

## **The Variation of Free Morphemes in Compound Words in Jinghpo\***

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In the Jinghpo language when free morphemes appear in compound words they often undergo variation in their phonetic form and/or meaning. Many of the variations occur when they are the initial morphemes of compound words. Not only is there variation in the characteristics of these morphemes, but this variation also gives rise to changes in the structural pattern of compound words. Furthermore, this variational phenomenon raises a new question as to how to understand the morpheme.

### **Part I. Phonetic Variation**

Phonetic variation of free morphemes in compound words can be divided into three types according to the locus of the variation. In the first type the variation occurs in the initial consonant, in the second type the variation occurs in the rhyme, and in the third type variation occurs over the whole syllable. When the free morpheme is disyllabic, usually the second syllable is used to form the compound word, and phonetic variation will occur in this second syllable. Another point to be noted is that the tone often changes when a free morpheme appears in a compound word.

#### **1.1 Types of phonetic variation**

##### **1.1.1 Rhyme variation**

The first type of phonetic variation is variation in the rhyme. This is rather common. Especially important is the reduction of a vowel to schwa. For example:

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kǎ<sup>55</sup>wa<sup>55</sup> 'bamboo' → wǎ<sup>31</sup>

wǎ <sup>31</sup> bamboo	tʃɛn <sup>33</sup> slice	'bamboo slice'	wǎ <sup>31</sup> bamboo	pɔt <sup>31</sup> root	'bamboo root'
wǎ <sup>31</sup> bamboo	tsi <sup>31</sup> green	'green bamboo'	wǎ <sup>31</sup> bamboo	kji <sup>31</sup> shriveled	'shriveled bamboo'

ka<sup>55</sup> 'soil' → kǎ<sup>31</sup>

kǎ <sup>31</sup> soil	khjeŋ <sup>33</sup> red	'red soil'	kǎ <sup>31</sup> soil	mu <sup>31</sup> gray	'fertile soil'
kǎ <sup>31</sup> soil	tʃaŋ <sup>33</sup> black	'black soil'	kǎ <sup>31</sup> soil	ni <sup>31</sup> fine	'watery mud'

pǎ<sup>31</sup>si<sup>33</sup> 'cotton' → sǎ<sup>31</sup>

sǎ <sup>31</sup> cotton	phʒa <sup>33</sup> farmland	'cotton farmland'	sǎ <sup>31</sup> cotton	ʒin <sup>55</sup> roll	'rolled cotton'
sǎ <sup>31</sup> cotton	khap <sup>55</sup> shoulder-pole	'a shoulder-pole of cotton'	sǎ <sup>31</sup> cotton	phuŋ <sup>55</sup> thick.shaft	'thick-shaft cotton'

tum<sup>31</sup>si<sup>33</sup> 'porcupine' → sǎ<sup>31</sup>

sǎ <sup>31</sup> porcupine	tʃap <sup>31</sup> smell	'smell of porcupine'	sǎ <sup>31</sup> porcupine	pʒum <sup>31</sup> arrow.shape	'arrow of porcupine'
sǎ <sup>31</sup> porcupine	ku <sup>55</sup> full.and.round	'buttock meat of porcupine'	sǎ <sup>31</sup> porcupine	phaŋ <sup>55</sup> cave	'porcupine cave'

mǎ<sup>31</sup>sin<sup>31</sup> 'liver; heart; vital organ; seat of emotions' → sǎ<sup>31</sup>

sǎ <sup>31</sup> organ	lum <sup>33</sup> round	'heart'	sǎ <sup>31</sup> organ	kʒi <sup>31</sup> gallbladder	'gallbladder'
sǎ <sup>31</sup> organ	te <sup>55</sup> kidney	'kidney'			

wa<sup>33</sup> 'tooth' → wǎ<sup>55</sup>

wǎ <sup>55</sup> tooth	thap <sup>55</sup> overlap	'bucktooth'	wǎ <sup>55</sup> tooth	ʒoŋ <sup>51</sup> erect	'crooked tooth'
wǎ <sup>55</sup> tooth	tʃi <sup>55</sup> convex	'alveolus'	wǎ <sup>55</sup> tooth	ʒum <sup>51</sup> fallen.out	'(teeth) all fallen out'

niŋ<sup>31</sup>wa<sup>33</sup> 'axe' → wǎ<sup>55</sup>

wǎ <sup>55</sup> thon <sup>51</sup> axe back	'back of axe'	wǎ <sup>33</sup> na <sup>33</sup> axe ears	'holes in axe'
wǎ <sup>33</sup> laŋ <sup>33</sup> axe handle	'axe handle'		

tʃiŋ<sup>33</sup>kha<sup>33</sup> 'door' → khǎ<sup>55</sup>

khǎ <sup>55</sup> noi <sup>55</sup> door hang	'door lintel'	khǎ <sup>55</sup> lap <sup>55</sup> door leaf	'window'
khǎ <sup>55</sup> tun <sup>55</sup> door surface	'threshold'		

