

Contrastive Study on Boro and Assamese Consonant-Phonemes.

Baneswar Baro.

Research Scholar, Deptt. of Bodo, Bodoland University, Kokrajhar, Assam, India.

Abstract: This paper attempts to study the similarities and dissimilarities between the Consonant-Phonemes of Boro and Assamese languages. Boro belongs to the Sino-Tiberian language family and Assamese belongs to the Indo-Aryan language family. Similarities and dissimilarities are seen in terms of description of consonant-phonemes and the distribution of consonant-phonemes, of both the language.

Key-words: Consonant-phonemes, description, distribution.

1.0 Introduction: The Boro and Assamese languages are originated from two different language families and acquiring notable linguistics features. The Boro belongs to the Bodo sub-group of Bodo-Naga under the Assam-Burmese of the Tibeto-Burman group of the Sino-Tibetan proper under the Sino-Tibetan or Tibeto-chinese speech family. The Assamese belongs to the Apabhramsa dialect of Magadhi Prakrit under the Indo-Arya language family originated from the Vedic-dialects of Sanskrit language. The structures of consonant-phonemes of both the languages have similarities and dissimilarities from the point of view of phonology. This paper aims to study the similarities and dissimilarities of Bodo and Assamese languages in terms of the description of consonant-phonemes and the distribution of consonant-phonemes.

1.1 Objectives of the study: The objective of this study is to discuss on description of consonant-phonemes of both the languages based on the function of articulatory organs in the production of the phonemes and the distribution of consonant-phonemes in the syllabic words and to find out the similarities and dissimilarities between the languages.

1.2 Methodology: Comparative method and structural analysis will be applied in the discussion of this topic. This study will assess the similarities and dissimilarities of the consonant-phonemes and analyse empirically with the help of examples from both the languages. To acquire the completion of this study, necessary linguistics data will be gathered from various sources. It is obvious to depend on primary and secondary sources through different published materials.

2.0 Boro consonant-phonemes: To identify and describe the consonant-phonemes of Boro, process of production or articulation on the basis of articulatory phonetics is necessary. There are sixteen (16) consonant-phonemes in Boro. These are: /p^h, b, t^h, d, d^h, g, s, z, h, m, n, ŋ, r, l, w, j/. In the articulation of these phonemes, functions of articulatory organs are divided into three divisions, i.e, (a) place of articulation (b) manner of articulation, (c) voicing. Place of articulation is divided into five types. These are: (1) Bilabial (2) Alveolar, (3) Palatal, (4) Velar, (5) Glottal. Manner of articulation is divided into six types. These are: (1) Plosive or Stop (Aspirated and unaspirated) (2) Fricative, (3) Nasal, (4) Trill, (5) Lateral, (6) Semi-vowel. Voicing is divided into two types. These are: (1) Voiced, (2) Voiceless. In the articulation of these

consonant-phonemes lip, alveolar, nose, tongue, palate, glottal, velar vocal-cords take important role. The consonant-phonemes are given in a tabular form as follows:

Boro consonant-phonemes:

	Place of articulation	Bilabial		Alveolar		Palatal		Velar		Glottal	
	Voicing	Vl.	Vd.	Vl.	Vd.	Vl.	Vd.	Vl.	Vd.	Vl.	Vd.
Manner of articulation	Aspirated Plosives	p ^h		t ^h				k ^h			
	Unaspirated Plosives	b		d				g			
	Fricatives			s z						h	
	Nasals	m		n				ŋ			
	Trill			r							
	Lateral			l							
	Semi-Vowels	w				j					

Description of Boro consonant-phonemes

Consonant-phonemes

Description

/p ^h /	voiceless, bilabial, aspirated plosive
/b/	voiced, bilabial, unaspirated plosive
/t ^h /	voiceless, alveolar, aspirated plosive
/d/	voiced, alveolar, unaspirated plosive
/k ^h /	voiceless, velar, aspirated, plosive
/g/	voiced, velar, unaspirated plosive
/s/	voiceless, alveolar, fricative
/z/	voiced, alveolar, fricative
/h/	voiceless glottal fricative
/m/	voiced, bilabial, nasal
/n/	voiced, alveolar, nasal
/ŋ/	voiced, velar, nasal
/r/	voiced, alveolar, trill
/l/	voiced, alveolar, lateral
/w/	voiced, bilabial, semi-vowel
/j/	voiced, palatal, semi-vowel

