

# Asymmetry in Meetei

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Dr.Meiraba Takhellambam  
meiraba@gmail.com  
Manipur University

# Overview

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- Theoretical Background
- Plosive Voicing in Meetei
- Application of the Rule
- Non application of the Rule
- Why?



# Theoretical Background

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- **Lexical phonology** (Kiparsky, Mohanan 1982):
  - Is a theory about the organisation of grammar.
  - Its basic claim is that morphological rules and word level phonological rules are interspersed. A rule of word phonology (i.e. a lexical phonological rule, which exclusively applies within words) may apply as soon as the required environment for its application has been created by some morphological rule. -Booij & Rubach (1984)
- **Metrical Phonology** (Lieberman 1975):
  - Study of the relative prominence of the rhythmic units of spoken language.



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- **Prosodic phonology** (Selkirk 1980, 1986; Nespor & Vogel 1982, 1986; Kaisse 1985; Inkelas & Zec 1990):
  - A theory of phonological domains where the phonological units defined on the basis of the mapping rules incorporating information from the various components of the grammar are grouped into hierarchical structures or trees in accordance with the principles governing the representation.



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- **Phonological Word ( $\omega$ ) :**

- The lowest constituent of the prosodic hierarchy constructed on the basis of mapping rules that make substantial use of non phonological notions
- Represents the interaction between the phonological and morphological components of the grammar

# Language Background

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- The type of morphological words in Meetei can be divided into two types in terms of metrical representation:
  - Root]ω
  - Root + suffix] ω



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- The metrical theory analysis of Meiteilol stress in derived words emerges as:
  - Dominance : **left dominant**.
  - Quantity sensitivity: **quantity insensitive (QI)**.
  - Boundedness : **unbounded, degenerate feet is allowed freely**.
  - Directionionality: **(L →R)**.
  - Extrametricality : **no**.

## Plosive Voicing in Meetei Suffixation

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- tʃa + pa → 'tʃa.bə `eat.INF'
- jum + tə → 'jum.də `house.LOC'
- tan + te → 'tan.de `chase.NEG'
- t<sup>h</sup>oŋ + ki → 't<sup>h</sup>oŋ.gi `door.GEN'
- t<sup>h</sup>a + kə + ni → 't<sup>h</sup>a.gə.ni `plant.POS. COP'



## Plosive Voicing Rule

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- $[-\text{son}, -\text{voice}, +\text{Plosive}] \rightarrow [+voice] / [+son] \_ [+son]$

# Non application of Voicing rule

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- $\text{ə} + \text{pak.pə} \rightarrow \text{ə} \cdot \text{'pak.pə}$  'ATT.young.NMZ'
- $\text{i} + \text{pa} \rightarrow \text{i} \cdot \text{'pa}$  '1sg.father'
- $\text{i} + \text{ta} \rightarrow \text{i} \cdot \text{'ta}$  '1sg.friend'
- $\text{mə} + \text{tu} \rightarrow \text{mə} \cdot \text{'tu}$  '2sg.wife'
- $\text{nə} + \text{tu} \rightarrow \text{nə} \cdot \text{'tu}$  '3sg.wife'



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- a) between a person prefixes  $i-$  ,  $m\text{ə}-$  , and  $n\text{ə}-$
  - b) the attributive prefix  $\text{ə}-$  .

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- Meetei prefixes do not undergo the lexical rule of plosive voicing.
  - Suffixation triggers plosive voicing when the derived structure is met.
  - Prefixation blocks voice assimilation even when the derived structure is satisfied.



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- The metrical condition for Plosive Voicing in Meiteilol can be represented as:

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- $[-\text{sonorant}] \rightarrow [+voice] / \text{___} \begin{array}{c} \sigma_w \\ | \\ \text{On} \\ | \\ \text{C} \end{array}$

## Metrical explanation.

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- During prefixation the voiceless plosives are in the metrically prominent position thereby they do not undergo the plosive voicing phenomenon.



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- The domain of the application of voice assimilation in non-compounds in Meetei is not isomorphic to the morphological word.
  - The prosodic condition for Plosive Voicing in Meiteilol can be represented as:



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