

The Kwatha Dialect of Meitei

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1. The Kwatha dialect of Manipuri (Meitei) is spoken in a small village called Kwatha, situated at the Indo-Burma border near Moreh, which is 109 kilometers to the south of Imphal town. It is the only hill village in Manipur in which the Manipuri language is spoken. It is surrounded by villages belonging to three different tribes, namely Maring, Kuki and Kom.

In this Kwatha village, there are twenty-five houses with a population of about 150 individuals. It is not known exactly when these people migrated to this hill village from the valley of Manipur. One of the local beliefs is that they settled there during the reign of king Kiyamba (14th Century A.D.) of Kangleipak (Imphal).

The name Kwatha is derived from the roots *kwa* 'betel nut' and *tha* 'to grow.' This village is the only place in Manipur where areca-nut trees are grown abundantly. The Kwatha villagers have not been influenced by Hinduism except for the fact that they observe the *yaosang* (Doljatra) festival. The deities that they worship are Nongpok Ningthaw and Panthoibi (which are also worshipped by the Meiteis of the plains.) Nowadays people of Kwatha are being converted to Christianity.

One interesting difference between the customs of the Kwatha and those of the plains Meiteis is that, in the case of the former, the bridegroom must stay, after the marriage, for the first three years (earlier it was for the first five years) at the bride's residence. This custom, known as *khoidou-kaba*, is not practised among the plains people.

2. The dialectal differences that occur between Kwatha and Standard (Imphal) Manipuri are mainly of the following four types:

- (i) phonological differences
- (ii) differences in the kind of sandhi changes that occur in compounding
- (iii) differences in the kind of sandhi changes that occur in inflection
- (iv) lexical differences.

On the whole, Kwatha appears to be rather conservative in that many of the sandhi changes that occur in the Standard dialect are absent. It is possible that the isolation of this dialect in the hill village for the past

several hundred years is responsible for this situation. However, there do occur some innovative sandhi changes in the Kwatha dialect as well.

The four main types of differences between the Kwatha and the Standard Manipuri dialects will be described in somewhat greater detail below:

3. Phonological Differences

3.1. The most interesting phonological difference between these two dialects is that the level tone of the Standard dialect regularly corresponds to a falling-rising tone in the Kwatha dialect. Examples:

| <i>Standard</i> | <i>Gloss</i> | <i>Kwatha</i> |
|-----------------|--------------|---------------|
| nā | 'ear' | nǎ |
| yā | 'tooth' | yǎ |
| mōn | 'pillow' | mǒn |
| kūm | 'year' | kǔm |
| yēn | 'hen' | yěn |
| kwā | 'betel nut' | kwǎ |
| mirōn | 'generation' | mirǒn |
| irūbə | 'bath' | irǔbə |
| phīrēn | 'best cloth' | phǐrēn |

This correspondence persists even in those instances where sandhi change affects the tone of roots and affixes. That is, when the falling tone of a syllable changes to level tone in the standard dialect, it changes to falling-rising tone in the corresponding syllable of the Kwatha dialect. Examples:

| <i>Standard</i> | | <i>Standard Sandhi</i> | | <i>Kwatha Sandhi</i> |
|-----------------|---------------|------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| ña | 'fish' | ñārəw | 'roasted fish' | ñǎrǎw ¹ |
| la | 'banana leaf' | lātōn | 'tip of banana leaf' | lǎtōn |
| phī | 'cloth' | phijī | 'border of cloth' | phicǐ |
| thā | 'month' | thakhay | 'fortnight' | thakhay |
| sēn | 'money' | sendōy | 'interest' | senthōy |
| kūm | 'year' | kumsī | 'this year' | kumsǐ |
| yā | 'tooth' | yathək | 'upper tooth' | yathək |
| i | 'water' | īpōm | 'wave' | īpōm |
| i- | 'my' | īsīn | 'my duty' | īsǐn |
| nə- | 'your' | nēñāy | 'your relative' | nēñǎy |
| mə- | 'his' | mētāw | 'his friend' | mētǎw |

¹ The symbol ñ is used for the velar nasal [ŋ] in this paper. [Ed.]

3.2. It has been found that there is a need to establish a word-juncture in the case of the Standard dialect in order to account for the contrast seen between the following two sets of forms:

Standard dialect

| | |
|----------|---------------------------|
| canəbə | 'to eat with one another' |
| ca-nəbə | 'for eating' |
| phunəbə | 'to beat one another' |
| phu-nəbə | 'for beating' |
| kawənəbə | 'to kick one another' |
| kaw-nəbə | 'for kicking' |
| panəbə | 'to read for one another' |
| pa-nəbə | 'for reading' |

Kwatha dialect

| | |
|----------|---------------------------|
| canəbə | 'to eat with one another' |
| caɳay | 'for eating' |
| phunəbə | 'to beat one another' |
| phuɳay | 'for beating' |
| kawənəbə | 'to kick one another' |
| kawɳay | 'for kicking' |
| panəbə | 'to read for one another' |
| paɳay | 'for reading' |

3.3. The distinction between the sounds *r* and *l* is rather a superficial one in both these dialects. Generally, *r* occurs intervocally and between a semi-vowel and a vowel, whereas *l* occurs elsewhere.

However, when preceded by the prefix *ə*, *l* changes to *r* only in the Standard dialect but not in the Kwatha dialect. Examples:

| Root | | Standard | Gloss | Kwatha |
|------|------------|----------|-----------------|--------|
| ləw | 'to take' | ərəwbə | 'one who takes' | ələwwə |
| lay | 'be easy' | əraybə | 'easy' | əlaybə |
| law | 'be broad' | ərawbə | 'broad' | əlawwə |
| laɳ | 'be noisy' | əraɳbə | 'noise-maker' | əlaɳmə |

3.4. In word-final position, the sounds *l* and *n* are found to be in free variation in both these dialects. Further, syllable-final *n* has been found to change to *l* in both the dialects when followed by *l*. Examples:

- (i) lan ~ lal 'war'
 un ~ ul 'snow'
- (ii) cen 'to run' celli 'is running'

| | | | |
|-----|------------|-------|---------------|
| hun | 'to throw' | hulli | 'is throwing' |
| yon | 'to sell' | yolli | 'is selling' |

3.5. The two dialects are found to differ from one another by the fact that the Kwatha dialect allows vowel clusters to remain as they are (in sandhi formation), whereas the Standard dialect inserts a glide and thereby breaks the vowel clusters.

