## **CHAPTER-2**

# LINGUISTIC FEATURES OF THE BORO AND RABHA LANGUAGES

## 2.1 Phonemes:

There are six vowels and sixteen consonant phonemes in Boro language. Thus Rabha language has also six vowel phonemes and sixteen consonant phonemes. Many of the characteristics of both the languages appear similar due to their ancestral roots. Hence, in respect of Vowel phonemes there are various similarities between the two languages. All of the vowel phonemes of both the languages are voiced. Phonemic distribution of vowel phonemes is also almost same in these languages. The vowel phonemes of both the languages may be postulated as given in the chart.

Boro:4

	Font	Central	Back	
High	i		ш	u
Mid	е			Э
Low		a		

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Basumatary, Phukan (2005). *An Introduction to the Boro Language*, p. 16

Rabha:<sup>5</sup>

	Font	Central	Back
High	i		u u
Mid	е		Э
Low		a	

## 2.2 Phonemic distribution:

The description of the vowel phonemes are given from the point of their places of occurrence and manner of articulation. In both the languages vowel phonemes are voiced. The phonemes may be described as given below:

/ i/: This vowel is pronounced at the front part of the tongue, the position of the tongue remains lifted (high) and the lips do not become round while pronouncing it in both the languages. Hence, this vowel phoneme is called high unrounded front vowel. It occurs at initial, middle and final position in both the languages. For example:

Boro: /i/

Initial occurrence	Medial occurrence	Final occurrence
/inzur/-wall	/lir/- write	/ gi /-fear
/ise/- a little, a few	/ziŋ/- near	/zi/- cloth

<sup>5</sup> Basumatary, Phukan Ch (2014), **Boro and Rabha: Two Tibeto-Burman Languages of the North-East India**, p. 12

Rabha: /i/

Initial occurrence	Medial occurrence	Final occurrence
/isi/-here	/riba/- come	/ki/-dog
/iba/-this also	/chiŋ/-we	/ mi/-curry

/ w/: This vowel phoneme is pronounced at the back part of the tongue, the position of the tongue remains lifted (high) and the lips do not become round while pronouncing it in both Boro and Rabha languages. Hence, this vowel phoneme is called high unrounded back vowel. It occurs at initial, middle (medial/central) and final position in both the languages. Example:

Boro: / w/

Initial occurrence	Medial occurrence	Final occurrence
/wngkham/ 'rice'	/gut <sup>h</sup> ar/-'pure'	/gusu/-'mind'
/wzwŋ/- 'here'	/gwbaə/- 'late'	/aŋgɯ/- 'dear'

Rabha: /w/

Initial occurrence	Medial occurrence	Final occurrence
/umba/-'husband'	/ ruŋ/-'drink'	/bu/-'draw'

/ u, u /: This vowel phoneme is pronounced at the back part of the tongue, the position of the tongue remains lifted (high) and the lips become round while

pronouncing it in both Boro and Rabha languages. Hence, this vowel phoneme is called high rounded back vowel. It is also found to occur at initial, middle (medial/central) and final position of words in both the languages. Example:

Boro: /u/

Initial occurrence	Medial occurrence	Final occurrence
/undu/-'to sleep'	/gup <sup>h</sup> ur/-'white'	/gusu/ - 'to cold'
/udaŋ/-'freedom'	/guduŋ/- 'hot'	/gubru/- 'to burst

## Rabha /u/

Initial	Medial occurrence	Final occurrence
occurrence		
/udangiri/-'free	/gur/-'sleep'	/gur/-'sleep'
person'		

/ e, e/: This vowel phoneme is pronounced at the front part of the tongue, the height of the tongue remains at mid position and the lips does not become round while pronouncing it in both Boro and Rabha languages. Hence, this vowel phoneme is called mid unrounded front vowel. It is also found to occur at initial, middle (medial/central) and final position of words in both the languages. Example:

Boro: / e/

Initial occurrence	Medial occurrence	Final occurrence
/er/- 'to increase'	/gen/- 'to open oneself'	/ze/-'net'
/ebre/- 'to hide'	/guseb/- 'narrow'	/k <sup>h</sup> ənse/- 'one time'
/engar/- 'to give	/ gew/- ' to open'	/gele/ - 'to play'
up'		

**Rabha:** /e/

Initial occurrence	Medial occurrence	Final occurrence
/ekan/-'freely'	/reŋ/-'go'	/ret <sup>h</sup> e/-'banana'

/ ə /, / ə /: This vowel phoneme is pronounced at the back part of the tongue, the height of the tongue remains at mid position and the lips become round while pronouncing it in both Boro and Rabha languages. Hence, this vowel phoneme is called mid rounded back vowel. It is also found to occur at initial, middle (medial/central) and final position of words in both the languages, Example:

**Boro:** / ə /

Initial occurrence	Medial occurrence	Final occurrence
/ ə lsiya/-'lazy'	/g ə n/-'stick'	/z ə /- 'sit'
/ ə ma/- 'pig'	/g ə nai/- 'agree'	/g ə t <sup>h</sup> ə /- 'child'

Rabha: / ə /

Initial occurrence	Medial occurrence	Final occurrence
/ ə k <sup>h</sup> re/-'like that'	/s ə ŋ/-'village'	/ch ə k ə /- 'wine/ beer

/ a, a/- This vowel phoneme is pronounced at the mid part of the tongue, the height of the tongue remains low and the lips does not become round while pronouncing it in both Boro and Rabha languages. Hence, this vowel phoneme is called low unrounded mid vowel. It is also found to occur at initial, middle (medial/central) and final position of words in both the languages, like-

## Boro: /a/

Initial occurrence	Medial occurrence	Final occurrence	
/aru/-'and'	/t <sup>h</sup> ar/-'truth'	/tha/-'to stay'	
/ak <sup>h</sup> ə l/-	/biban/- 'responsibility'	/la/- 'to take'	
'character'			

## Rabha: /a/

Initial occurrence	Medial occurrence	Final occurrence
/ap <sup>h</sup> e/-'star'	/bar/-'fire'	/ra/-'to take'

From the above description it is found that the features of vowel phonemes in both the Boro and the Rabha languages are similar.

