

Structure of Body Parts in Meiteiron

Yumnam Aboy Singh¹, Naorem Brindebala Devi²

Research Scholar, Department of Linguistics

Manipur University, Canchipur -795 003

Manipur, India

¹aboyyumnam@gmail.com, ²brindebalanaorem@gmail.com

Abstract- This paper mainly concentrates on the structure of body parts which have been practiced from the early days in Meitei Society. Therefore the study is very important aspect of this field and it will also give a deep knowledge insight into the element of structural language, philosophical culture, belief, thought etc. of the Meitei Society.

General Terms: Noun; Genitive marker; Compound; Pronominal marker

Keywords: Body parts; Categories of body parts; Human organ

1. INTRODUCTION

The social and cultural impacts forcefully penetrate into Meiteiron in the structural process of naming of the body parts. The exploration of socio-cultural activities or practices is rigidly intermingled with Meiteiron. It is unquestionable if the language is adornment of culture or culture is adornment of language. The beautification of language and culture is not a god's creation but a result arising from along preparatory procedures of human wisdom. Any social reflection existing into the language cannot be counted as blind faith since the civilization goes through it. The main attempt of the study is to cast the importance of ethno-science in the study of Meiteiron. In Meiteiron, the naming of body parts and its structural pattern can be analysed as hereunder.

1.1 BODY PARTS

The human body is the entire structure of a human being and comprises a head, neck, trunk (which includes the thorax and abdomen), two arms and hands and two legs and feet. Every part of body is composed of various cells (Wikipedia, 2014). In the body parts, the role of *lu/kok* 'head' is very important and it has a significant meaning in Meitei society.

1.2 Categories of body parts

In Meiteiron, *hakcaygi sərək* 'body parts' can be categorized as follows:

1.2.1 *lu/kok* 'head'

The Meiteis believe that *lu* 'head' is considered the most important part of human organ. It consists of the following constituents:

Examples:

1) *lumay*

lu + gi + mə + may >*lumay*

head gen. 3PP front

'Forelock'.

2) *luton*

lu + gi + mə + ton >*luton*

head gen. 3PP top

'Crown'.

3) *lusəm*

lu + gi + mə + səm >*lusəm*

head gen. 3PP hair

'Nape'.

4) *luk^həm*

lu + gi + ək^həmbə >*luk^həm*

head gen. end

'Occiput'.

It consists of two nouns, a genitive marker and a third person pronominal marker as in the above examples 1), 2) and 3). Whereas in the above example 4), it consists of a noun, a genitive marker along with an adjective.

In Meitei society, the people believe that one of the most valuable parts of body is considered as *lurel*. The meaning of *lurel* is valuable head, where *lu* means head and *rel/len* means valuable.

1.2.2 *mai* 'face'

It includes eyes 'the organ of sight', eyebrow 'the arch of hair above each eye', eyelid 'either of two folds of skin that can be moved to cover or open the eye', nose 'the organ of smell and entrance to the respiratory tract; the prominent part of the face of man', nostrils 'either one of the two external openings to the nasal cavity in the nose', philtrum 'the shallow groove between the nose and the upper lip', ears 'the sense organ for hearing and equilibrium', lips 'either of two fleshy folds of tissue that surround the mouth and play a role in speaking', chin 'the protruding part of the lower jaw', cheek 'either side of the face below the eyes' etc.

A) *mīt* 'eyes'

The word *mit* 'eyes' is the organ of sight. It includes the following organs.

Examples:

1) *mitpan*

mit + ki + mə + pan >*mitpan*
eye gen. 3PP border
'Eye lid'.

2) *mitk^ha*

mit + ki + mə + k^ha >*mitk^ha*
eye gen. 3PP lower part
'Lower part of the eyes'.

3) *mitt^hək*

mit + ki + mə + t^hək >*mitt^hək*
eye gen. 3PP upper part
'Upper part of the eyes'.

4) *mitci*

mit + ki + mə + ci >*mitci*
eye gen. 3PP corner
'Corner of the eyes'.

In the above example 1), most of the compounds are consisted of the following constituents such as, *mit* is root, *ki* is genitive marker, *mə* is third person pronominal marker and *pan* is modifier. The remaining constituents i.e. 2), 3) and 4) are the similar construction.

B) *naton* 'nose'

It is the organ of smell and entrance to the respiratory tract; the prominent part of the face of man or other mammals. It consists of the following constituents.

Examples:

1) *naton sumay*

naton + gi + sumay >*naton sumay*
nose gen. courtyard
'Philtrum'.