The glide to be inserted is *y* in the case of clusters having *i* as the second vowel, and *w* in the case of clusters having *u* or *o* as the second vowel. Examples:

| Standard | Gloss | Kwatha |
|----------|------------------|--------|
| nāyīn | 'ear ring' | nāīn |
| cāyīn | 'feeding' | cāīn |
| səwun | 'skin of animal' | səun |
| miwoh | 'type of man' | mioh |
| sawōh | 'figure (body)' | saōh |

3.6. The vowel *o* has an optional *w*-glide in the Standard dialect even in word-initial position, whereas the Kwatha dialect does not show any such glide. Further, when preceded by the semivowels *y* or *w*, syllable-initial *o* takes this *w*-glide in the case of the Standard dialect but not in the Kwatha dialect. Examples:

| Standard | Gloss | Kwatha |
|----------|---------------------|--------|
| thəwwoh | 'nature of work' | thəwoh |
| maywon | 'orientation' | mayon |
| lāywoh | 'nature of disease' | lāyoh |

4. Sandhi changes in compounding:

One general characteristic of the sandhi changes to be discussed in this section is that they are all rather irregular and idiosyncratic in their occurrence. The same root may be found to undergo the change in some of the compounds in which it occurs, whereas in others it may fail to do so for no apparent reason.

4.1. In the Standard dialect, the voiceless stops *p*, *t*, *c* and *k* are found to become voiced when preceded by a voiced sound. The change is more frequent when the preceding root has an initial aspirated stop or a fricative. No comparable change is found to occur in the Kwatha dialect. Examples:

(a) *change of p > b:*

| <i>Derivation</i> | <i>Standard</i> | <i>Gloss</i> | <i>Kwatha</i> |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------|
| phi + pan 'cloth' 'border' | phibān | 'border of cloth' | phipăn |
| thoñ + pa 'door' 'border' | thoñbā | 'frame' | thoñpă |
| sən + pən 'cow' 'barrier' | sēmbēn | 'fence' | sēnpěn |
| huy + pi 'dog' 'mother' | huybi | 'bitch' | huypi |
| ha + puñ 'grass' 'dense' | habuñ | 'bush' | hapuñ |
| teñ + pañ 'help' 'give' | teñbāñ | 'help' | teñpăñ |
| lan + pən 'war' 'barrier' | lānbēn | 'fort' | lānpěn |

(b) *change of t > d:*

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|------------|
| khoñ + ta 'leg' 'shape' | khoñdā | 'shape of leg' | khoñtă |
| sa + toñ 'animal' 'ride' | sədōñ | 'riding animal' | satōñ |
| sen + toñ 'money' 'get' | sēndōñ | 'profit' | sēntōñ |
| humphu + tēra 'sixty' 'ten' | hūm(phū)drā | 'seventy' | hūmphūtēră |
| pan + tum 'arum' 'round' | pandum | 'round arum' | pantum |
| paw + tēm 'news' 'give' | pāwdēm | 'report' | păwtēm |
| lēm + toñ 'land' 'be high' | lēmdoñ | 'highland' | lēmtoñ |

(c) *change of c > j:*

| | | | |
|------------------------------|---------|----------------|---------|
| phi + ci 'cloth' 'end' | phijī | 'end of cloth' | phiciĩ |
| thañ + caw 'knife' 'big' | thañjēw | 'daw, machete' | thañcăw |
| khoy + cəy 'hook' 'stick' | khōyjęy | 'angle' | khōycəy |
| sa + cəy 'animal' 'stick' | sajey | 'whip' | sacəy |

| | | | |
|--------------------|--------|------------|--------|
| sa + cət | sajət | 'habit' | sacət |
| 'body' 'go' | | | |
| tən + cəy | tēnjəy | 'arrow' | těncəy |
| 'bow' 'stick' | | | |
| cín + cak | cínjak | 'food' | cincak |
| 'mouth' 'material' | | | |
| u + caw | ūjāw | 'big tree' | ŭcāw |
| 'tree' 'big' | | | |
| ləm + cīh | ləmjiñ | 'guide' | ləmcīh |
| 'way' 'lead' | | | |

(d) *change of k > g:*

| | | | |
|----------------------|---------|-----------------|---------|
| phəw + kəy | phəwgəy | 'store house' | phəwkəy |
| 'paddy' 'store' | | | |
| thəw + kən | thəwgən | 'guard' | thəwkən |
| 'duty' 'save' | | | |
| khoñ + kap | khoñgap | 'footstep' | khoñkap |
| 'foot' 'shoot' | | | |
| sa + kəy | sagəy | 'clan' | sakəy |
| 'body' 'store' | | | |
| siñ + kəy | siñgəy | 'firewood shed' | siñkəy |
| 'firewood' 'store' | | | |
| kom + kut | kōñgut | 'pit' | kōmkut |
| 'pit' 'be depressed' | | | |
| mīh + kəw | mīhḡəw | 'address term' | mīhḡəw |
| 'name' 'call' | | | |
| lən + kəy | ləngəy | 'wealth' | lənḡəy |
| 'property' 'store' | | | |