16

## 2. 3 Introduction of Consonant phonemes:

Similarities of features in case of consonant phonemes are found between the Boro and the Rabha languages. There are 16 consonant phonemes in Boro language and 20 consonant phonemes are found in Rabha language. These are mentioned below:

**Boro:** /b, d, g,  $p^h$ ,  $t^h$ ,  $k^h$ , m, n,  $\eta$ , s, z, h, r, l, w, y/

**Rabha:** /p, b, t, d, ch, k, g,  $p^h$ ,  $t^h$ ,  $k^h$ , m, n,  $\eta$ , s, z, h, r, l, w, y/

## **Description of Consonant Phonemes:**

## (a) Boro:

/ b /: Voiced unaspirated bi-labial plosive

/ d /: Voiced unaspirated alveolar plosive

/ g /: Voiceless aspirated bi-labial plosive

/ g /: Voiced unaspirated velar plosive

/ ph/: Voiceless aspirated bi-labial plosive

/ th/: Voiceless aspirated alveolar plosive

/ k<sup>h</sup> /: Voiceless aspirated velar plosive

/ s /: Voiceless alveolar fricative

/ z /: Voiced alveolar fricative

- / h /: Voiceless glottal fricative
- / m /: Voiced bi-labial nasal
- / n /: Voiced alveolar nasal
- / s /: Voiced velar nasal
- / r /: Voiced alveolar trill
- /1/: Voiced alveolar lateral
- / w /: Voiced bi-labial semi-vowel
- / j /: Voiced palatal semi-vowel

## (b) Rabha:

- / p /: Voiceless bi-labial un-aspirated plosive
- / b /: Voiced bi-labial un-aspirated plosive
- / ph/: Voiceless bi-labial aspirated plosive
- /t/: Voiceless alveolar un-aspirated plosive
- / d /: Voiced alveolar un-aspirated plosive
- / th /: Voiceless alveolar aspirated alveolar plosive
- / ch /: Voiceless Palatal un-aspirated plosive
- / k / : Voiceless velar un-aspirated plosive

- / g /: Voiced velar un-aspirated velar plosive
- / kh/: Voiceless velar aspirated plosive
- / m /: Voiced bi-labial nasal
- / n /: Voiced velar nasal
- / s /: Voiceless alveolar un-aspirated fricative
- / z /: Voiced alveolar un-aspirated fricative
- / h /: Voiceless velar fricative
- / r /: Voiced alveolar trill
- /1/: Voiced alveolar lateral
- / w /: Voiced bi-labial semi-vowel
- / y /: Voiced palatal semi-vowel

# Chart of the Boro consonant phonemes:<sup>6</sup>

		Bi-l	ibial	Alv	eolar	Pala	ıtal	Vel	lar	Glo	ttal
		vl	vd	vl	vd	vl	vd	vl	vd	vl	vd
plosive	Un-		b		d				σ.		
piosive	Aspirated		U		u				g		
	Aspirated	p <sup>h</sup>		t <sup>h</sup>				k			
Nasal					n				Ŋ		
		M									
Fricative				s	Z					h	
Trill					r						
Lateral					1						
Semi-vov	wel		W				у				

<sup>6</sup> Basumatary, Phukan Ch (2014). *Boro and Rabha: Two Tibeto-Burman Languages of the North-East India, p. 14* 

## Rabha consonant phonemes: 7

		Bi-li	bial	Alve	eolar	Pala	tal	Ve	lar	Glo	tal
		vl	vd	vl	vd	vl	vd	vl	vd	vl	vd
plosive	Un-	p	b	t	d	Ch		k	g		
	aspirated										
	Aspirated	p <sup>h</sup>		th				k <sup>h</sup>			
Nasal			m		n				ŋ		
Fricative	:			S	Z					Н	
Trill					r						
Lateral					1						
Semi-vov	wel		W		_		У		_		_

## 2.3.1 Phonemic distribution of consonant phonemes:

The description of the consonant phonemes of Boro and Rabha languages by occurring at the initial, medial and final positions are discussed below. In both the languages the use of these consonant phonemes may be seen as follows:

/ **b**, **d**, **g** / : These / b, d, g / consonant phonemes are basically voiced phonemes. The / b / consonant phoneme is bi-labial and voiced. This phoneme is found to occur at initial, medial and final positions of a word. The / d / consonant phoneme is alveolar and voiced consonant phoneme. This phoneme is also found to occur at initial,

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> opcit. p.15

medial and final positions of a word. The / g / consonant phoneme is velar and voiced consonant phoneme. This phoneme occurs at initial and medial positions and is also found to occur at the final positions of a word. For example:

## Baro:

	Initial	Medial	Final
	occurrence	occurrence	occurance
/b/	/bərad/- 'luck'	/gwbaɔ/- 'late'	/thəb/- 'quick'
/d/	/dau/ - ' to bird'	/gudan/- 'new'	/abad/-'crops'
/g/	/gab/-'to cry'	/thəgai/- 'to cheat'	/p <sup>h</sup> arag/-'separat'

/  $\mathbf{p^h}$ ,  $\mathbf{t^h}$ ,  $\mathbf{k^h}$  /: Basically /  $\mathbf{p^h}$ ,  $\mathbf{t^h}$ ,  $\mathbf{k^h}$  / are voiceless consonant phonemes. They are produced at bi-labial, alveolar and velar. All of these phonemes occur at the initial and medial position of the words. As for example-