pu<sup>31</sup> 'intestines' → pǎ<sup>31</sup>

pǎ <sup>31</sup> tun <sup>31</sup> intestines starch	'starch sausage'	pǎ <sup>31</sup> tʃat <sup>31</sup> intestines add	'womb'
pǎ <sup>31</sup> ʒan <sup>31</sup> intestines put.in.order	'put in order (intestines)'		

lǎ<sup>31</sup>pu<sup>33</sup> 'snake' → pǎ<sup>33</sup>

pǎ <sup>33</sup> nen <sup>33</sup> snake smooth	'snake saliva'	pǎ <sup>33</sup> nu <sup>33</sup> snake soft	'boa'
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In a few cases, a constituent undergoes a change from an originally open syllable to a syllable closed with a final glottal stop. For example:

lǎ<sup>55</sup>ŋa<sup>55</sup> banana (wild) → ŋa<sup>731</sup>

ŋa <sup>731</sup> tun <sup>31</sup> banana leaf.tip	'top of banana leaf'	ŋa <sup>731</sup> li <sup>33</sup> banana leaf.bud	'banana leaf bud'
ŋa <sup>731</sup> kʒop <sup>55</sup> banana wither	'a kind of banana'		

Most of the stop-final rhymes do not change, e.g. compound words which contain wa<sup>731</sup> 'pig'. There are only one or two other stop-final syllables in the lexicon which are neutralized to open syllables in compound words. See the following example:

tʃiŋ<sup>31</sup>pho<sup>731</sup> 'people' → phǎ<sup>55</sup>

phǎ <sup>55</sup> on <sup>55</sup> people lead	'leader'	phǎ <sup>55</sup> ʒeŋ <sup>55</sup> people command	'commander'
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### 1.1.2 Initial consonant variation

The second type of phonetic morpheme variation is initial consonant variation. These include  $\eta \rightarrow w$ ,  $n \rightarrow l$ ,  $w \rightarrow l$  and  $l \rightarrow m$ , etc. Initial consonant variation often occurs simultaneously with vowel neutralization to schwa.

$\eta a^{33}$  'ox'  $\rightarrow$   $w\check{a}^{55}$

$w\check{a}^{55}$ ox	$lam^{55}$ loiter	'loitering ox'	$w\check{a}^{55}$ ox	$tat^{55}$ graze	'livestock farm'
$w\check{a}^{33}$ ox	$pja^{33}$ abort	'aborted ox'	$w\check{a}^{55}$ ox	$tam^{55}$ puzzle	'running-around ox'

$\eta a^{55}$  'fish'  $\rightarrow$   $w\check{a}^{31}$

$w\check{a}^{31}$ fish	$lun^{55}$ up	'fish swimming upstream'	$w\check{a}^{55}$ fish	$za^{31}$ cut	'carp'
$w\check{a}^{31}$ fish	$khje^{33}$ red	'yellow croaker'	$w\check{a}^{31}$ fish	$man^{55}$ keen	'shark'

$na^{33}$  'ear'  $\rightarrow$   $l\check{a}^{55}$

$l\check{a}^{55}$ ear	$tsop^{55}$ membrane	'eardrum'	$l\check{a}^{55}$ ear	$tan^{55}$ show	'ear adornment'
$l\check{a}^{55}$ ear	$kjo^{51}$ shriveled	'earwax'	$l\check{a}^{33}$ ear	$pjen^{33}$ board	'earlobe'

$khai^{55}nu^{33}$  'corn'  $\rightarrow$   $w\check{a}^{55}$

$w\check{a}^{55}$ corn	$kh\zeta o^{55}$ dry	'dried corn'	$w\check{a}^{33}$ corn	$pq^{33}$ heart	'corn cord'
$w\check{a}^{33}$ corn	$ph\zeta a^{33}$ field	'cornfield'	$w\check{a}^{55}$ corn	$phji^{55}$ skin	'corn skin'

$lam^{33}$  'road'  $\rightarrow$   $m\check{a}^{31}$ ,  $num^{31}$

$m\check{a}^{31}$ road	$sun^{33}$ small	'path'	$m\check{a}^{31}$ road	$p\zeta o^{31}$ branch	'branch road'
$num^{31}$ road	$je^{55}$ branch	'branch road'	$(=m\check{a}^{31})$ road	$je^{55}$ branch	
$num^{31}$ road	$sat^{31}$ scratch	'make road marking'	$num^{31}$ road	$p\zeta o^{31}$ fork	'crossroads'

### 1.1.3 Full syllable variation

The third type of variation is that which occurs over the whole syllable. In this type of variation the whole syllable is simplified to syllabic n-. Both nasal-final syllables and nasal-initial syllables are often simplified to n-. The