As pointed out earlier, the above-mentioned changes are rather irregular in that there are several compounds in which the changes have not taken place in spite of the existence of the relevant environment. The following are a few examples:

| | | | |
|------------------|--------|--------------|--------|
| həy + pan | həypan | 'fruit tree' | həypan |
| 'fruit' 'tree' | | | |
| lan + pot | lānpot | 'weapons' | lānpot |
| 'war' 'thing' | | | |
| paw + tak | pāwtak | 'advice' | pāwtak |
| 'news' 'teach' | | | |
| ləy + toñ | ləytōñ | 'mound' | ləytōñ |
| 'land' 'be high' | | | |

| | | | |
|--------------------|---------|---------------|---------|
| khoñ + cət | khoñcət | 'journey' | khoñcət |
| 'foot' 'go' | | | |
| u + cən | ūcən | 'joint' | ūcən |
| 'wood' 'make' | | | |
| ləm + cət | ləmcət | 'character' | ləmcət |
| 'way' 'to go' | | | |
| lu + ciñbə | lūciñbə | 'leader' | lūciñmə |
| 'head' 'lead' | | | |
| siñ + kup | siñkup | 'pieces of' | siñkup |
| 'firewood' 'piece' | | 'firewood' | |
| ləy + ka | ləykā | 'petal' | ləykā |
| 'flower' 'petal' | | | |
| ləw + kōn | ləwkōn | 'paddy field' | ləwkōn |
| 'paddy' 'place' | | | |

4.2. In the standard dialect, the aspirated stops *ph*, *th* and *kh* are found to get deaspirated, and the fricative *s* changed into the corresponding affricate when preceded by a syllable containing an initial aspirated sound or a fricative. The sounds affected by this change are further affected by the voicing changes mentioned in the previous section in the relevant environments.

No corresponding change has been found to occur in the Kwatha dialect. Examples:

- (a) *change of ph > p (> b)*
- | | | | |
|---------------|--------|----------------|---------|
| khoñ + phəm | khūbēm | 'sacred place' | khūphēm |
| 'leg' 'place' | | | |
- (b) *change of th > t (> d):*
- | | | | |
|----------------|----------|--------------------|-----------|
| phi + thup | phīdup | 'folding of cloth' | phīthup |
| 'cloth' 'fold' | | | |
| thəw + thabə | thəwdābə | 'to order' | thəwthābə |
| 'duty' 'send' | | | |
| sen + thoy | sendōy | 'interest' | senthōy |
| 'money' 'more' | | | |
- (c) *change of kh > k (> g):*
- | | | | |
|---------------|---------|-------------|----------|
| sen + khaw | señgāw | 'purse' | senkhāw |
| 'money' 'bag' | | | |
| khoñ + khun | khoñgūn | 'footprint' | khoñkhūn |
| 'foot' 'hole' | | | |
| thi + khun | thigūn | 'anus' | thikhūn |
| 'dung' 'hole' | | | |

(d) *change of s > c (> j)*:

| | | | |
|------------------------------|--------|----------|--------|
| hək + sañ 'body' 'long' | həkcāñ | 'body' | həksǎñ |
| sum + sit 'house' 'sweep' | sūmjī | 'broom' | sūmsit |
| khoñ + si 'leg' 'wear' | khoñjī | 'anklet' | khoñsǐ |
| phi + sət 'cloth' 'wear' | phījet | 'dress' | phisət |

These sandhi changes are also irregular in that they are found to be absent in some compounds, as seen in the following examples:

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|
| thok + phəm 'go out' 'place' | thokphēm | 'exit' | thokphēm |
| sen + phu 'money' 'container' | sēnphu | 'coffer' | sēnphu |
| sen + thok 'money' 'come out' | sēnthok | 'income' | sēnthok |
| thañ + khum 'sword' 'cover' | thañkhūm | 'sheath' | thañkhūm |
| tha + khay 'month' 'half' | thakhay | 'fortnight' | thakhay |
| khoñ + sanbə 'leg' 'to go' | khoñsanbə | 'departure' | khoñsanmə |
| sīn + sən 'duty' 'institution' | sīnsən | 'institution' | sīnsən |

4.3. In addition to these, there are certain minor changes that occur in the Standard dialect in its compound words but not in the Kwatha dialect.

For example, when followed by *k* or *kh* (both of which change to *g*), the nasal *n* is found to change to *ñ* in nine instances and the nasal *m* to *ñ* in two instances; the stop *t* of the root *khut* 'hand' is found to get deleted in some compounds; these and certain other minor changes occur only in the Standard dialect. Examples:

(a) *change of n > ñ*:

| | | | |
|----------------------------|--------|-----------|--------|
| yēn + kay 'hen' 'place' | yēñgāy | 'shelf' | yēñkǎy |
| sen + kon 'cow' 'place' | sēñgōn | 'cowshed' | sēñkōn |

(b) *change of m > ñ:*

| | | | |
|----------------|--------|--------|--------|
| nəm + kən | nēñgən | 'back' | nēmken |
| 'back' 'hard' | | | |
| kəm + kut | kōñgut | 'pit' | kōmkut |
| 'pit' 'narrow' | | | |

5. *Sandhi changes in inflection:*

The sandhi changes that occur in connection with inflection are comparatively very regular. However, they may affect only a certain set of affixes that satisfy the relevant conditioning but not others. That is, even though they are regular, their conditioning is morphological.

5.1. *Voicing change:*

We have seen in the previous section that the unaspirated voiceless stops /p t c k/ become voiced in compounding when preceded by voiced sounds. This change is irregular, and further, it occurs only in the Standard dialect but not in Kwatha.

There is a corresponding voicing change in the case of inflection also, but the change is very regular and further, it occurs in both the Standard and Kwatha dialects.

In the Kwatha dialect, the consonants *b* and *g* have been found to change further to the corresponding nasals, namely *m* and *ñ* respectively, when preceded by a nasal. Examples:

(a) *change of p > b (and to m after nasals in Kwatha)*

The suffixes affected by this change are:

(i) infinitive *pə*, (ii) benefactive *pi*, and (iii) accusative *pu*.