2.1 Assamese consonant-phonemes: Identification and description of Assamese consonant-phonemes, through the process of production or articulation on the basis of phonetics is important. There are twenty three (23) consonant-phonemes in Assamese. These are: /p, p^h, b, b^h, t, t^h, d, d^h, k, g, g^h, s, z, x, h̄, m, n, ŋ, r, l,

w, j/. In the articulation of these phonemes, roles of articulatory organs are divided into three divisions, i.e (a) place of articulation, (b) manner of articulation, (c) voicing. Place of articulation is divided into five types. These are: (1) Bilabial, (2) Alveolar, (3) Palatal, (4) Velar, (5) Glottal. Manner of articulation is divided into six divisions. These are: (1) Plosive or Stop (aspirated and unaspirated), (2) Fricative, (3) Nasal, (4) Trill, (5) Lateral, (6) Semi-vowel. Voicing is divided into two parts. These are: (1) voiced, (2) voiceless. In the production of these consonant-phonemes lip, alveolar, nose, palate, velar, glottal, vocal-cords act important action. The Assamese consonant-phonemes are shown below in a tabular form:

Assamese consonant-phonemes:

Place of articulation		Bilabial		Alveolar		Palatal		Velar		Glottal	
		Vl.	Vd.	Vl.	Vd.	Vl.	Vd.	Vl.	Vd.	Vl.	Vd.
Manner of articulation	Aspirated Plosives	p ^h	b ^h	t ^h	d ^h			k ^h	g ^h		
	Unaspirated Plosives	p	b	t	d			k	g		
	Fricatives			s	z			x			ɦ
	Nasals		m		n				ŋ		
	Trill				r						
	Lateral				l						
	Semi-Vowel		w				j				

Description of Assamee phonemes:

Consonant- phonemes

Description

/p ^h /	voiceless, bilabial, aspirated plosive
/p/	voiceless, bilabial, unaspirated plosive
/b ^h /	voiced, bilabial, aspirated plosive
/b/	voiced, bilabial, unaspirated plosive
/t ^h /	voiceless, alveolar, aspirated plosive
/t/	voiceless, alveolar, unaspirated plosive
/d ^h /	voiced, alveolar, aspirated plosive
/d/	voiced, alveolar, unaspirated plosive
/k ^h /	voiceless, velar, aspirated, plosive
/k/	voiceless, velar, unaspirated plosive
/g ^h /	voiced, velar, aspirated plosive
/g/	voiced, velar, unaspirated plosive
/s/	voiceless, alveolar, fricative
/z/	voiced, alveolar, fricative
/x/	voiceless, velar, fricative.
/ɦ/	voiced, glottal, fricative

/m/	voiced, bilabial, nasal
/n/	voiced, alveolar, nasal
/ŋ/	voiced, velar, nasal
/r/	voiced, alveolar, trill
/l/	voiced, alveolar, lateral
/w/	voiced, bilabial, semi-vowel
/j/	voiced, palatal, semi-vowel

From the above two description of Boro and Assamese consonant-phonemes based on the tabular form, the following similarities and dissimilarities are found out.

Similarities: In Boro and Assamese, places of articulation are similar as bilabial, alveolar, and palatal, velar, glottal. Manners of articulation are plosive, fricative, nasal, trill, lateral, semi-vowel and the voicing is also divided into two divisions as voiceless and voiced in both the languages /p^h, b, t^h, d, k^h, g, s, z, m, n, ŋ, r, l, w, j/. Consonant-phonemes are similar in terms of their feature.

Dissimilarities: There are sixteen consonant-phonemes in Boro i.e. /p^h, b, t^h, d, k^h, g, s, z, h, m, n, ŋ, r, l, w, j/. But, in Assamese there are twenty three (23) consonant-phonemes i.e. /p^h, p, b^h, b, t^h, t, d^h, d, k^h, k, g^h, g, s, z, x, f^h, m, n, ŋ, r, l, w, j/ Boro consonant-phonemes /h/ is different to Assamese consonant-phonemes /f^h/. Because /h/ is voiceless, glottal, fricative but, /f^h/ is voiced, glottal, fricative. Assamese consonant-phonemes /p, b^h, t, d^h, k, g^h, x/ are missing in Boro.

