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Consonant Correspondences in the Six Dialects of Manipuri

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Abstract

Manipuri (Meeteilon) is one of the important Tibeto-Burman languages of India and has a number of dialects. This paper tries to give the consonant correspondences of the six dialects of Manipuri. These six dialects (Kumbi, Thanga, Wangoo, Chairel, Heirok and Imphal) have similarities and dissimilarities regarding some aspects. But the paper focuses mainly on consonants correspondences of these six dialects. The correspondences can be analysed as identical and non-identical correspondences.

Introduction

Manipuri is Tibeto-Burman language spoken mainly in Manipur, a north eastern state of India. It is also known as Meeteilon. According to Grierson-Konow (1903), the Manipuri belongs to Kuki-Chin groups of Sino Tibetan family of languages. Manipuri is not only the name of the people of Manipur but also the language which is spoken by Meetei community.

There are varieties of Manipuri language. These varieties of language are known as dialects. 'A regionally or socially distinctive variety of language, identified by a particular set of words and grammatical structures is known as dialect' (David Crystal, 136). There are

more than 15 (fifteen) dialects of Manipuri, namely, Andro, Sekmai, Khurkhul, Kakching, Leimaram, Kumbi, Thanga, Wangoo, Chairel, Heirok, etc. Among these dialects, Imphal dialect is treated as standard dialect. Manipuri language is a tone language, but, in this paper, tone is not marked. Mainly the words having identical tones are selected for discussion.

Consonant Correspondences

There are twenty four consonants viz. /p b t d k g c ʃ p^h b^h t^h k^h g^h d^h ʃ^h m n ŋ s h l j w r/ in Manipuri. All the twenty four consonants can occur in the initial position of the word. But only fifteen consonants i.e. /p t k c p^h t^h k^h m n ŋ s h l j w/ can occur in the initial position of the native words whereas the remaining nine consonants i.e. / b d g ʃ b^h d^h g^h ʃ^h r/ can occur only in the initial position of the loan words. The consonants like /p t k m n l r ŋ/ can occur at the final position of the native words but /r/ can occur only in the loan words.

Consonant correspondences, in these six dialects, can broadly be analysed into two categories. They are-

1. Identical correspondences
2. Non identical correspondences

1. Identical correspondences

Identical correspondence means the exact correspondences i.e. p:p, p^h:p^h, k:k etc. and the position of the phoneme may be in the initial, medial or final position of a word. In order to find out the identical correspondences, it can be divided into three categories.

- 1.1. Identical correspondences in the initial position
- 1.2. Identical correspondences in the medial position
- 1.3. Identical correspondences in the final position

1.1. Identical correspondences in the initial position

All the six dialects have identical correspondences in the initial position of a word. All the twenty four (24) consonants can correspond identically in the initial position. Some selected examples are given as- p:p, p^h:p^h, b:b, k:k, k^h:k^h, m:m, etc.

Kumbi	Thanga	Wangoo	Chairel	Heirok	Imphal	Gloss
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pi	pi	pi	pi	pi	pi	‘tears’
p ^h əu	p ^h əu	p ^h əu	p ^h əu	p ^h əu	p ^h əu	‘paddy’
ka	ka	ka	ka	ka	ka	‘room’
k ^h aŋ	k ^h aŋ	k ^h aŋ	k ^h aŋ	k ^h aŋ	k ^h aŋ	‘pan’
ta	ta	ta	ta	ta	ta	‘spear’
t ^h a	t ^h a	t ^h a	t ^h a	t ^h a	t ^h a	‘moon’
mit	mit	mit	mit	mit	mit	‘eye’
na	na	na	na	na	na	‘ear’
la	la	la	la	la	la	‘plantain leave’
ŋa	ŋa	ŋa	ŋa	ŋa	ŋa	‘fish’
cin	cin	cin	cin	cin	cin	‘mouth’

1.2. Identical correspondences in the medial position

All the consonants except /g^h ʃ^h/ can correspond identically in the medial position of a word. Some examples are-