## **Boro:**

	Initial occurance	Medial	Final occurance
		occurance	
/p <sup>h</sup> /	/pʰərai/-'to read'	/gup <sup>h</sup> ur/-'white'	/bərəp <sup>h</sup> /-'ice'
/t <sup>h</sup> /	/thəkhan/-'stick'	/guthar/-'pure'	
/k <sup>h</sup> /	/k <sup>h</sup> ənse/- 'one time'	/ak <sup>h</sup> ai/-'hand'	

/ s, z, h /: These consonant phonemes are voiceless phonemes. / s / and / h / these two consonant phonemes are alveolar and glottal. These are found to occur at the

initial and medial position of a word but hardly occur at the final position. Besides, the / z / consonant phoneme is voiced and alveolar. This phoneme occurs at initial, medial and final positions of a word. For example:

## Boro:

	Initial occurance	Medial occurance	Final
			occurance
/s/	/ sayk <sup>h</sup> əŋ/ –'shadow'	/gusum/ – 'black'	
/z/	/zahun /- 'reason'	/gwzam/-ʻold'	/arəz/-'to pray'
/h/	/ hərk <sup>h</sup> ab/ – sudden	/gahai/-'short'	

/ m, n,  $\eta$  /: These phonemes are voiced, bi-labial, glottal and nasal. / m, n / these two phonemes occurs at the initial, medial and the final position of the words. The phoneme- /  $\eta$  / never occur at the initial position of a word. It occurs at the medial and final position of the words. For example:

## Boro:

	Initial	Medial occurance	Final occurance
	occurance		
/m/	/maət <sup>h</sup> i/- 'active'	/soman/ – 'equal'	/munam/'smell'
/n/	/naza/- 'to try'	/p <sup>h</sup> andai/- 'to deceive'	/guzan/-'to far'
/ŋ/		/uŋtʰi/-'meaning'	/biduŋ/ 'heat'

/ r, l /: These two phonemes are voiced, alveolar, trill and lateral. These two phonemes occur at the initial, medial and the final position of the words. For example:

## Boro:

	Initial occurance	Medial occurance	Final occurance
/r/	/rwk <sup>h</sup> a/-'clear'	/guran/-'to dry'	/gumur/ 'source'
/1/	/laimun/ - 'young'	/alai/ -'to hang'	/gut <sup>h</sup> al/-'wave'

/ w, y /: These two phonemes are semi-vowels. These are voiced, bi-labial and palatal. These two phonemes do not occur at the initial position of the words. These phonemes are found to occur at the medial and the final position of the words. As for example:

#### Boro:

	Initial occurance	Medial occurance	Final occurance
/w/		/pʰaətʰai/-'drama '	/nau/ 'boat'
/y/		/haylu/ - 'short'	/hast <sup>h</sup> ayl/-'to
			wish'

Likewise, in Rabha language also the consonant phonemes are found to form words by occurring at the initial, medial and final positions of the words which are discussed below: /p, t, ch, k /: These all consonant phonemes are basically voiceless, bi-labial, alveolar, and palatal. / p, t, k / these three phonemes occur at all the three positions, i.e. initial, medial and final positions of a word. However, / ch / is found to occur at the initial and medial positions only. It does not occur at the final position. For example:

## Rabha:

	Initial	Medial occurrence	Final
	occurrence		occurrence
/p/	/pidan/-'new'	/chupan/-'few/little'	/thop/- 'nest'
/t/	/tan/-'to cut'	/phatok/- 'prison/jail'	/hat/-'week'
/k/	/kui/-'betel nut'	/makra/-'monkey'	/lubak/-'frog'
/ch/	/chika/-'water'	/michik/-'wife'	

/ **b, d, g** /: In Rabha language, the consonant phonemes- / b, d, g / are basically voiceless, bi-labial, alveolar, and velar. It is seen that the / b / phoneme occurs at all three positions of the words, ie. Initial, medial and final positions. The / d, g / phonemes occur at the initial and medial positions only. These are not found to occur at the final position. Like:

	Initial occurrence	Medial occurrence	Final
			occurance
/b/	/ba/-'bamboo'	/meba/-'bamboo shoot'	/hoŋgrab/-

			'store room'
/d/	/dalay/-'branch'	/idaŋai/-'here'	
/g/	/gar/- 'responsibility'	/agui/-'to go forward'	

/  $p^h$ ,  $t^h$ ,  $k^h$ /: In Rabha language, basically the consonant phonemes- / ph, th, kh/ are voiceless, bi-labial, alveolar and velar. These /  $p^h$ ,  $t^h$ ,  $k^h$ / occur only at the initial and medial position of the words. These are not seen occurring at the final position of the words. Example:

## Rabha:

	Initial occurrence	Medial	Final
		occurrence	occurrence
/p <sup>h</sup> /	/phongbra/ - 'younger	/gap <sup>h</sup> ug/ - '	
	brother'	tomorrow'	
/t <sup>h</sup> /	/ t <sup>h</sup> e /- 'fruit'	/bant <sup>h</sup> o /— 'brinjal'	
/k <sup>h</sup> /	/k <sup>h</sup> ut <sup>h</sup> um/ – 'kiss'	/pik <sup>h</sup> a/ – 'liver'	

/ s, z, h /: In Rabha language- / s, h / these two phonemes are voiceless but / z / is voiced. / s, h / these two phonemes are alveolar and glottal, and / z / is alveolar only. All these three phonemes are found to occur at the initial and medial positions of the words and not seen at the final position. For example:

	Initial occurrence	Medial occurrence	Final occurrence
/s/	/sa/-'to eat'	/k <sup>h</sup> onsry/-'to search'	

/z/	/zamba/- 'idiot'	/baziŋ/-'outside'	
/h/	/hadubar/-'dust'	/raha/-'	

/ m, n,  $\eta$  /: In Rabha language these three phonemes are voiced, bi-labial, alveolar and velar. / m / and / n / are found to occur at all three positions i.e. initial, medial and final whereas / g / is not found to occur at the initial position of the words. It occurs only at the medial and final positions of the words. As for examples:

## Rabha:

	Initial	Medial occurrence	Final
	occurrence		occurrence
/m/	/mi/-'curry'	/somay/- 'time'	/nak <sup>h</sup> em/-'
/n/	/nək/-'house'	/typryna/-'complete'	/ain/- 'rules
/ŋ/		/rangre/- 'sun'	/reŋ/-'to go'

/ r, l /: These two phonemes are voiced, alveolar, trill and lateral. These two phonemes occur at the initial, medial and the final position of the words. As for example-

	Initial occurance	Medial	Final occurance
		occurance	
/r/	/riba/-'to come'	/triŋ/-'to learn'	/rampar/-'air/wind'
/1/	/liewa/-'creeper'	/gəla/-'shop'	/pal/-'group'

/ w, y /: These two phonemes are semi-vowels. These are voiced, bi-labial and palatal. These two phonemes do not occur at the initial position of the words. These phonemes are found to occur at the medial and the final position of the words. As for example

#### Rabha:

	Initial occurance	Medial occurance	Final occurance
/w/		/ thowa/- 'tasty'	
/y/		/rayma/-'cook'	/ray/-'to judgment'

**2.4 Supra-segmental phonemes**: Supra-segmental phonemes are the part of phonology. In both the languages the use of Tone, syllables, Diphthongs are very vivid and striking in distributive nature. For example:

**2.4.1 Tonal features:** The remarkable feature in the Tibeto-Burman language family is its Tone. This characteristic feature is found both in Boro and Rabha languages. That is why these two languages are often remarked as tonal languages. Tonal language means- When a syllable is associated with a particular pitch level such as high, mid, low etc. and the pitch distinguishes the meanings of the words, then the pitch is called tone and the language which has tone is a tonal language. In Boro and Rabha languages, the tone may be divided into two types. These are: High tone and Low tone. Example:

# Boro:5

Boro:	Meaning
/za´/	'to eat'
/za/	'to be'
/ga b/	'to cry'
/gab/	'to color'
/dán	'to cut'
/dan/	'to month'
/ba´r/	'to jump'
/bar/	'to wind'
/ba´y/	'to buy'
/bay/	'distribute'

Rabha	Meaning
/sa´-a/	'to eat'
/sa-a/	'to pain'
/bi´-a/	'break'
/bi-a/	'marriage'
/ri´m-a/	'to catch'
/rim-a/	'to cook'
/ra´y/	'banana leaf'
/ray/	'judgment'

**2.4.2 Syllable:** of syllable is found both in Boro and Rabha languages. The syllable is a unit of pronunciation typically (longer) larger than a single sound (phoneme) and (shorter) smaller than a word <sup>13.</sup> Basically in the syllable sometimes there exists only one vowel phoneme, sometimes two vowel phonemes or one or more consonant phoneme with a vowel phoneme.

On the basis of the number of syllables we find monosyllabic words, disyllabic words and polysyllabic words in both the languages. For example-

**2.4.1.1 Monosyllabic Feature**: In both the languages there are monosyllabic words. Some of the examples:

## Boro:

Boro	Meaning
dau	bird
Эr	fire
dui	water
ha	soil
maə	do
gan	wear/put on
na	fish

Rabha	Meaning
na	fish
ki	Dog

Su	Thorm
На	Soil

**2.4.1.2 Disyllabic feature:** It is seen that there are many disyllabic words in Boro and Rabha languages. For example:

## Boro:

Boro	Meaning
nuŋ-sur	You
uŋ-kʰam	Rice
an-zad	Examination
dui-ma	River

## Rabha:

Rabha	Meaning
naŋ-roŋ	You

**2.4.1.3 Polysyllabic features:** There exist many polysyllabic words in these languages. For example:

## Boro:

Boro	Meaning
ə-k <sup>h</sup> a-p <sup>h</sup> uır	Moon
san-p <sup>h</sup> rum-bui	Everyday
bai-di-si-na	Varieties
p <sup>h</sup> ə-rai-sa-li	School
p <sup>h</sup> aə-t <sup>h</sup> ai-gi-ri	Dramatist

## b) Rabha:

Rabha	Meaning
a-p <sup>h</sup> e	Star
triŋ-dam	School
ram-par	Wind
miη-ku	Cat
nuk-chi	Tear
na-k <sup>h</sup> em	Pounded dried fish

**2.4.3 Diphthong:** Diphthong is also one of the remarkable features of both the Boro and Rabha languages. Diphthongs are those where two vowel phonemes exist together. But sometimes the vowel phonemes even if they combine together are not considered as diphthong. Because to be a diphthong the vowel phonemes should be pronounced at a time and both the two vowels should remain within a syllable. In Boro language, there are eight diphthongs and there are five diphthongs in Rabha language. For examples:

Boro:<sup>7</sup>

Diphthongs	Boro	Meaning

/ ui /	/ui/	White ant
/ wi /	/t <sup>h</sup> wi/	Blood
/ ww /	/ wu-a /	Bamboo
/ əi /	/ gəi /	Areca-nut
/ iu /	/ ziu /	Life
/ aə /	daə /	Bird
/ eu /	/ eu /	To fry
/ ai /	/ mai /	Paddy

## Rabha:

Diphthong	Rabha	Meaning
/ui/	/sui/	Take aim
/əi/	/kəi-a/	Be bent
/au/	/hasu-a/	Desire
/eu/	/due-ri/	Priest
/ai/	/zai-a/	Changes place

From the discussion it is observed that the phonemic features in Boro and Rabha languages are almost similar. The reason is that both the languages have been originated from the same ancestral root.