(i) *pə* 'infinitive':

| | | |
|--------|-----------|--------|
| cətpə | 'to go' | cətpə |
| pibə | 'to give' | pibə |
| ləybə | 'to buy' | ləybə |
| phəmbə | 'to sit' | phəmmə |
| cənbə | 'to run' | cənmə |
| yēñbə | 'to see' | yēñmə |

This infinitive suffix further changes to *w* after *w* in Kwatha:

| | | |
|-------|---------------|-------|
| ləwbə | 'to take' | ləwwə |
| sāwbə | 'to be angry' | sāwwə |

(ii) *pi* 'benefactive':

| | | |
|----------|-----------------|----------|
| yekpībē | 'paint for smn' | yekpībē |
| ləybībē | 'buy for smn' | ləybībē |
| ibībē | 'write for smn' | ibībē |
| khawbībē | 'reap for smn' | khawbībē |

| | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|---------|
| tēmbībē | 'teach for smn' | tēmmbē |
| hōnbībē | 'carry for smn' | hōnmībē |
| (iii) pu 'accusative': | | |
| məruppū | 'friend (acc.)' | məruppū |
| əybū | 'me' | əybū |
| mabū | 'him' | mabū |
| icənbū | 'my younger sister (acc.)' | icənmū |

(b) change of *t > d*

The suffixes affected by this change are:

(i) past negative *tē* and (ii) locative *tə*.

(i) *tē* 'past negative':

| | | |
|-------|-----------------|-------|
| kəktē | 'did not cut' | kəktē |
| pidē | 'did not give' | pidē |
| tumdē | 'did not sleep' | tumdē |
| ləvdē | 'did not take' | ləvdē |

This change does not occur after three roots (*haw* 'be tasty', *həy* 'be skilled' and *ləy* 'exist'). *Tē* becomes *tte* after the root *phə* 'be good'.

(ii) locative *tə*:

The voicing is seen only in the Standard dialect, because in Kwatha the corresponding suffix is *lə ~ rə*.

| | | |
|--------|---------------|-------|
| koktə | 'on the head' | koklə |
| cihndə | 'on the hill' | cihlə |
| ūdə | 'on the tree' | ūrə |
| maydə | 'on the face' | mayrə |

(c) change of *c > j*

The only suffix affected by this change is the reflexive *cə*.

| | | |
|---------|----------------|---------|
| setcəbē | 'wear oneself' | setcəbē |
| lenjəbē | 'cut oneself' | lenjəbē |
| sājəbē | 'make oneself' | sājəbē |
| ləyjəbē | 'buy oneself' | ləyjəbē |

(d) change of *k > g* (and further to *ŋ* after nasals in the Kwatha dialect)

The suffixes affected by this change are:

(i) future *kəni*, (ii) habitual *kən*, (iii) proposal negative *kum*, (iv) genitive *ki*, and (v) associative *kə*.

(i) *kəni* 'future'

| | | |
|--------|-------------|--------|
| utkəni | 'will show' | utkəni |
| piɡəni | 'will give' | piɡəni |

| | | | |
|-----------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|
| | haygenī | 'will say' | haygenī |
| | cengenī | 'will run' | cennhenī |
| | thēmgenī | 'will put' | thēmhenī |
| | yēhgenī | 'will see' | yēhhenī |
| (ii) kən | 'habitual' | | |
| | cetkēndē | 'does not go habitually' | cetkēndē |
| | pigēndē | 'does not give habitually' | pigēndē |
| | tumgēndē | 'does not sleep habitually' | tumhēndē |
| | hūngēndē | 'does not throw habitually' | hūnhēndē |
| (iii) kum | 'proposal negative' (kən in Kwatha) | | |
| | cəpkūmsi | 'let us not cut' | cəpkēnse |
| | ləygūmsi | 'let us not buy' | ləygēnse |
| | cengūmsi | 'let us not run' | cennhēnse |
| (iv) gi | 'genitive': | | |
| | məhakkī | 'his' | məhəkkī |
| | nupigī | 'woman's' | nupigī |
| | əygī | 'my' | əygī |
| | nəhgī | 'your' | nəhhi |
| (v) kə | 'associative' | | |
| | thāwgē | 'with oil' | thāwgē |
| | nəhgē | 'with you' | nəhnhē |

5.2. Deaspiration and affrication:

Another sandhi change that is common to the contexts of compounding and inflection is the deaspiration of syllable-initial aspirated stops (restricted to *th* and *kh* in the case of inflection) and the affrication of syllable-initial *s* when these are preceded by a syllable containing an initial aspirate or a fricative.

Unlike the voicing change, however, these changes occur only in the Standard dialect and not in the Kwatha dialect, in both compounding and inflection.

As with the other sandhi phenomena discussed above, the changes are irregular in the case of compounding, but quite regular in the case of inflection, as far as the relevant suffixes are concerned.

The sounds resulting from these changes (namely *t*, *k*, and *c*) are found to become voiced after voiced sounds in the case of inflection also, as in the previous case of compounding. Examples:

(a) change of *th* > *t* (> *d*)

The suffix affected by this change is *thok* 'outwards':

deaspiration:

| | | |
|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| <i>khəptokpə</i> | 'to winnow out' | <i>khəpthokpə</i> |
| <i>səttokpə</i> | 'to draw out' | <i>səthtokpə</i> |

+ voicing:

| | | |
|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <i>thīdokpə</i> | 'to take out' | <i>thīthokpə</i> |
| <i>phoṇdokpə</i> | 'to make public' | <i>phoṇthokpə</i> |
| <i>sudokpə</i> | 'to wash out' | <i>suthokpə</i> |
| <i>həydokpə</i> | 'to pour out' | <i>həythokpə</i> |

no change:

| | | |
|------------------|---------------|------------------|
| <i>pithokpə</i> | 'to give out' | <i>pithokpə</i> |
| <i>cāmthokpə</i> | 'to wash out' | <i>cāmthokpə</i> |

