

Ling. 272  
Prof. James A. Matisoff  
Spring 1988

**Some Preliminary Issues in the Reconstruction  
of  
Proto-Kokborok**

*by*

Prashanta Tripura

May 27 1988  
Berkeley

*James A. Matisoff  
Department of Linguistics  
University of California  
Berkeley, CA 94720*

## Contents:

	page no.
1. Introduction: the language, its dialects, and the speakers	1
2. Phonological comparison of Gabing and Naitong	4
2.1.0. Phonemes	
2.1.1. Initial consonants	
2.1.2. Final consonants	
2.1.2.1. Naitong -Vr, -Vl X Gabing -V[zero]	6
2.1.2.2. Naitong -Vm, -Vn X Gabing -V[nasalized]	8
2.1.2.3. Naitong -Vp X Gabing -V[zero]	9
2.1.2.4. -š in loanwords	10
2.1.3. Vowels	10
2.2. Rhyme classes	
2.2.1. G. -Y X N. -Y; Y = ɔ a i u	11
2.2.2.1. G. -oŋ X N. -um, -uŋ, -oŋ	12
2.2.2.2. G. -ok X N. -ɔk, -uk	13
2.2.3. G. -auʔ X N. -ɔk	14
2.2.4. G. -eiñ X N. -eŋ, -em, -iŋ, -in	15
2.2.5.1. G. -eŋ X N. -iŋ, -om, -on, -um, -un	16
2.2.5.2. G. -eʔ X N. -ik, -op, -or	17
2.3. Consonant clusters (in Gabing)	18
2.4. Vowel harmony (in Naitong)	18
3. Miscellaneous issues	19
3.1. Boro-Kokborok correspondence.	
3.1.1. Boro /g- b- d-/ > Kokborok /p- t- k-/	
3.1.2. Aspiration of /p- t- k-/ in Kokborok	
3.2. The loss of -r- and -l- in clusters	20
4. References	21

## 1. INTRODUCTIOON: The Language, its dialects, and the speakers.

Kokborok is spoken by about half a million people living in the state of Tripura, India, and in neighboring areas in India and Bangladesh. Kokborok speakers in Bangladesh number around 100 000, of which the majority reside in the northern part of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Outside of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, pockets of Kokborok speakers can be found in Chittagong, Comilla (previously Tripura), Sylhet, and possibly some other districts.

Kokborok speakers as a whole can be thought to constitute an ethnolinguistic group, but they do not presently exist as a political entity and they seem to have been in a state of cultural and political flux for a considerable part of their history. It seems that this subject <sup>demands</sup> commands some consideration before a comprehensive study of the language can be taken up. I say this in the light of the dialectical variations of the language and the corresponding tribal groupings. The subject of internal diversity has generally been glossed over in the scanty literature that can be found on Kokborok. At any rate the nomenclature used for the dialectical/tribal groupings is not very consistent. A number of variant or derived forms of the term 'Tripura' are in circulation which are all roughly equivalent to what we are calling Kokborok here. Thus we have Tipura, Tipra, Tripuri, Tipperah etc. ('Tripura' and 'Tripuri' are, of course, the Sanskritic equivalents of the more colloquial 'Tipra,' while 'Tipperah' is a British legacy.) Now, these terms are also used as ethnic or tribal designations and have different degrees of inclusiveness depending on who uses them. As an example, Karapurkar(1976) reports thirteen different "dialects" of Kokborok of which she cites Debbarma, Riang, Halam and Tipra ("also known as Noatia") as the numerically large groups. She uses 'Tripuri' as a general term for all Kokborok speakers. However, the same term is sometimes used less inclusively to refer to the Debbarmas only, while 'Tipra' in many usages has the same broader meaning of the term 'Tripuri' (e.g. Gan Chaudhuri 1979).

