

Chapter-4

CONCLUSION

The research work entitled '**Phonological Analysis of Hajong**' is an effort to analyze the phonological features of Hajong language. It tries to analyze the phonological features of Hajong in a systematic manner. It comprises of four chapters excluding bibliography and appendices. The chapters are Introduction, Review of Literature, Phonology, and Conclusion.

Our study brings to light facts about the Hajong tribe and their life to which many people are not aware till date. The Hajongs are one of the ethnic tribes of the north-east India. In chapter 1 of this work, a detailed discussion on various aspects of their life has been done. General information regarding the Hajong people, their history, culture and language etc. presented in this chapter might justify our endeavour to conduct a research work on the phonology of Hajong. As per our effort to investigate the phonological features of the Hajong language, some findings have come out which are mentioned below.

Some relevant literature has been reviewed in chapter 2 that enlightens us as well as made us feel about the necessity of the present work. It also lets us know about the need for more study on the Hajong language.

The findings of the present research work on phonology have been presented in chapter 3 of the thesis. The vowel phonemes of Hajong are established with the help of contrasting pairs. It is done on the basis of minimal pairs, and where minimal pairs are

not available, sub minimal pairs are used for the purpose. As per findings of the study, six oral vowel phonemes have been established in Hajong. These are- / i, u, u, e, o and a / and have been described as the following: The distribution of the vowels has been done which provides the following data. In Hajong, all the six vowels occur initially, medially and finally. There is no contrast found in vowel length. It is observed that there is alternative use of some vowels amongst speakers belonging to different regions. The use of vowel phonemes /a/ and /u/ as in /bia/, /biu/ ‘marrige’; /dia/, /diu/ ‘to give’ etc. proves this. Such use of phonemes may be due to the influence of surrounding IA languages- Assamese and Bangla. There is a tendency of the use of the vowels /a/ instead of /u/ has been noticed amongst the speakers of new generation who have come into close contact with the speakers of Indo-Aryan languages like Assamese and Bangla.

After the vowel phonemes, we found out the diphthongs available in Hajong. The study explores out that there are 11 diphthongs in Hajong viz. /ai, ao, oi, ui, uu, ei, eu, ia, iu, ui, uu/. All diphthongs do not occur in all the position in a word. The diphthongs- /ao/, /uu/, /eu/, /uu/, /ia/and /iu/ do not occur in word initial position. In the word medial position, the diphthong /ei/ does not occur while in the final position, all diphthongs are found to occur in all the word positions.

Our investigation reveals that there are twenty-five (25) consonantal phonemes in Hajong as the following: / p, b, t, d, k, g, p^h, b^h, t^h, d^h, k^h, g^h, m, n, ŋ, ç, ʃ, s, z, z^h, h, l, r, w, y/.The consonants, as a whole, include 12 stops and 13 continuants. The stops show voiced, voiceless and aspirated, unaspirated contrast. Among the continuants, there are 3 nasals, 4 fricatives, 2 affricates, 1 trill, 1 lateral and 2 approximants. The nasals, the trill,

the lateral and the approximants are all voiced and the affricate is voiceless whereas the fricatives show voiced and voiceless. Place of articulation can be divided into bilabial, labio-dental, alveolar, palatal, velar and glottal.

In Hajong, all the consonantal phonemes do not occur in all the positions. The phonemes /p^h, b, b^h, t^h, d, d^h, k^h, g^h, č, z, h,/ do not occur in the final position. On the other hand, the phonemes /ŋ, y/ do not occur in initial position. All the phonemes except /b^h, g^h/ occur in the medial position.

These consonantal sounds are established on the basis of minimal pairs and where minimal pairs are not available, sub-minimal pairs are used for the purpose.

Consonant combinations are discussed under three categories, viz, (i) consonant cluster (ii) consonant sequences and (iii) geminates.

Initial consonant clusters are not found in an abundant number in Hajong language. In the initial clusters, the first member can be /p, b, t, k, g, s,/ while other consonants viz. liquids /l, r/, stop /t/ the position as the second member of the clusters.

The language has medial two consonant clusters and the various combinatory possibilities are as follows: in the medial clusters, the first member can be / b, t, d, k^h, g, s/ while other consonants viz. liquids /l, r/ occupy the positions as the second member of the clusters. However, occurrences of such clusters are very rare.

A small number of two consonant clusters occur in the final position of a word in Hajong. Most of the consonants which occur in the final cluster do not occur in the word

initial position. Interestingly, most of the words, where the final clusters occur are the loan word from English. At the same time, it is also seen that the final cluster is found only in the speech of educated persons whereas there is a case of final consonant cluster deletion when the same words are used by the uneducated native speakers. In the final two consonant clusters, the possible combinations are as the following. The first member can be nasal /n/, fricative /s/, and liquid /l/ while the second member includes stop /t/, /d/, nasal /m/, and fricative /s/.

