MORPHOPHONEMIC CHANGES IN MEITEIRON COMPOUNDING

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The aim of this paper is to show the modification of bases in Meiteiron. The paper deals about the changes of consonants and vowels in the process of compounding.

Introduction

The general characteristics of the morphophonemic changes in Meiteiron roots are very irregular. The sound changes which occur in compounding can be discussed in the following headings. They are (1) voicing, (2) deaspiration, (3) change of lateral sound, (4) changes of nasals, (5) changes of vowels, (6) loss or deletion and (7) addition of semi-vowels.

1. Voicing

In the process of voicing, the voiceless sounds change into voiced sounds. The type of process is of progressive assimilation. The unaspirated voiceless stop sounds p, t, c, k are found to have changed into their voiced counterpart b, d, j, g, respectively, when the second root is preceded immediately by a voiced sound (i.e., a nasal, a vowel) or a semi-vowel. It is shown in the following table.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st Root</th>
<th>+2nd root</th>
<th>=Compound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ends in a nasal, or a semi-vowel</td>
<td>begins with p-</td>
<td>[Voice] → [fVoice] p &gt; b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or a vowel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ends in a nasal or a vowel or a semi-vowel</td>
<td>begins with t-</td>
<td>t &gt; d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ends in a nasal or a vowel, or a semi-vowel</td>
<td>begins with c-</td>
<td>c &gt; j</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ends in a nasal or a vowel, or a semi-vowel</td>
<td>begins with k-</td>
<td>k &gt; g</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Voicing:  

\[
\begin{array}{c c c}
\text{Voice} & \text{+Voice} \\
p- & b \\
t- & d \\
c- & j \\
k- & g
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c c c c}
\text{+Vowel} \\
\text{+nasal} \\
\text{+semi-vowel}
\end{array}
\]

Examples:

\[ p \rightarrow b \]

\[ p^h_i + p\text{an} = p^h_i b\text{an} \]

'the cloth border'

\[ t^h \text{a} + p\text{um} = t^h\text{a} b\text{um} \]

'the whole month'

\[ k^h\text{o}\text{n} + p\text{i} = k^h\text{o}\text{n} b\text{i} \]

'big toe'

\[ l^\text{a}m + p\text{an} = l^\text{a}m b\text{an} \]

'wild arum'

\[ h\text{uy} + p\text{u} = h\text{uy} b\text{u} \]

'owner of dog'

\[ s\text{a}n + p\text{u} = s\text{a}n b\text{u} \]

'owner of cow'

\[ l\text{a}y + p\text{ak} = l\text{a}y b\text{ak} \]

'clay'

\[ c\text{aw} + p\text{a}\text{n} = c\text{aw} b\text{an} \]

'fool'

\[ t \rightarrow d \]

\[ p^h_i + t\text{a} = p^h_i d\text{a} \]

'type of cloth'

\[ k^h\text{o}\text{n} + t\text{a} = k^h\text{o} d\text{a} \]

'shape of leg'

\[ k^h\text{o}\text{y} + t\text{o}\text{n} = k^h\text{o} y d\text{a} \]

'one having big naval'

\[ t^h_\text{a}w + t\text{aw} = t^h\text{a} w d\text{aw} \]

'mode of doing'

\[ s\text{en} + t\text{a}\text{g} = s\text{en} d\text{a} \]

'debt'
ləm + ton = ləmdon 'high land'

cin + ton = cindon 'high hill'

cin + tum = cindum 'hillock'

pa + ton = padon 'end of eyelash'

\[ \frac{c}{j} \]

pʰi + caw = pʰijaw 'big cloth'

pʰi + qam = pʰijəm 'ordinary cloth'

tʰon + caw = tʰonjaw 'door'

kʰaŋ + caw = kʰəŋjaw 'big pan'

səm + ci = səmji 'knot of hair'

kʰaw + caw = kʰəwjaw 'big bag'

həy + caw = həyjaw 'big fruit'

\[ \frac{k}{z} \]

pʰi + kəŋ = pʰigəŋ 'dry cloth'

tʰaŋ + kon = tʰəŋgon 'sickle'

kʰon + kəy = kʰəŋgəy 'undesirable speech'

tʰəw + kon = tʰəwən 'guard'

siŋ + kəy = siŋgəy 'shed of firewood'

firewood store
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>p\ ɔy + k\ ɔn</th>
<th>p\ ɔy\ ɔn</th>
<th>'thigh'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>thigh to be hard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mɪŋ + k\ ɔw</td>
<td>mɪŋ\ ɔw</td>
<td>'term of address'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>name to call</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lɛŋ + k\ ɔ</td>
<td>lɛŋ\ ɔ</td>
<td>'same age'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shoulder to group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exception: In some compounding there is no changes of p, t, c, k if the 2nd root is immediately preceded by a nasal or semivowel or a vowel.

Examples:

- **p** remains as **p**
  - lɔm + pak = lɔmpak 'meadow'
  - land to be broad
- cɛŋ + pak = cɛŋpak 'flattened rice'
  - rice to be broad
- lɔw + pu = lɔwpu 'owner of the paddy field'
  - paddy field owner

- **t** remains as **t**
  - paw + tak = pawtak 'advice'
  - news to indicate
- u + ton = uton 'top of the tree'
  - tree top
- mi + top = mitop 'outsider'
  - man others
- ya + ton = yaton 'tip of the tooth'
  - teeth tip
- lɔy + ton = lɔyton 'tip of the tongue'
  - tongue tip

- **c** remains as **c**
  - kʰɔŋ + c\ ɔt  = kʰɔŋc\ ɔt  'journey'
  - leg to go
- lɔm + c\ ɔt  = lɔmc\ ɔt  'character'
  - land to go