Structure of Body Parts in Meiteiron

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Abstract - This paper mainly concentrates on the structure of body parts which have been practiced from the early days in Meitei Society. Therefore the study is very important aspect of this field and it will also give a deep knowledge insight into the element of structural language, philosophical culture, belief, thought etc. of the Meitei Society.

General Terms: Noun; Genitive marker; Compound; Pronominal marker

Keywords: Body parts; Categories of body parts; Human organ

1. INTRODUCTION
The social and cultural impacts forcefully penetrate into Meiteiron in the structural process of naming of the body parts. The exploration of socio-cultural activities or practices is rigidly intermingled with Meiteiron. It is unquestionable if the language is adornment of culture or culture is adornment of language. The beautification of language and culture is not a god’s creation but a result arising from along preparatory procedures of human wisdom. Any social reflection existing into the language cannot be counted as blind faith since the civilization goes through it. The main attempt of the study is to cast the importance of ethno-science in the study of Meiteiron. In Meiteiron, the naming of body parts and its structural pattern can be analysed as hereunder.

1.1 BODY PARTS
The human body is the entire structure of a human being and comprises a head, neck, trunk (which includes the thorax and abdomen), two arms and hands and two legs and feet. Every part of body is composed of various cells (Wikipedia, 2014). In the body parts, the role of lu/kok ‘head’ is very important and it has a significant meaning in Meitei society.

1.2 Categories of body parts
In Meiteiron, hakcanggi sərəg ‘body parts’ can be categorized as follows:

1.2.1 lu/kok ‘head’
The Meiteis believe that lu ‘head’ is considered the most important part of human organ. It consists of the following constituents:

Examples:
1) lumay
   lu + gi + mə + may >lumay
   head gen. 3PP front

2) luton
   lu + gi + mə + ton >luton
   head gen. 3PP top
   ‘Crown’.

3) lusəm
   lu + gi + mə + səm >lusəm
   head gen. 3PP hair
   ‘Nape’.

4) lukəm
   lu + gi + akəmbə >lukəm
   head gen. end
   ‘Occiput’.

It consists of two nouns, a genitive marker and a third person pronominal marker as in the above examples 1), 2) and 3). Whereas in the above example 4), it consists of a noun, a genitive marker along with an adjective.

In Meitei society, the people believe that one of the most valuable parts of body is considered as lurel. The meaning of lurel is valuable head, where lu means head and rel/len means valuable.

1.2.2 mai ‘face’
It includes eyes ‘the organ of sight’, eyebrow ‘the arch of hair above each eye’, eyelid ‘either of two folds of skin that can be moved to cover or open the eye’, nose ‘the organ of smell and entrance to the respiratory tract; the prominent part of the face of man’, nostrils ‘either one of the two external openings to the nasal cavity in the nose’, philtrum ‘the shallow groove between the nose and the upper lip’, ears ‘the sense organ for hearing and equilibrium’, lips ‘either of two fleshy folds of tissue that surround the mouth and play a role in speaking’, chin ‘the protruding part of the lower jaw’, cheek ‘either side of the face below the eyes’ etc.

A) mit ‘eyes’
The word mit ‘eyes’ is the organ of sight. It includes the following organs.
Examples:
1) mitpan
mit + ki+ mə + pan > mitpan
eye gen. 3PP border ‘Eye lid’.
2) mitkəa
mit + ki+mə + kəa > mitkəa
eye gen. 3PP lower part ‘Lower part of the eyes’.
3) mitək
mit + ki + mə + tək > mitək
eye gen. 3PP upper part ‘Upper part of the eyes’.
4) mitci
mit + ki+mə + ci > mitci
eye gen. 3PP corner ‘Corner of the eyes’.

In the above example 1), most of the compounds are consisted of the following constituents such as, mit is root, ki is genitive marker, mə is third person pronominal marker and pan is modifier. The remaining constituents i.e. 2), 3) and 4) are the similar construction.

