



Journal of the Southeast Asian Linguistics Society JSEALS 11.2 (2018): i-xii ISSN: 1836-6821, DOI: http://hdl.handle.net/10524/52427 University of Hawai'i Press

BHOI KHASI COMPARED TO STANDARD KHASI

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Abstract

The paper briefly documents the Bhoi variety of Khasi, in comparison with the standard variety.

Keywords: Bhoi language, lexicon, syntax, Austroasiatic

ISO 639-3 codes: kha

1 Introduction

The Khasian languages form a branch of the Austroasiatic language family spoken mainly in the state of Meghalaya (India) by more than a million speakers according to the latest census reports. A variety of Khasi spoken around Cherrapunji in the southern part of the state has been used in schools, newspapers, literary activities, and so on, and has come to be regarded as the standard form of Khasi (SK). In this report, an attempt is made to compare SK with Bhoi Khasi (BK), which is spoken in the Nongpoh subdivision of the north-west of Meghalaya. The data on BK was collected from Mr. Shadap, of Maurong village of Nongpoh sub-division of East Khasi Hills, Meghalaya. Mr. Shadap aged 74 (in 1987) and was a collage graduate. He knew BK, SK and English. I am extremely grateful to him for providing information to me. Dr. S.R. Sharma, my colleague at Deccan College (Pune) also assisted me in data collection. I am very much thankful to him. Additionally, the analyses presented here have benefitted from input from Dr. Paul Sidwell and Dr. Hiram Ring, whose efforts also helped to make this presentation possible.

2 Phonology

The phonemes of SK are tabulated below. The IPA values given to the phonemes give an approximate indication of the phonetic value in most cases, the main discrepancy being that the vowels e and o are somewhat more open [e, e, e) than the phonemicization would indicate. A fuller description of the phonetics of SK vowels is found in Rabel (1961), and there is a recent discussion of phonotactics of Nagaraja (2014).

Cons	onants:	initials				final	S			
p	t		k	?		p	t	^j t	k	?
p^h	t^h		k^h			m	n	п	ŋ	
b	d	dz				w	r	\dot{j}		
$b^{\scriptscriptstyle h}$	d^h	$d\!\mathcal{F}^{\scriptscriptstyle h}$								
m	n	л	ŋ							
w	r, l	j								
	S	ſ		h						
Vow	els									
i	\dot{t}	и		i.		u:				
e		0		e:		0.				
	a				a:					

The sounds of BK do not show much variation from that of SK in terms of the overall inventory, although it should be noted that the transcription offered herre is a broad impressionistic one. An asymmetry is found here only in the lack of voiced velar stop. Also, BK has voiceless and voiced palatal affricates, both unaspirated and aspirated, unlike SK, which does not have voiceless affricates /ʧ, ʧh/. As far as the alveolar and dental stop series are concerned, voiced aspirated equivalents of these do not occur.

Regarding the alveolar stops, they tend to be apical in initial (pre-vocalic) positions and dental elsewhere. This distribution is highly tentative and needs further study. It might be noted that this study was highly restricted in nature, as it was based on a questionnaire and collected in the nineteen eighties.

Vowel sounds show broad similarity with that of SK. However, while SK has [i], BK seems to have $[\mathfrak{d}]$ in addition to [i], although the distribution need to be worked out. Vowel length is phonemic in SK, but it appears that it is not so in BK.

The major sound alternations observed between SK and BK are discussed below. The comparisons in the list below show the correspondences among palatals in syllable onsets.

	SK	BK	gloss
(a) <i>s?eŋ</i>	tf?en	'bone'
	<i>ſ?jap</i>	ʧ?jap	'sand'
	ſkor	<i>tfkur</i>	'ear'
(b) sɨnraŋ	tf ^h inraŋ	'male'
	ſoŋ	ʧ ^ħ oŋ	'to stay'
	ſìm	tf ^h im	'to take'
	raſi	rətj ^h i	'knife'
	ſŧm	t ^{fh} em	'negation marker'
(c) dzew	fu	'sour'
	dzoŋ	<i>ffoŋ</i>	'possessive morpheme'
	dzuŋ	<i>fuŋ</i>	'to urinate'
	hadzroŋ	hatfron/hatron	'above'

The above are summarized as follows.

