Pronominal Markers in Hmar

Elangbam Sharatkumar Singh, Ph.D.

Abstract

This paper attempts to highlight the pronominal markers of Hmar. Hmar language belongs to Tibeto-Burman language family (Grierson, G.A. 1904). There are 7 (seven) pronominal markers in Hmar, they are - /kə-/ or /kən-/ or /ʔi-/ or /ʔi-/ or /ʔi-/ or /ʔan-/ and /ʔən-/. These pronominal markers can be divided into two types as singular and plural pronominal markers. Singular pronominal markers are: /kə-/ ‘I’, /ʔi-/ ‘you (SG.)’, and /ʔə-/ ‘she/he’, examples are - /kəpə/ ‘my father’, /ʔipa/ ‘your father’ and /ʔəpa/ ‘his/her father’ respectively. The plural pronominal markers are - /kən-/ or /ʔi-/ ‘we’, /ʔin-/ ‘you (PL.)’, and /ʔən-/ ‘they’. Examples are: /kənəpə/ or /ʔinpa/ ‘our father’, /ʔinpa/ ‘your father (PL.)’ and /ʔənpə/ ‘their father’. The first person plural pronominal marker can be classified into two as - /kən-/ and /ʔi-/.
These pronominal markers can occur with nouns and verbs. The unrealized aspect marker /tih/ is also used with these pronominal markers. This aspect marker is suffixed to the pronominal markers, for example: /o:\na-ni bu p^h ak o:\n- tih / ‘They eat rice’.

**Key words:** pronominal markers, first person, second person and third person.

**Pronominal Markers**

There are 7 (seven) pronominal markers in Hmar. They are: /k^\~a-/, /k\~o-/, or /\~i-/, /\~i-/, /\~i-/, /\~i-/, /\~i-/, and /\~i-/. These pronominal markers can be used as markers with nouns and verbs. The pronominal marker /k\~o-/ indicate the exclusiveness whereas /\~i-/ indicates inclusiveness in the first person plural nouns.

The pronominal markers are shown as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td>1(^{st}) person</td>
<td>/k^~a-/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td>2(^{nd}) person</td>
<td>/~i-/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.</td>
<td>3(^{rd}) person</td>
<td>/~i-/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table - Hmar Pronominal markers

**First Person Singular Pronominal Marker /k^\~a-/**

The first person singular pronominal marker /k^\~a-/ is prefixed to kin terms and the personal or intimate belongings, which are inalienable to the possessor. It is attached before the nouns and verbs. It is discussed as below:

**/k^\~a-/ with Noun**

The first person pronominal marker /k\~a-/ is attached just before the nouns in the first person singular number. Examples are as below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hmar</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Hmar</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/pa/</td>
<td>‘father’</td>
<td>/k~a-pa/</td>
<td>‘my father’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/nu/</td>
<td>‘mother’</td>
<td>/k~a-nu/</td>
<td>‘my mother’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. /pi/ ‘grandmother’ /ka-pi/ ‘my grandmother’
4. /pu/ ‘grandfather’ /ka-pu/ ‘my grandfather’

/kə-/ with Verb

The first person pronominal marker /kə-/ is attached just before the verbs in the first person singular number. Examples are given:
5. /kəi bu kə - pə ak/  
   I rice 1PP. eat 
   ‘I eat rice.’
6. /kəi mənipur ah kə- pə e/  
   I manipur LOC. 1PP. go 
   ‘I go to Manipur.’
7. /kəi tui kə- don/  
   I water 1PP. drink 
   ‘I drink water.’
8. /kəi- in puon kə- sop/  
   I NOM. cloth 1PP. wash 
   ‘I wash cloth.’
9. /kəi əmanu hi kə- lʊŋsiɛt/  
   I she DET. 1PP. love 
   ‘I love her.’

First Person Plural Pronominal Markers, /kən-/ and /əi-/

There are two types of first person plural pronominal markers in Hmar, namely, /kən-/ and /əi-/. The plural pronominal marker /kən-/ is used with exclusive pronouns whereas /əi-/ is used with inclusive pronouns. Examples are given below:

/kən-/ with Noun

The first person pronominal marker /kən-/ is attached just before the nouns in the first person plural sentence.
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Pronominal Markers in Hmar

Hmar Gloss

10. /kɔn-pa/ 'our father (EXCL.)'
11. /kɔn-nu/ 'our mother (EXCL.)'