- **2.5 Morphological features**: There are various similarities between the Boro and Rabha languages in respect of morphological features and structures. The similarities may be observed in case of grammatical category and structure of words.
- **2.6 Feature of Noun formation:** There are two types of noun word: basic noun and derived noun.

**Basic Noun:** The basic nouns in both the Boro and the Rabha languages are constant. Their structures can never be changed by prefixing or suffixing. For Example:

Boro	Rabha	Meaning
duii	Chika	Water
Na	Na	Fish
Nə	Nək	House
Mai	Mai	Paddy
Bibar	Par	Flower
gaik <sup>h</sup> er	Nu	Milk
t <sup>h</sup> alir	ret <sup>h</sup> e	Banana
Gəi	Kui	Betel nut
daək <sup>h</sup> a	tək <sup>h</sup> a	Crow
musuu	Masu	Cow
Mairəŋ	Mairəŋ	Rice

## **Derived Noun:**

There is the system of formation of words by prefixing and suffixing the nouns or verbs in both Boro and Rabha languages which can be discussed in two processes-Derivational process and Inflectional Process. If the derivational words are prefixed or suffixed we find the change of the meaning of the word. In Inflectional process the meaning of the words doesn't change even if they are prefixed or suffixed. By considering these all the processes of formation of noun may be observed as follows:

- (i) Formation of noun by adding prefix with the bound base of noun class
- (ii) Formation of noun by adding suffix or bound base with the free morpheme of noun class

Formation of noun by adding prefixes with the bound base of noun class may be observed in the Boro language as follows:

Boro	Meaning
bi- daŋ > bidaŋ	an ear of grain
bi-gab>bigab	Bark
p <sup>h</sup> i-sa>p <sup>h</sup> isa	Child
bi-lai>bilai	Leaf

Thus formation of noun by adding suffixes or bound base may be observed in the Boro language as follows:

## Boro:

N. sudub (word) - t <sup>h</sup> i > sudubt <sup>h</sup> i (meaning)
N. thunlai (literature)- ari > thunlaiari (literary/ relating to literature)
N. gami (village)- ari > gamiari (villager)
N. daoha (war) - ru > warrior
N. mun (get) - t <sup>h</sup> ai > munt <sup>h</sup> ai (rights)

Thus the similar features are also observed in the Rabha Language. Example:

N. chai (song)- giri >chaigi ri (song writer)
N. badaŋ (trade)- giri > badaŋiri (businesman)
N. chai (song)- p <sup>h</sup> aŋ > chaip <sup>h</sup> aη (singer)
N. bar (fire)- dam > bardam (place)

**(b) Formation of noun:** Formation of noun may be found in both the languages. In both the languages formation of noun may be found by adding prefixes. The prefixes in Boro language are /bi-/, /p<sup>h</sup>i-/, /gi-/ and in Rabha language are /pi-/ etc. As for example:

#### Boro:

Likewise in Rabha language also the verb can be transformed into noun by prefixing /pi-/ to the verbs. Examples:

## Rabha:

**Formation of Noun by suffixing**: In both the languages the formation of noun by suffixing is present. These prefixes are: Boro - /-nai/, /-gra/, /-giri/, /-ari/, /- ti/, /-sali/, /-sri/ etc. and on the other hand in Rabha- /-chai/, /-gir/, /-brək/, /-chək/, /-bra/, /-dam/ etc. example:

#### Boro:

#### Rabha:

V. chəy (to start) / kai > N. chəykai (act of strating)	
V. par (to bloom) / kai > N. parkai (act of blooming)	

V. tan (to cut) / kai >N. tankai (act of cutting)

V. riba (to come) / kai > N. ribakai (act of coming)

#### 2. 7 Similarities in Gender distinction:

There are similarities in the case gender distinction in between the Boro and the Rabha languages. In both the languages the expressions denoting masculine gender is differentiated directly by putting the words denoting feminine gender. In Boro language zurla (male) - zur (Female), huroa (husband) - hinzao (wife), bunda (male) - bundi (Female), Pantha (Male) - Phanthi (Femal) and in Rabha language /musa/, /mecha/, /maba//maw/ etc. are found to be used in the formation of gender words. In both the languages gender distinction may be done with the help of three processes. Example:

- (i) By using separate words denoting male and female
- (ii) By adding the words which denote male and female before or after the words
- (iii) By suffixing the male denoting words with female denoting words

## By using separate words denoting male and female:

In both the Boro and the Rabha languages there are some words which stand separately for male and female and hence their gender can be changed by putting such words in opposition. Example:

## Boro:

Masculine	Feminine
gumui (brother-in-law)	abə (sister)
adui (uncle)	madui (aunty)
ada(elder brother)	bazwi(elder brother wife)
ap <sup>h</sup> a(father)	ai(mother)
abuu(grand father)	abui (grand mother)

## Rabha:

Masculine	Feminine
baba (father)	aya(mother)
gimi(elder sister husband)	bibi(elder sister)
chaturi(bridge groom)	zituri(bridge)
zudu (grand father)	Buzi (grand mother)

## By adding the words which denote male and female before or after the words:

In both the By adding the words which denote male and female before or after the words.

