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Pronominal Markers in Hmar

Elangbam Sharatkumar Singh, Ph.D.

Abstract

This paper attempts to highlight the pronominal markers of Hmar. Hmar language belongs to Tibeto-Burman language family (Grierson, G.A. 1904). There are 7 (seven) pronominal markers in Hmar, they are - /kə-/ , /kən-/ or /əi-/ , /i-/ , /in-/ , /ə-/ and /ən-/. These pronominal markers can be divided into two types as singular and plural pronominal markers. Singular pronominal markers are: /kə-/ ‘I’, /i-/ ‘you (SG.)’, and /ə-/ ‘she/he’, examples are - /kəpa/ ‘my father’, /ipa/ ‘your father’ and /əpa/ ‘his/her father’ respectively. The plural pronominal markers are - /kən-/ or /əi-/ ‘we’, /in-/ ‘you (PL.)’, and /ən-/ ‘they’. Examples are: /kənpa/ or /əipa/ ‘our father’, /inpa/ ‘your father (PL.)’ and /ənpa/ ‘their father’. The first person plural pronominal marker can be classified into two as - /kən-/ and /əi-/.

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Pronominal Markers in Hmar

These pronominal markers can occur with nouns and verbs. The unrealized aspect marker /tih/ is also used with these pronominal markers. This aspect marker is suffixed to the pronominal markers, for example: /əma-ni bu p^hak ən-tih/ ‘They eat rice’.

Key words: pronominal markers, first person, second person and third person.

Pronominal Markers

There are 7 (seven) pronominal markers in Hmar. They are: /kə-/ , /kən-/ or /əi-/ , /i-/ , /in-/ , /ə-/ and /ən-/. These pronominal markers can be used as markers with nouns and verbs. The pronominal marker /kən-/ indicate the exclusiveness whereas /əi-/ indicates inclusiveness in the first person plural nouns.

The pronominal markers are shown as:

	Person	Singular	Plural
A.	1 st person	/kə-/	/kən-/ (EXCL.)
			/əi-/ (INCL.)
B.	2 nd person	/i-/	/in-/
C.	3 rd person	/ə-/	/ən-/

Table - Hmar Pronominal markers

First Person Singular Pronominal Marker /kə-/

The first person singular pronominal marker /kə-/ is prefixed to kin terms and the personal or intimate belongings, which are inalienable to the possessor. It is attached before the nouns and verbs. It is discussed as below:

/kə-/ with Noun

The first person pronominal marker /kə-/ is attached just before the nouns in the first person singular number. Examples are as below:

	Hmar	Gloss	Hmar	Gloss
1.	/pa/	‘father’	/kə-pa/	‘my father’
2.	/nu/	‘mother’	/kə-nu/	‘my mother’

- | | | | | |
|----|------|---------------|---------|------------------|
| 3. | /pi/ | ‘grandmother’ | /kə-pi/ | ‘my grandmother’ |
| 4. | /pu/ | ‘grandfather’ | /kə-pu/ | ‘my grandfather’ |

/kə-/ with Verb

The first person pronominal marker **/kə-/** is attached just before the verbs in the first person singular number. Examples are given:

- | | |
|----|---------------------------------------|
| 5. | /kəi bu kə - p ^h ak/ |
| | I rice 1PP. eat |
| | ‘I eat rice.’ |
| 6. | /kəi mənipur ah kə- p ^h e/ |
| | I manipur LOC. 1PP. go |
| | ‘I go to Manipur.’ |
| 7. | /kəi tui kə- don/ |
| | I water 1PP. drink |
| | ‘I drink water.’ |
| 8. | /kəi- in puon kə- sop/ |
| | I NOM. cloth 1PP. wash |
| | ‘I wash cloth.’ |
| 9. | /kəi əmanu hi kə- luŋsiet/ |
| | I she DET. 1PP. love |
| | ‘I love her.’ |

First Person Plural Pronominal Markers, /kən-/ and /əi-/

There are two types of first person plural pronominal markers in Hmar, namely, **/kən-/** and **/əi-/**. The plural pronominal marker **/kən-/** is used with exclusive pronouns whereas **/əi-/** is used with inclusive pronouns. Examples are given below:

/kən-/ with Noun

The first person pronominal marker **/kən-/** is attached just before the nouns in the first person plural sentence.