	SK	BK		Proto-Khasian
(a)	ſ	y	/_C[-son]	< *#
(b)	ſ	y^{r_h}	$/$ _C[+son]	< *f
(c)	d₹	tf`	/V, C[+son]	< *d\(\frac{7}{3}\)

It is clear that these changes are regular developments of Proto-Khasian *f and *d3, indicating a general devoicing in BK, with secondary aspiration before obstruents. The secondary aspiration can also be seen in the following example.

SK	BK	gloss
kpo?	$k^{h}po?$	'belly'

Among nasal codas there is apparent palatalization of *y in BK after historical front vowels, as in groups (a) and (b).

(-)	SK	BK	gloss
(a)	reŋ	ren	'horn'
	jeŋ	jeɲ	'to stand'
	dieŋ	din	'tree'
	diŋ	din	'fire'
	pɨrleŋ	pɨrləŋ	'egg'
(b)	joŋ	joŋ	'black'
	dzroŋ	dzroŋ	'black'
	dzirŋam	ðz i rŋəm	'green'

Another example of the tendency for nasal assimilation is the following item, in which *b- has nasalized before /n/ in BK.

SK BK gloss bnai mnei 'moon'

It is evident that BK preserves the historical r infix, which otherwise assimilates to following sonorants in SK, but which is preserved in BK, as in these examples.

SK BK gloss

tilli tirli 'non-human classifier'

pillun pirlun 'round'

pillen pirlen 'egg'

There are also examples of BK lacking segments that are attested in SK.

SK BK gloss h:ø 'six' hɨnrei inru ɨnɲəu/ɨnɲjəu hɨnniu 'seven' -C : ø $le^{j}t$ lei 'to go' 'with' ba:t ba i?: ij di? dit / di**f** 'to drink' ti? 'to dig' tij

The equivalent of unstressed [i] of SK is [ə] in BK.

SKBKglosspinpan'causative morpheme' $kint^hei$ $kant^hei$ 'woman'rindayranday'neck' t^himmai t^hammai 'new'

SK orthographic /ie/ reflects a sound that varies from [e:] to [ie]. This is regularly [i] in BK.

SK BK gloss sdie? sdi? 'to fry' k^hlie? khli? 'head' ktien ktɨn 'mouth' miet mit 'night' t^hiet $t^h it$ 'root'

SK orthographic /u/ reflects a sound that varies from [u:] to [o:] and is regularly [o] in BK.

SK BK gloss muhor seal' $k^h lur$ $k^h lor$ 'star' $k^h un$ $k^h on$ 'child'

Moreover, there are a couple of comparisons that indicate a correspondence between SK /o/ and BK [ə].

SK	BK	gloss
su?ot	su?ət	'dysentery'
oŋ	әŋ	'to say'

Finally, in this section, we highlight two odd examples of SK vowel sequences corresponding to BK [u].

SK	BK	gloss
hinrei	inru	'six'
brieu	bru	'human being'

BK also has various lexical items which are not found in SK. See the basic word list at the end of this paper.

3 Grammar

3.1 Sentential word order

Standard Khasi (SK) has as its normal order Subject-Verb-Object (SVO)(SK1-5). However, BK normally has VSO order with a pronoun subject (BK1-2). With a noun subject, BK fronts the noun; if the verb is transitive, a subject agreement pronoun/classifier is placed after the verb- SnVSpO (BK3-4). Also, when both DO and IO are present, the first DO occurs followed by IO, as in (SK2: S-V-DO-IO) and in BK as well (BK2: V-S-DO-IO). With an infinitive construction in BK, the main subject occurs at the very end – VOS (BK5).