/kɔn-/ with Verb

The first person pronominal marker /kɔn-/ is attached just before the verbs in the first person plural number. Examples are given below:

12. /kɔi- ni bu kɔn- pʰak/ I PL. rice 1PP. eat
    ‘We eat rice (EXCL.).’
13. /kɔi- ni sa kɔn- pʰak/
    I PL. meat 1PP. eat
    ‘We eat meet (EXCL.).’

/ɔi-/ with Noun

The first person pronominal marker /ɔi-/ is attached just before the nouns in the first person plural number. Examples are as follows:

14. /ɔi-pa/ ‘our father (INCL.)’
15. /ɔi-nu/ ‘our mother (INCL.)’

/ɔi-/ with Verb

The first person pronominal marker /ɔi-/ is attached just before the verbs in the first person plural number. Examples are as below:

16. /ɔi-ni bu ɔi- pʰak/ I PL. rice 1PP. eat
    ‘We eat rice (INCL.).’
17. /ɔi-ni sa ɔi- pʰak/
    I PL. meat 1PP. eat
    ‘We eat meet (INCL.).’

Second Person Singular Marker /i-/ 

The second person singular pronominal marker /i-/ is prefixed to kin terms and the personal or intimate belongings, which are inalienable to the possessor.
/i-/ with Noun

The second person singular pronominal marker /i-/ is attached just before the nouns in the second person singular number. Examples are shown as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hmar</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/pa/</td>
<td>‘father’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/i-pa/</td>
<td>‘your father’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/pu/</td>
<td>‘grandfather’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/i-pu/</td>
<td>‘your grandfather’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/nu/</td>
<td>‘mother’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/i-nu/</td>
<td>‘your mother’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/pi/</td>
<td>‘grandmother’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/i-pi/</td>
<td>‘your grandmother’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/kut/</td>
<td>‘hand’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/i-kut/</td>
<td>‘your hand’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/mit/</td>
<td>‘eye’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/i-mit/</td>
<td>‘your eye’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

/i-/ with Verb

The second person singular pronominal marker /i-/ is attached just before the verbs in the second person singular number. Examples are as below:

24. /nəŋ bu  i- pʰak/  
you rice 2PP. eat  
‘You (SG.) eat rice.’

25. /nəŋ tui  i- don/  
you water 2PP. drink  
‘You (SG.) drink water.’

26. /nəŋ- in əmanu hi  i- luŋsiɛt/  
you NOM. she DET. 2PP. love  
‘You (SG.) love her.’

27. /nəŋ- in puon cu  i- sop/  
you NOM. cloth DET. 2PP. wash  
‘You (SG.) wash the cloth.’
28. /nəŋ- in kʰəŋ cu i- sop/
   you NOM. plate DET. 2PP. wash
   ‘You (SG.) wash the plate.’

**Second Person Plural Pronominal Marker /in-/**

The second person plural pronominal marker /in-/ is prefixed to kin terms and the personal or intimate belongings, which are inalienable to the possessor. Examples as:

/\in-\ with Noun

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hmar</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/pa/</td>
<td>‘father’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/in-pa/</td>
<td>‘your (PL.) father’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/nu/</td>
<td>‘mother’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/in-nu/</td>
<td>‘your (PL.) mother’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/nau/</td>
<td>‘child’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/in-nau/</td>
<td>‘your (PL.) child’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

/\in-\ with Verb

The second person plural pronominal marker /in-/ is prefixed to the verbs in the second person plural number. Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>/nəŋ-ni- in əma pa kʰə in- luŋsiet/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>you PL. NOM. he DET. 2PP. love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘You (PL.) love him.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

33. /nəŋ-ni- in ton kʰə in- tʰə/          
   you PL. NOM. work DET. 2PP. do        
   ‘You (PL.) do the work.’              

34. /nəŋ-ni lekʰəbu in- tiem rəu/        
   you PL. book 2PP. read COM.           
   ‘Read your (PL.) book.’               

