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English Loanwords in Meiteiron
A Linguistic and Sociolinguistic Analysis

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Abstract

English emerged as an International language due to the economic and political power of Britain and the US. Many English words have been absorbed by most of the languages of the world. Meiteiron also contains thousands of such English borrowed words in it. Many of them are firmly rooted in Meiteiron. For this study, a list of English loanwords commonly used in Meiteiron was collected from the written literatures, newspapers, radio, T.V and also from normal day to day conversations.

This paper begins with the background introduction of the study of ‘Loanword’ and the historical context of the language contact of English and Meiteiron. To discuss the nativization process of English loanwords, the phonemic charts of English and Meiteiron are given in the second section. The nativization of unfamiliar sounds of the English loanwords in Meiteiron is the primary focus of this study which is discussed in the third section of this paper. This is followed by a brief discussion of the medium of borrowing in Meiteiron (Eye and Ear borrowing). The impact of English loanwords on Meiteiron is discussed in the fifth section which includes hybridization, obsolescence and phonemic innovation. Finally, the summary of the study concludes this presentation.

Defining Loan Words

The term 'loanword' may be defined as the importation of lexical materials from other source languages. Loanwords in a language are the words which have been borrowed from other different languages (Benjamin 1947; Louis 1950; Lehmann 1962).

Borrowing of any vocabulary is especially very common, morphological patterns are less commonly borrowed. And borrowing is more common at the higher levels of a language, but at the phonological and morphological levels, the elements of any language are native. And bilingualism, more intimate social contact, the usefulness/status of the languages play important roles in deciding the percentage and directions of the borrowing (Lehmann 1962; Hock and Joshep 1996; Franklin 2005).

Loanwords are treated as the milestone in the history of a language: *“Loanwords have been called the milestones of philology because in a good many instance they permit us to fix approximately the dates of much right be termed some of the milestones of general history, because they show us the course of civilization and the wandering of inventions and institutions and in many cases give us valuable information as to the inner life of nations when dry annals tell us nothing but the dates of the king and bishops”* (Jespersen 1982).

The speakers of any language have some contacts with other languages or dialects. Languages and dialects normally do not exist in a vacuum, (Hock and Joshep 1996). There are varieties of factors that initiate language contact- economic contacts, socio-cultural, political relations, aspects of topography, psychological factors, globalization, etc. to name some. And the common result of linguistic contact is lexical borrowing (Bynon 1969; Anderson 1973; Felicity 1989; Bharathi 1992; Kay 1995; Hock and Joshep 1996; Shashikanta and Reddy 2009).

The degree of influence of the source language to the recipient language depends on the nature of the borrowing; the time course of borrowing and the status of the languages. The status of the languages also has a major role to decide the directions (whether one way or two-way direction) of the borrowing. Cultural contact and prestige motives are the two predominant types which lead lexical borrowing, (Bharathi 1992) which is supported by Hock and Joshep (1996) claiming that the major reasons of borrowing is need and prestige. A borrower might have borrowed a loanword only to use just for an occasion, while the listener found it useful and repeat it for the same. This repetition of the word becomes familiar in the recipient language. Unless, one has no knowledge of the source language, the subsequent users of the loanword often will not know that the word is from a different language origin.

Foreign Rule and Influence

The British colonization of India began in the 18th C. The first office of the British Political Agent in Manipur was established in 1835, long before the Anglo-Manipuri War of 1891. By that time, Hindi, Bengali and Assamese had been introduced to Meiteiron through the cultural and religious contact and Hinduism was at its zenith in Manipur after decades of resistance.

After the defeat of the King Kulchandra of Manipur by the British forces in the Anglo-Manipuri war in 1891, Manipur became a part of British Government until it regains its

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independence from British on the 15th August, 1947. English schools came up with the initiations of some British Political agents like Sir James Johnstone (1877-1886) and missionaries like Pettigrew (1912) and others.

In 1885, the Johnstone Middle School, Imphal, was established. And since then absorbing English words into Meiteiron probably started which made up a dynamic conglomeration of Meiteiron, Hindi, Bengali, Assamese and English.

Meiteiron

Meiteiron is spoken in Manipur, the North-Eastern state of India. Besides Meiteiron, English has been one of the dominant languages of Manipur since the British colonization of India. And with the passage of time, it has become more popular and gain more prestige in terms of its functions and usages among the Meiteiron speakers. Quite a large number of loanwords from other different Indo-European languages were also introduced to Meiteiron through the vehicle of English, because English language itself, has built up its vocabularies with the sources from many different languages; most English words have been imported from elsewhere, either when invasions of England took place (e.g. the Romans, the Vikings and the Normans) or when the English invaded other countries (e.g. America and India). Imports from Greek, Latin, Norse, French, German, Spanish, Italian and Dutch are so numerous as to be unremarkable.

However, for this present purpose, we restrict on the English loanwords found in Meiteiron which were collected from the written literatures of Meiteiron, daily newspapers, journals, and from the conversations of day to day life.

The paper begins with the background of the study of ‘Loanword’ and the historical context of the language contact of English and Meiteiron.

In the second section, the charts of consonants and vowels are given.

The nativization of foreign sounds of the English loanwords in Meiteiron is the major focus which is the third section of this study.

The fourth section discusses the medium of borrowing in Meiteiron (Eye and Ear borrowing).

The impact of English loanwords on Meiteiron is discussed in the fifth section which includes hybridization, coining, obsolesce and phonemic innovation.

Finally, the summary of the study concludes this presentation.