- (SK1) ka/ŋa la leit she/I PT go (BK1) la? lei ka/ŋa PT go she/I 'She/I went.'
- (SK2) la aj ka kot ha ka ja и he PT give OBJ F. book to her
- (BK2) *la? aj u ka kot ha ka*PT give he F. book to her 'He gave the book to her.'
- (SK3) la be? mjau и kseu и ja и M. dog M.PRO PT chase OBJ M. cat
- (BK3) uksau la? be? и ha ka mjaũ dog M. PT chase M. OBJ F. cat 'The dog chased the cat.'
- (SK4) *ka kinthei ka la leit kloj-kloj* F. woman F. PT go quick-quick
- (BK4) kə kanthei lei pan-thait F. woman go quickly 'The woman went quickly.'
- (SK5) u le^{it} ban $t^{h}ied$ ja ka kot he go to purchase OBJ F. book
- (BK5) *lei* t^h*iet* kot u go purchase book he 'Hto purchase a book.'

- (SK6) u la wan si-sien
 - he PT come one-time
- (BK6) *la?-wan u ţî-sin*PT-come he one-time 'He came once.'

3.2 Subject marking

In SK when a noun is used as a subject, it occurs at the beginning of the sentence and is followed immediately by its agreement marker before the verb. In BK, the subject agreement marker occurs regularly after the verb.

- (SK7) ka $k^hinna?$ ka la wan minhinnin
 - F. girl F. PT come yesterday
- (BK7) ka khənna? kinthej la?wən ka ?innin
 F. girl female PT-come F. yesterday
 'The girl came yesterday.'
- (SK8) u kseu u la be? ja u mjau
 - M. dog M. PT chase OBJ M. cat
- (BK8) u ksau la? be?u ha ka mjaũ M. dog PT chase OBJ F. cat 'The dog chased the cat.'

3.3 Pronouns and possessives

The BK personal pronominal system is very similar to the one in the SK except that the 1st plural pronoun in BK has a different form /ŋi/, and it lacks a gender distinction in 2p. singular, which is found in SK.

Personal Pronouns

	Sing.	Pl.
1p	ŋa	i?
2 p	me	$p^h i$
3p.masc	и	ki
3p.fem	ka	

Demonstratives

	SK	BK
'proximate'	kane	kəni
'remote-invisible'	ka-ta	kəta
'remote-visible'	ka-tai	kətei
'remote-not far'	ka-to	kətei hətəi
'remote-up'	ka-tei	kətei hətfroŋ
'remote-down'	ka-t ^h ie	kətu həpo

The possessive marker in BK is co-, while in SK it is coon.

- (SK9) $u k^h u: n dzon-\eta a$
 - M. child GEN-I
- (BK9) u khon fo-ŋa M. child GEN-I 'my son'
- (SK10) fakri dzoŋ-u
- servant GEN-he (BK10) u t^hakri tfo-u(?)
- M. servant GEN-he
 - 'his servant'

However, when the possessor is a noun, no possessive marker is used.

```
(SK11) u tdoŋ-ksəu
M. tail-dog
(BK11) kə tdoŋ-ksou
F. tail-dog
'dog's tail' / 'tail of dog'

(SK12) ka sla-dieŋ
F. leaf-tree
(BK12) ka sla-diŋ
F. leaf-tree
'tree leaf' / 'leaf of tree'
```

The BK reflexive marker ba-hi is etymologically distinct from that of SK ($la \sim lade$).

```
(BK)
        dət
              ba-hi
                      ηa
         beat self
         'I beat myself.'
         tf i
              ba-hi
         see
              self
         'He saw himself.'
        wən
                ba-hi
                        ki
         come self
                        thev
         'They came by themselves.'
                    la?
                               bəs
        wən
                ŋa
                           ka
         come Í
                    OBJ
                               bus
         'I came by bus.'
         la?-be?
                    ba-ki
                               ha-ki
                                       brat
         PT-chase by-them
                              OBJ-PL animal
         'The animal was chased by them.'
(SK)
              fo?
                     ja-lade
        ŋa
              beat
                     OBJ-self
         'I beat myself.'
```

3.4 Noun class agreement markers

SK has the classifiers nouns u 'masculine singular', ka 'feminine singular'; and ki 'common plural'. These occur before all nouns as can be observed above and may stand alone as pronoun subjects before all verbs (e.g. SK11) or as a pronoun indirect object after ha 'to'.