The majority of Kokborok speakers in Bangladesh belong to the Noatia division (=Tipra in Karapurkar 1976), and generally use the term 'Tripura' (or Tipra, Tipara) to refer to themselves, and these days to refer to their language as well (thus *tipra kau?*). There is no Noatia dialect as such. Instead, the people considered Noatia ("new") are divided into several

*dophas* ("clans")--I can think of at least eight, namely, Anok, Dendawk, Gabing, Kewa, Khali, Naitong, Phatong, and Tongbay--all of which speak distinct, though generally mutually intelligible, dialects. Similarly, it is possible that when we speak of a "Debbarma dialect," the internal diversity of this group is being overlooked. (It is my understanding that there is no *dopha* called 'Debbarma;' rather, the members of the Gurpai *dopha* use this as their last names. But other groups may also have taken up the practice because of the prestige associated with the last name since the royal family of Tripura comes from the same group mentioned above.) My goal here, however, is not to resolve such issues, but to give a sense of the degree to which the dialects of the various *dophas* differ from one another. My specific goal in this paper is to describe the patterns of phonological correspondence between the dialects spoken by mother's and father's *dophas*, namely, Naitong and Gabing, respectively.

The literature on Kokborok is rather scanty, as already noted. Available materials include Karapurkar(1972, 1976), Grierson(1903), and Debbarma(1967). There is also a Kokborok translation of the New Testament (The Bible Society of India 1976) which is most definitely the largest body of Kokborok text currently in existence. The form of Kokborok found in these sources are more or less the same, of the Debbarma variety. Since I have no firsthand knowledge of Debbarma, excepting some exposure to the language through radio programs broadcast from Agartala, any reference to Debbarma is derived from the literature. But otherwise I am mainly relying on my own command of Kokborok.

The village in which I grew up is predominantly Gabing, but my mother retained her Naitong, and spoke it consistently, thus I was exposed to both dialects from an early age. My own speech shows a clearly Gabing character. However, it should be mentioned here that Gabing is considered (by members of other *dophas*) to be crude. Gabing-speakers are characterized as "wide-mouthed" (bəkho? kuə). Consequently, my Gabing could often be modified in my speech or writing, giving it more of a Naitong character. Thus I may say ၶၶၶ rather than ၶၶ for 'salt'. But since I am aware of the idiosyncrasies of my speech, it hopefully will not influence my analysis negatively.

In comparing Gabing and Naitong, I do not intend to make any specific attempt to determine their historical relationship. But a sociolinguistic problem may be mentioned here that has some relevance in this regard. Kokborok was rendered to writing only relatively recently, that

*reduced*

too in a haphazard manner. The problem of standardization remains, but in the state of Tripura any dispute over this is likely to be settled in favor of Debbarma, because of the social prominence of its speakers, if for no other reason. In Bangladesh, no single dialect has yet gained prominence, but Naitong seems to be setting the standard. There, as in Tripura, Kokborok is written using Bengali script, and most Tripuras agree that Naitong is the easiest dialect to transcribe using available Bengali symbols. Naitong also shows more phonological affinity to Debbarma than the other dialects I am familiar with. For the purpose of historical reconstruction, this poses a question as to whether Naitong or Debbarma haven't really come under more Bengali (or Sanskritic) influence than the other dialects. To my knowledge no linguist has yet tried to reconstruct proto-Kokborok, and hence the question of which dialects are more conservative is yet to be explored. Until a comprehensive survey of all the different dialects of Kokborok is made, a definitive answer to this question will need to wait. Thus in comparing Gabing and Naitong, I will not make any assumption about which is more conservative. In any case, it is possible that one dialect is conservative in some aspects and another in others.

## 2. PHONOLOGICAL COMPARISON OF GABING AND NAITONG.

**2.1.0. Phonemes:** Although I haven't carried out any systematic<sup>a</sup> investigation in the subject, I believe it would be safe to state that Gabing and Naitong both basically have the same set of phonemes. Tentatively, they are as follows:

p	t	č	k		i	u
p <sup>h</sup>	t <sup>h</sup>	š	k <sup>h</sup>		e	ə
b	d	ǰ	g		a	
m	n	(ñ)	ŋ			

l r w y h (?)