**Third Person Singular Pronominal Marker /ə-/**

The third person singular pronominal marker /ə-/ is also prefixed to kin terms and the personal or intimate belongings, which are inalienable to the possessor.
/ə-/ with Noun

The third person singular pronominal marker /ə-/ is attached to kin terms and the personal pronouns. Examples are given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hmar</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/pa/</td>
<td>‘father’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ə-pa/</td>
<td>‘his/her father’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/pu/</td>
<td>‘grandfather’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ə-pu/</td>
<td>‘his/her grandfather’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/pi/</td>
<td>‘grandmother’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ə-pi/</td>
<td>‘his/her grandmother’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/nu/</td>
<td>‘mother’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ə-nu/</td>
<td>‘his/her mother’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

/ə-/ with Verb

The third person singular pronominal marker /ə-/ is prefixed to the verb in the third person singular number. Examples are given below.

39. /ə-mapa bu ə- pʰak/  
He rice 3PP. eat  
‘He eats rice.’

40. /ram tui ə- don/  
Ram water 3PP. drink  
‘Ram drinks water.’

41. /tomba lekʰbu ə- tiem/  
Tomba book 3PP. read  
‘Tomba reads the book.’

Third Person Plural Pronominal Marker /ən-/  

The third person plural pronominal marker /ən-/ is prefixed to kin terms and the personal pronouns which are inalienable to the possessor.
Pronominal Markers in Hmar

The third person plural pronominal marker /ən-/ is prefixed to the nouns in the third person plural number. Examples are as follows:

42. /pa/ ‘father’
   /ən-pa/ ‘their father’

43. /nu/ ‘mother’
   /ən-nu/ ‘their mother’

44. /pu/ ‘grandfather’
   /ən-pu/ ‘their grandfather’

The third person plural pronominal marker /ən-/ is prefixed to the verbs in the third person plural number. In the examples below, the pronominal marker /ən-/ is prefixed just before the verbs (pʰak ‘to eat’ in eg.45, tiem ‘to read’ in example 46, and veŋ ‘to watch’ in example 47) respectively.

45. /əma-ni bu ən- pʰak/
   he PL. rice 3PP. eat
   ‘They eat rice.’

46. /əma-ni lekʰbu ən- tiem/
   he PL. book 3PP. read
   ‘They read books.’

47. /əma-ni sinema ən- veŋ/
   he PL. cinema 3PP. watch
   ‘They watch cinema.’

Pronominal Markers with Aspect Markers

These 7 (seven) pronominal markers: /kə-/ /kən-/ or /əi-/, /i-/ /i-n-, /ə-/, /ən-/) and /ən-/ can be used with unrealized aspect markers. The unrealized aspect marker /tih/ is used with pronominal markers. In the example (48) below, the third person plural pronominal marker /ən-/ is used with the unrealized aspect marker /tih/. Examples are given below.
Conclusion

In the above analysis, it is found that there are 7 (seven) pronominal markers in Hmar, such as- /kə-/ or /kən-/ or /i-/ or /i-/, /in-/ or /iə-/ and /iən-/ or /iən-/. These pronominal markers can be divided into two types as singular and plural pronominal markers. Singular pronominal markers are /kə-/ ‘I’, /i-/ ‘you (SG.)’, and /iə-/ ‘she/he’ and plural pronominal markers are - /kən-/ or /iə-/ ‘we’, /iən-/ ‘you (PL.)’, and /iən-/ ‘they’ respectively. The first person plural pronominal marker (kən-) ‘we’ expresses exclusive meaning whereas (iə-) ‘we’ expresses inclusive meaning. These pronominal markers can occur with nouns and verbs. They can be used with unrealized aspect markers also. The unrealized aspect marker /tih/ is used with these pronominal markers.

Abbreviations

1PP. : ‘first person pronominal marker’
2PP. : ‘second person pronominal marker’
3PP. : ‘third person pronominal marker’
SG. : ‘singular’
PL. : ‘plural’
UNR. : ‘unrealized aspect marker’
NOM. : ‘nominative’
DET. : ‘determiner’
LOC. : ‘locative’
INCL. : ‘inclusive’
EXCL. : ‘exclusive’

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References


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