BK uses the same forms of classifiers but with non-identical class membership. BK also requires a classifier before nouns except before the object of a complex verb. With a fronted noun subject and a transitive verb, BK requires an agreeing pronoun subject after the verb. The pronoun indirect object may be used after ha 'to'.

3.5 Interrogative time marking

In SK, time questions are indicated by prefixing la- 'future' or min- 'past' to -no 'when' (SK13 and SK14). It should be noted that la-, when not attached to no-, marks the 'past' tense. In BK, only min- is used with - $n\tilde{o}$.

```
(SK13) la-no u-n wan
FUT-when he-FUT come
(BK13) minnõ tî wən u
when FUT come he
'When will he come?'
```

```
(SK14) min-no ka la wan
PT-when she PT come
(BK14) minnõ la? wən ka
when PT come she
'When did she come?'
```

3.6 Function markers

SK uses *ja* to mark direct objects, and *ha* to mark indirect objects. BK uses *ha* to mark the direct object of a simple transitive verb or the indirect object of a transitive verb. The direct object of a bi-transitive verb or of a complex verb is left unmarked.

SK uses ja to mark the direct object in a di-transitive sentence. BK leaves the direct object unmarked.

```
(SK15) u
                              kot
                                     ha ka
                      ia
                          ka
                give OBJ F.
        he
           PT
                                    to she
(BK15) la? aj
                 u
                      ka
                          kot
                                ha
                                    ka
                                     she
        PT give he
                     F.
                          book to
        'He gave the book to her.'
```

In an interrogative construction questioning the direct object, SK prefixes ja- to the interrogative -no. BK. just uses the question word *uie*.

```
(SK16) ja\text{-}no p^hi la k^hot OBJ-INT you PT call (BK16) uje/uije k^hut p^hi who call you 'who did you call?'
```

In a causative sentence, SK marks both the intermediate agent and the direct object with ja. BK leaves the intermediate agent unmarked and marks the direct object with ha. Apparently, animate nouns take ha, the object marker, while other nouns do not.

In SK, *ha* is an indirect object marker. In BK, it functions as an indirect object marker in a di-transitive sentence, as the marker of direct object in a causative sentence, or as a locative preposition.

```
(SK17) u s?iem u
                         la
                                p^ha? ja
                                          и
                                               sakri
                                                      ban k<sup>h</sup>ot ja
        M. king M.
                         PT
                                send OBJ M.
                                              servant INF send OBJ she
(BK17) u s?em p^ha?k^hut
                                     ka ha
                                                       sakri
                                и
                                              и
        M. king send-call(PT) M.
                                     she OBJ M.
                                                       servant
        'The king sent a servant to call her.'
```

3.7 Verb constructions

Both SK and BK have three tense distinctions: present, past and future. However, their placement in the verbal complex differs.

- present tense: unmarked in both
- past tense: la in SK, placed before the verb; la? in BK, also placed before the verb
- future tense: in in SK, placed before the verb; and ci in BK, placed before the verb

One interesting difference in regard to the future the marker is that the future marker generally fuses with with the pronominal element in SK while such fusing does not take place in BK.

The present continuous *day* in Khasi is placed before the verb, while the form *nay* in BK, also placed before the verb.

```
(SK19) na dan leit
I CONT go
(BK19) nan lei na
CONT go I
'I am going.'
```

Note also that while BK infinitives are unmarked, SK marks infinitive verbs with *ban*, see examples below at §SK/BK20, S/BLK21, SK/BK22, etc.