Phonological contrasts of English and Meiteiron

It is quite natural that the phonology of English and Meiteiron are different. The details of it can be figured out from the tables below:

Table: 1

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Consonant phonemes of English Language														
	Bilabial		Labio-dental		Dental		Alveolar		Post-alveolar		Palatal	Velar		Glottal
Plosive	p	b					t	d				k	g	
Affricate									tʃ	dʒ				
Fricative			f	v	θ	ð	s	z	ʃ	ʒ		(x)		h
Nasal							n					ŋ		
Lateral							l							
approximant	w								ɹ		j			

Table of English consonants based on Daniel Jones, 15th Edition, 1997

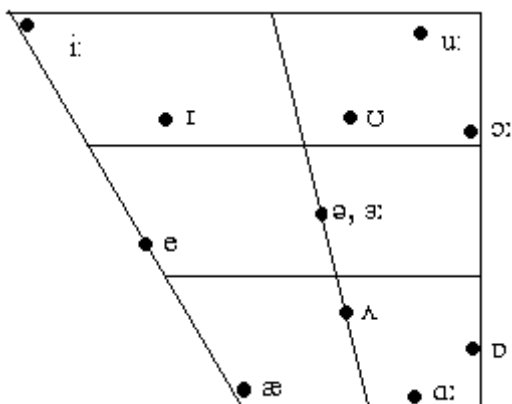
Table: 2

Consonant phonemes of Modern Meiteiron										
		bilabial		Alveolar		palatal	velar		labial-velar	glottal
Nasals		m		n			ŋ			
Plosives	Unasp	p	*b	t	*d		k	*g		
	Asp	p ^h	*b ^h	t ^h	*d ^h		k ^h	*g ^h		
Affricates	Unasp			c	*z					
	Asp				*z ^h					
Fricatives				s						h
Lateral				l						
Flap				*p						
Approximants						j			w	

* Newly developed sounds of modern Meiteiron.

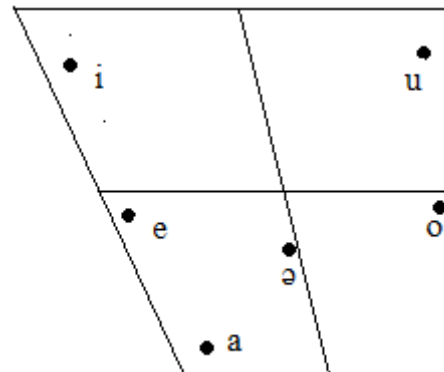
Vowel phonemes of English language:

Vowel Chart: 1



Vowel phonemes of Modern Meiteiron:

Vowel Chart: 2



Phonological nativization of English loanwords:

Nativization in this context is the adjustment of an unfamiliar word with all the restrictions of a recipient language; it may be in phonology, morphology or syntax. The most obvious nativization process among all the types is the phonology, which is very much natural to every language. Phonological nativization is the naturalization of unfamiliar sounds in order to make those borrowed words pronounceable by the receivers.

A word, when it enters into a new environment of another language, adjusts with all the restrictions of the recipient language in such a way that the recipient language does not affect its equilibrium.

The flexibility of form and meaning of loanwords enables them to adapt easily to the structure of the host language and current trends and needs (Kay, 1995). In this study, we shall discuss the different phonological nativization processes; such as the substitution of sounds, addition of sounds, deletion of sounds and metathesis.

Substitution of English consonants:

In receiving a loanword, the speakers substitute the unfamiliar sounds of the borrowed word by the nearest possible native sounds. For example, sounds like labio-dental fricative /f/ is not available in Meiteiron, so substituting /f/ with bilabial aspirated plosive /p^h/ makes sense; it even makes some senses in substituting /f/ by bilabial plosive /p/. The substitutions of English sounds by Meiteiron native sounds are discussed below:

	<u>E. P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
/f/ > /p ^h / > /p/ (final)*	/fæn/	/πHεv/	‘fan’
	/faɪl/	/p ^h ail/	‘file’
	/'səʌ.fə/	/sop ^h a/	‘sofa’
	/'ɔf.is/	/o.p ^h is/	‘office’
	/skA:f/	/is.kap/	‘scarf’
	/hA:f/	/hap/	‘half’
/v/ > /b ^h / > /p/ (final)*	/vəYt/	/βHοτ/	‘vote’
	/vet ^ə ri:n ^ə ri/-rə-/	/b ^h etənari/b ^h ete-/be-/	‘veterinary’
	/vidiəY/	/b ^h idio ~ bi-/	‘video’
	/'in.tə.v ^ə l/	/in.tər.b ^h en ~ -ben/	‘interval’
	/'in.tə.vju:/	/in.tər.b ^h iu/-bi-/	‘interview’
	/ti:ʊvi:/	/ti.b ^h i/ti.bi/	‘t.v.’
	/stəYv/	/is.top/	‘stove’
	/glʌv/	/glop ~ golop/	‘glove’
/ʃ/ > /s/	/ʃæm'pu:/	/σ↔μ.πυ/	‘shampoo’
	/ʃed/	/set/	‘shed’
	/'ʃʌt.əʃ/	/sə.tər/	‘shutter’

	/fæʃən/	/p ^h e.sən/	‘fashion’
	/ɪlekʃən/	/i.lek.sən/	‘election’
/tʃ/ > /c/	/tʃɜ:tʃ ~ tʃɜ:rtʃ/	/χ↔ρσ/	‘church’
> /s/ (final)*	/tɔ:tʃ ~ tɔ:rtʃ/	/τoσ/ τopσ/	‘torch’
	/brʌʃ/	brəs/-z /bu.ru.zə	‘brush’
	Exceptionally /ʃ/ changes to /c/ in examples like machine and parachute.		
	/məʃi:n/	/me.ci:n/	‘machine’
	This could be from the influence of the spelling (-ch-).		
/dʒ/ > /z/	/dʒeɪl/	/ʒελ /√v/	‘jail’
> /s, z/ (final)*	/dʒækɪt/	/zeket/	‘jacket’
	/dʒen ^ə rətɔːr/	/ze.ne.tər/	‘generator’
	/bʌdʒɪt/	/bə.zet/	‘budget’
	/ˈendʒɪn/	/in.zɪn/en.-/	‘engine’
	/ˈprɒdʒ.ekt,-ɪkt/	/pro.zek/	‘project’
	/		
	/steɪdʒ/	/is.tez,-s/	‘stage’
	/ˈmes.ɪdʒ/	/me.sez,-s/	‘message’
	/frɪdʒ/	/phriz,-s/	‘fridge’
/z/ > /z/	/dɪ.vɪ.ʒən/	/dɪ.βɪ.ʒ↔v/	‘division’
/θ/ > /t ^h /	/θæŋk.ju/	/t ^h eŋ.kɪu/	‘thank you’
> /t/ (final)*	/θɜ:d (US-) θɜ:rd/	/t ^h ar/	‘third’
	/ˈθiə.tə/	/t ^h e.tər ~ t ^h i.je.tər/	‘theatre’
	/θri:/	/τHρɪ/	‘three’
	/ˈbɜ:θ.deɪ/-di (US-)	/bar.de/	‘birthday’
	/ˈbɜ:rθ.deɪ/		
	/bA:θ/	/βατ/	‘bath (bath room)’

*-- these are explained under ‘Devoicing of consonants’.