2) *naton mək^hun*

naton + gi + mə + k^hun >*naton mək^hun*
nose gen. 3PP hole
'Nostril'.

In the above example 1), the compound is formed by combining the constituents such as, noun + genitive marker + noun. Whereas in the example 2), the compound is formed by combining noun + genitive marker + third person pronominal marker + noun.

C) *cin* 'mouth'

It is the organ of speaking. It plays the role of eating also. It consists of the following constituents.

Examples:

1) *cinban*

cin + gi + mə + pan >*cinban*
mouth gen. 3PP border
'Lip'.

In the above example, the compound word is formed by combining some elements such as: *noun* + genitive marker + third person pronominal marker + modifier etc.

Here, *cin* is mouth, *gi* is genitive marker, *mə* is third person pronominal marker and *pan* is modifier.

1.2.3 *k^hut* 'hands'

It is the organ of holding something as well. It consists of the following elements.

Examples:

1) *k^humay*

k^hut + ki + mə + may >*k^humay*
hand gen. 3PP front
'Front part of the hand'.

2) *k^hujin*

k^hut + ki + mə + cin >*k^hujin*
hand gen. 3PP mouth
'Nails'.

3) *k^hubak*

k^hut + ki + mə + pak >*k^hubak*
hand gen. 3PP breath
'Palm'.

4) *k^hunəm*

k^hut + ki + mə + nəm >*k^hunəm*
hand gen. 3PP dorsum
'Dorsum of palm'.

5) *k^hujek*

k^hut + ki + mə + cep >*k^hujek*
hand gen. 3PP side
'Side of palm'.

6) *k^hubi*

k^hut + ki + mə + pi >*k^hubi*
hand gen. 3PP head
'Thumb'.

7) *k^hudombi*

k^hut + ki + ətumbi >*k^hudombi*
hand gen. pointed
'Pointed finger'.

8) *k^huniŋt^həu*

k^hut + ki + niŋt^həu >*k^huniŋt^həu*
hand gen. king
'Ring finger'.

9) *k^hujai*

k^hut + ki + mə + jai >*k^hujai*
hand gen. 3PP center
'Middle finger'.

10) *k^hutnabi*

k^hut + ki + mə + nau >*k^hutnabi*
hand gen. 3PP younger
'Little finger'.

11) *k^hutsa*

k^hut + ki + mə + sa >*k^hutsa*
hand gen. 3PP branch
'Finger'.

12) *k^huday*

k^hut + ki + mə + tay >*k^huday*

hand gen. 3PP join
'Wrist'.

13) *k^huniy*

k^hut + ki + mə + niy >*k^huniy*

hand gen. 3PP back
'Elbow'.

In the above examples i.e. from 1) to 6) and from 9) to 13) are the same construction because they are consisted of a noun, a genitive marker, third person pronominal marker and a modifier. Whereas the example 7) and example 8) are the different forms, for instance, in the above example 7) the constituent is consisted of a noun, a genitive marker and an adjective. On the other hand, the example 8) is formed by combining a noun, a genitive marker and a noun.

1.2.4 *k^hoy* 'leg'

It is a kind of human limb; commonly used to refer to a whole limb but technically only the part of the limb between the knee and ankle. By the help of leg one can move from one place to another.

Examples:

1) *k^huniy*

k^hoy + gi + mə + niy >*k^huniy*

leg gen. 3PP back
'Heel'.

2) *k^hoyja*

k^hoy + gi + mə + ja >*k^hoyja*

leg gen. 3PP sole
'Sole'.

3) *k^hoybi*

k^hoy + gi + mə + pi >*k^hoybi*

leg gen. 3PP head
'Big toe'.

4) *k^hoynau*

k^hoy + gi + mə + nau >*k^hoynau*

leg gen. 3PP younger
'Little toe'.

5) *k^hoynəm*

k^hoy + gi + mə + nəm >*k^hoynəm*

leg gen. 3PP instep
'Instep'.

6) *k^hoypak*

k^hoy + gi + mə + pak >*k^hoypak*

leg gen. 3PP bottom surface
'Foot'.

7) *k^hoyša*

k^hoy + gi + mə + sa >*k^hoyša*

leg gen. 3PP branch
'Toe'.

In the above examples i.e. from 1) to 7) are the similar constructions because they are consisted of a noun, a genitive marker, third person pronominal marker and a modifier. One of the most interesting phenomena which is

found in Meiteiron is that the word *k^huniy* (above 1.2.3.(13) and 1.2.4.(1)) refers to both **elbow** and **heel**.