3.8 Word formation

Here only one feature will be mentioned. BK is very similar to SK in this aspect of word formation. However, it appears that BK prefers vowel insertion to avoid consonant clusters; compare the following:

```
BK: f^hog 'to dwell' > finog 'village'
SK: fog 'to dwell, live' > fnog 'village', dwelling'.
SK: sa:r 'to sweep > sinsa:r 'a broom'
BK: siga? 'to sweep, clean' > usiga? 'a broom';
```

Comparative and superlative forms are obtained as follows.

```
BK and SK.: 'good': b^h a, 'better': k^h am - b^h a, 'best': b^h a - tam
```

With another adjective, 'bad', the formation is somewhat different.

```
(22) BK: 'bad': hoi\text{-}re, 'worse': b^ha\text{-}k^ham\text{-}sneo, and 'worst': ba\text{-}hoi\ be\text{-}re\text{-}re SK. forms are: sniew\ bad': k^ham\text{-}sniew\ 'worse': sinew\text{-}tam\ 'worst'
```

3.9 Causative constructions

SK forms a causative construction by attaching a causative prefix *pin*- to the verb 'to be', and putting an infinitive marker before the main verb, with the sentence thus having the form *causer-causative verb-object-actor-infinitive verb*. BK, on the other hand, simply attaches the causative prefix to the main verb, giving a sentence form *causative verb-causer-actor*, using no verb 'to be', object marker, or infinitive marker. Note that SK marks the 'actor' here as the first object, while BK does not put a marker on the actor.

```
I CAUS-be OBJ he INF eat
(BK20) pan-bam
                       ŋa
                             и
        CAUS-eat
                             M.
        'I made him eat.'
(SK21) ki
              pɨn-loŋ ja u ban sŋgap
        they CAUS-be OBJ M. INF hear
(BK21) pan-snap
                  ki
        CAUS-hear they he
        'They made him hear.'
        p^hi pin-lon ja u ban trej you(sg.) CAUS-be OBJ he INF. work
(SK22) p^hi
        'You made him work.'
(BK22) pan-trej
                     p^h i
                              ka
```

CAUS-work you(sg) her 'You made her work.'

(SK20) na pɨn-loŋ ja u ban bam

- (SK23) ka pin-lon ja u ban t^h ia? she CAUS-be OBJ M. INF sleep 'She made him sleep.'
- (BK23) pan-dejt na u CAUS-drink I him 'I made him drink.'

3.10 Negation

In SK, the negative markers are preverbal im-/-m and the past tense negation word $k^h lem$. In the past tense, the preverbal particle fim is also used. In BK, the negative marker is post-verbal re, and a pre-verbal particle $fi^h em$ is used in the past tense with re.

- (SK24) u $k^hinna?$ u-m ba:m
 - M. boy M.-NEG eat
- (BK24) u k^h anna? bam re u M. boy eat NEG M. 'The boy does not eat.'
- (SK255) ka k^h inna? ka-n im trej ja ka kam F. girl F.-FUT NEG work OBJ F. work
- (BK25) kə khənna? ei ka re ka ba trei F. girl F. NEG F. NOM work 'The girl does not do the work.'
- (SK26) *ka/ŋa fim la le^jt* she/I NEG PT go
- (BK26) them lei re ka/ŋa NEG-PT go NEG she/I 'She/I did not go.'
- (BK) ba-ʔu tfi-sin dei-re sin dei-re ba-ŋa ţſi lei reи one-time NOM-he one or-NEG time or-NEG NOM-I NEG he go 'once or twice' 'He but not I.' 'He is not going.'

4 Vocabulary

As far as vocabulary is concerned, there is not much of difference between them, as can be observed below.