(b) change of *kh* > *k* (> *g*)

The suffixes affected by this change are:

(i) *khət* 'upwards', (ii) *khay* 'destruction'

deaspiration:

| | | |
|------------------|---|-------------------|
| <i>hapkətpə</i> | 'to put on' | <i>hapkhətpə</i> |
| <i>thekkətpə</i> | 'to bend up' | <i>thekkhətpə</i> |
| <i>phəkkaybə</i> | 'to take out force- fully and break' | <i>phəkkhaybə</i> |
| <i>satkaybə</i> | 'to bloom and break' | <i>satkhaybə</i> |

+ voicing:

| | | |
|------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>phugetpə</i> | 'to strike up' | <i>phukhetpə</i> |
| <i>hōygetpə</i> | 'to drive up' | <i>hōykhətpə</i> |
| <i>thāṅgetpə</i> | 'to lift up' | <i>thāṅkhətpə</i> |
| <i>sūgaybə</i> | 'to strike and break' | <i>sūkhaybə</i> |
| <i>phugaybə</i> | 'to beat and break' | <i>phukhaybə</i> |

no change:

| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| <i>pikhətpə</i> | 'to give upwards' | <i>pikhətpə</i> |
| <i>cenkhətpə</i> | 'to run up' | <i>cenkhətpə</i> |
| <i>otkhaybə</i> | 'to stir and break' | <i>otkhaybə</i> |
| <i>nəmkhaybə</i> | 'to press and break' | <i>nəmkhaybə</i> |
| <i>təkkhaybə</i> | 'to run over and break' | <i>tekkhaybə</i> |

(c) change of *s* > *c* (> *j*)

The suffix affected by this change is *sin* ~ *sən* 'in'.

affrication:

| | | |
|-----------|-----------------|-----------|
| hapcīnbə | 'to put in' | hapsīnmə |
| thēkcīnbə | 'to drink (in)' | thēksīnmə |
| sitcīnbə | 'to sweep in' | sitsīnmə |

voicing:

| | | |
|------------|---------------|-----------|
| thajīnbə | 'to send in' | thasīnmə |
| hōhājīnbə | 'to shift in' | hōhsīnmə |
| thəwājīnbə | 'to drive in' | thəwsīnmə |

no change:

| | | |
|----------|---------------|----------|
| kapsīnbə | 'to shoot in' | kapsīnmə |
| tānsīnbə | 'to drive in' | tānsīnmə |

The suffix freely varies between *sin* and *sən* in the Standard dialect.

5.3. Assimilation:

The assimilation of suffix-initial *l* to the preceding consonant when that consonant is *p*, *m*, or *ŋ* is yet another change which occurs only in the Standard dialect. Further, it is only found in inflection.

The suffixes affected by this change are the following:

(i) *li* 'present progressive', (ii) *le* 'present perfect', (iii) *lo* 'persuasion', (iv) *loy* 'future negative', (v) *lə* 'movement towards the speaker (action after the movement)', (vi) *lu* 'movement away from the speaker (action after movement)', and (vii) *lək* 'movement towards the speaker (action before movement)'.

(a) change of *l* > *p* after *p*

| | | | |
|-------|----------|------------------|----------|
| (i) | kəppī | 'is weeping' | kəplī |
| | leppī | 'is standing' | leplī |
| (ii) | kappe | 'has shot' | kəple |
| | kuppe | 'has covered' | kuplə |
| (iii) | kuppō | 'please cover' | kuplō |
| (iv) | kappōy | 'will not shoot' | kəplōy |
| (v) | kappērō | 'come and shoot' | kəplērō |
| (vi) | leppū | 'go and stand' | leplū |
| (vii) | kəppək-i | 'shot and came' | kəplək-e |

(b) change of *l* > *m* after *m*

| | | | |
|------|--------|---------------|--------|
| (i) | tummī | 'is sleeping' | tumlī |
| | cāmmī | 'is washing' | cāmlī |
| (ii) | thēmme | 'has put' | thēmle |
| | semme | 'has made' | semle |

| | | | |
|-------|-----------|------------------|-----------|
| (iii) | thēm̄mō | 'please put' | thēm̄lō |
| (iv) | lūmmōy | 'will not warm' | lūmlōy |
| (v) | thēm̄mērō | 'come and put' | thēm̄lērō |
| (vi) | thēm̄mū | 'go and put' | thēm̄lū |
| (vii) | tumm̄ek-i | 'slept and came' | tumlek-e |

(c) change of *l* > *ñ* after *ñ*

| | | | |
|-------|----------|--------------------|----------|
| (i) | yēññī | 'is looking' | yēñlī |
| | ñāññī | 'is speaking' | ñāñlī |
| (ii) | khēññe | 'has known' | khēñle |
| | cēññe | 'has entered' | cēñle |
| (iii) | cēññō | 'please enter' | cēñlō |
| (iv) | sēññōy | 'will not be free' | sēñlōy |
| (v) | yēññērō | 'come and see' | yēñlērō |
| (vi) | hēññū | 'go and ask' | hēñlū |
| (vii) | yēññek-i | 'saw and came' | yēñlek-e |

5.4. Deletion:

The initial *l* of the suffixes mentioned above (except the last one) gets deleted after syllables ending in *k* in the Standard dialect. The sound is kept intact in the Kwatha dialect.

| | | | |
|-------|---------|------------------|---------|
| (i) | kək-ī | 'is cutting' | kəklī |
| | yek-ī | 'is painting' | yeklī |
| (ii) | lak-e | 'has come' | lakle |
| | sək-e | 'has sung' | səkle |
| (iii) | lak-ō | 'please come' | laklō |
| | sək-ō | 'please sing' | səklō |
| (iv) | thək-ōy | 'will not drink' | thəklōy |
| (v) | yek-ērō | 'come and paint' | yeklērō |
| (vi) | hek-ū | 'go and pluck' | heklū |
| (vii) | kək-ū | 'go and cut' | kəklū |

5.5. The two suffixes, *li* 'past' and *lu* 'command' are exceptions to this rule in that they show a somewhat different set of sandhi changes, and further, these changes are found to occur in both the dialects.