2.2 Distribution of Boro and Assamese pure consonant-phonemes:- The discussion on the distribution of Boro and Assamese pure consonant-phonemes in initial, medial, final position of syllabic word is important in phonology. The distributions of pure consonant-phonemes are given with examples in below:

2.2.1 Distribution of Boro consonant-phonemes:

<u>Consonant-phonemes</u>	<u>Initial</u>	<u>Medial</u>	<u>Final</u>
/p ^h /	/p ^h u/ 'to root out'	/ap ^h a/ 'my father'	x
	/p ^h uŋ/ 'morning'	/gup ^h uŋ/ 'healthy'	x
/b/	/ba/ 'five'	/daba/ 'knife'	/t ^h ab/ 'quick'
	/bu/ 'to beat'	/haba/ 'work'	/gab/ 'to cry'
/t ^h /	/t ^h aŋ/ 'to go'	/p ^h it ^h a/ 'cake'	x
	/t ^h i/ 'specific'	/bit ^h a/ 'altar'	x
/d/	/do/ 'six'	/ada/ 'my elder brother'	/abad/ 'cultivation'
	/duqi/ 'water'	/banda/ 'servant'	/bad/ 'customary law'
/k ^h /	/k ^h uŋ/ 'to celebrate'	/bik ^h a/ 'chest'	x
	/k ^h i/ 'stool'	/gwk ^h a/ 'bitter'	x
/g/	/gu/ 'nine'	/agu/ 'former'	x
	/gi/ 'to afraid'	/bigur/ 'skin'	x
/s/	/se/ 'one'	/p ^h isa/ 'small'	x
	/su/ 'to wash'	/muṣa/ 'tiger'	x

/z/	/zuŋ/ 'to kick'	/nuza/ 'to appear'	x
	/za/ 'to eat'	/guza/ 'red'	x
/h/	/ho/ 'to shave'	/boha/ 'where'	x
	/ha/ 'to cut'	/baha/ 'nest'	x
/m/	/ma/ 'what'	/lama/ 'road'	/dam/ 'to play'
	/muŋ/ 'name'	/bima/ 'his/her mother'	/ham/ 'to be cure'
/n/	/nu/ 'to see'	/zeŋna/ 'problem'	/gan/ 'to wear'
	/na/ 'fish'	/bana/ 'flood'	/dan/ 'to cut'
/ŋ/	x	/aŋni/ 'my'	/liŋ/ 'to call'
	x	/siŋni/ 'of inner'	/siŋ/ 'under'
/r/	/raŋ/ 'to be soft'	/burza/ 'maximum'	/t ^h ar/ 'true'
	/rui/ 'to be soft'	/guŋra/ 'hard'	/bar/ 'to jump'
/l/	/lu/ 'to build'	/guŋlau/ 'long'	/hal/ 'plough'
	/la/ 'to take'	/p ^h ulŋ/ 'source'	/at ^h al/ 'celing'
/w/	x	/dawha/ 'war'	/daw/ 'to be forward'
	x	/muwa/ 'thing'	/saw/ 'to burn up'
/j/	x	/zajga/ 'plage'	/gahaj/ 'main'
	x	/hajga/ 'lower'	/baj/ 'to purchase'

2.2.2 Distribution of Assamese consonant-phonemes:

Consonant-phonemes

	<u>Initial</u>	<u>Medial</u>	<u>Final</u>
/p ^h /	/p ^h ul/ 'flower'	/bip ^h ɔl/ 'failure'	/laph/ 'a jump'
	/p ^h ɔl/ 'fruit'	/xɔp ^h ɔl/ 'success'	/sap ^h / 'clean'
/p/	/pok/ 'insect'	/rupa/ 'silver'	/rup/ 'beauty, shape'
	/pit/ 'spittle'	/bipɔd/ 'distress'	/xap/ 'snake'
/b ^h /	/b ^h ul/ 'wrong'	/xb ^h ja/ 'gentle'	/lab ^h / 'income'
	/b ^h at/ 'rice'	/bi b ^h yam/ 'error'	/xula b ^h / 'cheap'
/b/	/bipul/ 'many'	/bibafi/ 'marriage'	/deb/ 'lord'
	/bat/ 'way'	/rɔbi/ 'the sun'	/kob/ 'stroke'
/t ^h /	/t ^h al/ 'plate'	/ɔr t ^h ɔ/ 'meaning'	/ka t ^h / 'wood'
	/t ^h ak/ 'steps'	/ã t ^h u/ 'knee'	/ko t ^h / 'fort'
/t/	/tal/ 'cymbal'	/bib ^h uti/ 'wealth'	/b ^h at/ 'rice'
	/tɔi/ 'you'	/kirti/ 'fame'	/prbb ^h at/ 'morning'
/d ^h /	/d ^h an/ 'paddy'	/ud d ^h ar/ 'rescue'	nixe d ^h / 'prohibition'
	/d ^h al/ 'shield'	/xid d ^h ɔ/ 'cooked'	/bɔd ^h / 'murder'
/d/	/dal/ 'shield'	/bidex/ 'foreign land'	/mɔd/ 'liquor'
	/dui/ 'two'	/adex/ 'order'	/praɔmod/ 'enjoyment'
/k ^h /	/k ^h al/ 'canal'	/ut k ^h at/ 'disorder'	/sɔk ^h / 'excited'
	/k ^h ura/ 'uncle'	/bi k ^h jat/ 'famous'	/lak ^h / 'lac'

