ্রীমতী shriimatii" for Mistress. "বাবুbaabu" may be heard placed after a friendly forename. This is used rarely only, primarily in Hindu areas. "মহাশয় mahaashay" used for a 'gentleman' and "মহাশয়া mahaashayaa" for a 'lady' follow the surname.

Announcements are often addressed to "ভদ্রমহিলা ও মহাদেবগণ bhadramahilaa o mahaadev-gan" as for "Ladies and Gentlemen".

A letter to a senior relative may be addressed to "শ্রী ... shrii ..." with the addressee's name. It may be signed off with the greeting "প্রণত pranata" and the writer's name.

A letter to a junior relative may be addressed to "স্নেহের ... sneher ..." with the addressee's name inserted. It may be signed off with the greeting "তোমার tomaar" and the relationship followed by the writer's name.

A letter from a customer to a business supplier may be addressed to "মহাশয় ... mahaashay ..." with the addressee's name inserted. It may be signed off with the greeting "ইতি, ভদনীয়, iti, bhadaniya," and then "শ্রী ... shrii ..." with the writer's name inserted.

GRAMMAR 56.3**Extended Use of Words for Brother and Sister**

As is evident in the family tree in *Grammar 56.4*, the words for brother "ভাই bhaai" and for sister "বোন bon or ভগ্নী bhagnii" are used in a wider range of meanings than in English. These terms are even used for friends. For various cousins the same word is used, but preceded by an adjective derived from the word for the uncle and aunt who are the parents of the cousin. If it is necessary to emphasize that a brother is one's biological brother, the adjectival word "আপন aapan" can be inserted to convey "own".

You may wish to highlight the charts in colour signifying gender and blood-line.

GRAMMAR 56.4**Family Relationships Before One's Marriage**

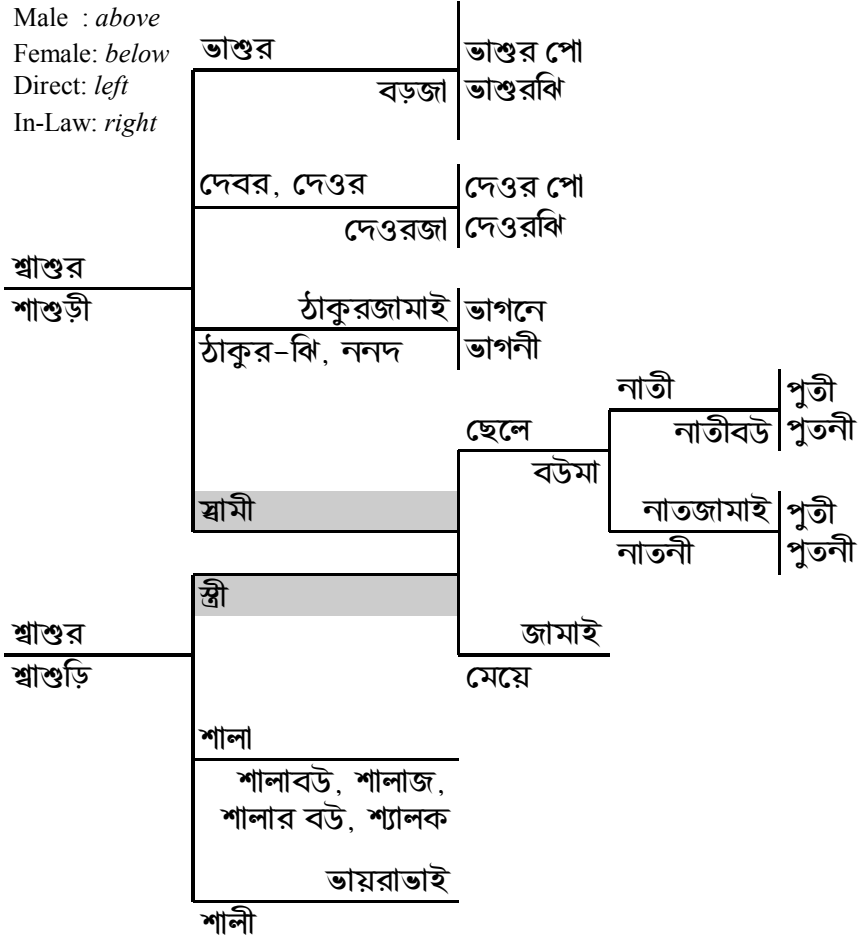
Male : *above*
 Female: *below*
 Direct: *left*
 In-Law: *right*

| | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-------|
| | জেঠা, জেঠা | জেঠতুতো ভাই | |
| | জেঠাইমা, জেঠী, জেঠীমা | জেঠতুতো বোন | |
| | কাকা, চাচা | কাকাতো ভাই, চাচাতো ভাই | |
| | কাকী, কাকীমা, চাচী | কাকাতো বোন, চাচাতো বোন | |
| | পিসা, পিসে, ফুপা | পিসতুতো ভাই, ফুপাতো ভাই | |
| | পিসীমা, ফুপু, পিসি | পিসতুতো বোন, ফুপাতো বোন | |
| ঠাকুরদাদা | | দাদা | ভাইপো |
| ঠাকুরমা | | বউদি | ভাইবি |
| | | দাদাবাবু | ভাগনে |
| | | দিদি | ভাগনী |
| | বাবা, আবা, পিতা | আমি | |
| | মা, আন্না, মাতা | | |
| | | ভাই | ভাইপো |
| | | বউমা, ভাইজ | ভাইবি |
| দাদু, দাদা মহাশয় | | বোনাই, ভেগিনী-পতি | ভাগনে |
| দিদিমা | | বোন | ভাগনী |
| | মামা | মামাতো ভাই | |
| | মামী, মামানী | মামাতো বোন | |
| | খালু, মেসো, মেশোমশায় | খালাতো / মাসতুতো ভাই | |
| | মাসীমা, খালী, মাসী | খালাতো / মাসতুতো বোন | |

Family Relationships Before One's Marriage

Male : *above*
 Female: *below*
 Direct: *left*
 In-Law: *right*

| | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| jethaa, jyesthaa | jethatuto bhaai | |
| jethaa ^u imaa, jethii, jethii ^u imaa | jethatuto bon | |
| kaakaa, caacaa | kaakaato bhaai, caacaato bhaai | |
| kaakii, kaakiimaa, caacii | kaakaato bon, caacaato bon | |
| pisaa, pise, phupaa | pis-tuto bhaai, phupaato bhaai | |
| pisiimaa, phupu, pisi | pis-tuto bon, phupaato bon | |
| <u>thaakur-daadaa</u> | daadaa | bhaaipo |
| <u>thaakur-maa</u> | baudi | bhaaijhi |
| | daadaabaabu | bhaag-ne |
| | didi | bhaag-nii |
| baabaa, aabbaa, pitaa | aami | |
| maa, aammaa, maataa | bhaai | bhaaipo |
| | baumaa, bhaaija | bhaaijhi |
| daaduu, daadaa mahaashay | bonaai, bheginii-pati | bhaag-ne |
| didimaa | bon | bhaag-nii |
| maamaa | maamaato bhaai | |
| maamii, maamaanii | maamaato bon | |
| khaalu, meso, meshomashaay | khaalaato/maas-tuto bhaai | |
| maasiimaa, khaalii, maasii | khaalaato/maas-tuto bon | |

GRAMMAR 56.5**Family Relationships After One's Marriage**Male : *above*Female: *below*Direct: *left*In-Law: *right*

Family Relationships After One's Marriage

Male : *above*
 Female: *below*
 Direct: *left*
 In-Law: *right*

