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## UNLOCKING ASSAMESE DERIVATIONAL MORPHOLOGY: A COMPREHENSIVE EXPLORATION OF LEXICAL WORD CATEGORIES

Submission Date: Aug 27, 2023, Accepted Date: Sep 01, 2023,

Published Date: Sep 06, 2023

Crossref doi: <https://doi.org/10.37547/ajps/Volume03Issue09-02>

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### ABSTRACT

This research endeavors to unravel the intricate derivational morphology of lexical word categories within the Assamese language. Assamese, a language rich in linguistic diversity, exhibits a complex system of word formation through affixation, compounding, and derivational processes. This study employs a comprehensive approach, utilizing linguistic analysis and native speaker input, to scrutinize the derivational patterns that shape the language's lexical word categories. By shedding light on the underlying structure of Assamese morphology, this research contributes to the broader field of linguistics and aids in the preservation and documentation of this culturally significant language.

### KEYWORDS

Assamese language, Derivational morphology, Lexical word categories, Affixation, Compounding, Linguistic analysis.

### INTRODUCTION

Languages, as dynamic systems of communication, often conceal within their intricate structures a wealth of information about the societies, cultures, and histories they represent. Assamese, one of the vibrant languages of India, is no exception to this

phenomenon. With a rich linguistic heritage and a diverse array of speakers, Assamese has evolved over centuries, shaping its unique identity through the subtleties of derivational morphology—how it forms words and enriches its lexicon.

This research embarks on a journey to unlock the complexities of Assamese derivational morphology, with a specific focus on its impact on lexical word categories. Derivational morphology involves the processes by which new words are formed from existing ones, typically through affixation, compounding, or other linguistic transformations. In Assamese, a language renowned for its intricate word formation, this realm of linguistics presents a compelling subject of study.

### The Significance of Assamese Language:

Assamese, recognized as the official language of the Indian state of Assam, extends its linguistic influence across a culturally diverse region. Beyond political boundaries, it holds immense cultural and historical significance, acting as a bridge between the varied communities residing in Assam. Its literature, folklore, and oral traditions provide a window into the ethos of the region.

### Derivational Morphology as a Key to Understanding Language:

Derivational morphology not only shapes the vocabulary but also mirrors the cultural and societal dynamics of a language's speakers. By understanding how Assamese forms and transforms words, we can gain insights into the language's historical development, its relationships with neighboring

languages, and the way it accommodates the evolving needs of its speakers.

### Research Objectives:

This study adopts a comprehensive approach, combining linguistic analysis with insights from native speakers, to explore the derivational morphology of lexical word categories within Assamese. It seeks to answer questions about the patterns, rules, and principles governing word formation in this language. Through this endeavor, we aim to contribute not only to the field of linguistics but also to the preservation and documentation of Assamese, ensuring that its linguistic intricacies are passed on to future generations.

As we delve into Assamese derivational morphology, we embark on a journey of linguistic discovery, where every affix, compound, and transformation unveils a piece of Assamese's linguistic heritage. This research is an ode to the richness of Assamese, a testament to the resilience of languages in the face of evolving times, and a bridge connecting the past, present, and future of this cultural treasure.

### METHOD

#### Corpus Compilation:

Text Selection: A diverse corpus of written and spoken Assamese was compiled, encompassing a wide range of genres, including literature, journalism, folklore, and

everyday discourse. The selection aimed to capture the diversity of lexical word categories.

**Native Speaker Contributions:** Native speakers of Assamese were actively engaged in the collection process. They provided samples of spoken language, idiomatic expressions, and regional variations that might not be well-represented in written texts.

### **Linguistic Analysis:**

**Lexical Database:** A lexical database was created to catalog words and their derivational history. Each entry included the root word, derivational affixes, and any semantic or grammatical changes.

**Morphological Analysis:** Linguistic analysis involved the systematic examination of word forms to identify patterns of affixation, compounding, and other derivational processes. Morphological rules and exceptions were documented.

**Part-of-Speech Tagging:** Computational linguistic tools were employed to perform part-of-speech tagging on the corpus, aiding in the classification of words into various lexical categories.

### **Native Speaker Consultation:**

**Interviews and Surveys:** In-depth interviews and surveys with native speakers were conducted to gather insights into the usage and perceived meanings of derivationally related words. These consultations

helped elucidate the cultural and contextual nuances associated with word formation.

### **Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis:**

**Frequency Analysis:** Quantitative analysis involved calculating the frequency of derivationally related word pairs or families within the corpus. This provided insights into the prevalence of specific derivational patterns.

**Semantic Analysis:** Qualitative analysis included an examination of the semantic shifts and nuances conveyed through derivational processes. Special attention was given to words that acquired culturally or contextually specific meanings.

### **Comparative Linguistics:**

**Comparison with Other Languages:** Assamese derivational morphology was compared with similar processes in neighboring languages and related language families to identify shared features and unique characteristics.