Substitution of English vowels:

Meiteiron has no phonemic contrast between long and short vowels, so the difference between /i:/, /ɪ/ and /i/ does not make any difference while adopting a loanword. For this reason /i:/ and /ɪ/ of loanwords are replaced by /i/ in Meiteiron which is the only nearest available sound. For example,

	<u>E.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
/i:/ and /ɪ/	/mɪl/	/min/-l/	‘mill’
> /i/	/sɪti/	/si.ti/	‘city’
	/sti:l/	/is.tɪn/-l/	‘steel’
	/dʒɪ:p/	/zip/	‘jeep’
	/bɪl/	/bɪn/-l/	‘bill’

Similarly, /Y/ and /u: / of English, are substituted by /u/ of Meiteiron in the nativization process.

	<u>E.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
/Y/ > u	/bYlɪt/	/bu.let/	‘bullet’
	/bu:t/	/but/	‘boot’
/u:/ > u	/fu:t/	/phut/	‘foot’
	/dʒu:lai ~ dʒʌ'lai/	/zu.lai/	‘july’

One good reason for nativization of English words is, English has 12 vowels while Meiteiron has 6 vowels and so, most of the English vowels are unfamiliar to Meiteiron speakers; hence they are nativized by substituting the unfamiliar sounds with the native sounds. The substitutions of English vowels are as follows:

	<u>E.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
/A:/ > /a/	/klA:s/	/klas/kə.las/	‘class’
	/klA:k/	/klak/kə.lak/	‘clerk’
	/drA:ft/	/drap/	‘draft’
	/mA:k/	/mak/	‘mark’
	/pA:s/	/pas/	‘pass’

In some exceptional cases, /A:/ changes to /ə/. For example,

	<u>E.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
/A:/ > /ə/	/mA:stəʳ/	/məs.təʳ/	‘master’
	/plA:stəʳ/	/pləs.təʳ/	‘plaster’

/Θ/ of loanwords are replaced by /e/ of Meiteiron.

	<u>E.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
/Θ/ > /e/	/ʊbæt.ʳ.i/	/be.tə.ri	‘battery’
	/kæmp/	/kem/	‘camp’
	/kænt.səʳ/	/ken.səʳ/	‘cancer’

The English vowel /ɔ:/ and /ɒ/ are naturalized by /o/ of Meiteiron.

	<u>E.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
/ɔ:/ > /o/	/bɔ:l/	/bon/-l/	‘ball’
	/hɔ:l/	/hol/-n/	‘hall’
	/'ɔ:k.ʃʳən /'ɔ:k- /	/ok.sən/	‘auction’

In a rare case, /ɔ:/ does not change to /o/.

/drɔ:r/	/drə.war/ -was/	‘drawer’
	dər.war/dər.was/	

	<u>E.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
/ɒ/ > /o/	/bɒm/	/bom/	‘bomb’

/bɔks/	/bɔks/	'box'
/'kɔfi/	/ko.phi/	'coffee'

In some loanwords /↔/ is replaced by /e/.

	<u>E.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
/↔/ > /e/	/kənæɪ/	/ke.nen/-ɪ	'canal'
	/fain ^ə ɪ/	/phai.nen/-ɪ	'final'

As the nearest available sound of /ɸ/ is /ə/ in Meiteiron, /ɸ/ of English loanwords is replaced by /ə/. For example,

	<u>E.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
/ɸ/ > /↔/	/kʌp/	/kəp/	'cup'
	/pʌmp/	/pəm/	'pump'
	/drʌg/	/drək/	'drug'
	/'ʌŋ.kl/	/əŋ.kən/ɪ/	'uncle'
/ɛ:/ > /a/	/'kɜ:fju:/	/kar.phi.ju/-phiu/	'curfew'
	/fɜ:st/	/phas/	'first'
/ɛ:/ > /↔/	/skɜ:t/	/is.kət/	'skirt'
	/tʃɜ:tʃ/	/çərs/çə.rəs/	'church'

Diphthongs:

Some English vowel combinations are not permissible in Meiteiron, so they are either substituted by a vowel or a diphthong of Meiteiron. For example, /eɪ, I↔, e↔/ are substituted by /e/ of Meiteiron.

	<u>E.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
/eɪ/ > /e/	/'teɪ.bl/	/te.bən/-ɪ/	'table'
	/geɪt/	/get/	'gate'
	/bleɪd/	/blet/ be.let/	'blade'
/I↔/ > /e/	/'zɪə.rəY/	/ze.ro/	'zero'
	/hɪərəʌ/	/hero/	'hero'
	/'θɪətə ^r /	/the.tər/	'theatre'
	/eɪliəs,-æs/	/e.lais/	'alias'
/e↔/ > /e/	/eə.ri. əɪ/	/e.ren/-ɪ/	'aerial'
	/eərəpleɪn/	/e.ro.plen/ -pen/	'aeroplane'
	/eərədrəʌm/	/e.lo.drom/ e.ro-/	'aerodrome'

The diphthong /↔Y/ is replaced by vowel /o/ of Meiteiron. For example,

	<u>E.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
/↔Y/ > /o/	/ləYn/	/lon/	'loan'

/fəYn/	/phon/	‘phone’
/’kwəY.tə/	/ko.ta/	‘quota’
/kəYt/	/kot/	‘coat’

/Y↔/ is substituted by /u/ of Meiteiron. For example,

/Y↔/ > u	/dʒYə.ri/	/zu.ri/	‘jury’
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English diphthongs like /aI, □I, aY/ are replaced by /ai, oi, au/ of Meiteiron respectively. The following examples illustrate it.