1.2.5 *səru* 'bone'

It is an organ of rigid connective tissue that makes up the skeleton of vertebrates. It consists of the following elements.

Examples:

1) *səru*

sa + gi + mə + ru >*səru*

body gen. 3PP bone
'Bone'.

This construction is consisted of two nouns, a genitive marker and a third person pronominal marker.

1.2.6 *həkcangi məpan^həybə səruk* 'external organs'

This is an important organ that is situated on or near the surface of the body. Some of the external organs of body and their structural patterns are given below:

Examples:

1) *leyban*

ley + gi + mə + pan >*leyban*

shoulder gen. 3PP border
'Shoulder'.

2) *pukcep*

puk + ki + mə + cep >*pukcep*

belly gen. 3PP side
'Side of the belly'.

3) *pukli*

puk + ki + mə + ri >*pukli*

belly gen. 3PP insides
'Insides'.

4) *k^hoiri*

k^hoi + gi + mə + ri >*k^hoiri*

navel gen. 3PP line
'Navel'.

5) *niygoy*

niy + gi + mə + k^hoy >*niygoy*

hip gen. 3PP root
'Hip'.

6) *t^həbak*

t^ha + gi + əpakpə >*t^həbak*

chest gen. breath
'Chest'.

7) *p^həigən*

p^həi + gi + əkənbə >*p^həigən*

thigh gen. hard
'Thigh'.

8) *jaylen*

jay + gi + len >*jaylen*

spinal code gen. valuable
'Spinal code'.

9) *unsa*

un + gi + sa >*unsa*

skin gen. flesh
'Skin of flesh'.

In the above examples i.e. from 1) to 5) are the same constructions because they are consisted of a noun, a genitive marker, third person pronominal marker and a modifier. Whereas the examples 6) to 8) are also in the similar category, for instance, the constituents are consisted of a noun, a genitive marker and an adjective. On the other hand, the example 9) is formed by combining a noun, a genitive marker with a noun.

1.2.7 *həkcaŋgi mənuyt^həybə səruk* 'internal organs'

It is a main organ that is situated inside the body. The main parts of internal organ include: *ja* 'teeth', *ləi* 'tongue', *ca^hau* 'stomach', *t^həmoi* 'heart', *p^hirak* 'liver', *məsɪŋk^ha* 'gold bladder', *kitəni* 'kidney', *t^həbombi* 'lungs', *t^hirin* 'intestine' etc.

A) *ja* 'teeth'

It is a hard bonelike structure in the jaws of vertebrates; used for biting and chewing or for attack and defence.

Examples:

1) *jamaŋ*

ja + gi + mə + maŋ >*jamaŋ*
teeth gen. 3PP front
'Front teeth'.

2) *jak^ha*

ja + gi + mə + k^ha >*jak^ha*
teeth gen. 3PP lower
'Lower teeth'.

3) *ja^hək*

ja + gi + mə + t^hək >*ja^hək*
teeth gen. 3PP upper
'Upper teeth'.

4) *jak^hoŋ*

ja + gi + mə + k^hoŋ >*jak^hoŋ*
teeth gen. 3PP root
'Root of the teeth'.

5) *jaton*

ja + gi + mə + ton >*jaton*
teeth gen. 3PP tip
'Tip of the teeth'.

6) *jari*

ja + gi + mə + ri >*jari*
teeth gen. 3PP line
'Gum'.

7) *jacəu*

ja + gi + əcəubə >*jacəu*
teeth gen. protrusive
'Protrusive teeth'.

8) *japəŋ*

ja + gi + əpəŋbə >*japəŋ*
teeth gen. blunt
'Molar'.

The similar constructions are found in the above examples i.e. from 1) to 6), for instance, the examples are consisted of a noun, a genitive marker, third person pronominal marker and a modifier. On the other hand, the examples from 6) to 8) are the similar one, for instance, the constituents are consisted of a noun, a genitive marker and an adjective.

B) *ləi* 'tongue'

It is the organ of taste and a muscular tissue covered with mucous membrane and located in the oral cavity.

Examples:

1) *ləiton*

ləi + gi + mə + ton >*ləiton*
tongue gen. 3PP tip
'Tip of the tongue'.

2) *ləijai*

ləi + gi + mə + jai >*ləijai*
tongue gen. 3PP middle
'Middle of the tongue'.

3) *ləik^hoŋ*

ləi + gi + mə + k^hoŋ >*ləik^hoŋ*
tongue gen. 3PP root
'Root of the tongue'.

