

## Mising Morphophonemics

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In Mising, as in other languages, sounds tend to get modified in different phonetic environments. Mising has a strongly affixative morphological system, and, therefore, such modifications are frequent in this language.

I. When a vowel is followed by a consonant or by a consonant by a vowel, there is no phonetic modification, e.g.,

(a) Vowel followed by a consonant:

/abu/	'father'	+ -də	(definite article)	=	/abudə/
...		+ -ko	(indefinite article)	=	/abuko/
...		+ -ma	(negativizer)	=	/abuma/ etc.

(b) Consonant followed by a vowel:

/takar/	'star'	+ -ə	(nominative suffix)	=	/takarə/
...		+ -a	(vocative suffix)	=	/takara/
...		+ -o:	('plenty of' suffix)	=	/takaro:/ etc.

(N.B. It should, however, be remembered that although syllable-final, and therefore morpheme- and word-final plosives lose the voiced/voiceless opposition, morpheme-final plosives followed by vowels are always voiced, e.g.,

/alap/ or /alab/	'bird's wing'	+ -o:	=	/alabo:/	'plenty of wings'
/tapat/ or /tapad/	'leech'	+ -a	=	/tapada/	'O leech!'
/kopak/ or /kopag/	'banana'	+ -ə	=	/kopagə/	'banana' (nom)

In this treatment, only /b, d, g/ are used in final positions, in which case the plosives also conform fully to I(b) above.)

II. When a consonant is followed by another consonant, phonetic modification takes place in the following environments:

(a) Modifications by way of regressive assimilation take place extensively in the case of plosives. Taking the final plosives to be /b, d, g/ (see Note under Ib above), we might proceed to analyze these modifications as follows:

(i) /b/ becomes [p], when followed by voiceless consonants, e.g.

/kab/	'weep'	+	-po	=	/kappo/	'pleasant to weep'
...		+	-ten	=	/kapten/	'weep again'
...		+	-ka	=	/kapka/	'had wept'
...		+	-sed	=	/kapsed/	'added weeping'

/b/ becomes [m], when followed by /m/, e.g.

/kab/ + -ma (negativiser) = /kamma/.

/b/ is partially nasalized, when it is followed by the nasals /n, ŋ, ɲ, ɳ/ but no modification takes place when it is followed by voiced sounds other than the nasals.

(ii) /d/ becomes [t], when followed by voiceless consonants, e.g.

/ad/	'write	+	-po	=	/atpo/	'pleasant to write'
...		+	-ten	=	/atten/	'to write again'
...		+	-sed	=	/atsed/	'add to what is written'
...		+	-kin	=	/atkin/	'know how to write'

/d/ becomes [n], when followed by /m, n, ŋ, ɳ/, e.g.

/ad/	+	-ma	=	/anma/	'write not'
/ad/	+	-nam	=	/annam/	'to write'
/ad/	+	-ŋer	=	/anŋer/	'to be fed up with writing'
/ad/	+	-ɳinɳ	=	/anɳinɳ/	'tedious to write (with)'

/d/ becomes [l], when followed by /l/, e.g.

/ad/ + -len = /allen/, 'write out'

/d/ becomes [r], when followed by /r/, e.g.

/ad/ + -rə = /arrə/ 'fee for writing'

/d/ becomes [j], when followed by /j/, e.g.

/ad/ + -jo (imperative negative) = /ajjo/ 'don't write'

No modification takes place when /d/ is followed by /b, d, g/ and vowels.

(iii) /g/ becomes [k], when followed by voiceless consonants, e.g.

/dug/	'run'	+	-po	=	/dukpo/	'pleasant to run'
...		+	-to	=	/dukto/	'run' (imperative)
...		+	-kin	=	/dukkin/	'to know how to run'
...		+	-sum	=	/duksum/	'gather together by running'

/g/ becomes [ŋ] when followed by /ŋ/, e.g.

/dug/ + -ŋoŋ = /duŋoŋ/ 'the rest of the race'

No modification takes place when /g/ is followed by voiced sounds except /ŋ/. Partial nasalization of /g/ can, however, be discerned when it is followed by /m, n, ɲ/.

(b) Morpheme-final /ŋ/ undergoes an important modification when it is followed by various consonants except /k, g, ŋ/. In such cases, /ŋ/ is replaced by vowel length, e.g.

/simaŋ/	'corpse'	+-pə	=	/sima:pə/	'like a corpse'
...	+	-bə	=	/sima:bə/	'that corpse to the south'
...	+	-tə	=	/sima:tə/	'that corpse to the north'
...	+	-də	=	/sima:də/	'the corpse'
...	+	-ma	=	/sima:ma/	'not a corpse'
...	+	-lo	=	/sima:lo/	'on a corpse'
...	+	-so	=	/sima:so/	'on this corpse'
...	+	-ruŋko	=	/sima:ruŋko/	'a corpse for sure'

/duŋ/	'sit' (root)	+ -nə	=	/du:nə/	'one who sits'
...	+	-ɲiŋ	=	/du:ɲiŋ/	'unpleasant to sit'
...	+	-zon	=	/du:zon/	'sitting companion'
...	+	-rə	=	/du:rə/	'fee for sitting'
...	+	-jo	=	/du:jo/	'don't sit'

/ŋ/ gets deleted when it is followed by /ŋ/, e.g.

/duŋ/ + -ŋaŋ = /duŋaŋ/ 'begin to sit'

No modification takes place when /ŋ/ is followed by /k, g/, e.g.

/simaŋ/	+	-ko	=	/simaŋko/	'a corpse'
/duŋ/	+	-gor	=	/duŋgor/	'to sit hurriedly' etc.

(c) There are not many instances of progressive assimilation in the language. The following dialectal and idiolectal phenomena may be noted:

(i) /l/ becomes [r], when preceded by /r/, e.g.

/kar/	'to peel'	+	-len	=	karren	'to peel off'
/kor/	'to take a step'	+	-lad	=	korrad	'to take a step back'

(ii) /l/ becomes [n], when preceded by /m/, e.g.

/tam/	'to spread'	+	-len	=	/tamnen/	'to spread out'
/kum/	'to salute'	+	-la	=	/kumna/	'having saluted'

However, these instances of progressive modification, particularly (ii), are by no means regular.

III. Some important modifications occur when a morpheme-final or word-final vowel is followed by another vowel. These modifications may be classed under four heads:

- A. Insertion of /j/
- B. Insertion of /w/
- C. Deletion of vowels
- D. Gemination of consonants

#### A. Insertion of /j/

When a morpheme or word ends with the front long vowels /i:/ or /e:/ and takes a vowel suffix<sup>1</sup>, /j/ is inserted in place of the vowel length, e.g.

/tani:/	'man'	+	-ə	(nominative and copula)	=	/tanijə/
/ka:ni/	'opium'	+	-ə	"	=	/ka:nijə/
/tame:/	'tail'	+	-ə	"	=	/tamejə/
/ja:me:/	'young man'	+	-ə	"	=	/ja:mejə/
/tani:/	+	[-o:]	('plenty of' suffix)	=	/tanijo:/	
/ka:ni:/	+	[-o:]	"	=	/ka:nijo:/	
/tame:/	+	[-o:]	"	=	/tamejo:/	
/ja:me:/	+	[-o:]	"	=	/ja:mejo:/	
/tani:/	+	[-a]	(vocative suffix)	=	/tanija/	
/ja:me:/	+	[-a]	"	=	/ja:meja/ etc.	

<sup>1</sup> 'Vowel suffix' includes suffixes beginning with vowels.