

Compound Noun Formation in Manipuri and Marwari

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Abstract

A compound is a word or lexeme that is formed by combining two or more lexemes together. When two or more words are combined together to create a new term or word, than this process of word formation is known as compounding. This research paper aims to examine the word formation process that takes place in Manipuri, and Marwari and how the structures of the words are formed. It involves the study of compound noun structure found in Manipuri and Marwari Compounds. The data are gathered using a series of questionnaires and a semi-structured group interview among the speakers of Manipuri and Marwari community. Compounding is a highly prominent morphological process in Manipuri. Syntactic or morphological analysis simply cannot easily rebuild the identified semantic relation between the components. The original meanings of the components may occasionally be lost during compounding, or an item may be placed in between the constituents to create a potential compound. In other case, if the constituents are inseparable they can be considered to be compounds. Again, in Marwari, the compound nouns are formed by addition of the derivative suffixes like noun, verb or adjectives and they are categorized based on the semantic relationship of the constituent noun. The root word in the compound gives an instance of completeness or totality of the related object. Thus, this paper focus on the various structures formed during compound noun formation in both Manipuri and Marwari language and also highlight the role that takes place in deriving new words from the existing words. The study is an exploration and is not primarily focus on the comparative and contrastive study of compound noun structure; Manipuri belongs to the Tibeto-Burman language family and Marwari to the Indo-Aryan.

Keywords: Compound noun, Manipuri and Marwari, connective particles, possessive markers, purposive markers, semantic relationship.

1. Introduction

Languages use a variety of strategies to expand their lexicon by adding new terms. One of these strategies is called compounding. It is the process of combining already existing words in a language to form compound words. Trask in 2007, states that compounding is the process of creating new words only from inside a language, without using resources from other languages. The present paper seeks to shed light on the compound noun structure found in Manipuri and Marwari Compounds. Manipur, a northeastern state of India, is home to the majority of the people with approx. 1.5 million speakers of the Tibeto-Burman language, known as Manipuri.

It also serves as the lingua franca among the 29 distinct ethnic groups of Manipur. Whereas Marwari is an Indo-Aryan language with approximately 45–50 million people speaking it in the Marwar region of western Rajasthan, India. Both Manipuri and Marwari are highly productive in the word formation process and the method employed in the study of compound noun formation is the structural analysis approach, which is used in linguistics to denote any method of analyzing language that explicitly considers how linguistic aspects may be best explained in terms of structure and system. Thus, this study aims at classifying the compound noun structure found in Manipuri and Marwari Compounds into various categories and the role that takes place in deriving new words from the existing words. It explores the various processes of compound noun formation and their various forms by examining the relationship between the constituents and the resulting compounds.

2. Objectives of the Study

- To examine the compound word formation process of Manipuri and Marwari language.
- To explore the various processes of compound noun formation and their various forms by examining the relationship between the constituents and the resulting compounds.

3. Research Methodology

This study incorporates both primary and secondary data to examine the word formation process found in Manipuri and Marwari languages and the data collection is done using a series of questionnaires and a semi-structured group interviews are conducted among the speakers. A total of 8 to 10 native speakers of different age groups and gender are interviewed to meet the primary objectives of this paper and few secondary resources are used.

4. Compound in Manipuri

Compounding is one of the significant and highly productive word formation processes in Manipuri. This study examines the Manipuri compound noun structure based on the structural analysis approach. The following three compound noun formations are examined based on variations in the underlying structure.

1. Endocentric Compounds
2. Exocentric Compounds
3. Copulative Compounds

4.1 Endocentric Compounds

Here the compound AB is an instance of B where A and B is combined with possessive markers. When a compound word structure of this kind is used, the possessive markers found in the underlying structure are absent from the resulting compound words. The two parts that make up the compound words that are created in this way have a propensity to occur together only. Noun plus possessive marker plus noun is the form of the composite noun, as in - ləw ‘paddy’ + gi (possessive marker) + kon ‘place’ > ləwkon ‘paddy field’.