1 all ro? baro? 2 and bad ba 3 animal mrad baki, brat ? dpei dpei 5 at ha ha 6 bad snieu hoi-re 7 bark snep snepdin 8 because namar namar 9 belly kpo? k*po? 10 big he? he? 11 bird sim ksim 12 bite da¹t da¹t 13 black jon jon 14 blood snam snam 15 bone f?en f?in 16 breast fadem fadam 17 burn t*an ?ip 18 child k*un k*on 19 cloud l?o? lo?o 20 cold k*riat<		1	-	
2 and bad bə 3 animal mrad baki, brat ? 4 ashes dpei dpei 5 at ha ha 6 bad snieu hoi-re 7 bark snep snepdin 8 because namar namar 9 belly kpo? k*po? 10 big he? he? 11 bird sim ksim 12 bite da/t da/t 13 black jon jon 14 blood snam snam 15 bone f?en f?ip 16 breast fadem fadem 17 burn t*an k*on 18 child k*un k*on 19 cloud l?o? lo?o 20 cold k*riat tingam		Gloss	SK	BK
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45 hand <i>kti kti</i> 46 he <i>u u</i>	44			
46 he <i>u u</i>	45	hand	kti	•
	46	1	и	и
	47	head	k ^h lie?	k ^h li?

10	1		1
48	hear	sŋgap	ѕӈәр
			1.0
49	heart	klongsnam	do?nod
50	heavy	he?	k ^h ija
52	I	nga	ŋa
52	in	ha	ha
53	kill	pɨnjap	рәпјәр
54	know	tip	tip
55	leaf	sla	sla
56	lie, cheat	thok	t ^h ɔk
57	live	im	tf ^h oŋ
58	liver	do?nud	t ^h əru
59	long	дзгоŋ	dzroŋ
60	louse	ksi/	ksi
		dzinrein	
61	man-male	finraŋ	sinran
62	many	bun	si bəŋ
63	meat-flesh	do?	ka do?
64	mountain	lum	u ləm
65	mouth	ſŧntur	k ^h tin
66	name	kɨrteŋ	pərtit
67	near	jan	hatfan
68	neck	rɨndaŋ	rəndəŋ
69	new	t ^h immai	t ^h əmmai
70	night	miet	mıt
71	nose	k ^h mut	k ^h mut
72	not	ŧт	?əm
73	one	uwei	woi
74	person	brieu	bru
75	rain	slap	sləp
76	red	sau	sau
77	road	l i nti	luti
78	root	t i nrai	t ^h it
79	rub	kɨrʃut	kərk ^h ut
80	see	joʔi	tfi?
81	seed	sɨmbai	səmbai
82	sit	ſoŋ	𝔰 ħoŋ
83	skin	snie?do?	sne?
84	sleep	thia?	thia?
85	small	rit	bə-rit
86	smoke	tdem	tdem
87	stand	ieŋ	jen
88	star	k ^h lur	k ^h lor
89	stick	dieŋ	din
90	stone	таи	таи
91	sun	sŋgi	sŋi
92	swim	dzŋgi	t∫¹∂mpa?
93	tail	tdoŋ	tdoŋ
94	that	-ta/-tei	kə-tu
95	this	-ne	kə-ni

96	thou	me/pʰa	me/pʰa
97	three	lai	lai
98	tongue	t ^h illiedz	t ^h ərle ^j t
99	tooth	bniat	dumin
100	tree	dieŋ	dɨɲ
101	two	a:r	ar
102	walk	jaːʲt	lei
103	warm	s?a: ^j t	sa?it
104	water	um	um
105	we	ŋgi	i₽

106	what	-ei	kә-je
107	when	lano	mɨ/ən-no
108	white	lie?	li?
109	who	-no	uie
110	with	bad	ba
111	woman	kɨntʰei	kənt ^h ei
112	woods/forest	k ^h lau	k ^h lav
113	ye > you (pl.)	$p^h i$	p^hi
114	yellow	stem	stem

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Reviewed: Received 19 June 2018, revised text accepted July 8 2018, published 20 July 2018 **Editors**: Editor-In-Chief Dr Mark Alves | Managing Eds. Dr Paul Sidwell, Dr Nathan Hill, Dr Sigrid Lew