- (a) Their initial consonant is assimilated to a preceding *p*, *m*, or *w* in both the dialects:

| | | |
|--------|----------|--------|
| kappi | 'shot' | kappe |
| tummi | 'slept' | tumme |
| yēññi | 'saw' | yēññe |
| kēw̄wi | 'called' | kēw̄we |

(b) The consonant is lost completely when preceded by *k*, *y* or a vowel; the following vowel is also lost when the preceding sound is *y*, *i*, or *e*, whereas it is changed to *y* when the preceding sound is *ə*, *a*, *u* or *o*:

| | | | | |
|-----|--------------|-------|--------------|-------|
| kək | 'to cut' | kək-i | 'cut(past)' | kək-e |
| pā | 'to read' | pāy | 'read(past)' | pāy |
| su | 'to wash' | suy | 'washed' | suy |
| phə | 'be good' | phəy | 'was good' | phəy |
| pə | 'to carry' | pəy | 'carried' | pəy |
| pi | 'to give' | pi | 'gave' | pi |
| ke | 'to make up' | ke | 'made up' | ke |
| hay | 'to say' | hay | 'said' | hay |

5.6. There are two somewhat related changes which occur only in the Kwatha dialect, and not in the Standard dialect.

Firstly, the initial sound *kh* changes to *h* after voiced sounds in the case of the suffixes (i) *khi* 'continuous' and (ii) *khə* 'away from a place':

| | | | |
|-----|------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| (i) | cakhīgēnī | 'will continue to eat' | cahīgēnī |
| | lāwkhīgēnī | 'will continue to shout' | lāwhīgēnī |
| | tumkhīgēnī | 'will continue to sleep' | tumhīgēnī |
| | cenkhīgēnī | 'will continue to run' | cenhīgēnī |

no change:

| | | | |
|------|------------|----------------------------|------------|
| | kəkkhīgēnī | 'will continue to cut' | kəkkhīgēnī |
| | lepkhīgēnī | 'will continue to stand' | lepkhīgēnī |
| (ii) | lenkhēre | 'had cut and gone away' | lenhēre |
| | thōmkhēre | 'had struck and gone away' | thōmhēre |
| | pikhēre | 'had given and gone away' | pihēre |

no change:

| | | | |
|--|----------|---------------------------|----------|
| | kapkhēre | 'had shot and gone away' | kapkhēre |
| | utkhēre | 'had shown and gone away' | utkhēre |

Secondly, the initial *h* changes to *kh* after a voiceless stop in the case of the suffix *hən* 'causative' (which is *hən* in the Kwatha dialect):

| | | |
|----------|------------------|-----------|
| kəphēnbə | 'cause to weep' | kəpkhānmə |
| cəthēnbə | 'cause to go' | cətkhānmə |
| yekhēnbə | 'cause to paint' | yekkhānmə |
| suhēnbə | 'cause to wash' | suhānmə |

6. Lexical differences:

The lexical differences that occur between these two dialects have been arranged here into three distinct groups: (i) irregular phonological differences in some of the suffixes used, (ii) use of distinct suffixes, and (iii) a list of distinct lexical items.

6.1. Irregular phonological differences:

- | | | |
|-----|--|--------------|
| (a) | Standard <i>li</i> 'past' corresponds to Kwatha <i>le</i> | |
| | cətli 'went' | cətle |
| | hatli 'killed' | hatle |
| (b) | Standard <i>si</i> 'proposal': Kwatha <i>se</i> | |
| | səksi 'let us sing' | səkse |
| | cāmsi 'let us wash' | cāmse |
| (c) | Standard <i>ni</i> 'copula': Kwatha <i>ne</i> | |
| | məsi ūnī 'This is a tree' | məse ūně |
| | məhak əhānnī 'He is a child' | məhək əhānně |
| (d) | Standard <i>si</i> 'proximate': Kwatha <i>se</i> | |
| | məsi 'this' | məse |
| (e) | Standard <i>lu</i> 'command': Kwatha <i>lo</i> | |
| | cellu 'run!' | cello |
| | cətlu 'go!' | cətlo |
| (f) | Standard <i>sənu</i> 'concessive': Kwatha <i>səno</i> | |
| | cətsənu 'let him go!' | cətsəno |
| | pasənu 'let him read!' | pasəno |
| (g) | Standard <i>kum</i> 'negative proposal': Kwatha <i>kən</i> | |
| | cəpkūmsi 'let us not cut' | cəpkěnsə |
| | səkkūmsi 'let us not sing' | səkkěnsə |
| (h) | Standard <i>hən</i> 'causative': Kwatha <i>hən</i> | |
| | pihēnbə 'cause to give' | pihěnmə |
| | cenhēnbə 'cause to run' | cenhěnmə |
| (i) | Standard <i>su</i> 'also': Kwatha <i>suñ</i> | |
| | əysu 'I also' | əysuñ |
| | ənisu 'two also' | ənisuñ |
| (j) | Standard <i>tə</i> 'locative': Kwatha <i>lə</i> | |
| | koktə 'on the head' | koklə |
| | mittə 'to the eye' | mitlə |
| | khuttəgī 'from the hand' | khutləgĩ |
| (k) | Standard <i>lēm</i> 'perfect': Kwatha <i>hām</i> | |
| | cətlēmme 'had gone' | cəthāmle |
| | carēmme 'had eaten' | cahāmle |

In the case of the first person pronominal prefix added to kinship terms to denote the possessor (ego), Kwatha shows a distinction between kin who are elder than ego and those who are younger or of the same age.