**2.1.1. Initial Consonants:** In both dialects, all consonants except /ŋ (?) (ñ)/ occur initially. /b d g/ are voiced and unaspirated; /p t k/ are unvoiced and unaspirated; unlike in Garo and Boro, aspiration of unvoiced stops is distinctive in Kokborok, thus we have the series /p<sup>h</sup> t<sup>h</sup> k<sup>h</sup>/; /č ǰ/ are affricates; /š/ seems to have two freely varying allophones, [č<sup>h</sup>] and [š], thus writing it as /č/ would actually have made the chart look more symmetrical.

**2.1.2. Final Consonants:** This is an area in which I find my phonological knowledge to be inadequate. My control of the two dialects is also slightly problematic in this regard, in the sense that this is the area where my speech shows obvious Naitong influences. Despite this, the following statements would not probably be very inaccurate.

The consonants to occur finally in Naitong are: /p k m n ŋ l r/; /-p/ and /-k/ seems to be either voiced or unvoiced, depending on the environment, or perhaps they are unreleased. I am not sure whether Naitong has /ʔ/ or not, or whether I hear it as /-k/ even if it does occur. In Gabing, /ʔ ŋ/ are probably the only final consonants to be found consistently.

(Here also I tend to perceive /-ʔ/ as /-k/). The status of / $\tilde{n}$ / is uncertain, but it is included here following Jurafsky et al(1988), where it is shown only in the rhyme class  $-\text{əi}\tilde{n}$ . Compared to Naitong, /-l -r/ are mostly missing in Gabing, but certain words seem to preserve them. /-m -n/ are also characteristically missing in Gabing, instead, there is a propensity towards (homorganic) nasalized vowels. Gabing also has no final /-p/. /-ʃ/ can be found in loanwords only.

## 2.1.2.1. Naitong /-Yr -Yl/ X Gabing /-V[zero]/

<u>N.</u>	<u>G.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
kól	kó	'to stir with a ladle'
khól	khó	'to pick, collect'
jor	jo	'pair' (<Bengali)
tól	to	'to lead (draw)'
thól	thó	'to order'
nór	nó	'to move'
bodól	bédo	'bottle' (<B. botól <English)
✓ hór	hó	'fire'
hór	ho	'to carry on back'
hól	hó	'to send'
kar	ka	'to fish with; to discard'
katal	keta	'new'
✓ tal	ta	'moon'
nál	ná	'to shake'
bar	ba	'to bloom'
bál	bá	'to jump'
phal	pha	'to sell'
phál	phá	'to sweep'
bál	bá	'to jump'
mal	ma	'to crawl'
war	wa	'to plait'
✓ wál	wá	'to bite'
✓ šal	ša (but šal-ə	'at daytime') 'sun, day'
šál	šá	'to scatter'
har	ha	'to brandish, aim'
phil	phi	'to split (wood)'
phíl	phí	'to return; to turn over'
síl	sí	'to serve, transfer (liquid)'
hil	hi	'to raise (children, animals)'
úl	ú	'to grind'
kúl	kú	'to scold'
khúl	khú	'to serve (food)'
dúl	dú	'to roll'



phul	phu	'to rub'	
✓ phúl	phú	'to be white'	<i>metathesis -ru &gt; -ul ?</i>
bul	bu	'to mix'	
šur	šu	'to aim'	
šumur	šumú	'flute'	
er	e	'to multiply; to be numerous'	
ér	é	'to mess up'	
šer	še	'a unit of weight (2 lbs.)' (<B.)	

