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## Lexical Borrowing In Kokborok: Influence Of Bengali And English

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**Abstract:** This study examines lexical borrowing in Kokborok, with particular emphasis on the influence of Bangla and English. As the indigenous language of the Tripuri community, Kokborok has experienced extensive contact with neighboring and global languages due to historical, social, educational, and administrative factors. These interactions have resulted in the incorporation of numerous loan words, especially from Bangla and English, into the Kokborok lexicon. The research investigates the nature, sources, and patterns of lexical borrowing, as well as the phonological and morphological adaptations that borrowed words undergo before becoming part of everyday Kokborok usage. It also explores the sociolinguistic factors that encourage borrowing, including bilingualism, language contact, education, urbanization, media exposure, and technological advancement. The study employs a descriptive and qualitative approach, drawing on examples from spoken and written Kokborok to illustrate the extent of lexical influence. The findings indicate that while Bangla has significantly influenced domains such as administration, culture, and daily communication because of long-standing regional contact, English has contributed extensively to the vocabulary of education, science, technology, and modern lifestyle. The study concludes that lexical borrowing has enriched the Kokborok vocabulary and reflects the language's adaptability to changing social and cultural contexts. At the same time, it emphasizes the importance of documenting these linguistic changes to preserve the unique identity and structural characteristics of Kokborok.

Key words: Kokborok, Indigenous, linguistic, language,

### 1. Introduction:

Lexical borrowing is one of the most significant outcomes of language contact, reflecting the social, cultural, political, and economic interactions between speech communities. It refers to the process by which a language adopts words or expressions from another language to meet new communicative needs or to accommodate changes in society. Borrowed words often become integrated into the phonological, morphological, and semantic systems of the recipient language, enriching its vocabulary while also reflecting historical patterns of contact. In multilingual societies, lexical

borrowing is a common linguistic phenomenon that demonstrates the dynamic and adaptive nature of languages.

Kokborok, the principal language of the Tripuri people and one of the official languages of Tripura, belongs to the Tibeto-Burman branch of the Sino-Tibetan language family. Over the centuries, Kokborok speakers have maintained close contact with speakers of Bangla and, more recently, English. These interactions have significantly influenced the lexical development of Kokborok. Bangla, being the dominant regional language and the medium of administration, education, literature, and trade for a long period, has contributed a substantial number of loanwords to Kokborok. Many terms related to administration, agriculture, household objects, religion, and everyday communication have been borrowed from Bangla and have become an integral part of the Kokborok lexicon.

The influence of English has increased considerably since the post-independence period, particularly through formal education, technology, mass media, globalization, and digital communication. English loanwords are commonly found in domains such as education, science, technology, business, healthcare, and modern lifestyle. These borrowed terms are often adapted to fit Kokborok phonological and grammatical patterns while retaining their original meanings. In many cases, English borrowings coexist with Bangla loanwords and indigenous Kokborok vocabulary, creating a multilingual lexical environment.

The study of lexical borrowing in Kokborok is important not only for understanding linguistic change but also for documenting the effects of language contact on minority and indigenous languages. While borrowing enriches the vocabulary and facilitates communication in changing social contexts, excessive dependence on dominant languages may also contribute to language shift and the gradual erosion of native lexical resources. Therefore, examining the patterns, sources, and functions of borrowed vocabulary helps reveal the balance between language development and language preservation.

This study aims to investigate the influence of Bangla and English on the Kokborok lexicon by identifying commonly borrowed words, analyzing their semantic domains, and examining the linguistic processes involved in their adaptation. It also seeks to explore the sociolinguistic factors that encourage borrowing, including bilingualism, education, urbanization, media exposure, and inter-community interaction. By providing a systematic analysis of lexical borrowing, this research contributes to a better understanding of language contact in Northeast India and offers insights into the evolving linguistic identity of the Kokborok-speaking community.