In the Standard dialect the prefix *i-* is used throughout, whereas in the Kwatha dialect the prefix *i-* is used only in the case of younger kin and kin of the same age, while a different prefix, *ə-*, is used in the case of kin who are elder than ego. Examples:

elder kin:

| | | |
|-----|-------------------|-----|
| ipa | 'my father' | əpa |
| ice | 'my elder sister' | əce |

younger or equal:

| | | |
|------|---------------------|------|
| icən | 'my younger sister' | icən |
| ica | 'my child' | ica |

6.2. *Distinct suffixes:*

| | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| (a) canēbē | 'for eating' | cañhăy |
| yōnnēbē | 'for selling' | yōnhăy |
| thēknēbē | 'for drinking' | thēkhăy |
| (b) ñaŋge tēwbē | 'about to speak' | ñahñăy tēwwē |
| cage tēwbē | 'about to eat' | cañhăy tēwwē |
| cenge tēwbē | 'about to run' | cenñăy tēwwē |
| (c) əmuk lakke | 'has come once again' | lakhiklē |
| əmuk tēwre | 'has done once again' | tēwhiklē |

(d) The Kwatha dialect has the suffix *phat* that can be used after verbs as shown below, but no corresponding suffix occurs in the Standard dialect:

| | | | |
|-------|------------------|----------|--------------------------------|
| kaybē | 'to break' | əkayphat | 'useless due to breaking' |
| sibē | 'to die' | əsiphat | 'useless due to death' |
| lembe | 'to be left out' | ələmphat | 'useless due to prolonged use' |

6.3. *List of distinct lexical items:*

| | | |
|--------------|---------------------------------|---------------|
| əsāñbē ña | 'long fish' | əkūybē ña |
| ərūbē mēkhūl | 'deep hole' | əkutpē mēkhūl |
| ārāmdār | 'plane (tool)' | ətāla |
| umāybī | 'kite (bird)' | kaklēn |
| kāñ khīnbē | 'erecting Kang' | kāñ līñmē |
| kwāmānbī | 'a medicinal plant' | tīñdēbō |
| khərmi | 'cockroach' | khəyrah |
| khōy coppē | 'angling' | khōysotpē |
| ceñ wanbē | 'to buy rice' | cak wanmē |
| tīn sitpē | 'to spit' | tīn thakpē |
| thēw lēytēbē | 'to have no right to interfere' | thēw cēñdēbē |
| nūmityūñbī | 'lizard' | hēñhōy sōmiya |
| nurā nēnbē | 'to rub off dirt' | nurā nōybē |
| pā | 'eyelash' | mittu |
| pok | 'grey hair' | səm əñhəwwē |
| bhelāndrī | 'lady's finger' | yōñpetet |
| mayrōñbī | 'arhar dal' | kōkreñ |
| mit ūysīnbē | 'to close eyes' | mit tummə |

| | | |
|--------------|----------------------|-------------|
| mit kuppe | 'to wink' | mit kheppe |
| mo | 'flea' | phihik |
| yamne | 'much' | kenne |
| yū hawbe | 'be drunk' | yū pihme |
| lambi theybe | 'to divert the way' | lem caybe |
| lāyhew hewbe | 'to get fever' | lāyhew sǎbe |
| lukhak cēgūm | 'waste food' | ecaphat |
| sēhgabē | 'inaugurate a house' | im kabē |
| sēbēw | 'porcupine' | lēhyay |
| sihkap | 'a kind of tree' | mēysut |
| hārēw | 'cricket (insect)' | khōhmāy |
| hūy khōhbe | 'to whistle' | hū sōnmē |

A story in the Kwatha dialect

(with translation in the Standard dialect and in English):

- Kwatha:* thaynē memahhēyre mētey-menāw khūn emēre
Standard: thaynē memahhēyde mētey-menāw khūn emēde
Kwatha: lēyñāmmē.
Standard: lērēmī.
- K:* miyay cēllebe phawwēre mēca poktēberegī
St: miyay cēllebe phawbede mēca poktēbedegī
K: mēbihani yāmnē nūhñāyhīdē.
St: mēbani yāmnē nūhñāykhīdē.
- K:* nōhmēri manē sēhpay sǎhāy pēceñ itpēre tūm emē
St: nōhmēdi manē sēhbay sǎnēbe pējeñ itpede tūm emē
K: mēkhutlē cēhñhēre.
St: mēkhutte cēhñhēre.
- K:* madunē yāmnē cāwnē pōmhī ēdugē layyēñmēresuñ
St: mēdunē yāmnē cāwnē pōmkhī ēdugē layyēñbēdesu
K: phēbe hēmhīdē.
St: phēbe hēmkhīdē.
- K:* thǎ tērāgī mētūñlē epōmmēduregi phējerebe
St: thǎ tērāgī mētūñlē epōmbēdudēgi phējerebe
K: mēcanupi emē pokkhī.
St: mēcanupi emē pokkhī.
- K:* khutlēgī pok-e haydunē magī mēmīñ khokmāte
St: khutlēgī pok-i haydunē magī mēmīñ khokmāte

K: thõnhĩ magĩ phək-lokpe nũmitle.
 St: thõnkhĩ magĩ ĩpān-thābē nũmitte.

7. K: mētēmnhĩ metũh ĩnnē mahək lēysābi mēpuh pharekle.
 St: mētēmgi metũh ĩnnē mehək lēysābi mēpuh pharek-e.

8. K: magĩ phějēbesi əlappe khũnsĩhle sēnthoklekke.
 St: magĩ phějēbesi ərappe khũnsĩhde sēndoklek-e.

9. K: səraṅkēy kēwwə kēy əmēnē magĩ nupi ōyrege
 St: səraṅkēy kēwbə kēy əmēnē magĩ nupi ōyrege
 K: khēnhēre.
 St: khēnkhēre.