	<u>E.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
/aI/ > /ai/	/paip/	/paip/	‘pipe’
	/straik/	/is.traik/	‘strike’
	/fait/	/phait/	‘fight’
	/paip/	/paip/	‘pipe’
/□I/ > /oi/	/straik/	/is.traik/	‘strike’
	/b□ik□t/	/boi.kot/	‘boycott’
/aY/ > /au/	/t□I.let/	/toi.let/	‘toilet’
	/əkaYnt/	/e.kaun/	‘account’
	/kaʌntəʳ/	/kaun.təʳ/	‘counter’
	/kaYntsʰləʳ/	/kaun.se.ləʳ/	‘counsellor’
	/paYdəʳ/	/pau.dəʳ/bau-/	‘powder’

Triphthongs

All the triphthongs are accepted only in the simplified forms in Meiteiron. The following examples illustrate it.

	<u>E.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
/aIə/	/taIəʳ/	/tə.jar/ təi.jar/	‘tyre’
	/daIət/	/dait/	‘diet’
/ai↔/	/waIʳ/ wai↔(r)/	/wə.jar/	‘wire’
		wo.jar/o.jar/	
/aYə/	/taYəʳ/	/tə.war/təu.war/	‘tower’
/aYəl/	/taYəl/	/ta.wel/-n/	‘towel’

Nativization of triphthongs involves the addition of a semi-vowel which results in splitting a syllable of English into two syllables in Meiteiron. In the above examples, the first element of the triphthongs is /a/ and the last element is /ə/ in which the high front vowel /i/ chooses the addition of /j/ and the high back vowel /Y/ chooses /w/.

As the phonotactics of English and Meiteiron differ, many sounds are restricted to occur at certain positions. Only seven consonants occur at the final position of Meiteiron. Out of

which, three are voiceless plosives /p, t, k/, three are nasals /m, n, ŋ/; and the remaining one is /l/ which occurs as free variation of /n/ only at the word final position. Because of this reason, whenever a loanword enters into Meiteiron with the consonants other than those mentioned seven consonants are substituted by its nearest equivalent sounds available in Meiteiron. This will be illustrated below.

Devoicing of consonants

(a) At the final position

Devoicing of voiced consonant plosives at the word final positions of loanwords is made mandatory. Because, Meiteiron permits only three consonant plosives /p, t, k/ at the final positions of words. Hence, any loanword other than these three consonant plosives are all substituted by /p, t, k/ at the final position choosing the nearest possible one. This is illustrated in the following examples:

<u>R.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
/æsid/	/e.sit/	‘acid’
/bleid/	/blet/	‘blade’
/tju:b/	/ti.jup/	‘tube’
/t∅b/	/təp/	‘tub’
/dʒ∅g/	/zək/	‘jug’
/m∅g/	/mæk/	‘mug’

In the above examples, the final sounds /b, d, g/ are devoiced in the process of nativization.

(b) At the initial or medial position

Devoicing in the initial or medial positions of English loanwords is not available. However, a few examples are available in Indo-Aryan loanwords. It may be because of the fact that English came in contact with Meiteiron only after the advent of Bengali and Hindi into Meiteiron. It may also be noted that Meiteiron has developed the voiced phonemes /b, d, g, z, b^h, d^h, g^h, z^h, t/ by the time English language was introduced to Meiteiron speakers.

Deaspiration of final consonants

The Meiteiron aspirated consonant phonemes /p^h/ and /t^h/ replace the English labio-dental fricative sound /f/ and dental fricative /θ/ respectively in the initial and medial positions of loanwords. But when they occur in the final positions, they are deaspirated as aspirated sounds are not allowed in the final position of a word. The following examples illustrate it:

<u>R.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
/skA:f/	/is.kap/	‘scarf’
/hA:f/	/hap/	‘half’
/bA:θ/	/bat/	‘bath’ (in bathroom)

Both the phonological conditions of devoicing and deaspiration are visible in the following examples:

<u>R.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
/faɪv/	/phaɪp/	‘five’
/stəʔv/	/is.tɔp/	‘stove’

Here, in the above two examples, the labio-dental fricative /v/ is substituted by its counterpart bilabial aspirated plosive sound /b^h/, as no such sound like /v/ is not available in Meiteiron, then it is followed by the rule of deaspiration of the final consonants which results into a voiced bilabial stop /b/, which again is followed by devoicing of the voiced plosive consonants, and the final result is /p/. However, when they occur in the initial and medial positions, they are not deaspirated. The final aspirated sounds of Hindi loanwords in Meiteiron such as /k^h/ in /lak^h/ ‘one lakh’ and /tʃaPik^h/ are deaspirated in nativization process.

Free Variation of /l/ and /r/

In Meiteiron, /l/ and /n/ are in free variation at the final position of a word, in which case /n/ is more preferable than /l/. Hence, most of the loanwords which end with /l/ has the liberty to shift to /n/ or it remains the same i.e. /l/. For examples:

<u>R.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
/kæn.dl/	/ken.dən/	‘candle’
/kənæɫ/	/kenen/	‘canal’
/faɪn ^ɔ l/	/phaɪ.nen/	‘final’
/hæn.dl/	/hen.dən/	‘handle’
/hɔs.pɪ.t ^ɔ l/	/hos.pi.tan/	‘hospital’
/həY ^ɔ tel/	/ho.ten/	‘hotel’
/sku:l/	/is.kun/	‘school’

Nativization of English consonant clusters in Meiteiron

The occurrences of consonant clusters vary from language to language; the phonotactics of the languages decide the possibilities of the combinations of the consonants. Many languages such as Maori, Piraha), Tahitian, Fijian, Samoan, Hawaiian and Japanese do not permit consonant clusters at all. While on the other hand, language like Georgian is drastically permissive of consonant clustering having clusters of four, five or six consonants which are not unusual—for instance, /brt’q’ɛli/ (*flat*), /mtɔs vrtnɛli/ (*trainer*) and /prtsɔkvna/ (*peeling*)—and if grammatical affixes are used, it allows an eight-consonant cluster: /gvbrdyvnis/ (*he's plucking us*). Consonants cannot appear as syllable nuclei in Georgian, so this syllable is analyzed as CCCCCCCVC (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Consonant_cluster).