**Table 1. Loaned words (dry fruits ):**

Sl no	Bangali	Kokborok	Gloss
1	Dut	dut	milk
2	Doi	doi	Dadhi
3	Singara	singgwra	Shinghara
4	Chinabadam	Chinabadam	peanut
5	kishmish	kismis	raisins
6	Kath badam	Kath badam	almond
7	Batasha	batasa	Sugar drops
8	Kaju	kaju	cashews

**Table 1.1 Loan words ( fruits):**

Sl. no	Kokborok	Bengali	Gloss
1	Sosa	sosa	cucumber
2	Komola	komola	orange
3	Lewachi	lichi	lychee
4	Anggur	anggur	grapes
5	Bedana	bedana	pomegranate
6	Naspati	naspati	pear
7	Amra	amra	Hog plum
8	Amlai	amlai	gooseberry
9	Jambuk	jambuk	blackberry
10	Bel	bel	Wood apple

**Table 1.2 Loan words (vegetables):**

Sl. no	Kokborok	Bengali	Gloss
1	Badakopi	badakopi	cabbage
2	Phulkopi	fulkopi	cauliflower
3	Mulai	mula	radish
4	Jingga	jingga	Ridge gourd
5	Piyas	piyas	onion
6	risum	risun	garlic
7	Alu	alu	patato
8	Derso	derso	Ladys finger
9	Potol	potol	Pointed finger
10	Motor	motorsuti	beans

**Table 1.3 Loans words (cloths):**

Sl. no	Kokborok	Bengali	Gloss
1	Urna	urna	scarf
2	Panjabi	panjabi	kurta
3	Longgi	lungi	For a men's wrap
4	Sari	saree	For a woman's drape
5	Bulaus	blouse	A woman's top, often worn with a saree

**Table 1.4 Loan words (fish):**

Sl. no	Kokborok	Bengali	Gloss
1	Ilis	ilish	hilsha
2	katla	katol	carp
3	Puthi	Puti	amalfry
4	Rui	ruir	salmon
5	Buwal	buyal	trout
6	Pabda	pabda	Butter catfish
7	Rupchad	rupchada	pomfret
8	karpnu	carfu	carp
9.	Hanggor	hanggor	shark
10	<b>Chitol</b>	<b>chitol</b>	<b>Flat fish</b>

**Table 1.5 Loan words (flowers):**

Sl. no	Kokborok	Bengali	Gloss
1	Gulap	gulap	rose
2	Joba	joba	hibicus
3	Poddo	podha	lotus
4	krisnachura	Krishna chura	Royal poinciana
5	korbi	korbi	oleander
6	kamini	kamini	China box
7	Surjamukhi	surjamukhi	sunflower
8	Rojoniganda	rojoniganda	tuberose
9	Rada chura	Radha chura	Peacock flower
10	Chandra malika	Chandra malika	chrysanthemu m

**Table 1.6 Loan words (human organs):**

Sl. no	Kokborok	Bengali	Gloss
1	Kwpal	kopal	forehead
2	Kwpalpura	kopalpura	unlucky
3	Taluka	talu	palm
4	Sira	sira	nerve
5	kone	konui	elbow

**Table 1.7 Loan words (ornaments):**

Sl. no	Kokborok	Bengali	Gloss
1	Mala	mala	necklace
2	Koli	koli	bud
3	Bajuban	bajuban	armlet
4	Lulu	lulu	lulu
5	Ring	ring	ring

**Table. 2 Loaned words from English(stationary term):**

Sl.no	English	Kokborok	Glossary
1	Handle	hendol	Internet
2	Pencil	pensil	cooler
3	Glass	gulas	glass
4	Pin	pin	pin
5	plate	pelet	plate
6	Bottle	botal	bottle

**Table. 2.1 Loaned words (junk foods):**

Sl.no	English	Kokborok	Glossary
1	Ice cream	iskrim	Ice cream
2	Chocolate	chokulet	chocolate
3	Burger	barger	burger
4	Pizza	pija	pizza
5	Chips	chips	chips