There are a number of exceptions to the above. Below are some examples (/r -l/ found in both Gabing and Naitong):

ul	'back' (B. ulto 'opposite')
kə-/kačar	'middle'
kə-/kačal	'distant'
kə-/kathar	'taboo'
khar	'to taste caustic'
✓ khál	'to run'
kəbər/kəbər	'crazy'
čor	'splinter'
čál	'to be distant'
čur	'drenched' (<B. čor)
jur	'appropriate' (<B. jut)
tór	'to be big'
thar	'secret gesture' (<B. thaur 'to recognize')
diphər	'noon' (<Sk. dviprahar)
nal	'sense'
pər	'variety' (<B. pod)
pór	'dawn; lighted'
bər	'blessing' (<B.)
ból	'ball' (<<Eng.)
✓ šor	'iron'
šol	'loose'
šur	'in a straight line'
hər	'night'
hél	'frustrated; resigned' (B. hela 'neglect')

*1/3 of the exs. are loans*  
 From a casual inspection of the list(s) above, it is difficult to come up with any generalization. It is possible that words for which Gabing preserve /r -l/ may have been introduced in the dialect at a later period of its development.

## 2.1.2.2. Naitong /-Vm -Vn/ X Gabing /-Vnasalized/

<u>N.</u>	<u>G.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
šon	šǒ	'thatching grass' (B. šon)
✓ šóm	šǒ	'salt'
	(See also : G. -əŋ X N. -om, -on)	
kan	kǎ	'to wear'
khan	khǎ	'to offer to drink'
gam	gǎ	'good'
čan	čǎ	'to place in the oven'
ran	rǎ	'to dry'
ram	rǎ	'to be emaciated'
ham	hǎ	'to be good'
✓ lum	lǔ	'to have a fever'
šum	šǔ	'(food) to be spoiled'
	(See also G. -əŋ X N. -um, -un; G. -oŋ X N. -um)	
čen	čě	'to be defeated'
šen	šě	'to fry in oil'
	(See also G. -əiñ X N. -iN, -eN; N = m, n, ŋ)	

## 2.1.2.3. Naitong /-Vp/ X Gabing /-V[zero]/

<u>N.</u>	<u>G.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
thop- bothop	thó- betho	'drop' (Clf.) 'nest'
✓ kap	<u>krá</u>	'to cry'
čap	čá	'to fold'
thap	thá	'to paste'
rap	rá	'to wrap around'
račap	reča	'to sing'
hap	há	'to enter'
sip	sí	'to fan'
kisip	kisi	'fan'
kusup	kusu	'to suck'
thup	thú	'to use as a crutch'
buthup	buthu	'bunch'
sup	sú	'to blow into; to play a flute'
khep	khé	'to hold (as with a prong)'
lep-	lé-	'flat, round object' (Clf.)
šep	šé	'to press'

## 2.1.2.4. /-š/ in loanwords.

Examples:	khaš	'(land) not owned by anyone'
	laš	'deadbody'
	baš	'bus'
	paš	'(to) pass (an exam)'
	biš	'poison'

**2.1.3. Vowels.** /i u a/ seem to present no problems in either dialect. /e/ probably has two allophones, [e] and [ɛ], or it may be simply [ɛ], but clarification of this calls for a better-trained ear than mine. /o/ is phonetically [ɔ] in Naitong; in Gabing it has two allophones: [o] when followed by /ʔ/ or /ŋ/, and [ɔ] otherwise. In Naitong /ə/ is phonetically [ɛ̃] in the rhyme classes /-ək/ and /-əŋ/ (equivalent to /w/ in Karapurkar[1976]; she also has /ə/ as a separate phoneme, but does not provide any minimal pair to show that these two are distinctive).