Kumbi	Thanga	Wangoo	Chairel	Heirok	Imphal	Gloss
latpa	latpa	latpa	latpa	latpa	latpa	‘to worship’
kəkceŋ	kəkceŋ	kəkceŋ	kəkceŋ	kəkceŋ	kəkceŋ	‘ant’
məton	məton	məton	məton	məton	məton	‘tip’
mət ^h a	mət ^h a	mət ^h a	mət ^h a	mət ^h a	mət ^h a	‘fleshy part of cow’s neck’

1.3. Identical correspondences in the final position

Like above correspondences, it is also found that only seven consonants /p t k m n l ŋ/ of Manipuri can correspond in the final position of a word. Even though, if the consonant /n/ and /l/ occur in the final position of a word, they show free variation. Examples are-

Kumbi	Thanga	Wangoo	Chairel	Heirok	Imphal	Gloss
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kap	kap	kap	kap	kap	kap	‘hand span’
tat	tat	tat	tat	tat	tat	‘pretend’
kok	kok	kok	kok	kok	kok	‘head’
t ^h um	t ^h um	t ^h um	t ^h um	t ^h um	t ^h um	‘salt’
t ^h un	t ^h un	t ^h un	t ^h un	t ^h un	t ^h un	‘buttock’
sel	sel	sel	sel	sel	sel	‘money’
kaŋ	kaŋ	kaŋ	kaŋ	kaŋ	kaŋ	‘mosquito’

2. Non-identical correspondences

Non-identical correspondences can be observed when compare the lexical items of these six dialects, i.e., Kumbi, Thanga, Wangoo, Chairel, Heirok and Imphal. These correspondences can further be analysed into three categories.

- 2.1. Word initial non identical correspondences
- 2.2. Word medial non identical correspondences
- 2.3. Word final non identical correspondences

2.1. Word initial non-identical correspondences

Some examples are given below from the Kumbi, Thanga, Wangoo, Chairel, Heirok and Imphal in order to show non-identical correspondences in the word initial of these six dialects.

The /l/ in the word initial of Chairel and Heirok correspond to /n/ in Kumbi, Thanga, Wangoo and Imphal dialects.

Chairel	Heirok	Kumbi	Thanga	Wangoo	Imphal	Gloss
ləmaŋk ^h a	ləmaŋkha	noŋmaŋkha	noŋmaŋk ^h a	noŋmaŋk ^h a	noŋmaŋk ^h a	‘Adhatoda’

The /t/ in the word initial of Kumbi, Wangoo, Heirok and Imphal correspond to /k/ in Thanga and Chairel.

Kumbi	Wangoo	Heirok	Imphal	Thanga	Chairel	Gloss
tebi	tekpi	tegədek	tebi	kebi	kebi	‘sword bean’

The /t^h/ in the word initial of Kumbi, Wangoo, Chairel, Heirok and Imphal correspond to /d^h/ in Thanga.

Kumbi	Wangoo	Chairel	Heirok	Imphal	Thanga	Gloss
t ^h ukki	t ^h upki	t ^h ukki	t ^h upki	t ^h okki	d ^h ukki	‘a knot’

The /m/ in the word initial of Kumbi and Thanga correspond to /l/ in Wangoo, Chairel, Heirok and Imphal.

Kumbi	Thanga	Wangoo	Chairel	Heirok	Imphal	Gloss
mərak	mərak	ləurak	ləurak	ləurak	ləurak	‘a unit for measuring land’

The /k/ in the word initial of Kumbi, Thanga and Chairel correspond to /t/ in Wangoo, Heirok and Imphal.

Kumbi	Thanga	Chairel	Wangoo	Heirok	Imphal	Gloss
kali	kali	kali	tɛŋgali	tɛŋgali	tɛŋgali	‘soot’

The /c/ in the word initial of Kumbi, Thanga Wangoo, Chairel and Imphal correspond to /ʃ/ in Heirok.

