

Deictic suffixes in Manipuri¹

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1. Manipuri deictic suffixes:

The Manipuri language makes use of four deictic suffixes: *rə*, *ru*, *rək*, and *kʰə*. These are used for denoting the location or orientation of an event or state, primarily with reference to the speaker's location. There are three different semantic parameters which help to differentiate one from the other. They are (1) motion or orientation of the event (towards or away from the speaker), (2) place of occurrence of the event (at the place of the speaker or at a place which is away from him), and (3) relative positions of these two (event preceding or following the motion or orientation). The following table will give a clear picture.

<i>Suffixes</i>	<i>Motion or orientation</i>	<i>Place of occurrence</i>	<i>Relative position of the two</i>
<i>rə</i>	toward the speaker	at the speaker's place	event follows the motion
<i>ru</i>	away from the speaker	away from the speaker's place	event follows the motion
<i>rək</i>	toward the speaker	away from the speaker's place	event precedes the motion
<i>kʰə</i>	away from the speaker	at the speaker's place	event precedes the motion

Table 1

The use of these four suffixes can be illustrated with the help of the following paradigms and sentences.²

¹ This paper is part of the research on Manipuri being done by D. N. S. Bhat and M. S. Ningomba. It was given at the 24th International Conference on Sino-Tibetan Languages and Linguistics, Ramkhamhaeng University, Bangkok (1991).

² The verbal forms given in these examples to illustrate the various uses and meanings of these deictic suffixes end in the non-future tense suffix which has the alternant *y* after the suffixes *rə* and *ru*, and the alternant *i* after the suffixes *rək* and *kʰə*. The vowel *ə* of the suffix *kʰə* gets deleted when the non-future tense suffix is added.

1. tēw 'do' tēwrēy 'came here and did something'
 tēwrūy 'went there and did something'
 tēwrək-i 'did something and came here'
 tēwk^hi 'did something and went away'
2. ca 'eat' carēy 'came and ate'
 carūy 'went and ate'
 carək-i 'ate and came'
 cak^hi 'ate and went away'
3. Johnnə Peterk^hoydə cak carūy
 John-NOM Peter-PL-LOC cooked rice eat-dSFX³-nonfut.
 John went to Peter's place and dined.
4. John møyumdəgi cā t^həklək-i
 John his house-ABL tea drink-dSFX-nonfut.
 John took tea in his place and came here.
5. Johnnə sal pūrək-əgə Peterdə pirēy
 John-NOM shawl bring-dSFX- Peter-Loc give-dSFX-nonfut.
 PERF-ASSO
 John brought a shawl and gave it to Peter.
6. Johnnə yāmne sāwne t^həbək tokk^hi
 John-NOM very angry-ADV job resign-dSFX-nonfut.
 With great anger, John resigned from his job and went away.

But when the speaker himself is carrying out an activity, he would be referring to a motion which is related to the location in which he is speaking rather than to himself, as in the following example:

7. əy carēgəni 'I will come here and eat'
 əy carūgəni 'I will go and eat (somewhere else)'
 əy carək-i 'I ate (somewhere else and came here)'
 əy cak^higəni 'I will eat here and go'

³ "Deictic suffix." [Ed.]

2. Allomorphy.

The initial consonant *r* of the first three of these suffixes, namely *rə*, *ru*, and *rək*, is found to show the following sandhi changes.

It might be noted in this connection that the meanings of the suffixed forms in the case of some of the examples given below are somewhat different from the primary meanings mentioned above. The nature of such semantic differences is discussed in detail under section 3 below.

(1) The initial consonant *r* of these three deictic suffixes assimilates completely to the preceding consonant when that consonant is *m*, *ŋ*, or *p*. For example:

8.	<i>p^həm</i>	'sit'	<i>p^həmmēy</i>	'came and sat here'
			<i>p^həmmūy</i>	'went and sat there'
			<i>p^həmmək-i</i>	'came sitting (as on a bus)/ sat sometime (somewhere else) and came'
9.	<i>t^hēŋ</i>	'touch'	<i>t^hēŋŋəy</i>	'came and touched'
			<i>t^hēŋŋūy</i>	'went and touched'
			<i>t^hēŋŋək-i</i>	'touched from the opposite direction/ touched and came'
10.	<i>lep</i>	'decide'	<i>leppēy</i>	'came and decided'
			<i>leppūy</i>	'went and decided'
			<i>leppək-i</i>	'decided and came'

(2) The *r* changes to *l* when the preceding consonant is *t* or *n*; if the preceding consonant is *n*, it also changes to *l* by assimilation to the suffix. For example:

11.	<i>sot</i>	'take on credit'	<i>sotlēy</i>	'came and took on credit'
			<i>sotlūy</i>	'went and took on credit'
			<i>sotlək-i</i>	'took on credit and came'
12.	<i>tan</i>	'earn'	<i>tallēy</i>	'came and earned'
			<i>tallūy</i>	'went and earned'
			<i>tallək-i</i>	'earned and came'

(3) If the preceding consonant is *k*, the first two suffixes (*rə* and *ru*) delete their initial consonant, whereas the third one (*rək*) changes it to *l*. For example:

13.	lok	'harvest'	lok-ēy	'came and harvested'
			lok-ūy	'went and harvested'
			lok-lək-i	'harvested and came'

(4) The suffix $k^hə$ drops its final vowel when followed by the nonfuture tense suffix i . For example:

14.	lok	'harvest'	lokk ^h i	'harvested and went away'
			lokk ^h rē	'has harvested and gone away'
			lokk ^h rəgəni	'will have harvested and gone'

3. Semantic variations.

There are certain semantic variations that are shown by these deictic suffixes, which are primarily dependent upon the meaning of the verbal bases with which they occur. These semantic variations are discernible by examining the two classes of verbs: the dynamic and the stative.

3.1. Dynamic verbs.

In the case of dynamic verbs, the first two suffixes, $rē$ and $rū$, are rather uniform in providing the following meanings:

$rē$	'to come (or bring something) and do something'
$rū$	'to go (or take away something) and do something'

Examples:

15.	lāw	'cry'	lāwrēy	'came and cried'
			lāwrūy	'went and cried'
16.	t ^h ōŋ	'cook'	t ^h ōŋŋēy	'came and cooked'
			t ^h ōŋŋūy	'went and cooked'
17.	sī	'die'	sīrēy	'came and died'
			sīrūy	'went and died'
18.	yok	'rear up'	yok-ēy	'brought someone and reared up'
			yok-ūy	'took away someone and reared up'

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|-----|-----|-----------|---------|--|
| 19. | sat | 'blossom' | satl̄ēy | 'a plant that had been brought and blossomed' |
| | | | satl̄ūy | 'a plant that had been taken away and blossomed' |

3.1.1. The above two suffixes are somewhat infrequent after non-volitional intransitive verbs like *pop* 'swell', *pom* 'bud', *sēw* 'boil', etc., and in the case of some of them the suffixes show certain extended or metaphorical connotations. For example:

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|-----|-----|--------|--------|---|
| 20. | cak | 'burn' | cak-ēy | 'sad thoughts came and burnt the heart' |
| | | | cak-ūy | 'sparks flew off and burnt something at a distance' |

3.1.2. The suffix *rək* has the primary sense of doing something and coming towards the speaker (or the place where the speaking is taking place), whereas the suffix *k^hə* has the opposite sense of doing something and going away from the speaker. In both these cases the motion generally takes place after the action has been carried out, but in the case of the suffix *rək* the action takes place at a location that is away from that of the speaker (and hence the motion is toward him), whereas in the case of the suffix *k^hə* the action takes place at the location of the speaker (and hence the motion is away from him). For example:

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|-----|-------------------|--------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 21. | l̄ēy | 'stay' | l̄ēyrək-i | 'stayed somewhere else and came here' |
| | | | l̄ēyk ^h i | 'stayed here and went away' |
| 22. | ca | 'eat' | carək-i | 'ate somewhere and came here' |
| | | | cak ^h i | 'ate here and went away' |
| 23. | t ^h ōŋ | 'cook' | t ^h ōŋŋēk-i | 'cooked and came' |
| | | | t ^h ōŋk ^h i | 'cooked and went' |
| 24. | pā | 'read' | pārək-i | 'read and came' |
| | | | pāk ^h i | 'read and went' |

3.1.3. However, in the case of some of the durative verbs like *kəp* 'weep', *cən* 'run', *pāy* 'fly', *iroy* 'swim', *tāw* 'float', etc., the action is shown to take place along with the motion (toward or away from the speaker), even though it is being assumed to have started at a distant place in the case of the suffix *rək* and at the speaker's place in the case of the suffix *kʰə*. For example:

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|-----|-------------|---------|------------------------------------|---|
| 25. | <i>kəp</i> | 'weep' | <i>kəppək-i</i>
<i>kəpkʰi</i> | 'came weeping'
'went away weeping' |
| 26. | <i>cən</i> | 'run' | <i>cəllək-i</i>
<i>cənkʰi</i> | 'came running'
'went away running' |
| 27. | <i>tʰāŋ</i> | 'carry' | <i>tʰāŋŋək-i</i>
<i>tʰāŋkʰi</i> | 'came carrying something'
'went away carrying something' |

An interesting extension of this particular use is seen in the following instances in which the verb itself does not allow a simultaneous motion:

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| 28. | <i>tum</i> | 'sleep' | <i>tummək-i</i>
<i>tumkʰi</i> | 'came sleeping (in a sleeper)'
'went away sleeping' |
| 29. | <i>pʰəm</i> | 'sit' | <i>pʰəmmək-i</i>
<i>pʰəmkʰi</i> | 'came sitting (on a bus)'
'went away sitting' |

3.1.4. In other instances, when the meaning of the verb does not directly involve any motion as such, one may obtain the sense of orientation from the use of these suffixes. In the case of the suffix *rək* the orientation is toward the speaker (from a place which is away from him), whereas with *kʰə* it is away from his location. For example:

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|-----|------------|--------|----------------------------------|---|
| 30. | <i>yēŋ</i> | 'look' | <i>yēŋŋək-i</i>
<i>yəŋkʰi</i> | 'looked from the other side (toward the speaker)'
'looked from the speaker's side' |
| 31. | <i>lāw</i> | 'cry' | <i>lāwrək-i</i>
<i>lāwkʰi</i> | 'cried from the other side'
'cried from the speaker's side' |

3.1.5. In the case of some of the verbs which involve a beneficiary, these two suffixes are found to show an interesting exchange of meaning as far as the agent of the relevant action is concerned.

When the transaction involves an agent who is also the receiver, the suffix *rək* indicates the arrangement in which the speaker functions as the agent. However, when it involves a losing agent and a distinct beneficiary who gains from the transaction, the suffix *rək* indicates the arrangement in which the speaker functions as the beneficiary but not as the agent. On the other hand, the suffix *k^hə* denotes the exact opposite arrangement in the case of these two types of verbal bases.

The contrastive use of these suffixes in two different types of transaction verbs can be exemplified by the following pairs of verbal forms:

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| 32. | <i>ləw</i> | 'take' | <i>ləwrək-i</i> | 'speaker took something from someone' |
| | | | <i>ləwk^hi</i> | 'someone took something from the speaker' |
| 33. | <i>pi</i> | 'give' | <i>pirək-i</i> | 'someone gave something to the speaker' |
| | | | <i>pik^hi</i> | 'speaker gave something to someone' |
| 34. | <i>k^hay</i> | 'collect' | <i>k^hayrək-i</i> | 'speaker collected from someone' |
| | | | <i>k^hayk^hi</i> | 'someone collected from the speaker' |
| 35. | <i>yēn</i> | 'distribute' | <i>yēllək-i</i> | 'someone distributed (and the speaker received it)' |
| | | | <i>yēnk^hi</i> | 'speaker distributed (and someone else received it)' |

In sentences 33 and 35 above, the suffix *rək* has the speaker as the beneficiary and someone else as the agent, with the situation being reversed for *k^hə*, whereas in sentences 32 and 34 the suffix *rək* has the speaker as the agent and the suffix *k^hə* has the speaker as the beneficiary.

The crucial point to be noted here is that the suffix *rək* has the primary meaning of denoting a motion toward the speaker, and the suffix *k^hə* has the opposite sense of denoting a motion away from the speaker. In the case of transactions, the motion involved is that of the object concerned,

which explains the fact that *rək* always indicates the receiver of the object, while *kʰə* marks the loser, irrespective of the actual case roles involved.

The case of the verb *ni* 'request' is rather interesting in that the suffix *rək* shows an ambiguity. It can indicate either (1) the orientation of the request itself toward the speaker, or (2) the benefit of the request toward him:

36. *ni* 'request' *nirək-i*: (1) 'someone requested something of the speaker'
 (2) 'speaker requested and obtained something from someone'

It may be noted in this connection that all these verbs show a uniform sense in the case of the suffix *kʰə*, which gives the additional temporal sense of 'past perfect', as pointed out in the following section.

3.1.6. The suffix *kʰə* is very frequently used in the temporal meaning of doing something in the past. This can be regarded as an extension of its spatial meaning, namely, doing something and going away. In this temporal meaning, the suffix can be used with almost all the verbal bases (including the stative ones).

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|-----|-------------|---------|----------------|--------------|
| 37. | <i>tʰōŋ</i> | 'cook' | <i>tʰōŋkʰi</i> | 'had cooked' |
| | <i>tum</i> | 'sleep' | <i>tumkʰi</i> | 'had slept' |
| | <i>səw</i> | 'boil' | <i>səwkʰi</i> | 'had boiled' |

3.1.7. The suffix *rək* can also be used in a comparable temporal meaning in the case of durative verbs such as *yū* 'leak', *tʰəw* 'drive', etc. However, the suffix *rək* indicates here an ongoing process or activity that had been started earlier (which is clearly an extension of the spatial meaning of someone starting an activity somewhere else and moving toward the speaker), whereas the suffix *kʰə* denotes an activity that had been completed or had ceased.