## 2.2. RHYME CLASSES.

## 2.2.1. G. -Y X N. -Y; Y = ɔ a i u.

	<u>G.</u>	<u>N.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>	
-ɔ	čɔ	čɔ	'to be severed'	
	šɔ	šɔ	'to pull'	
	ʝɔ	ʝɔ	'time'	
-a	ka	ka	'to rise'	
	ká	ká	'to be enough'	
	kha	kha	'to tie'	
	✓ khá	khá	'to taste bitter'	
	✓ ča	ča	'to be appropriate'	
	✓ čá	čá	'to eat'	
	ša	ša	'to say, tell'	
	ra	ra	'to cut'	
	lá	lá	'to take'	
	✓ wa	wa	'to rain'	
✓ wá	wá	'bamboo' }		
-i	ki	ki	'to be free from debt'	
	✓ khi	khi	'feces; to defecate'	
	ni	ni	'to be even'	
	bí	bí	'to ask for'	
	ri	ri	'to roll'	
	rí	rí	'cloth; clothing'	
	✓ ši	ši (1)	'to know'	
ši	ši (2)	'to be wet'		
-u	čú	čú	'to pack'	
	thu	thu	'to sleep'	
	ru	ru	'to boil'	
	lu	lu	'to pour'	
	su	šu	'to repay debt'	
	šú	šú	'to wash'	
	hu	hu	'to rub (so as to clean)'	
	-e	će	će	'to look for'
		le	le	'to wander'
		še	še	'to transfer'

## 2.2.2.1. G. -oŋ X N. -um, -uŋ, -oŋ

	<u>G.</u>	<u>N.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
-oŋ X -uŋ	koŋ	kuŋ	'nose'
	khon-	khun-	'houses, vehicles etc.' (Clf.)
	goŋ	guŋ	'clam'
	toŋ	tuŋ	'to be hot'
	noŋ	nuŋ	'to see'
	roŋ	ruŋ	✓ 'boat'
	roŋ	ruŋ	'to pile'
	šoŋ	šuŋ	'to cook'
	hoŋ	huŋ	'to cover the head with'
-oŋ X -um	khon	khum	'flower'
	čoŋ	čum	'to wear'
	takhon	takhum	'goose'
	thoŋ	thum	'to gather'
	dóŋ	dúm	'to surround with a fence'
-oŋ X -oŋ	oŋ	oŋ	'to become'
	koŋ	koŋ	'to bend over'
	kóŋ-	kóŋ-	'slender objects' (Clf.)
	čoŋ-	joŋ-	'a book of' (Clf.)
	čoŋ	čoŋ	'to assign (a name)'
	toŋ	toŋ	'to stay, exist'
	thoŋ	thoŋ	'post'
	póŋ	poŋ	'to cook by steaming'
	phóŋ	phoŋ	'to copulate'
	(a)yoŋ	yoŋ	'parent's elder brother'
yóŋ	yóŋ	✓ 'worm'	
-oŋ X -on	toŋ	ton	'to put'

## 2.2.2.2. G. -ok ʌ N. -ok, -uk (See also, G. -au? ʌ N. -ok)

	<u>G.*</u>	<u>N.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
-ok ʌ -ok	ók	ok	'belly'
	kók	kok	'to become loose'
	tók	tok	'to hit'
	nók	nok	'house'
	yók	yok	'to escape'
	rók	rok	'to scratch'
	sók	sok	'to reach'
-ok ʌ -uk	kók	kuk	'grasshopper'
	khók	khuk	'to peel'
	khók	khuk	'mouth'
	čok	čuk	'to benefit'
	čók	čuk	'to be high'
	tók	tuk (1)	'to feed'
	tók	tuk (2)	'to be dense'
	thók	thuk	'to be deep'
	phok	phuk	'to bore'
	bok	buk	'to be sharp'
	bədok	buduk	'rope'
	mók	muk	'to bake'
	mešok	mušuk	'cow'
	rok	ruk	'to disentangle'
	šok	šuk (1)	'to bite (like a snake)'
	šok	šuk (2)	'happiness' (<B. šukh)
šók	šuk	'to crush'	
hók	huk	'swidden'	

\*Note: Gabing -k = -ʔ in Jurafsky et al[1988].

## 2.2.3. G. -au? X N. -ɔk.

Note: G. /-au?/ seems to vary freely between [-au] and [-au?].