4) *ləit^hək*

ləi + gi + mə + t^hək >*ləit^hək*
'Tongue gen. 3PP upper
upper part of the tongue'.

5) *ləik^ha*

ləi + gi + mə + k^ha >*ləik^ha*
tongue gen. 3PP lower
'Lower part of the tongue'.

The similar constructions are found in the above examples i.e. from 1) to 5), for instance, the examples are consisted of a noun, a genitive marker, third person pronominal marker and a modifier.

C) *ca^hau* 'stomach'

The stomach is an enlarged and muscular saclike organ of the alimentary canal. It is also a principal organ of digestion.

1) *ca^hau*

ca^h + ki + k^hau >*ca^hau*
rice gen. bag
'Stomach'.

2) *əŋaŋk^hau*

əŋaŋ + gi + k^hau >*əŋaŋk^hau*
baby gen. bag
'Womb'.

The above examples i.e. 1) and 2) are formed by inserting a genitive marker in between two nouns.

D) *t^həmoi* 'heart'

It is a valuable organ of locus of feelings and intuitions. The hollow muscular organ located behind the sternum

and between the lungs. By the help of heart, the rhythmic contractions move the blood through the body.

E) *p^hirak* 'liver'

Large and complicated reddish-brown glandular organ located in the upper right portion of the abdominal cavity; secretes bile and functions in metabolism of protein and carbohydrate and fat; synthesizes substances involved in the clotting of the blood; synthesizes vitamin A; detoxifies poisonous substances and breaks down worn-out erythrocytes.

F) *məsɪŋk^ha* 'gallbladder'

It is an organ of muscular sac attached to the liver that stores bile (secreted by the liver) until it is needed for digestion.

G) *kitəni* 'kidney'

It is an internal organ that looks like two bean-shaped that filter wastes from the blood and excrete them and water in urine.

H) *t^həbombi* 'lungs'

Lungs is a breathing organ (Soibam, 2004). It is either of two saclike respiratory organs in the chest of vertebrates; serves to remove carbon dioxide and provide oxygen to the blood.

I) *t^hirin* 'intestine'

It is the part of the alimentary canal between the stomach and the anus. It is two types such as *t^hirinməca* 'small intestine' and *t^hirinəcaubə* 'large intestine'. Structurally it can be analyzed as under.

1) *t^hirin*

t^hi + *rin* >*t^hirin*
excrement pipe
'Intestine'.

It consists of two nouns.

1.2.8 *sigli* 'nerve'

Any bundle of nerve fibers running to various organs and tissues of the body (WordWeb dictionary, 2013). Linguistically it can be analyzed as under.

1) *sigli*

siy + *li* >*sigli*
fibers line
'Nerve'.

Here the root *siy* of *sigli* may be derived from the *siy* of *məsɪy* 'fiber'.

CONCLUSION

A unique form of Meitei indigenous terms is shown by Meitei body parts that have its roots in Meitei culture. It also examines the Meitei structural pattern of body parts at different categories. The study is more or less related to the belief of the people, culture and philosophy of the indigenous people. The main objective of study of Meitei

body parts is to explore the structural pattern of the language by the help of culture. After investigation about the body parts of Meiteironone can easily understand that how the ancestors were scientifically given such kind of body parts in the society.

SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

gen. ---genitive marker
3PP--- 3rd person pronominal marker
+ ----combined with
>---- become

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Authors' Biography



Yumnam Aboy Singh is presently working on Ethno-Semantic Study on Meiteiron under the Department of Linguistics, Manipur University, Canchipur, Imphal, Manipur. He is also working as an Asst. Project Scientist of PLS-IL: Manipur Consortium Project under the Ministry of MC and IT, DIT, Govt. of India. He loves to work particularly on socio-cultural related areas. Some of the works that were done by him are "Compounding in Meitei Surnames" in Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 Vol.13:10 October 2013, MEITEIS' NAMING PRACTICE in Journal of Advances in Linguistics (JAL) ISSN 2348-3024, Vol 3, No. 2 editor@cirworld.com, March 13, 2014 and will be published a paper "KINSHIP TERMS IN MEITEIRON: A special reference to compound words" in the *International Journal of English and Education* (IJEE) in the APRIL 2014 issue (Vol. 03, Issue: 02) etc.



Naorem Brindebala Devi is presently undergoing research work in the Department of Linguistics, Manipur University, Canchipur, Imphal (India). She is a UGC-JRF holder. Her research topic is 'Kakching Dialect: A Linguistic Analysis'.