In both the languages the process of formation of gender words by adding the words which denote male and female before or after the words is found. In Boro /zwla/ (male) – /zwl/ (Female), /bunda/ (male) – /bundi/ (Female), /p $^h$ ant $^h$ a/ (Male) – /p $^h$ ant $^h$ i/ (Female) are added in case of animals and in case of human beings /hwua/ (husband) – /hinzaə/ (wife) is added. On the other hand in Rabha languages the

words like- /musa/ and /mecha/ are added in case of human being and /maba/ and /maru/ are added in case of the animals. Example:

## Boro:

Masculine	Feminine
huiua- p <sup>h</sup> əraisa (male student)	hinzaə-p <sup>h</sup> əraisa(female student)
huua- gət <sup>h</sup> ə(boy)	hinzaə- gət <sup>h</sup> ə (girl)
huiua mansi(male man)	hinzaə mansi (female woman)

## Rabha:

Masculine	Feminine
mucha –sabra(male child)	mecha-saba (female child)
subra mucha(grand son)	subra- micha (grand daughter)
nebra mucha(father-in-law)	nebra-micha(mother-in-law)
sungir mucha(gents)	sungir -micha (ladies)

## Boro:

Masculine	Feminine
muk <sup>h</sup> ra– bunda (male monekey)	muk <sup>h</sup> ra-bundi(female monkey)

muisu –dambra(male buffalo	muisu- dambri(Female buffalo
calf)	calf)
haŋsw-zwla (drake)	haŋsw-zw (duck)
əma bunda(male pig)	əma bundi(female pig)
burma p <sup>h</sup> antha (male goat)	burma p <sup>h</sup> anthi(female goat)

## Rabha:

Masculine	Feminine
bak-maba (male pig)	bak-maru (Female pig)
makra-maba (Male monkey)	makra-maru (Female monkey)

## By suffixing the male denoting words with female denoting words:

In both the languages we find the process of forming Feminine gender by adding the feminine gender denoting suffix to the masculine gender denoting words. Example:

## Boro:

Masculine	Feminine
p <sup>h</sup> agla (male mad)	p <sup>h</sup> agli (female mad)
zamba (male foolish)	zambi (female foolish)
nabla (male having short & flat	nable (female having& flate nose)
nose)	
balənda(a widower man)	baləndi(a widower woman)
t <sup>h</sup> əgaisula(a cheat man)	t <sup>h</sup> əgaisuli (a cheat women)

## Rabha:

Masculine	Feminine
zara(a mad man)	zari (a mad women)
benga(a deaf man)	bengi (a deaf women)
gasura(a man who does not know	gasuri(a man who does not know
how to work)	how to work)
lara(a widower man)	lari (a widower woman)
tepra(a dwarf man)	tepri (a dwarf woman)

## 2.8 Number distinction:

In both the languages the number can be formed with the help of three methods or processes which are discussed below:

- i. By adding plural suffixes to the singular number words that express the plurality of a noun or pronoun
- ii. By mentioning the numerals also singular number words can be changed into plural form
- iii. By repeating the same words twice.

There are some specific suffixes that express the plurality of a noun in both Boro and Rabha languages. In Boro language- /-sur/, /-phur, /-mun/ etc. and in Rabha language- /- taŋ/, /--bizan/, /-rəŋ/ etc. are used to form plural nouns from singular noun.

/-sur/ and /-rəŋ/: In Boro and Rabha languages the suffixes- /-sur/ and /-rəŋ/ are used with 2<sup>nd</sup> person and 3<sup>rd</sup> person pronouns to form plural number subject. Besides, these are found to be used with demonstrative pronouns too. Example

Boro	Rabha	Meaning
/bi/ - sur	/ə/ - rəŋ	They
/nwŋ/ - swr	/naŋ/ - rəŋ	You
/be/ -sur	/i/ - rəŋ	These
/buri/ - sur	/ə/ - rəŋ	Those

/-  $p^hur/$  and /-bizan/: In both the Boro and Rabha languages- /-  $p^hur/$  and /-bizan/ these two suffixes are used with human beings, animals, birds, fish insects etc. to express them into plural forms. Examples:

Boro	Rabha	Meaning
/mwswu/ - p <sup>h</sup> wr	/masu/ - bizan	Cows
/p <sup>h</sup> it <sup>h</sup> ai/ -p <sup>h</sup> ur	/t <sup>h</sup> e/ - bizan	Fruits
/ dau/ - p <sup>h</sup> ur	/tə/- bizan	Birds
/əm/- p <sup>h</sup> wr	/bak/-bizan	Pigs

/-mun/ and /-taŋ /: I Boro and Rabha languages the - /-mun/ and /-taŋ/ suffixes are used with the Kinship terms and honorific indicating personal pronouns to form plural form of the words. Examples:

Boro	Rabha	Meaning
/ada/ - mun	/dad/ - taŋ	elder brother and others
/abə/ - mun	/bibi/ - taŋ	elder sisters and others
/ai/ - muin	/ aya/ - taŋŋ	mother and others
/ap <sup>h</sup> a/-mun	/baba/-taŋ	Fathers and others
/abwi/-mwn	/zuzu/-taŋ	Grandmothers and others

In both the Boro and Rabha languages there are some words denoting collective noun. By putting them with the singular number words plural words are formed. Examples of such words are -  $p^h$ alu, -damul, -mak $^h$ a, -hanza,-gubaŋetc. in Boro and -,zakari,-pal etc. in Rabha. For example-

## **Boro:**

Boro	Meaning
musuu - p <sup>h</sup> alu	herd of cow
na – hanza	haul of fishes
dao - p <sup>h</sup> alu	flock of birds
mansi – hanza	group of people

Boro	Meaning

misi – pal	herd of buffalo
to – pal	flock of birds

# By repeating the nominal words or adjectives twice.for example-Boro and Rabha

Boro	Rabha	Meaning
nə- nə	nək- nək	from house to house
dui- dui	chika- chika	throughout water
gami -gami	səŋ- səŋ	from village to village

**2.9 Similarities in pronoun:** There are five types of Pronoun fond in Boro and Rabha language. These are mention below. Personal pronoun, Interrogative Pronoun, Demmomstrative pronoun, Indifinite Pronoun, Reflexive Pronoun etc.