<u>G.</u>	<u>N.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
kau?	kɔk	'to throw; to fire'
káu?	kók	'word; language'
✓ khau?	khɔk	'to steal'
kháu?	khók	'to scoop up'
čau?	čɔk	'to paddle (a boat)'
čáu?	čók (1)	'liquor'
čáu?	čók (2)	'to dig'
.		
.		
.		
láu?	lɔk	'to be long'



## 2.2.4. G. -eiñ X N. -eŋ, -em, -iŋ, (-im,) -in.

	<u>G.</u>	<u>N.</u>	<u>Gloss.</u>
-eiñ X -eŋ	gabeiñ	kaipeŋ	'Gabling (clan)'
	kəiñ	keŋ	'to loosen'
	khəiñ	khəŋ	'to untie'
	čəiñ	čeŋ	'to begin'
	təiñ	təŋ	'to compare'
	pəiñ	peŋ	'to be satisfied'
	bəiñ	bəŋ	'to drive (a herd of animals)'
	šəiñ	šeŋ	'to be sparse'
	šəiñ	šeŋ	'backbone'
	ləiñ	leŋ	'to be tired'
-eiñ X -em	həiñ	hém	'to walk'
-eiñ X -iŋ	reiñ	riŋ	'to call'
	heñ	hiŋ	'cold' (Sk. hima)
	ketəiñ	kitiŋ	'round; to revolve'
	metheñ	mithiŋ	'to spin'
	šəreiñ	širiŋ	'to be deserted'
	gayreiñ	gayriŋ	'swidden-hut'
	nayšəiñ	nayšiŋ	'to wait'
	bayčəiñ	bayčiŋ	'edge'
	mayšəiñ	mayšiŋ	'winter'
	hayčəiñ	hayčiŋ	'ginger'
-eiñ X -in	šəiñ	šin	'to press'
	heñ	hin	'to say'

## 2.2.5.1. G. -əŋ X N. -iŋ, -óm, -ón, -um, -un.

Note: 'i' may actually be more like [u].

	<u>G.</u>	<u>N.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
-əŋ X -iŋ	čəŋ	čiŋ	'we'
	thəŋ	thiŋ	'to play'
	nəŋ	niŋ (1)	'you' ✓
	nəŋ	niŋ (2)	'to drink'
	pəŋ	piŋ (1)	'to be full' ✓
	pəŋ	piŋ (2)	'to make a sound'
	phəŋ	phiŋ	'to close'
	bəŋ	biŋ	'to be dense'
	məŋ	miŋ	'name' ✓
	rəŋ	riŋ	'to know (how to)'
	šəŋ	šiŋ	'to arrange in a row'
	šəŋ	šiŋ	'to ask; (dog) to bark'
-əŋ X -óm, -ón	čəŋ	čóm	'to soak'
	phəŋ	phon	'to decay'
	phəŋ-	phón-	'piece' (Clf.)
	rəŋ	róm	'to hold'
	ləŋ	lóm	'to be flooded'
	kətəŋ	koton	'obstructed; to obstruct'
	šetəŋ	šoton	'to stretch'
-əŋ X -um, -un	šəŋ	šum	'to be black' ✓
	kəšəŋ	kušum	'black'
	kəməŋ	kumun	'ripe' ✓
	kələŋ	kulum	'to sweat'
	mətəŋ	mutum	'fragrant; to smell'
	məišerəŋ	mīšurum	'ant'
	yərəŋ	yarum	'root'

## 2.2.5.2. G. -ə? X N. -ik, -ɔp, -ɔr.

Note: -? may have elsewhere been transcribed as -k in this paper.