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|-----|-------------|-----------|------------------|----------------------------------|
| 38. | <i>kʰən</i> | 'think' | <i>kʰəllək-i</i> | 'have been thinking' |
| | | | <i>kʰənkʰi</i> | 'had thought earlier' |
| 39. | <i>tʰəw</i> | 'drive' | <i>tʰəwrək-i</i> | 'have been driving for sometime' |
| | | | <i>tʰəwkʰi</i> | 'had driven earlier' |
| 40. | <i>li</i> | 'narrate' | <i>lirək-i</i> | 'have been narrating' |
| | | | <i>likʰi</i> | 'had narrated' |

A somewhat different kind of temporal meaning is observed in the use of the suffix *rək* in the following instances:

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|-----|-------------------|--------------------|------------------------|--|
| 41. | tīn | 'meet' | tīllək-i | 'have been meeting
(from a fixed point
of time)' |
| 42. | p ^h ēw | 'expose
to sun' | p ^h ēwrək-i | 'have been exposing in the
sun (from a fixed point of
time)' |
| 43. | p ^h oŋ | 'publish' | p ^h oŋŋək-i | 'have been publishing
(from a fixed point of time)' |

In the case of certain intransitive verbs which denote non-volitional events (such as *pom* 'bud' and *sat* 'blossom'), the suffix *rək* provides the temporal sense of the event taking place slowly or gradually. This particular meaning is quite common for this suffix in the case of stative verbs (see section 3.2 below). For example:

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|-----|-----|-----------|----------|---|
| 44. | pom | 'bud' | pommək-i | '(the plant) started giving out
buds slowly' |
| 45. | sat | 'blossom' | satlək-i | '(the flower) started
blossoming gradually' |

3.2. *Stative verbs.*

The suffixes *rə* and *ru* have roughly the same meanings after stative verbs as they do after dynamic verbs:

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|----|--|
| rə | 'to come here and show the state or property denoted
by the verb' |
| rū | 'to go there and show the state or property' |

Examples:

46.	lam	'hungry'	lammēy lammūy	'came here and is hungry' 'went somewhere and was hungry there'
47.	cīn	'busy'	cīllēy cīllūy	'came here and is busy' 'went there and was busy'
48.	phē	'good'	phērēy phērūy	'came here and is good' 'went there and is good'
49.	iŋ	'cold'	iŋŋēy iŋŋūy	'came here and feels cold' 'went there and feels cold'

The state or property is seen in the object rather than in the agent himself in the following examples:

50.	cūm	'straight'	cūmmēy cūmmūy	'came and straightened something' 'went and straightened something there'
51.	k ^h oy	'be bent'	k ^h oyrēy k ^h oyrūy	'(river) flows straight and bends here' '(river) flows straight and bends there'

3.2.1. In the case of color terms, the meaning of these suffixes may not involve any motion or orientation as such, but only the spatial distribution. For example:

52.	ŋaŋ	'red'	ŋaŋŋēy ŋaŋŋūy	'is red here' 'is red over there'
53.	mū	'black'	mūrēy mūrūy	'is black here' 'is black over there'

3.2.2. The suffixes rək and k^hə can also have the same kind of meanings here as they do with dynamic verbs:

rək	'to have had the property before coming here (or bringing something here)'
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$k^h\theta$ 'to have had the property before going away from here (or taking something away from here)'

Examples:

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|-----|-------------|---------------------------------|---|
| 54. | pik 'small' | piklæk-i
pikk ^h i | 'had been small before coming here'
'had been small before going there' |
| 55. | sāŋ 'long' | sāŋŋøk-i
sāŋk ^h i | 'had been long before someone here received the object'
'had been long before someone there received the object' |
| 56. | pak 'wide' | paklæk-i
pakk ^h i | 'becomes wide here'
'(river) becomes wide over there' |

However, these two suffixes show temporal connotations more frequently than spatial connotations in the case of these stative verbs. The suffix $ræk$ generally denotes that an individual or object attains the state or property slowly and gradually, whereas the suffix $k^h\theta$ indicates that they had shown this property in the past. For example:

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|-----|----------------|---------------------------------|---|
| 57. | ŋaŋ 'red' | ŋaŋŋøk-i
ŋaŋk ^h i | 'became red gradually'
'had been red (but not any more)' |
| 58. | cik 'calm' | ciklæk-i
cikk ^h i | 'became calm gradually'
'had been calm' |
| 59. | sā 'hot' | sāræk-i
sāk ^h i | 'became hot gradually'
'had been hot' |
| 60. | hēy 'skillful' | hēyræk-i
hēyk ^h i | 'became skillful gradually'
'had been skillful' |

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