B) naton ‘nose’
It is the organ of smell and entrance to the respiratory tract; the prominent part of the face of man or other mammals. It consists of the following constituents.
Examples:
1) naton suməy
naton + gi + suməy > naton suməy
nose gen. courtyard ‘Philtrum’.
2) naton məkəun
naton + gi+mə + kəun > naton məkəun
nose gen. 3PP hole ‘Nostril’.

In the above example 1), the compound is formed by combining the constituents such as, noun + genitive marker + noun. Whereas in the example 2), the compound is formed by combining noun + genitive marker + third person pronominal marker + noun.

C) cin ‘mouth’
It is the organ of speaking. It plays the role of eating also. It consists of the following constituents.
Examples:
1) cinban
cin + gi + mə + pan > cinban
mouth gen. 3PP border ‘Lip’.

In the above example, the compound word is formed by combining some elements such as: noun + genitive marker + third person pronominal marker + modifier etc.

Here, cin is mouth, giis genitive marker, mə is third person pronominal marker and pan is modifier.

1.2.3 kʰut ‘hands’
It is the organ of holding something as well. It consists of the following elements.
Examples:
1) kʰuməy
kʰut + ki+mə + may > kʰuməy
hand gen. 3PP front ‘Front part of the hand’.
2) kʰujin
kʰut + ki+mə + cin > kʰujin
hand gen. 3PP mouth ‘Nails’.
3) kʰubak
kʰut + ki + mə + pak > kʰubak
hand gen. 3PP breath ‘Palm’.
4) kʰunəm
kʰut + ki + mə + nəm > kʰunəm
hand gen. 3PP dorum ‘Dorsum of palm’.
5) kʰujek
kʰut + ki+mə + cep > kʰujek
hand gen. 3PP side ‘Side of palm’.
6) kʰubi
kʰut + ki + mə + pi > kʰubi
hand gen. 3PP head ‘Thumb’.
7) kʰudombi
kʰut + ki+ətəmbi > kʰudombi
hand gen. pointed ‘Pointed finger’.
8) kʰuniyəəu
kʰut + ki + niyəəu > kʰuniyəəu
hand gen. king ‘Ring finger’.
9) kʰujai
kʰut + ki + mə + jai > kʰujai
hand gen. 3PP center ‘Middle finger’.
10) kʰutnaubi
kʰut + ki + mə + nau > kʰutnaubi
hand gen. 3PP younger ‘Little finger’.
11) kʰutsa
kʰut + ki+mə + sa > kʰutsa
hand gen. 3PP branch ‘Finger’.
12) kʰudan
kʰut + ki+mə + tan > kʰudan

In the above examples i.e. from 1) to 6) and from 9) to 13) are the same construction because they are consisted of a noun, a genitive marker, third person pronominal marker and a modifier. Whereas the example 7) and example 8) are the different forms, for instance, in the above example 7) the constituent is consisted of a noun, a genitive marker and an adjective. On the other hand, the example 8) is formed by combining a noun, a genitive marker and a noun.

1.2.4 kʰʊŋ ‘leg’

It is a kind of human limb; commonly used to refer to a whole limb but technically only the part of the limb between the knee and ankle. By the help of leg one can move from one place to another.

Examples:
1) kʰʊŋ
kʰʊŋ + gi + mə + niŋ > kʰʊŋ
leg gen. 3PP back ‘Heel’.

2) kʰʊŋja
kʰʊŋ + gi + mə + ja > kʰʊŋja
leg gen. 3PP sole ‘Sole’.

3) kʰʊŋbi
kʰʊŋ + gi + mə + pi > kʰʊŋbi
leg gen. 3PP head ‘Big toe’.

4) kʰʊŋnau
kʰʊŋ + gi + mə + nau > kʰʊŋnau
leg gen. 3PP younger ‘Little toe’.

5) kʰʊŋmən
kʰʊŋ + gi + mə + nəm > kʰʊŋmən
leg gen. 3PP instep ‘Instep’.