In Meiteiron, consonant clusters occurring at the initial position of native words is very rare while consonant clusters at the final position of a word or a syllable is completely absent. But, a few examples of medial clusters are there in Meiteiron which were apparently developed at the later stage as in the old literatures of Meiteiron (18th C.) no such evidences of consonant clusters are available. All the consonant clusters of Meiteiron are formed with a

following sounds among the consonants /r, l, w, y/. The cluster with /l/ occurs only in the loanwords. Hence, the speakers of Meiteiron having very limited consonant combinations face the problems in accepting a loanword containing clusters or in learning a second language. The simplification processes of the unfamiliar clusters are as follows:

Initial clusters

Initial clusters are rare in Meiteiron, however the only clusters which we find in Meiteiron is formed only with the combinations of /k^h, k, l, s/ as the first element and /w, y/ as the following element of the cluster. But initial cluster is most commonly found in the onomatopoeic words. Most of the Meiteiron consonants except /m, n, h, l, r, w, y/ can make a cluster with /r/ sound as a following element of the clusters in the onomatopoeic words, while /j^h, b^h, d^h/ can occur as clusters with /r/ as following element in the speakers of some Meiteiron speakers. Initial clusters are simplified in two ways, either by the addition of a vowel or insertion of a vowel.

a) Addition of a vowel /i/ (vowel prothesis),

Loanwords having initial clusters starting with /s/ are all separated by the addition of /i/ at the initial position that results a single syllable into two syllables in Meiteiron. For examples:

<u>R.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>gloss</u>
/stə ɸ v/	/is.top/	‘stove’
/sti:l/	/is.tin/-l/	‘steel’
/skɜ:t/	/is.kət/	‘skirt’
/sku:l/	/is.kun/-l/	‘school’
/spɔ:rt/	/is.pot/	‘sport’
/sp ɸ ndʒ/	/is.pon/-ns/	‘sponge’

But this initial vowel addition does not cover in the case of cluster with semi vowel. For example:

<u>R.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>gloss</u>
/switʃ/	/suis/sui, suiz/	‘switch’
/'swet.əʃ/	/sui.tər/ swe.t↔r/	‘sweater’

b) Insertion of vowel

/gl-/

<u>R.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>gloss</u>
/glA:s/	/gi.las/ gi.la.s↔/	‘glass’
/gl ɸ v/	/go.lop/ grop/	‘glove’
	/glop/	
/'glu:kə ɸ s/	/gu.lu.kos/-gos,	‘glucose’
	/gru.kos/-gos/	
	/gu.ru.kos/	

/kl/

<u>R.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>gloss</u>
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/kIA:s/	/kə.las/kə.la.sə/	‘class’
/kIA:k/	/kə.lak/ klak/	‘clerk’
/kl ɸ b/	/kə.ləp/ kl↔p/	‘club’

In the above /gl/ and /kl/ clusters, they are simplified with a vowel /ə/ insertion. But in the following examples, the simplification process shows the vowel harmony.

/klInIk/	/ki.li.nik/	‘clinic’
/klIp/	/ki.lip/	‘clip’
/kləYn/	/ko.lom/	‘clone’

c) Interchanging the positions of the elements of the clusters (metathesis)

R.P.	M. P.	gloss
/'prez.I.d ^ə nt/	/pə.r.si.den/ ~ /prə.si.den/	‘president’
/prəYgræm/	/pɔr.gam/ ~ /pro.gam/	‘programme’

In the above examples the last element /r/ of the /pr/ cluster interchanged its position with the following vowels.

d) Dropping of the second element of the initial cluster

R.P.	M. P.	gloss
/'preʒə ^r /	/pe.sər /pre.sər/	‘pressure’
/træns'fɜ: ^r /	/tans.phar/ /trans.phar/	‘transfer’
/'træktə(r)/	/tek.tər/ /trek.tər/	‘tractor’

Medial clusters

There are two possible options to form medial clusters in Meiteiron- only the 13 phonemes of Meiteiron viz. /p, b, c, k, t, d, z, g, p^h, t^h, k^h, s, m/ followed by /r/ and the other possibility is /p, d, t^h, s/ followed by /w/ (Yashwanta, 2000; Madhubala, 2002). Hence, the clusters other than these combinations are problems for Meiteiron speakers, so they are accepted only in the simplified forms while receiving a loanword by the speakers. The simplification of medial clusters with /s/ as the initial element is as follows:

	<u>R.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
/st/	/ʊlip.stIk/ /ʊredZ.I.stə ^r / /ʌredZ.I.ʊstrə ^r /	/lips.tik/ /res.tar/ /res.tar/	‘lipstick’ ‘register’ ‘registrar’
/sk/	/haI sku:l/	/hais kul/	‘high school’
/sp/	/Inʊspek.t↔ ^r /	/ins.pek.t↔r/	‘inspector’

In the above simplification, the clusters are split in such a way that the first element i.e. /s/ attached to the previous syllable and the second element remains in its own place initiating the syllable.

Final cluster

Like most of the Tibeto-Burman languages especially of the Kuki-Chin group, Meiteiron has no final cluster (Yashwanta, 2000; Madhubala, 2002). Any loanwords entering into Meiteiron with final cluster are naturalized in the following ways:

a) Vowel epenthesis

Insertion of /↔/

It seems that the final clusters having the plosive consonants as the first element and the alveolar lateral approximant /l/ as the following element accompany the vowel insertion of /↔/ to simplify the cluster. For examples:

<u>R.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
/kæn.dl/	/ken.dəl/-n/	‘candle’
/'teI.bl/	/te.bəl/-n/	‘table’
/'saIkI/	/sai.kəl/-n/	‘cycle’
/'ɔŋkI/	/əŋkəl/-n/	‘uncle’

Insertion of /o/

/hɔ:rn/ hɔ:n/	/ho.ron/	‘horn’
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In the above example, the final cluster /r n/ is simplified with a vowel /o/ insertion which has vowel harmony with the preceding vowel.

b) Addition of vowel

<u>R.P.</u>	<u>M.P.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
/tæŋk/	/teŋ.ki/	‘tank’
/'ketI/	/ke.t↔.li/	‘kettle’

The above simplification process is similar with Hindi and Bengali as well. Probably, Meiteiron might have borrowed the simplified form of the particular word from the two languages i.e. Hindi and Bengali; otherwise, ‘kettle’ could have come under the nativization process of /ə/ addition. This is similar to Assamese producing bench as /ben.si/. *Tank* is borrowed in Korean with the vowel addition of /ũ/ as *taengkũ*.

c) Dropping the last sound of final clusters

<u>R.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
/'æksId ^ə nt/	/ek.si.den/	‘accident’
/'dIskaYnt/	/dis.kaun/	‘discount’

/sek ^ə nd/	/se.ken/	‘second’
/sə'spend/	/səs.pen/	‘suspend’
/lA:st/	/las/	‘last’
/ædikt/	/e.dik/	‘addict’
/dIstrIkt/	/distrik/	‘district’
/kæmp/	/kem/	‘camp’
/təYst/	/tos/	‘toast’

Similar kind of simplification process is available in Khasi language (Awadesh 2009)

d) Metathesis

The process of transposition of sounds or syllables within a word or words within a sentence is called metathesis. This is one of the processes for the simplification of clusters in Meiteiron. For example, the two elements of the cluster of /sk/ in the word's final are interchanged. This phenomenon is even found in the speech of educated people in their casual and careless speech.