**2.9.1: Personal Pronoun:** Personal Pronouns are used only with human beings in both the Boro and the Rabha languages. From the point of number personal pronoun can be found in two types- Singular pronoun and Plural pronoun and from the point of Persons may be found in three types-: 1<sup>st</sup> person, 2<sup>nd</sup> Person and 3<sup>rd</sup> Persons pronouns. Its examples are discussed below:

#### Boro:

Person	Singular (Boro)	English	Plural (Boro)	English
1 <sup>st</sup>	Aŋ	Ι	zwŋ	We
2 <sup>nd</sup>	nແກ (non-hon.)	You	nuŋ-sur (non-Hon.)	You
	nuinthan(hon.)	You	nunt <sup>h</sup> an-mun (hon.)	You
3 <sup>rd</sup>	bi (non-hon.)	He/ She	bi-sur (non-hon.)	They

bit <sup>h</sup> aŋ (hon.) He/she bit <sup>h</sup> aŋ-mun (hon.) Th	hey
---	-----

## Rabha:

Person	Singular	Plural
1 <sup>st</sup>	an (I)	chin(we)
2 <sup>nd</sup>	naŋ(you)	naŋ-rəŋ(you
3 <sup>rd</sup>	ə (he/ she)	ə-rəŋ (they)

2.9.2 Demonstrative Pronoun: The Demonstrative Pronouns are also available in the Boro and the Rabha languages too. These are- '-bui' (that) and '-be' (this). 'Be' is used to represent human being and '-bui' is used to indicate animals and things of distant place. In Rabha language 'e-i' and 'ə-u' demonstrative pronoun is found. Example-

Boro	Meaning
be- gət <sup>h</sup> ə	this boy
be-p <sup>h</sup> it <sup>h</sup> ai	this fruit

This 'be' demonstrative pronoun can also be expressed by adding plural suffixes as shown below:

Boro	Singular	Plural
Be	Be	be-sur (human)
Be	Be	be-p <sup>h</sup> ur (non-human

Rabha	Meaning
/c-i/	This
/ə-u/	That

These /c-i/ and /ə-u/ can also be expressed in plural form by adding the plural suffix-/bizan/ as shown below-

Rabha	Meaning
e – bizan	these are
u – bizan	those are

**2.9.3 Interrogative Pronoun**:- We can find the use of Interrogative Pronoun in both the Boro and the Rabha languages. In Boro there are three types of Interrogative Pronouns. These are-/-sur/, /-ma/ and /-bəbe/ or /-mabe/ or /-be/. /sur/ is used with human beings. The /-ma/ and /-bəbe/ or /-mabe/ or /əbe/ are used in the case of inquiry. Moreover, these are used with plural number suffixes as well as with case marker. In Rabha language the Interrogative Pronouns- chan', '-ata', 'bisi' 'bedə' and 'bekhere' are found. Example-

#### Boro:

'-sur': The Interrogative Pronoun '-sur' (who) is used with human being in making interrogative sentences. For example-

Boro	Meaning
sur (who)	sur sur

'-ma': The Interrogative Pronoun '-ma' (what) is found to be used to ask questions about non-human things.for example-

## Boro:

Singular	Plural
ma (what)	ma –ma

/mabe/ or /bəbe/ or /əbe/: These Interrogative Pronouns are used in the case of non animate things. For example-

## Boro:

Boro	Meaning
Bəbe	Where/ which
mabe	where/ what is this
əbe	which/ where

**Rabha:** In Rabha language the following words are used as interrogative pronoun: For example:

## Rabha:

Rabha	Meaning
Chaŋ	Who
Ata	What
bekay	Which
Bisi	Where
bedə	When
Bekhere	How

**2.9.4 Reflexive Pronoun:**- In both the Boro and the Rabha languages the use of Reflexive Pronoun can be seen. The Reflexive Pronoun is used only with

human being. 'gaə' reflexive pronoun is pluralized by suffixing 'sur' as well as by repeating the same word twice. Example:

## Boro:

Boro	Meaning
gaə - sur	(themselves)
gaə gaə	(oneself)

Rabha: In Rabha language we can find the word- 'kakay' as reflexive pronoun. And it can be transformed into plural number by repeating it twice. Example-Rabha:

Rabha	Meaning
Kakay	oneself, himself,herself
kakay kakay	Themselves

2.9.5 Indefinite Pronoun: In Boro language there are three types of Indefinite Pronouns. These are 'raobur', 'surba' and 'khaise/ khaipha. All these three pronouns are used with human, things and animals too and these pronouns can be pluralized be repeating them twice. Similarly in Rabha language also the use of indefinite pronouns is seen. These are- 'kese', 'chanba' and 'chakchba'. These pronouns can be pluralized by suffixing /-tan/ to them as shown below-

## Boro:

Singular		Plural	
surba - surba		surba surba (any body	and some others)
/k <sup>h</sup> aise/	k <sup>h</sup> aip <sup>h</sup> a	/khaise-khaise/khaipha	khaipha/(some
(somebody)		others)	

## Rabha:

Rabha	Meaning
/kese/	Some
/chaŋba/	Somebody
/chakchaba/	Nobody

Moreover, it is seen that indefinite pronouns can also be formed by adding /-taŋ/ suffix to these pronouns. Example:

## Rabha:

Rabha	Meaning
/kesa/	kesa – taŋ>somebody
chaŋba	chanba-tan>somebody
chakchaba	chakchaba - taŋ>nobody

From this chapter we can be clear that there are lots of similarities in the use of Pronouns between the Boro and the Rabha languages.