10. K: nōṅmēri manē phějerebē pakhēh əmē ollege
 St: nōṅmēdi manē phějerebē pakhēh əmē ollege
 K: khokmātegi khũlle lākle.
 St: khokmātegi khũnde lāk-e.

11. K: khokmatenē isĩh sokpe lākpere səraṅkēynē lotne
 St: khokmatenē isĩh sokpe lākpēde səraṅkēynē lone
 K: isĩh khērē lāywa sōllēge magĩ pũn mēnũhle
 St: isĩh khērē lāywa sōllēge magĩ pũn mēnũhde
 K: hapsĩnhere.
 St: hāpcĩnkhēre.

12. K: isĩhdu theklūberēgi khokmāte nādunē sīṅṅy tēwre.
 St: isĩhdu theklūbēdegi khokmāte nādunē sīge tēwre.

13. K: əmāybē əmāybi kēyānē layyēṅmərə mabũ phēhānmē
 St: əmāybē əmāybi kēyānē layyēṅbēde mabũ phēhēnbē
 K: ṅēmhiḍe.
 St: ṅēmkhīḍe.

14. K: mēpanē mabũ phēhānmē ṅēmme mire pigeni
 St: mēpanē mabũ phēhēnbē ṅēmbe miḍe pigeni
 K: lāwthokke.
 St: lāwthok-e.

15. K: mabũ pāmjebe kēyānē layyēṅmərə phēhānmē
 St: mabũ pāmjebe kēyānē layyēṅbēde phēhēnbē
 K: ṅēmhiḍe.
 St: ṅēmkhīḍe.

16. K: sərāṅkēynə layyēhmərə phēredunə mabū pūhəre.
St: sərāṅkēynə layyēhbədə phēredunə mabū pūkhəre.
17. K: ləmkaṇlə sərāṅkēydu kēy onhəre ədugə mabū
St: ləmkaṇdə sərāṅkēydu kēy onkhəre ədugə mabū
K: cīṇ-cīṇdunə pūbərə khokmāte kīdunə kepləkle.
St: cīṇ-cīṇdunə pūbədə khokmāte kīdunə keppək-e.
18. K: thəwthokse khokmātegi mēpanə tarədunə
St: thēwdoksi khokmātegi mēpanə tarədunə
K: khūnduregī lēṇsāy kēwwe əkənme pakhēṇ əmə
St: khūndudēgī lēṇsāy kēwbe əkənbe pakhēṇ əmə
K: mēcanupī kēllūṇāy thahəre.
St: mēcanupī kēllūnəbe thakhəre.
19. K: lēṇsāynə khokmāte thēṇnərədunə sərāṅkēy lēytebə
St: lēṇsāynə khokmāte thēṇnərədunə sərāṅkēy lēytebə
K: mētəmlə maṇollə imlə həlləse hayhī.
St: mētəmdə maṇondə yumdə həlləsi haykhī.
20. K: sərāṅkēynə imlə həlləkperə mahək cenhəre
St: sərāṅkēynə yumdə həlləkpedə mēhak cenkḥərə
K: haybə khēṇhī loynənə tānnərəkkhī.
St: haybə khēṇkhī loynənə tānnərəkkhī.
21. K: ləmkaṇlə thēṇnərədunə lān soknəbəre lēṇsāynə
St: ləmkaṇdə thēṇnərədunə lān soknəbədə lēṇsāynə
K: sərāṅkēybu mēḥək kəktunə hattḥokle.
St: sərāṅkēybu mēḥək kəktunə hattok-e.
22. K: lēṇsāynə mabū mēpare sīnnəhī.
St: lēṇsāynə mabū mēpade sīnnəkhī.
23. K: mēpanə mēcanupibū lēṇsāyre eoṇ-əṇ tēmdunə
St: mēpanə mēcanupibū lēṇsāyde awoṇ-əwūn tēmdunə
K: thājehī.
St: thājekhī.
24. K: makhoysuṇ nūḥḥāynə pānhī.
St: mēkhoysuṇ nūḥḥāynə pānhī.

English translation:

1. Long long ago, there were a husband and a wife in a village.
2. They were very unhappy as they had no issue even in their middle age.
3. One day, a *tum* (tiny piece of sharp and pointed bamboo) pierced his hand while scraping a piece of bamboo for making a basket.
4. The wound developed into a big boil and all treatments to get it cured were in vain.
5. After ten months, a beautiful daughter was born from that boil.
6. On the day of Swasti-puja, she was named Khokmate as she was born from the hand.
7. In the course of time she became mature.
8. The news of her beauty spread to distant villages.
9. Sarangkei, a tiger, had decided to make her his wife.
10. One day, he transformed himself into a handsome man and visited the village of Khokmate.
11. When Khokmate came out to fetch water, Sarangkei secretly put some water inside her pitcher after reciting an incantation.
12. Khokmate drank the water and was about to die due to serious illness.
13. Many physicians (tried but) failed to cure her.
14. Her father declared that she would be married to anyone who could save her life.
15. Those youths who loved her tried to save her but failed.
16. Sarangkei cured her and took her away.
17. On the way, Sarangkei transformed himself again into a tiger and dragged Khokmate who was crying with fear.
18. After receiving word of this incident, Khokmate's father sent Langsai, one of the brave youths of their village, to save his daughter.
19. In the absence of Sarangkei, Langsai found her and asked her to go back (with him) to her house.
20. When Sarangkei came back to his house, he found that she had already escaped and he ran after them.
21. On the way, Sarangkei met them and in the fighting that ensued he was killed by being beheaded by Langsai.
22. Langsai handed her over to her father.
23. She was then married to Langsai by her father with enough dowry.
24. They led a happy life.