6) kʰʊŋpak
kʰʊŋ + gi + mə + pak > kʰʊŋpak
leg gen. 3PP bottom surface ‘Foot’.

7) kʰʊŋsa
kʰʊŋ + gi + mə + sa > kʰʊŋsa
leg gen. 3PP branch ‘Toe’.

In the above examples i.e. from 1) to 7) are the similar constructions because they are consisted of a noun, a genitive marker, third person pronominal marker and a modifier. One of the most interesting phenomena which is found in Meiteiron is that the word kʰᵢun[j (above 1.2.3.(13) and 1.2.4.(1)) refers to both elbow and heel.

1.2.5 səru ‘bone’

It is an organ of rigid connective tissue that makes up the skeleton of vertebrates. It consists of the following elements.

Examples:
1) səru
sa + gi + mə + ru > səru
body gen. 3PP bone ‘Bone’.

This construction is consisted of two nouns, a genitive marker and a third person pronominal marker.

1.2.6 həkɔŋəŋ məpənt həŋə saŋuk ‘external organs’

This is an important organ that is situated on or near the surface of the body. Some of the external organs of the body and their structural patterns are given below:

Examples:
1) leŋban
leŋ + gi + mə + pan > leŋban
shoulder gen. 3PP border ‘Shoulder’.

2) pukcep
puk + ki + mə + cep > pukcep
belly gen. 3PP side ‘Side of the belly’.

3) pukli
puk + ki + mə + ri > pukli
belly gen. 3PP insides ‘Insides’.

4) kʰoiri
kʰoi + gi + mə + ri > kʰoiri
navel gen. 3PP line ‘Navel’.

5) niggəŋ
niiŋ + gi + mə + kʰoŋ > niggəŋ
hip gen. 3PP root ‘Hip’.

6) tʰəbak
tʰa + gi + əpakə > tʰəbak
chest gen. breath ‘Chest’.

7) pʰəɡəŋ
pʰəi + gi + əkənə > pʰəɡəŋ
thigh gen. hard ‘Thigh’.

8) jaŋlən
jaŋ + gi + len > jaŋlən
spinal code gen. valuable ‘Spinal code’.

9) unsa
un + gi + sa > unsa
skin gen. flesh
‘Skin of flesh’.

In the above examples i.e. from 1) to 5) are the same constructions because they are consisted of a noun, a genitive marker, third person pronominal marker and a modifier. Whereas the examples 6) to 8) are also in the similar category, for instance, the constituents are consisted of a noun, a genitive marker and an adjective. On the other hand, the example 9) is formed by combining a noun, a genitive marker with a noun.

1.2. ტყაყანმით მთელმკეთ უზარმაზარ ტკბილი კუთხით ამოქრებულ და ოსილებით კვლავ პუნქტობულ ტექნოლოგიურ სისტემებში.

It is a main organ that is situated inside the body. The main parts of internal organ include: ja ‘teeth’, ლი თაღი, რკაკ ‘stomach’, წრით ‘heart’, ტართ ‘liver’, მოკა ‘gold bladder’, ქითო ‘kidney’.

A) თარ ‘teeth’

It is a hard bonelike structure in the jaws of vertebrates; used for biting and chewing or for attack and defence.

Examples:
1) jamaj
ja + gi + mə + məj
‘Front teeth’.
2) jak’a
ja + gi + mə + k’a
‘Lower teeth’.
3) jat’ək
ja + gi + mə + ək
‘Upper teeth’.
4) jak’əy
ja + gi + mə + əy
‘Root of the teeth’.
5) jaton
ja + gi + mə + ton
‘Tip of the teeth’.
6) jari
ja + gi + mə + ri
‘Gum’.
7) jaceu
ja + gi + əcəuə
‘Protrusive teeth’.
8) japəy
ja + gi + əpəyə
‘Molars’.

The similar constructions are found in the above examples i.e. from 1) to 6), for instance, the examples are consisted of a noun, a genitive marker, third person pronominal marker and a modifier. On the other hand, the examples from 6) to 8) are the similar one, for instance, the constituents are consisted of a noun, a genitive marker and an adjective.