Kumbi	Thanga	Wangoo	Chairel	Imphal	Heirok	Gloss
curi	curi	curi	curi	curi	ʃuri	‘gutter’

The /h/ in word initial of Kumbi, Chairel, Heirok and Imphal correspond to /k^h/ in Thanga and Wangoo.

Kumbi	Chairel	Heirok	Imphal	Thanga	Wangoo	Gloss
higətpə	higətpə	higətpə	higətpə	k ^h igətpə	k ^h igətpə	‘to grin’

The /j/ in word initial of Kumbi, Thanga, Wangoo, Chairel and Imphal correspond to /ʃ/ in Heirok.

Kumbi	Thanga	Wangoo	Chairel	Imphal	Heirok	Gloss
jat ^h i	jat ^h i	jat ^h i	jat ^h i	jat ^h i	ʃat ^h i	‘scale’

2.2. Word medial non-identical correspondences

Some selected word medial non-identical consonant correspondences are given in order to analyse these correspondences in Kumbi, Thanga, Wangoo, Chairel, Heirol and Imphal.

The /p/ in the word medial of Wangoo corresponds to /b/ in Kumbi, Thanga, Chairel, Heirol and Imphal.

Wangoo	Kumbi	Thanga	Chairel	Heirol	Imphal	Gloss
laipək	laibək	laibək	laibək	laibək	laibək	‘fate’

The /t/ in the word medial of Kumbi, Thanga, Heirol and Imphal correspond to /d/ in Wangoo and Chairel.

Kumbi	Thanga	Heirol	Imphal	Wangoo	Chairel	Gloss
k ^h uttum	k ^h uttum	k ^h uttum	k ^h uttum	k ^h udum	k ^h udum	‘fist’

The /c/ in word medial of Kumbi, Thanga, Wangoo, Heirol and Imphal correspond to /ʃ/ in Chairel.

Kumbi	Thanga	Wangoo	Heirol	Imphal	Chairel	Gloss
k ^h oŋcep	k ^h oŋcep	k ^h oŋcep	k ^h oŋcep	k ^h oŋcep	k ^h oŋjep	‘side of leg’

The /k^h/ in the word medial of Kumbi, Chairel and Heirol correspond to /g/ in Thanga and /g^h/ in Wangoo and Imphal.

Kumbi	Chairel	Heirol	Thanga	Wangoo	Imphal	Gloss
məsiŋk ^h a	məsiŋk ^h a	məsiŋk ^h a	məsiŋga	məsiŋg ^h a	məsiŋg ^h a	‘gall bladder’

The /k/ in the word medial of Thanga, Wangoo, and Chairel correspond to /g/ in Kumbi, Heirol and Imphal.

Thanga	Wangoo	Chairel	Kumbi	Heirol	Imphal	Gloss
p ^h əikən	p ^h əikən	p ^h əikən	p ^h əigən	p ^h əigən	p ^h əigən	‘thigh’

The /t/ in word medial of Thanga and Imphal correspond to /t^h/ in Kumbi, Wangoo, Chairel and Heirok.

Thanga	Imphal	Kumbi	Wangoo	Chairel	Heirok	Gloss
həitroi	həitroi	həit ^h roi	həit ^h roi	həit ^h roi	həit ^h roi	‘puneala plum’

The /m/ in word medial of Kumbi, Thanga, Wangoo, Chairel correspond to /p/ in Heirok and Imphal.

Kumbi	Thanga	Wangoo	Chairel	Heirok	Imphal	Gloss
kəmlak	kəmlak	kəmlak	kəmlak	kəplak	kəplak	‘politeal fossa’

The /k/ in word medial of Kumbi, Thanga, Chairel, and Imphal correspond to /p/ in Wangoo and Heirok.