	Hmar	Gloss
10.	/kən-pa/	‘our father (EXCL.)’
11.	/kən-nu/	‘our mother (EXCL.)’

/kən-/ with Verb

The first person pronominal marker /kən-/ is attached just before the verbs in the first person plural number. Examples are given below:

12. /kəi- ni bu kən- p^hak/
 I PL. rice 1PP. eat
 ‘We eat rice (EXCL.).’
13. /kəi- ni sa kən- p^hak/
 I PL. meat 1PP. eat
 ‘We eat meet (EXCL.).’

/əi-/with Noun

The first person pronominal marker /əi-/ is attached just before the nouns in the first person plural number. Examples are as follows:

14. /əi-pa/ ‘our father (INCL.)’
15. /əi-nu/ ‘our mother (INCL.)’

/əi-/ with Verb

The first person pronominal marker /əi-/ is attached just before the verbs in the first person plural number. Examples are as below:

16. /əi-ni bu əi- p^hak/
 I PL. rice 1PP. eat
 ‘We eat rice (INCL.).’
17. /əi-ni sa əi- p^hak/
 I PL. meat 1PP. eat
 ‘We eat meet (INCL.).’

Second Person Singular Marker /i-/

The second person singular pronominal marker /i-/ is prefixed to kin terms and the personal or intimate belongings, which are inalienable to the possessor.

/i-/ with Noun

The second person singular pronominal marker /i-/ is attached just before the nouns in the second person singular number. Examples are shown as:

	Hmar	Gloss
18.	/pa/ /i-pa/	'father' 'your father'
19.	/pu/ /i-pu/	'grandfather' 'your grandfather'
20.	/nu/ /i-nu/	'mother' 'your mother'
21.	/pi/ /i-pi/	'grandmother' 'your grandmother'
22.	/kut/ /i-kut/	'hand' 'your hand'
23.	/mit/ /i-mit/	'eye' 'your eye'

/i-/ with Verb

The second person singular pronominal marker /i-/ is attached just before the verbs in the second person singular number. Examples are as below:

24. /nəŋ bu i- p^hak/
you rice 2PP. eat
'You (SG.) eat rice.'
25. /nəŋ tui i- don/
you water 2PP. drink
'You (SG.) drink water.'
26. /nəŋ- in əmanu hi i- luŋsiet/
you NOM. she DET. 2PP. love
'You (SG.) love her.'
27. /nəŋ- in puon cu i- sop/
you NOM. cloth DET. 2PP. wash
'You (SG.) wash the cloth.'

28. /nəŋ- in k^hej cu i- sop/
 you NOM. plate DET. 2PP. wash
 ‘You (SG.) wash the plate.’

Second Person Plural Pronominal Marker /in-/

The second person plural pronominal marker /in-/ is prefixed to kin terms and the personal or intimate belongings, which are inalienable to the possessor. Examples as:

/in-/ with Noun

	Hmar	Gloss
29.	/pa/	‘father’
	/in-pa/	‘your (PL.) father’
30.	/nu/	‘mother’
	/in-nu/	‘your (PL.) mother’
31.	/nau/	‘child’
	/in-nau/	‘your (PL.) child’

/in-/ with Verb

The second person plural pronominal marker /in-/ is prefixed to the verbs in the second person plural number. Examples:

32. /nəŋ-ni- in əmapa k^ha in- luŋsiet/
 you PL. NOM. he DET. 2PP. love
 ‘You (PL.) love him.’
33. /nəŋ-ni- in ton k^ha in- t^ho/
 you PL. NOM. work DET. 2PP. do
 ‘You (PL.) do the work.’
34. /nəŋ-ni lek^həbu in- tiem rəu/
 you PL. book 2PP. read COM.
 ‘Read your (PL.) book.’

Third Person Singular Pronominal Marker /ə-/

The third person singular pronominal marker /ə-/ is also prefixed to kin terms and the personal or intimate belongings, which are inalienable to the possessor.

/ə-/ with Noun

The third person singular pronominal marker /ə-/ is attached to kin terms and the personal pronouns. Examples are given below.