B) ლი ‘tongue’

It is the organ of taste and a muscular tissue covered with mucous membrane and located in the oral cavity.

Examples:
1) ლაითონ
la + gi + mə + ton
‘Tip of the tongue’.
2) ლაიჯაი
la + gi + mə + jai
‘Middle of the tongue’.
3) ლაიკ’ოი
la + gi + mə + k’on
‘Root of the tongue’.
4) ლაით’ოკ
la + gi + mə + ək
‘Upper part of the tongue’.
5) ლაიკ’ა
la + gi + mə + k’a
‘Lower part of the tongue’.

The similar constructions are found in the above examples i.e. from 1) to 5), for instance, the examples are consisted of a noun, a genitive marker, third person pronominal marker and a modifier.

C) რკაკ ‘stomach’

The stomach is an enlarged and muscular saclike organ of the alimentary canal. It is also a principal organ of digestion.

1) რკაკ’ა
ra + ki + k’aa
‘Stomach’.
2) ათარჟ’ა
aṭa + gi + k’aa
‘Womb’.

The above examples i.e. 1) and 2) are formed by inserting a genitive marker in between two nouns.

D) წრით ‘heart’

It is a valuable organ of locus of feelings and intuitions. The hollow muscular organ located behind the sternum.
and between the lungs. By the help of heart, the rhythmic contractions move the blood through the body.

E) \( p^{i}rak\) ‘liver’
Large and complicated reddish-brown glandular organ located in the upper right portion of the abdominal cavity; secretes bile and functions in metabolism of protein and carbohydrate and fat; synthesizes substances involved in the clotting of the blood; synthesizes vitamin A; detoxifies poisonous substances and breaks down worn-out erythrocytes.

F) \( masiq^{a}\) ‘gallbladder’
It is an organ of muscular sac attached to the liver that stores bile (secreted by the liver) until it is needed for digestion.

G) \( ki\tilde{n}\tilde{i}\) ‘kidney’
It is an internal organ that looks like two bean-shaped that filter wastes from the blood and excrete them and water in urine.

H) \( \tilde{t}abombi\) ‘lungs’
Lungs is a breathing organ (Soibam, 2004). It is either of two saclike respiratory organs in the chest of vertebrates; serves to remove carbon dioxide and provide oxygen to the blood.

I) \( \tilde{t}ir\tilde{r}\tilde{n}\) ‘intestine’
It is the part of the alimentary canal between the stomach and the anus. It is two types such as \( \tilde{t}ir\tilde{r}\tilde{m}n\tilde{c}a\) ‘small intestine’ and \( \tilde{t}ir\tilde{r}\tilde{m}n\tilde{c}a\tilde{u}\tilde{b}a\) ‘large intestine’. Structurally it can be analyzed as under.

\[
\tilde{t}i + rin > \tilde{t}ir\tilde{r}in
\]

excrement pipe

‘Intestine’.

It consists of two nouns.

1.2.8 \( si\tilde{g}l\tilde{i}\) ‘nerve’

Any bundle of nerve fibers running to various organs and tissues of the body (WordWeb dictionary, 2013). Linguistically it can be analyzed as under.

\[
sig + \tilde{li} > sigli
\]

fibers line

‘Nerve’.

Here the root \( sig\) of \( sigli\) may be derived from the \( sig\) of \( masig\) ‘fiber’.

**CONCLUSION**

A unique form of Meitei indigenous terms is shown by Meitei body parts that have its roots in Meitei culture. It also examines the Meitei structural pattern of body parts at different categories. The study is more or less related to the belief of the people, culture and philosophy of the indigenous people. The main objective of study of Meitei body parts is to explore the structural pattern of the language by the help of culture. After investigation about the body parts of Meiteironone can easily understand that how the ancestors were scientifically given such kind of body parts in the society.

**SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

gen. --- genitive marker
3PP--- 3rd person pronominal marker
+ --- combined with
> ---- become

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