Kumbi	Thanga	Chairel	Imphal	Wangoo	Heirok	Gloss
t ^h ukki	d ^h ukki	t ^h ukki	t ^h okki	t ^h upki	t ^h upki	‘a knot’

The /ŋ/ in word medial of Kumbi, Wangoo, Chairel and Imphal correspond to /g/ in Thanga and Heirok.

Kumbi	Wangoo	Chairel	Imphal	Thanga	Heirok	Gloss
səŋəm	səŋəm	səŋəm	səŋəm	səŋgəm	səŋgəm	‘a kind of unit’

The /l/ in word medial of Heirok and Imphal correspond to /r/ in Kumbi, Wangoo, Chairel, and /n/ in Thanga.

Heirok	Imphal	Kumbi	Wangoo	Chairel	Thanga	Gloss
sələiba	sələiban	sərəiban	sərəiban	sərīban	sənəiban	‘dirt of heel’

The /t^h/ in word medial of Kumbi, Wangoo, Chairel, Heirok and Imphal correspond to /d^h/ in Thanga.

Kumbi	Wangoo	Chairel	Heirok	Imphal	Thanga	Gloss
tɪŋt ^h əu	tɪŋt ^h əu	tɪŋt ^h əu	tɪŋt ^h əu	tɪŋt ^h əu	tɪŋd ^h əu	‘cynodon’

The /j/ in word medial of Kumbi, Thanga, Chairel and Imphal correspond to /ɟ/ in Wangoo and Heirok.

Kumbi	Thanga	Chairel	Imphal	Wangoo	Heirok	Gloss
naoɟom	naoɟom	naoɟom	naoɟom	naoɟom	naoɟom	‘amnion’

2.3. Word final non-identical consonant correspondences

In the comparison of lexical items of these six dialects, i.e., Kumbi, Thanga, Wangoo, Chairel, Heirok and Imphal, word final non-identical correspondences are found and are analysed:

The /k/ in the word final of Thanga, Wangoo, Chairel, Heirok and Imphal correspond to /ŋ/ in Kumbi.

Thanga	Wangoo	Chairel	Heirok	Imphal	Kumbi	Gloss
k ^h ərek	k ^h ərek	k ^h ərek	k ^h ərek	k ^h ərek	k ^h əreŋ	‘dirt on the mouth’

The /n/ in the word final of Kumbi, Thanga, Wangoo, Chairel and Imphal correspond to /ŋ/ in Heirok.

Kumbi	Thanga	Wangoo	Chairel	Imphal	Heirok	Gloss
p ^h əuman	p ^h əuman	p ^h əuman	p ^h əuman	p ^h əuman	p ^h əumaŋ	‘chaff’

The /ŋ/ in the word final of Thanga, Wangoo, Chairel, Heirok and Imphal correspond to /m/ in Kumbi.

Thanga	Wangoo	Chairel	Heirok	Imphal	Kumbi	Gloss
wahoŋ	wahoŋ	wahoŋ	wahoŋ	wahoŋ	wahom	‘peacock’

The /p/ in the word final of Kumbi, Thanga, Wangoo, Chairel and Imphal correspond to /k/ in Heirok.

Kumbi	Thanga	Wangoo	Chairel	Imphal	Heirok	Gloss
p ^h əuintop	p ^h əuintop	p ^h əuintop	p ^h əuintop	p ^h əuintop	p ^h əuint ^h ok	‘a device used in winnowing’

The /m/ in the word final of Kumbi, Wangoo, Chairel and Heirok correspond to /p/ in Thanga and /ŋ/ in Imphal.

Kumbi	Wangoo	Chairel	Heirok	Thanga	Imphal	Gloss
p ^h əuɟum	p ^h əuɟum	p ^h əuɟum	p ^h əuɟum	p ^h əukup	p ^h əugriŋ	‘small pieces of chaff’

The /k/ in the word final of Kumbi, Wangoo, and Chairel correspond to /ŋ/ in Thanga and /m/ in Heirok and Imphal.