**2.10 Similarities in Numeral classifier**: The use of Numeral Classifier is also found present in both the Boro and Rabha languages. The numeral classifier mainly indicates the things in number. Such suffixes depend upon the structure of the noun (countable and uncountable). The numeral classifier is put before and after the noun to show the noun distinctly.

## Numeral Classifier used in Boro and Rabha languages:

(i) Boro {ma-} and Rabha {maη-} This Classifiers is functional used for animals, birds, and insects. For examples-

## Boro:

Boro: {ma-}	Meaning
/musuu ma-se/	a cow
/na ma-se/	a fish
/mwkhra ma-se/	a monkey
/dau ma-se/	a bird

## Rabha:

Rabha:{maŋ-}	Meaning
/masu maŋsa/	a cow
/na maŋ-sa/	a fish
/tə maŋsa/	a bird
/ki maŋsa/	a dog

ii) Boro {sa-} and Rabha {sak-} this Classifier is functional used for human beings. For example-

## Boro: {sa-}

Boro	Meaning
/mansi sa-se/	A man
/mansi-sa-nwi/	Two man

## Rabha: {sak-}

/kai sak/-sa/	a man
/kai sak-niŋ/	two man

iii) Boro  $\{p^ha\eta-\}$  and Rabha  $\{p^ha\eta-\}$  in this classifier is used for counting any kinds of tree and creepers in both the two languages. For examples-

# Boro: $\{p^ha\eta - \}$

Boro	Meaning
/thaizuu phaŋ-se/	a mango tree
/dəŋpʰaŋ pʰaŋ-se/	a tree
/thalir phan-se/	a banana tree

# Rabha: $\{p^ha\eta - \}$

/pəchə p <sup>h</sup> aŋ-se/	a mango tree
/dənphan phan-se/	a tree
/thalir phaŋ-se/	a banana tree

From the discussion it is observed that the numeral classifiers features in Boro and Rabha languages are almost similar. The reason is that both the languages have been originated from the same ancestral root.

**2.11 Reduplication of words:** The use of the features of reduplication of words is seen in both the Boro and the Rabha languages. According to this feature the same word is repeated for two times to express the desired meaning. The nouns, pronouns and adjective words are mostly reduplicated to express the desired meaning. Examples:

## Noun:

Boro	Rabha	Meaning
nə-nə	nək-nək	From house to house
gami-gami	səŋ-səŋ	From village to village
dui-dui	chika-chika	From water to water

## **Pronoun:**

Boro	Rabha	Meaning
sur-sur	chaŋ-chaŋ	Who
ma-ma	ata-ata	What

## Adjective:

Boro	Rabha	Meaning
gudan- gudan	pidan-pidan	New

mwzaŋ-mwzaŋ	nema-nema	Good
geder-geder	geder-geder	Big

**2.12 Agglutinating Feature**: The formation of words by adding prefix or suffix is called agglutinating. This feature is also present in both the Boro and the Rabha languages. In this process different prefix or suffixes are added to the root word and the meaning of the word gets slightly changed. Let's see the following examples:

#### Boro:

dau-p <sup>h</sup> ur-zuŋ>daophurzuŋ	With the birds
bibar-p <sup>h</sup> ur-ni-p <sup>h</sup> rai>bibarnip <sup>h</sup> rai	From the flowers

#### Rabha:

kai-rəŋ-ni>kairəŋni	Of the men
raba-taŋ-ni	Of the Rabhas

**2.13 Negation Formation:** In the Boro and Rabha languages the positive sentence is transformed into negative by adding the word of negation before or after the verb. In Boro language the prefix {da-} and suffix {-a} are added with the verb and in Rabha language the prefix {ta-} and the suffix {-cha} are added with the verb to denote the negativity of a word. We can be clear with the help of following examples:-

## Boro:-prefix {-da}

{da-}-v.za>daza (not to eat)
{da-}-v.ma>>dama> (not to do)
{da-}-v.phui>daphui (do not come)
{da-}-v.lir>dalir (do not write)
{da-}-v.gab>dagab(do not cry)

# Boro: suffix {-a}

V.than-{a-}>thana (do not go)
V.phui-{a-}>phuia(do not come)
V.dan-{a-}>dana(do not touch)
V.thui-{a-}>thuia(do not die)
V.bu-{a-}>bua(do not beat)

## Rabha: prefix {ta-}

```
{ta-}-v.ra (take) >tara(do not take
```

Rabha: suffix {-cha}

V.nu-{a-}>nua(do not see
V.za-{a-}>zaa>zaya (do not eat)
V.se-{a-}>sea(do not snatch
V.su-{a-}>sua(do not cold)
V.hu-{a-}>hua(do not rub)etc.

**2.14 Feature of Compound Words**: In both the Boro and Rabha languages there is a feature of formation of compound words by conjoining different distinct words. Example:-

## Boro:

Nok(house)-ha(land)>nokha (properties)
Nen(clothes)-kan(to dress)>nenkan(dresses)
Ha(earth)-tshoη(village)>hatshoη(country)
Nok(house)-tshabra(small)>notshra(kitchen)

The discussion has focused a clear idea about the affinities found in the level of phonology and morphology of both the languages. Being the languages of Tibeto-Burman group they have shown genetic correspondence on the one hand; and the other side they have also acquired Indo-Aryan elements along with the linguistics elements from different language families through the process of assimilations.