For example:

yot + chəy > yotchəy ‘iron-rod’
 iron stick

li + chəy > lichəy ‘can-stick’
 mud nuts

wahəy + pəreŋ > wahəypəreŋ ‘sentence’
 word line

sən + gari > səngari ‘bullock-cart’
 bull vehicle

cek + kon > cekon ‘brick-farm’
 brick place

4.2 Exocentric Compound

Here AB is neither A nor B but a C somehow associated with A and B which does not have an overt semantic head; AB is formed with connective particles. The constituent parts of the compound retain their identities to some extent and are inseparable in this sort of compound noun formation. The compound words that are so produced lack the connective particles that are present in the underlying structure. The compound words that result from this process have a propensity to have a gap between the two components. The compound noun has the form of noun plus connective particles plus noun plus connective particles, as in

sa ‘animal’ gə (connective particle) ŋa ‘fish’ gə (connective particle) > sa ŋa ‘animals’

For example:

phurit shirt	+	khongaw trousers	>	phurit khongaw ‘dresses’
upu almirah	+	kaṅthol bed	>	upu kaṅthol ‘furnitures’
nupi woman	+	əṅaṅ child	>	nupi əṅaṅ ‘women’
mətəy brother-in-law	+	mənaw younger in age	>	mətəy mənaw ‘husband-wife’
səna gold	+	lupa silver	>	səna lupa ‘jewellery’
cak rice	+	isiṅ water	>	cak isiṅ ‘meal’
sa animal	+	kəy tiger	>	sa kəy ‘animals’

4.3 Copulative Compounds

Here the Compound AB is an instance of both A and B combined with purposive markers. When the general linking verb is combined with the purposive marker, a compound noun structure of this kind is created. The compound words so generated do not include the purposive marker that was added to the generic connecting verb that is present in the underlying structure. The two components that combine to make compound words have a propensity to emerge in their purely combined form. The compound noun has the form of a noun + connecting verb-purposive marker nominalizer plus noun, such in- cak ‘rice’ + thoṅ (linking verb)-nə (purposive marker)-bə (nominalizer) + səṅ ‘hut’ > caksəṅ ‘kitchen’.

For example

ṅa fish	+	hapnəbə put-PUR-NZR	+	lubak basket	>	ṅarubak a closed basket for keeping fish
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kwa	+	cəpnəbə	+	cegəp	>	kwajəp
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betel nut	cut-PUR-NZR	cutter	a betel nut cutter
lay + God	khoyrəmnəbə + pray-PUR-NZR	səŋ > hut	laysəŋ temple

5. Compounding in Marwari

Compounding is one of the most productive morphological processes found in Marwari language. This study examines the various processes of compound noun formation and their various forms by examining the relationship between the constituents and the resulting compounds. The compound nouns are mainly formed by addition of the derivative suffixes like noun, verb or adjectives and they are categorized based on the semantic relationship held by the constituent noun. There are three main types of semantic relationship between the constituent nouns in order to form the compound nouns. They are- equational compounds, associative compounds, and attributive compounds. In attributive compounds, the verb can also serve as an attributive by forming the structural form- Verb (V) + Noun (N) compounds.

5.1 Equational Compounds

The two words that make up the composite noun in this sort of compound may have the same meaning or one that is quite similar. There may be differences in some attribute features between the constituents created in this kind.

For example:

sewa service	+	susər > nursing	‘nursing’
suk ^h relief	+	cən > peace	‘peace’
puja worship	+	silam > salutation	‘worship’
guŋ animal manure	+	liyə > insect	‘dungbug’

5.2 Associative Compounds

This type of compound nouns combine the restricted referents of the same semantic field or, by combining the prominent characteristics of that semantic field, they can produce compounds whose referential range encompasses the whole semantic field.

For example:

hawa air	+	paŋi water	>	‘climate’
kər work	+	məʒuri wage	>	‘livelihood’
ʃabər children	+	ʃikər boys	>	‘family’
ʃabər children	+	pənə hood	>	‘childhood’
pat ^h study	+	sala a sheltering place	>	‘school’

5.3 Attributive Compounds

Attributive compounds are formed by combining a noun or a verb as the first element, followed by an adjective and adverb, which modifies the noun or the verb. This kind of compound uses the second word as a substantive and the first noun, adjective, or adverb as an attributive.

For example:

d ^h eri dark	+	rat night	>	‘moonless night’
ɖuŋi deep	+	bat story	>	‘mystery’
mæc ^h ər mosquito	+	dani net	>	‘mosquionet’
sita custard apple	+	p ^h al fruit	>	‘custard apple’

6. Conclusion

Thus, this study revealed that the process of compounding is one of the most productive word formation processes employed in Manipuri and Marwari. In essence, the present article is not a comparative or contrastive study but it focuses on examining the compound noun structure present in Manipuri and Marwari languages through an exploratory analysis. It analyzes both from the semantic and structural points of view the various types of compounds present in both the languages. The results of this initial research should pave the way for further investigations.

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