<u>R.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
/flA:sk/	/p ^h laks/	‘flask’
/dIsk/	/diks/	‘disc’
/rIsk/	/riks/	‘risk’
/desk/	/deks/	‘desk’
/m□sk/	/moks/	‘mosque’

But the cluster /sk/ in the initial and medial positions of words has an entirely different process as discussed above.

It has been mentioned that the clusters of /l/ occurs only in the loanwords in Meiteiron. The continuous contact with English language, primarily due to the English education and the imitation to pronounce like the native speakers of the source language is the sole reason for such a result. Thus a few consonants as well as their possible combinatory are assimilated into Meiteiron. For example:

<u>Consonant Cluster</u>	<u>R.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>gloss</u>
/pl/	/pl ø g/	/plak/	‘plug’
	/plai/	/plai/pə.lai/	‘ply’
	/plæs.tik/	/plas.tik/ /pə.las.tik/	‘plastic’
	/pleig/	/plek/	‘plaque’
	/plæn/	/plan/pə.lan/	‘plan’
/bl/	/b ø lb/	/bləp/	‘bulb’
/gl/	/gl ø v/	/glop/ grop/	‘glove’
/kr/	/krIkIt/	/kri.ket/ ki.ri.ket/	‘cricket’

	/kræk/	/krek/ ke.rek/	‘crack’
/t ^h r/	/θri:/	/thri/	‘three’
/pr/	/praɪz/	/prəis/ pə.raiz/	‘prize’
	/pres/	/pres/	‘press’
	/praɪm/	/praɪm/ pə.raɪm/	‘prime’
	/ˈpreʃə/	/pre.sər/ pe.sər/	‘pressure’
/tr/	/trʌk/	/træk/ təræk/	‘truck’
	/ˈtrɒfi/	/trophi/	‘trophy’
	/treɪn/	/tren/	‘train’
	/ˈtræktə(r)/	/trek.tər/ tek.tər/	‘tractor’

This is similar to Bengali that the final clusters are very rare; but due to the continuous contact with Sanskrit, Hindi and English languages, many loanwords having final consonant clusters have become extremely common in Bengali which now can even be considered legal consonant clusters of Bengali (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Consonant_cluster). Thus, the speakers of Bengali are acquainted with many final clusters of Sanskrit and English languages. With the passage of time, new set of clusters may be accepted in Meiteiron as it occurs in the speech of conscious speakers.

Medium of Borrowing

As regard with the medium of transmission, two processes can be categorized: Ear borrowing and Eye borrowing.

Ear Borrowing

A type of borrowing that we perceive through the speech sounds by ear. This is the common process of borrowing in most of the languages. But, interestingly in some cases of ear borrowing, it happens that, a borrower, during his conversation tries his best to pronounce the nearest possible sound of a new word that he has already heard from others, and he mispronounces it in doing so. And in the course of time, it gains currency in his society that the object or the concept is known by that wrong/ incorrect pronunciation. Many of such examples are still available in the lexicon of Meiteiron. For examples:

/te.r↔.siŋ/de.rə.siŋ/	‘kerosene’	/hem.let/ het.met/	‘helmet’
/ke.t↔li/ te.k↔li/	‘kettle’	/gi.t↔r/ gin.t↔r/	‘guitar’
/seŋ.gəm/ siŋ.gəm/	‘chewing gum’	/s↔s.pen/	‘sauce pan’
/hen.d↔.men/	‘handyman’	/z↔r.kiN/z↔r.kin/	‘jerry can’
/hen.d↔l.men/		/im.be.tər/	‘inverter’
/ge.sen/gre.sen/	‘glycerin’	/in.bhai.tər/	
kre.sen/		/se.lep/	‘slate’
/soda.bai.g↔p/	‘sodium-bi-carbonate’	/l↔b.b↔r/	‘rubber’
/la.ten/ ~ /lar.ten/	‘lantern’	l↔.b↔r/	
		/peN/	‘brain’

/pə.la.sə/ ~ /pə.las/ 'pliers' etc.

Eye Borrowing

Eye Borrowing is the borrowing of lexical items through orthography. This happens when someone finds a new object and known by the brand name written on it. In this case the spelling influences the pronunciation of the word. For example, CVZ – a brand name of motorbike which is supposed to be pronounced as /s:i 'vi: dZi:/ is pronounced as /si. bi. zet/ by Meiteiron speakers. It's because the alphabet 'z' is pronounced as /zet/ in Meiteiron. Another example is that of a mini car /b^han/ 'van' which English pronunciation is /væn/. Similar examples are:

<u>R.P.</u>	<u>M. P.</u>	<u>gloss</u>
/bIskIt/	/bis.kuit/	'biscuit'
/'res.trɒnt/	/res.tau.ren/ res.tu.ren/	'restaurant'
/'rib ³ n/	/ri.bon/ li-/	'ribbon'

Words often travel along with the objects that they represent and are introduced into speech communities at the same time as the objects themselves (Bynon 1969, page no. 482). Thus, many new terms are introduced to a language when an object reached a speech community. But sometimes, that thing or object is known by the brand name written on it; and it becomes a generic term for all the varieties of the object.

A brand name representing a thing or a concept

(a) Colgate 'toothpaste'

It is pronounced as /kol.get/ by Meiteiron speakers. And it is a generic term for all kinds of toothpaste in Meiteiron. Perhaps, this toothpaste (Colgate) was the first popular toothpaste introduced to Meiteiron speakers.