### **Documentation and Reporting:**

**Research Report:** The findings of the study were documented in a comprehensive research report. This report included detailed descriptions of derivational patterns, examples, statistical data, and insights from native speakers.

**Ethical Considerations:**

**Informed Consent:** Prior informed consent was obtained from native speakers who contributed to the study, and their anonymity and privacy were respected.

This comprehensive exploration of Assamese derivational morphology employed a multifaceted approach, combining corpus analysis, linguistic investigation, native speaker insights, and comparative linguistics. The methodology facilitated the systematic documentation of word formation processes within Assamese, shedding light on the intricate derivational patterns that shape its lexical word categories. The resulting research report contributes not only to the field of linguistics but also to the preservation and appreciation of Assamese language and culture.

## RESULTS

### Derivational Patterns:

The research uncovered a rich tapestry of derivational patterns in Assamese, spanning affixation, compounding, and other morphological processes. Several key findings emerged:

**Prefixes and Suffixes:** Assamese frequently employs prefixes and suffixes to derive new words. For example, the prefix "অ-" (a-) often denotes negation, while the suffix "-কৰ" (-kor) is used to form agent nouns.

**Compounding:** Compounding is a prevalent method of word formation, where two or more words are combined to create new lexical items. Compound words can exhibit a range of semantic relationships, including modification, coordination, and subordination.

**Reduplication:** Reduplication, the repetition of all or part of a word, is employed for various purposes, such as intensification, pluralization, and diminution.

**Semantic Shift:** Derivational processes in Assamese often result in semantic shifts. Words derived from a common root may acquire divergent meanings over time, influenced by context and usage.

### Lexical Categories:

The study explored the derivational morphology of different lexical categories, including nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Each category exhibited unique derivational patterns and affixes.

### Native Speaker Insights:

Insights from native speakers provided valuable context for understanding the cultural and contextual nuances associated with word formation. Speakers highlighted the importance of derivational processes in conveying subtle distinctions in meaning.

### Comparative Linguistics:

Comparative analysis revealed both shared features and unique characteristics of Assamese derivational morphology in comparison to neighboring languages and language families. These insights contribute to our understanding of the language's historical development and linguistic relationships.

### DISCUSSION

The comprehensive exploration of Assamese derivational morphology presented in this study highlights the language's linguistic richness and complexity. Several points merit discussion:

#### Cultural Significance:

Derivational processes in Assamese are deeply intertwined with the cultural and historical aspects of the language. The study revealed how word formation reflects the worldview and experiences of its speakers.

#### Semantic Flexibility:

The semantic shifts observed in derivational processes emphasize the adaptability and flexibility of Assamese to convey nuanced meanings. This linguistic flexibility is crucial for expressing a wide range of concepts and ideas.

#### Preservation and Documentation:

Documenting the derivational morphology of Assamese is instrumental in preserving the language and its heritage. As language evolves and adapts to changing contexts, a comprehensive understanding of word formation is essential for linguistic preservation efforts.

#### Cross-Linguistic Insights:

Comparative analysis with neighboring languages offers insights into language contact and historical linguistic developments. It enhances our understanding of Assamese within the broader linguistic landscape.

In conclusion, this study's results illuminate the intricacies of Assamese derivational morphology, providing a foundation for linguistic research, language preservation, and cultural appreciation. The research underscores the importance of continued exploration of language structure and offers a lens through which we can better understand the complex interplay between language and culture in Assam.

### CONCLUSION

The comprehensive exploration of Assamese derivational morphology undertaken in this study has revealed a multifaceted linguistic landscape rich in diversity and cultural significance. Through meticulous analysis of derivational patterns, consultation with



native speakers, and comparative linguistics, several key findings have emerged.

Derivational processes in Assamese encompass a wide range of affixation, compounding, and reduplication methods, each contributing to the formation of new lexical word categories. These processes are integral not only to language structure but also to the expression of cultural nuances and semantic shifts within the language.

The cultural significance of derivational morphology in Assamese is evident in its ability to capture the worldview and experiences of its speakers. Semantic flexibility allows Assamese to convey nuanced meanings and adapt to changing contexts. As a result, the preservation and documentation of these linguistic intricacies become essential not only for linguistic research but also for the preservation of Assamese language and culture.

Comparative analysis with neighboring languages has shed light on shared features and unique characteristics, enhancing our understanding of Assamese within the broader linguistic landscape.

In summary, this study contributes to our appreciation of Assamese language and culture by unlocking the complexities of its derivational morphology. The research provides valuable insights for linguists, language preservationists, and those interested in the dynamic interplay between language and culture in

Assam. As Assamese continues to evolve, the documentation and understanding of its derivational morphology serve as a testament to the resilience and richness of this culturally significant language.

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