Kumbi	Wangoo	Chairel	Thanga	Heirok	Imphal	Gloss
p ^h əuhik	p ^h əurik	p ^h əurik	p ^h əugriŋ	p ^h əuɟum	p ^h əuɟum	‘olivier’

3. Consonant Clusters

Consonant cluster correspondences in these six dialects can be analysed as following categories.

3.1. Word initial consonant cluster

3.2. Word medial consonant cluster

3.3. Word final consonant cluster

Here, only 3.1. and 3.2. types of clusters will be discussed because the third (3.3) types of cluster is not found in the native words of these six dialects.

3.1. Word initial consonant cluster

Limited numbers of word initial consonant clusters are found in these six dialects. In this type of cluster, first members are /k, k^h, s, g/ and second member is /w/. This initial consonant cluster is formed by deleting /ə/ and /i/ in between the first and second member.

Examples are-

- | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. k+w | kəwa>kwa | ‘betel nut’ |
| | kəwak>kwak | ‘crow’ |
| 2. k ^h +w | k ^h əwaŋ>khwaŋ | ‘waist’ |
| 3. s+w | səwaidə>swaidə | ‘here’ |
| 4. k+y | kiyamgəi>kyamgəi | ‘name of a place’ |

kiyاملəi>kyاملəi ‘a kind of flower’

All these consonant clusters are found in the six dialects i.e. Kumbi, Thanga, Wangoo, Chairel, Heirol and Imphal except the word /k^hwaŋ/. This word is pronounced as /k^həwaŋ/ in Kumbi, Wangoo and Chairel.

Initial consonant cluster is also found in some sound like words of these six dialects. Such clusters are formed by deleting the vowels in which it is present in that sound like words. Examples are-

p+r	porok>prok	‘a kind of sound’
p ^h +r	p ^h erek>phrek	‘a sound of firing’
k+r	karak>krak	‘a kind of sound’ etc.

4.2. Word medial consonant clusters

There are some Word medial consonant clusters which are found in the syllable initial position of a word in these six dialects. The first member of the cluster is mainly /p b t d k g p^h t^h k^h/ etc. and the second member is /r/. By deleting /ə/ vowel in between the first and second members, the cluster is formed. Examples are-

Kumbi	Thanga	Wangoo	Chairel	Heirol	Imphal	Gloss
nəptron	nəptron	nəptron	nəptron	nəptron	nəptron/nəpton	‘mucus’
sendraŋ	sendraŋ	sendraŋ	sendraŋ	sendraŋ	sendraŋ/sendraŋ	‘sparrow’
ŋəkra	ŋəkra	ŋəkra	ŋəkra	ŋəkra	ŋəkra	‘a kind of fish’ etc.

Sometimes there are some variations among the dialects regarding some clusters. In this, cluster is formed as insertion of sound. Examples are-

The /b/ of Kumbi, Thanga, Chairel, Heirol and Imphal correspond to /br/ in Wangoo.

Kumbi	Thanga	Chairel	Heirol	Imphal	Wangoo	Gloss
seŋbaŋ	sembaŋ	sembaŋ	sembaŋ	sembaŋ	sembrəŋ	‘a kind of bird’

The /j/ of Thanga, Wangoo, Chairel, Heirol and Imphal correspond to /jr/ in Kumbi.

Thanga	Wangoo	Chairel	Heirol	Imphal	Kumbi	Gloss
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səɪjak səɪjak səɪjak səɪjak səɪjak səɪɾak ‘a kind of tree’

4.3. Word final consonant cluster

In all the six dialects of Manipuri, there is no final consonant cluster whereas in some borrowed word final consonant clusters are found. But in this paper that borrowed words are not discussed.

Conclusion

From the above analysis it is clear that these six dialects of Manipuri have variations regarding the consonant correspondences. Such variations may lead unintelligible amongst the dialects. This paper will contribute some knowledge to the readers about the variation of consonants in these six dialects of Manipuri and it will also give an idea in order to reconstruct the proto form of Manipuri.

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