(b) Surf 'detergent'

All kinds of detergent for washing clothe is known by the name 'surf' which is pronounced as /sə.rəp/ by the speakers. For referring to detergent cake /sə.rəp sa.pon/ is used while /sa.pon/ means 'soap'. Similarly, in Kashmiri¹ language, *leptin chay* 'milked tea' in which *leptin* is a brand name of milk powder.

(c) Superfine 'imported rice form outside Manipur'

'Superfine' refers to all kinds of non-sticky rice which are very hard to eat. From this term, it seems as if the quality of rice is very fine, soft and costly. But this is not in the case of Meiteiron '*superfine*'. Non-sticky and hard rice are also available in Manipur but they are not

¹ This data was collected from Irshad Ahamad Naikoo who is a native speaker of Kashmiri.

referred to this name and this term does not include the soft and costly kind of rice like ‘*Basmati*’ even though they are brought from outside the state. Thus, ‘*superfine*’ is considered as very low quality rice with many foreign particles like weeds, stones, etc.

(d) Boy ‘notebook/paper’

‘Boy’ is a brand name of a notebook. This brand name gradually came to be known for any notebook. This word is used in *boy-kolom* ‘paper (and) pen’ while the actual word for ‘paper’ is *Che /ce/*.

(e) Brite /brait/ is a big bucket of a particular shape of different colors. This concept came from the fact that when this type of container was brought into Manipur, the brand name ‘Brite’ was written on it. Later, spellings like ‘Bride’ and ‘Bright’ have appeared as a different brand. Similarly, *Syntax* /sin.teks~ sen.teks/ is ‘a cylindrical shaped water tank’ which is bigger as well as thicker than *Brite* and is normally black in color. *Syntax* became a generic term of any container having the similar shape of it. In Meiteiron, /tengki/ ‘tank’ is used to mean a ‘water or oil reservoir built with cement and brick/ metal’.

But as literacy rate increases among the Meiteiron speakers, people gradually have become more aware and conscious about the usages and pronunciation of the borrowed words and try to more careful about the wrong usage of such generic terms and also try to avoid any sort of mispronunciations.

Impact of English Loanwords on Meiteiron

As Meiteiron had been in contact with English for a considerable period of time, many English loanwords have entered into Meiteiron. There are certain terms in the lending languages which denote specific concept or object which were previously not known to the speakers of the recipient language. For example, in Meiteiron, the concept of Santa Claus and the Angels of Christianity as well as the concept of Tulsi and Ganga in the case of the contact with Indo-Aryans were assimilated as the result of linguistic and cultural contacts with English, Hindi, Bengali and Assamese.

Meiteiron, therefore, also accepted new segmental phonemes and their possible combinations such as the cluster of /bl/ in /bl↔p/ ‘blub’, /kl/ in /klak/ ‘Clerk’, and /p^hl/ in /p^hlaks/ ‘flask’. Consonant sounds /b, b^h, d, d^h, g, g^h, z, j^h, r/ now can readily be pronounced at the initial position of loanwords and they can also be conspicuously used in the final position of loanwords which were once a problem for Meiteiron speakers. The followings are some of the impacts of English loanwords on Meiteiron.

Impact on the kinship terminology and proper name

Meiteiron adopted many kinship terms from English such as Mummy, Daddy, Uncle, Auntie etc. and proper names like Jacky, Rosy, Romeo, and Juliet etc. Many educated speakers use English kinship reference in their formal and polite speeches. For example, ‘husband’ is more preferable to the native terms /nu.pa/ ‘man’ or /i.pu.roi.bə/ ‘my companion’ in a formal speech, though /i.pu.roi.bə/ is considered to be highly respectful and polite.

Hybridization

The term "hybridization" is loosely used in various industries. Basically, hybridization is the process of combining two things together to form something new. The new item is often similar to the original item of each. In fact, it may have the characteristics of the original sources and its own unique characteristics as well after the combination. However, in linguistics 'hybridization' is often a term used to describe a language being blended with another language; a hybrid word is a word made up of elements (or morphemes) from different languages; it can be in word level or in phrase level. 'Television' is a hybrid word from Greek *tele* 'far' and Latin *visio* 'seeing'.

Hybrid words formed with English and Meiteiron are very less in number; but a handful of hybrid words formed with Indo-Aryan languages may be observed. It is because the contact with Indo-Aryan languages is much earlier than European languages.

Above all, the socio-cultural and religious contact between the Indo-Aryan languages and Meiteiron is considerably to a large extent and historically quite old. Close contact with English came only after the Anglo-Manipuri war in 1891. But as of now, the popularity of English is much more than any other languages in Manipur. The processes of the hybridization are discussed bellow,

1. /bi.lu.ŋa/ 'a kind of small fish not more than two inch length'.

It is a hybrid word formed by English *balloon* and Meiteiron *Nga* 'fish'.

bi.lun + ŋa > bi.lu.ŋa/ bi.luŋ.ŋa
 ballon fish

The literal meaning of this combination is 'fish that resembles balloon'. In Meiteiron, airplane is known by the name *balloon* of English. This meaning perhaps comes from the appearance of the airline when it is in space that appears very tiny due to its height. The equivalent word in the standard Meiteiron of this word is *Ngasang* /ŋa.saŋ/ which literally means 'long fish'. Because of the dialectal difference, this word has variant forms; they are /**be.lun toŋ.bi**/ and /**be.lun pai.bi**/.

The name /**be.lun toŋ.bi**/ apparently derives its meaning from the belief that this particular fish can fly.

bi.lun + toŋ.bi > bi.lun toŋ.bi
 plane board/ sit on

The literal meaning of this combination is 'fish which is on board in a plane' but this is more appropriate to translate as 'a fish which flies like a plane.'

Similarly /**be.lun pai.bi**/

be.lun + pai.bi
 plane fly

The literal meaning is 'fish that flies like a plane'

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2. /**bol-ə.kam.bi**/ ‘balloon’
 /bol/ ‘ball’ + /ə.kam.bi/ ‘(that is) blown’

Hybrid formation with the native nominal bound root /-ta/

The native Meiteiron word /**mə.ta**/ ‘manner, characteristics, look, type, way of doing something’ can be attached to the monosyllabic nouns by dropping the suffix **mə-** that results into a hybrid word. For example:

/bek-ta/ ‘a kind of bag’ which may occur in sentences like the following,
 məsi-di **bek-ta** əmə-ni ‘this is a kind of bag (~ a different type of bag).’
 this- demo beg-type one-copula

Similarly, /get-ta/ ‘a kind of gate’

But /-ta/ cannot be attached to a polysyllabic nouns or nouns consisting a cluster. For example:

- *bil.diŋ-da ‘a type of building’
- *trək-ta ‘a kind of truck’
- *plak-ta ‘a kind of plug’

In such cases, /mə.ta/ occurs as a single lexical item to convey the same meaning. In fact, this kind of hybrid formation with /-ta/ is of recent development.