Consonant sequences are found up to three consonants. Two consonant sequences contain combinations as the following:

<u>Ist member</u>	<u>2nd member</u>
p +	(t, g ^h , z, s, l, r,)
p ^h +	(n)
b +	(d, l, r)
t+	(p, p ^h , b, b ^h , k, k ^h , g ^h , s, m, n, l, r)
t ^h +	(l)
d+	(b, g, n, l, r)
d ^h +	(k)
k+	(p, b, t, t ^h , d, d ^h , g ^h , z, s, n, l, r)

k ^{h+}	(l, r)
g ⁺	(d, n, l, r)
g ^{h+}	(n)
z ⁺	(n, l)
s ⁺	(p, p ^h , t, k, k ^h , g, m, n, l, r)
m ⁺	(p, b, d ^h , k, k ^h , s, n, l, r)
n ⁺	(b, t, t ^h , d, d ^h , č, z, s, l, r)
ŋ ⁺	(p, p ^h , t, t ^h , k, k ^h , g, z, s, h, l, r)
l ⁺	(p, p ^h , b, b ^h , t, t ^h , d, k, k ^h , g, č, z, z ^h , s, m, n)
r ⁺	(p, p ^h , b, b ^h , t, d, k, k ^h , g, z, s, m, n)

Three consonant sequences are only a few the combinations of which are as follows:

<u>First member</u>	<u>Second & Third member</u>
n ⁺	(tr, dr)
ŋ ⁺	(kl, k ^h r)
r ⁺	(pr)

As per our investigation, the following stop, affricate and laterals form geminates in medial positions in Hajong: /-p+p-/ , /-d+d-/ , /-t+t-/ , /-k+k-/ , /-m+m-/ , /-n+n-/ , /l+l/.

Then the syllable pattern of Hajong is discussed. The study reveals that there are words having up to five syllables are available in Hajong. However, the numbers of pentasyllabic words are very rare.

Here, we have discussed the processes concerning changes in the words of this language. It is noticed that that the processes responsible for change in the vocabulary or pronunciation includes both phonologically and morphologically conditioned changes. It has also been found that prothesis, apocope, syncope, diphthongization, de aspiration-voicing, voicing, and devoicing are some of the processes responsible for such changes.

Apart from the above, the research work has also found out some other features of the Hajong language. It is observed that like other languages, the influence of foreign words is available in it. Therefore, a large number of words have been found as loan words which originated due to the influence of different foreign words. Some loan words of Hajong are enlisted below in support of the above statement.

Hajong words influenced by English

<i>Hajong</i>	<i>English</i>
/kem/	camp
/ares/	arrest

/kerasin/	kerosene
/tin/	tin
/rel/	rail
/saikel/	cycle
/tebil/	table
/biskut/	biscuit
/op ^h is/	office
/apel/	apple
/intarviu/	interview
/govarmen/	government
/inkam/	income
/eria/	area
/taon/	town
/distik/	district
/notis/	notice
/fil/	field
/bord/	board

/rosid/		receipt
/recod/		record
/gelas/		glass
/pelet/		plate

Hajong words influenced by Portugese

Hajong	Portugese	English gloss
/pin/	pin	pin
/sabon/	sabon	soap
/ata/	ata	wheat
/kerani/	kerani	clerk
/ruti/	ruti	bread
/botam/, /gudam/	butan	button

Hajong words influenced by Arabic-Parsi

Hajong	Arabic/Parsi	English gloss
/hazra/	hajira	daily wage
/asol/	asli	actual

/zaga/	jaga	place
/pion/	peon	peon
/dolil/	dalil	deed

Not only the influence of foreign words are visible, but also the use of surrounding Indo-Aryan languages like Assamese and Bangla is also found in a large scale. The following list will prove this fact.

Hajong words influenced by Bangla/Assamese

<i>Hajong</i>	<i>Bangla</i>	<i>Assamese</i>	<i>English gloss</i>
/t ^h oikor/	/t ^h aikul/	/t ^h ekera/	star fruit
/bas/	/baʃ/	/bah/	bamboo
/čini/	/čini/	/čeni/	sugar
/at ^h a/	/at ^h a/	/et ^h a/	gum
/damra/	/damra/	/dɔmɔra/	/cub/
/gas/	/gas/	/gɔs/	/tree/

The study also reveals that the alternative use of sounds both vowel and consonant in a particular word is a feature of spoken Hajong. Like the vowel sound as mentioned earlier, such use is found in the pronunciation of consonant sound also. For example, /s/ and /h/ are found to be alternatively used by the speakers of different regions. We have observed that the speakers of ‘susong’ dialect use the former while

those speakers belong to ‘dashkahani’ dialect use the latter for the same word e.g. /sak/> /hak/ ‘leafy vegetable’.

We have found out another remarkable characteristic of the Hajong language that is the use of vowel phoneme /ɯ/ (close back un-rounded vowel) and which is very frequently used by the speakers, is not available in other IA languages, but a ‘typical’ sound of the TB languages. Further, the most interesting fact is that the use of /ɯ/ is so frequent in Hajong but no other Indo-Aryan (IA) languages even Assamese and Bengali with which it is familiar in some way, use this sound. This leads to assume that probably this vowel sound is the property of the original Hajong language that is extinct now but the sound remains prevalent as spontaneous inheritance through generations.

As per the data presented above, it can be said that though the Hajong language is influenced by the surrounding languages like Assamese and Bengali concerning vocabulary, there are differences concerning pronunciation and other linguistic features amongst these. Moreover, a large number of words are found totally different which are independent of both meaning and pronunciation. Hence, it may be considered as an independent language and not a dialect of any other language.