**Table. 2.2 Loaned words (technical)**

Sl no	English	Kokborok	Glossary
1	Fridge	firij	fridge
2	Button	butan	button
3	Compass	compas	compass
4	Cooker	kukar	cooker
5	Cycle	sikel	cycle

**Table. 2.3 Loaned words (travel and Education):**

Sl no	English	Kokborok	Glossary
1	Number	namber	number
2	Fail	phel	fail
3	Pass	pas	pass
4	Order	oder	order
5	Ticket	tiket	ticket

**Table.3 Loaned words from Sanskrit:**

Sl no	Sanskrit	Kokborok	Gloss
1	Mula	<b>Mulai</b>	radish
2	Potol	<b>potol</b>	Pointed gourd
3	aluka	<b>alu</b>	Potato
4	yuj	<b>yoga</b>	yoga
5	Guru	<b>guru</b>	teacher
6	Prasada	<b>prasad</b>	grace
7	Ladduka	<b>ladu</b>	Spherical sweet

**Table.4 Loaned words from Hindi:**

Sl.no	Hindi	Kokborok	Gloss
1	Lungi	longgi	Sarong
2	Basmati	Basmati	Basmati rice
3	Guli	Guli	A bullet
4	Rotee	Roti	Bread
5	Chakka	chaka	A wheel
6	Aaloo	Alu	Patato
7	Puree	Puri	one kind of cake
8	Baranda	Baranda	veranda
9	Kaichi	Kenchi	Scissors
10	Panchaayat	Panchayat	Panchayat

**Table.5 Loaned words from Arabic:**

Sl no	Arabic	Kokborok	Gloss
1	Hisab	hisab	calculation
2	Baki	baki	Remaining
3	Amol	amol	Alcohol
4	Asol	asol	Real
5	Elem	elem	knowledge

**Table.6 Loaned words from Portuguese :**

Sl no	Portuguese	Kokborok	Gloss
1	Chabi	chabi	key
2	Armarium	almari	Almirah
3	Estiar	istiri	iron
4	Janela	janala	window
5	Caju	kaju	cashew
6	Mistri	mistri	mechanic
7	Saban	saban	soap

**Table.7 Loaned words from Persian:**

Sl no	Persian	Kokborok	Gloss
1	Ayna	Ayna	mirror
2	aram	Aram	Comfort
3	côshma	Chosma	glasses
4	Pardeh	Porda	Curtain
5	nôkol	Nokol	Fake/copy
6	Jadu	jadu	magic
7	Balance	baki	Balance
8	Ojon	Ojon	Weight
9	Tabesh	Tabis	Radiance
10	Hindi	Hindi	Hindi

### 3. Conclusion:

Lexical borrowing has played a significant role in the development of the Kokborok language, with Bangla and English serving as its two major sources of borrowed vocabulary. The influence of Bangla is especially evident in everyday communication, administration, education, trade, and cultural interactions due to long-standing geographical and historical contact. English, on the other hand, has contributed primarily to the vocabulary of modern education, science, technology, governance, and globalization. These borrowed words have been phonologically and morphologically adapted to fit the linguistic structure of Kokborok, demonstrating the language's flexibility and capacity for linguistic innovation.

Rather than weakening Kokborok, lexical borrowing reflects its dynamic nature and ability to adapt to changing social and cultural contexts. However, excessive dependence on borrowed words may gradually reduce the use of native vocabulary, making language documentation and preservation increasingly important. Therefore, while borrowing from Bangla and English has enriched Kokborok by expanding its lexicon and communicative functions, balanced language planning and the promotion of indigenous vocabulary are essential to preserving the language's unique identity and cultural heritage.

This study highlights that lexical borrowing in Kokborok is not merely a linguistic phenomenon but also a reflection of historical contact, multilingualism, and ongoing socio-cultural change.

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