Hybridization with Suffixes

In most of the languages, borrowing is more common at the higher levels; at the phonological and morphological levels, the elements of any language are native (Hock and Joshep 1995). In English, since many prefixes and suffixes are of Latin or Greek origin, it is straightforward to add a prefix or suffix to a word that comes from a different language which results a hybrid word (http://wopedia.mobi/en/Hybrid_word). In Meiteiron, the most common process of hybrid formation is with the Meiteiron suffixes. For example:

Plural suffix /-siŋ/:

In making plurals in Meiteiron, suffix /-siN/ is added to the noun or a lexical item $m \leftrightarrow jam$ accompanies the noun. Most of the loanwords also come in this rule when making plurals of each word. For examples:

- Computer + /-siN/ > /k↔m.pu.t↔r-siN/ ‘computers’
- Table + /-siŋ/ > /te.bəl.siŋ/ ‘tables’ etc.

Other than this plural marker, is accusative marker /-pu/; demonstrative marker /-tu ~ -to, -ti/; locative marker /-tə/ etc. in which all the consonants of these markers change to their voiced counterparts if they are preceded by a voiced sound.

Obsolescence

Words become obsolete or archaic for many number of reasons. Borrowing is one of them. Switching to borrowed words excessively discards the native words which diminishes the usage of the native words. Thus, at later stage, they are being marginalized and have less frequency in general usage; this makes the native words partially or completely archaic words to the new generations. Many speakers do not realize that they are incorporating loanwords in their speech. The excessive usage of English loanwords by educated Meiteiron speakers can easily be evidenced in any one of the popular local newspapers.

Hence, it is questionable whether a person who has less knowledge of English can fully understand the newspaper or not. But as media is the best means for a loanword to spread, the frequent occurrence of the word gives its currency in the lexicon of Meiteiron. Borrowing enriches the lexicon of a language for sure but excessive borrowing under the category of prestige motive may result into making many native words obsolete.

For example, ‘Diabetes’ is more commonly understood than the native equivalent term ‘ising pukchat (/i.sij puk.cət/)’; ‘office’ is more popularly known than ‘Loisang /loi.səŋ/’; ‘history’ or /i.ti.has/ ‘history’ of Indo-Aryan word discarded the native word /pu.wa.ri/. Similarly, Indo-Aryan loanword /ko.lom/ ‘pen’ replaced the native term /k^hor.zəi/ ‘pen’ of Meiteiron and now /k^hor.zəi/ appears only in the poetic forms.

Phonemic Innovation

In many languages, new phonemes are introduced by a gradual process of borrowing from an exterior source with a period of coexistent phonemic systems (Fries and Pike, 1949).

Loanwords may be taken into a language in a form already acceptable to the recipient language or they may retain some alien feature and so introduce new phonological patterns (Henderson 1970). The nine phonemes (/b, bH, d, dH, g, gH, z, jH, P/) of Meiteiron are the later development sounds.

In the ancient literatures of Meiteiron, these sounds were not available. The voiced consonants /b, bH, d, dH, g, gH/ were developed from their voiceless counterparts /p, p^h, t, t^h, k, k^h/ respectively whereas /z/ and /p/ were developed from /c/ and /l/ in the intervocalic positions or in between two voiced sounds. Though, there are possibilities of the self development of the sounds as the language evolves the contact with the speakers of Indo-Aryan languages like Hindi, Bengali and Assamese enhances in the development of such new sounds in Meiteiron.

As Meiteiron keeps constant contacts with many such languages, especially English in this modern time, in the near future, there are high chances for the development of more new sounds in Meiteiron. For instance, in the speech of educated people, the bilabial fricative /p^h/ in the words like /im.p^hal/ ‘Imphal (capital of Manipur)’ has become labiodental fricative /f/. This appears in the speech of younger generation which emerges as a new trend.

Conclusion

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The contact with English language has tremendous impacts on Meiteiron. As English is an associate official language of the state as well as a global language, the influence of English on Meiteiron is obvious and undeniable. The unfamiliar sounds of English are naturalized by substituting them with nearest possible native sounds, for example, English consonant sounds like /f, v, ʃ, tʃ, dʒ, θ/ are replaced by Meiteiron phonemes /p^h, b^h, s, c, z, t^h/ respectively; English vowel sounds like /Y, æ, ɔ, ɔ̃/ are substituted by Meiteiron vowels /u, e, o, o/ respectively, English diphthongs like /eə, əY/ are replaced by /e, o/ of Meiteiron and English triphthongs are accepted only in the simplified forms in Meiteiron. The voiced consonants /b, d, g/ at the final positions of English words are devoiced in the nativization process in Meiteiron as /p, t, k/ respectively. /l/ sound in English words at the final position is preferably substituted by /n/ as both sounds occur as free variation at the final position of a word in Meiteiron. English clusters are simplified by inserting a vowel, by dropping one of the consonants of the cluster, by metathesis etc.

The imitation to pronounce like the native speakers of the source languages in accepting loanwords or learning a second language introduces and familiarizes new phonemes and their possible combinations to the speakers of Meiteiron, which, in later stages, become part and parcel of Meiteiron phonemes. For example, the clusters like /pl; kl; bl; gl/ are developed in Meiteiron as a result of language contact with English.

A brand name becomes a generic term in some cases when they are being introduced to the speakers.

Hybridization, obsolescence and phonemic innovations are the primary impacts of borrowing.

It is natural that borrowing of English loanwords enriches the lexical stock of Meiteiron; however, excessive absorption of loanwords may not be a wise attempt as this may endanger many native vocabularies and thereby leading them to the verge of extinction in future. The influence and impact of English on Meiteiron in near future seems potentially more dynamic and vibrant. Therefore, a conscious effort of regulation of language matters must be exercised by the users of Meiteiron.

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