/k/	/kɔl/ 'banana'	/utkat/ 'severe'	/t ^h it/ 'right'
	/kal/ 'time'	/mukɔt/ 'crown'	/tarkik/ 'debator'
/g ^h /	/g ^h al/ 'to rebuke'	/ba g ^h ini/ 'tigress'	/bag ^h / 'tiger'
	/g ^h oini/ 'wife'	/big ^h ini/ 'chaos'	/me g ^h / 'cloud'
/g/	/gan/ 'song'	/bɔga/ 'white'	/zug/ 'era'
	/gal/ 'check'	/muga/ 'silk'	/nilag/ 'distant'
/s/	/sat/ 'to cover'	/xɔsib/ 'secretary'	/nis/ 'low'
	/sal/ 'sieve'	/bisani/ 'fan'	/sas/ 'to smoother'
/z/	/zat/ 'caste'	/ozɔn/ 'weight'	/laz/ 'shame'
	/zal/ 'net'	/boza/ 'load'	/b ^h oz/ 'feast'
/x/	/xat/ 'seven'	/bixal/ 'huge'	/ɔb ^h jax/ 'habit'
	/xal/ 'a kind of fish'	/ɔxim/ 'endless'	/dex/ 'country'
/fi/	/fiat/ 'hand'	/afiar/ 'food'	/bɔtafi/ 'wind'
	/fiat/ 'plough'	/bifit/ 'suitable'	/bifi/ 'poison'
/m/	/mat/ 'voice'	/biman/ 'aeroplane'	/maram/ 'love'
	/mal/ 'thing'	/tamol/ 'betel nut'	/gɔrɔm/ 'hot'
/n/	/nal/ 'handle'	/benu/ 'flute'	/than/ 'a sacred place'
	/nat/ 'drama'	/t ^h ana/ 'police station'	/kan/ 'ear'
/ŋ/	x	/xɔŋgɔ/ 'accompany'	/beŋ/ 'frog'
	x	/ɔŋkɔ/ 'mathematics'	/dɔŋ/ 'canal'
/r/	/rak ^h / 'to keep'	/sɔrbi/ 'fat'	/abur/ 'privacy'
	/rek ^h a/ 'line'	/pitri/ 'father'	/ak ^h ɔr/ 'script'
/l/	/lab ^h / 'income'	/beli/ 'the sun'	/kal/ 'time'
	/lob ^h / 'greedy'	/bɔlia/ 'mad'	/gal/ 'cheek'
/w/	x	/biswax/ 'faith'	/prɔb ^h aw/ 'impact'
	x	/xowad/ 'taste'	/udb ^h ɔw/ 'offshoot'
/j/	x	/bidja/ 'learning'	/zɔj/ 'long live'
	x	/padja/ 'poetry'	/hɔj/ 'happens'

From the above examples on the distribution of Boro and Assamese consonant-phonemes, the following similarities and dissimilarities are found out.

Similarities: In Boro and Assamese consonant-phonemes like /b, d, g, s, z, h, fi, m, n, r/ are occurred in all the position i.e initial, medial and final position of the syllabic word. Consonant-phonemes like /ŋ, w, j/ are not occurred in the initial position of the syllabic words, but these are occur in the medial and final position only.

Dissimilarities: In Boro /p^h, t^h, k^h/ consonant-phonemes are not occurred in the initial position. These consonant-phonemes are occurring only in the medial and final position only. But, in Assamese /p^h, t^h, k^h/ consonant-phonemes are occurred in all the positions of the syllabic words. In Assamese /p, b^h, t, d^h, k, g^h, x/ consonant-phonemes are occurred in initial. Medial, final positions of the syllabic words. But, these are

not occurred in any position of the syllabic words in Boro, because these are not the consonant-phonemes of Boro language.

3.0 Conclusion: From the above discussion, it is come to know that, Boro and Assamese may be originated from two different language families. But, there are similarities and dissimilarities in terms of identification, description, distribution of the consonant-phonemes of both the language. In Boro and Assamese, in the production of consonant-phonemes i.e place of articulation, manner of articulation and voicing are divided into same divisions. But, the numbers of consonant-phonemes are not equal in both the languages.

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