	<u>G.</u>	<u>N.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
-ə? X -ik	čə?	čik	'to sting'
	tə?	tik	'cooking pot'
	thə?	thik	'louse'
	lə?	lik	'beads'
-ə? X -ɔp, -ɔr (very few examples)	čə?	čóp	'to cage'
	phə?	phɔb	'to bury'
	rə?	ror	'to store back (after drying in the sun)'

**2.3. Consonant clusters:** In polysyllabic (or what appears to be polysyllabic) constructions Gabing tends to have unstressed vowels (usually indicated by a 'ə') in the first syllables, thus giving rise to cluster-like constructions. Naitong, on the other hand, is characterized by vowel harmony in such cases. Example: G. kəɾək, krək X N. Kəɾək. (Naitong has no consonant clusters, that is, even where Gabing may have a "genuine" cluster, Naitong would break it down into vocalically harmonized syllables).

**2.4. Vowel harmony (in Naitong):**

G.	N.	Gloss
kəbəŋ	kəbəŋ	'much'
kəmə	kəmə	'to be lost'
.		
.		
.		

(Exceptions:)

kəlauʔ	kalok	'tall'
kəthauʔ	kathok	'tasty'

### 3. MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES.

#### 3.1. Boro-Kokborok correspondence.

<u>Boro*</u>	<u>Kokborok</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
pəy	phəy	'to come'
bəy	pəy	'to buy'
báy	báy	'to break'
bəy 'recent past marker'	páy	'to end'
téy	théy	'blood'
təy	thəy	'to die'
dəy	təy	'water'
déy	téy	'to lay eggs'
dəy	téy	'to carry with hand'
---	(bə)dəy	'branch'
pen	phəŋ	'to decay'
bun	pəŋ	'to be full'
bun 'to say'	pəŋ	'to make sound'
bún	bəŋ	'to be thick'

\*Source for Boro: Bhat(1968).

3.1.1. Boro /g- b- d-/ > Kokborok /k- p- t-/. This correspondence is quite obvious.

For certain words, both Boro and Kokborok have voiced consonants. Can this be predicted?

3.1.2. <sup>ant</sup>Aspiration of unvoiced stops. Boro /p<sup>h</sup>- t<sup>h</sup>- k<sup>h</sup>-/ are phonetically aspirated (there is other allophonic forms also), and some authors indicate this in their transcription. Most Boro-Garo languages do not have a distinctive set of unaspirated /p- t- k-/, but Kokborok does. This would be an interesting area for historical reconstruction.

**3.2. The loss of -r- and -l- in clusters:** (Cf. Jurafsky et al [1988], Sec. 2.2.5. "l-cluster insertion"). One of two obviously related words may sometimes contain -l- or -r-, while the other does not. These two words may belong to the same dialect, or they may be from two different dialects. The phenomenon holds true even when we include Boro or hypothetical proto-forms.

Examples:

krá (G.)	kap (N.)	'to cry'
kri (G), kiri (N.)	gi (Boro)	'to be afraid'
khrã (G.)	kham (N.)	'drum'
khr̄ei (G.)	khei (N., Boro)	'to taste sour'
*nə-rau?, narok (N.?)	nau? (G.)	'you(pl.)'
brau? (Phatong)	bau? (G.)	'they'
kepləŋ (G.)	pəŋ, šepəŋ (G.)	'full,...'
purun (N.), prũ (G.)	puma (N., G.)	'goat, she-goat'

#### 4. REFERENCES.

THE BIBLE SOCIETY OF INDIA

1976 *Smai Ktal*. Calcutta: The Bible Society of India.

BHAT, D.N.S.

1968 *Boro Vocabulary*. Poona: Deccan College.

DEBABARMA, A.

1967 *Kak-Rabam (English-Tripuri Dictionary)*. Agartala: Education Directorate.

GAN CHAUDHURI, J.

1979 *Tripura, the Land and its People*.

GRIERSON

1903 *Linguistic Survey of India*.

JURAFSKY, D. et al

1988 Being a grammar of Kaukborok....Manuscript.

KARAPURKAR, P.

1976 *Kokborok Grammar*. Mysore: CIIL.