	Hmar	Gloss
35.	/pa/ /ə-pa/	'father' 'his/her father'
36.	/pu/ /ə-pu/	'grandfather' 'his/her grandfather'
37.	/pi/ /ə-pi/	'grandmother' 'his/her grandmother'
38.	/nu/ /ə-nu/	'mother' 'his/her mother'

/ə-/ with Verb

The third person singular pronominal marker /ə-/ is prefixed to the verb in the third person singular number. Examples are given below.

39. /əmapa bu ə- p^hak/
he rice 3PP. eat
'He eats rice.'
40. /ram tui ə- don/
ram water 3PP. drink
'Ram drinks water.'
41. /tombə lek^həbu ə- tiem/
tomba book 3PP. read
'Tomba reads the book.'

Third Person Plural Pronominal Marker /ən-/

The third person plural pronominal marker /ən-/ is prefixed to kin terms and the personal pronouns which are inalienable to the possessor.

/ən-/ with Noun

The third person plural pronominal marker /ən-/ is prefixed to the nouns in the third person plural number. Examples are as follows:

- | | | |
|-----|---------|---------------------|
| 42. | /pa/ | ‘father’ |
| | /ən-pa/ | ‘their father’ |
| 43. | /nu/ | ‘mother’ |
| | /ən-nu/ | ‘their mother’ |
| 44. | /pu/ | ‘grandfather’ |
| | /ən-pu/ | ‘their grandfather’ |

/ən-/ with Verb

The third person plural pronominal marker /ən-/ is prefixed to the verbs in the third person plural number. In the examples below, the pronominal marker /ən-/ is prefixed just before the verbs (p^hak ‘to eat’ in eg.45, tiem ‘to read’ in example 46, and vej ‘to watch’ in example 47) respectively.

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 45. | /əma-ni bu ən- p ^h ak/ |
| | he PL. rice 3PP. eat |
| | ‘They eat rice.’ |
| 46. | /əma- ni lek ^h əbu ən- tiem/ |
| | he PL. book 3PP. read |
| | ‘They read books.’ |
| 47. | /əma-ni sinema ən- vej/ |
| | he PL. cinema 3PP. watch |
| | ‘They watch cinema.’ |

Pronominal Markers with Aspect Markers

These 7 (seven) pronominal markers: /kə-/ , /kən-/ or /əi-/ , /i-/ , /in-/ , /ə-/ and /ən-/ can be used with unrealized aspect markers. The unrealized aspect marker /tih/ is used with pronominal markers. In the example (48) below, the third person plural pronominal marker /ən-/ is used with the unrealized aspect marker /tih/. Examples are given below.

48. /kə-ni bu p^hak kən-tih/
 he PL. rice eat 1PP. UNR.
 ‘We shall eat rice.’
49. /nəŋ- ni lek^həbu tiem in- tih/
 you PL. book read 2PP. UNR.
 ‘You (PL.) will read books.’
50. /əma- ni sinema veŋ ən- tih/
 we PL. cinema watch 3PP. UNR.
 ‘They will watch cinema.’

Conclusion

In the above analysis, it is found that there are 7 (seven) pronominal markers in Hmar, such as- /kə-/ , /kən-/ or /əi-/ , /i-/ , /in-/ , /ə-/ and /ən-/. These pronominal markers can be divided into two types as singular and plural pronominal markers. Singular pronominal markers are /kə-/ ‘I’, /i-/ ‘you (SG.)’, and /ə-/ ‘she/he’ and plural pronominal markers are - /kən-/ or /əi-/ ‘we’, /in-/ ‘you (PL.)’, and /ən-/ ‘they’ respectively. The first person plural pronominal marker (kən-) ‘we’ expresses exclusive meaning whereas (əi-) ‘we’ expresses inclusive meaning. These pronominal markers can occur with nouns and verbs. They can be used with unrealized aspect markers also. The unrealized aspect marker /tih/ is used with these pronominal markers.

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Abbreviations

1PP.	:	‘first person pronominal marker’
2PP.	:	‘second person pronominal marker’
3PP.	:	‘third person pronominal marker’
SG.	:	‘singular’
PL.	:	‘plural’
UNR.	:	‘unrealized aspect marker’
NOM.	:	‘nominative’
DET.	:	‘determiner’

LOC. : 'locative'
INCL. : 'inclusive'
EXCL. : 'exclusive'

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