The 3rd chapter of the proposed research work is History, structure and characteristics of Pali and Prakrit — the early MIA languages (600 B.C. - 100 B.C.). Since Buddhism flourished during 600 B.C., it can be surmised that Pali as colloqui came into being even before Asokan Prakrit though written form of Pali can be discerned not before 100 B.C.

The discussion on the genesis and early development of (1) PALI and (2) ASOKAN PRAKRIT follows:

(1) PALI

* THE TERM PALI AND ITS ORIGIN :

The term Pali is a controversial issue. Different scholars have oppressed their respective views regarding the term Pali leading to an interesting debate in the academic world. According to Geiger, the word 'Pali' is an abbreviation for Pālibhāṣā. European Orientalists have put forward a different view in respect of Pali. In their opinion it means a row (paṁkti) or line of a book or a book itself and again also the page of a canon or

It is also mentioned by several scholars that Pali means ‘texts’ or ‘sacred text’. According to Kosambi, a Buddhist scholar, Pali is derived from root ‘pāl’ which means ‘to protect’, ‘to preserve’. Some scholars also argue that Pali took its meaning from ‘Pālī’, i.e., village. As Pali became the language of the common people, it might have been originally the language of the rural areas. According to a grammatical work Pali is defined as “Saddattham pāletfi pāli”, i.e., “text is so called because it protects the sense of the words”. However, the Great commentator Buddhaghosa made the following observation that the language in which Tipiṭaka was written was known as the language of Pali.

**THE HOMELAND OF PALI:**

The homeland of Pali is still a puzzle. Indian and foreign scholars as well have put forward different views on origin and homeland of Pali. Max Wallesser, a German scholar, opines that Pali is derived from the name of the city of Pātaliputra (Greek Palibothra) and has pointed out that the word ‘pāli’ has been formed from Pātali or Pāḍali and his assumption is that Pali was the language of Pātaliputra, which was the capital of Magadha. However, the direction appears to be right since grammatically it is wrong to suggest that Pātali > Pali, because the right direction is as follows: Pātali > later Prākr Pāḍali > Old Bengali Pālali > Modern Bengali Pārula. According to Ceylonese tradition Pali is Māgadhī, Māgadhaniiruti, Māgadhikabhasa and the argument behind it is the language of the region known as Magadha wherefrom Buddhism emerged. The Great commentator Buddhaghosa also pointed out that Pali is ‘Māgadhiniiruti’, i.e., the language of Māgadhī and in his aṭṭhakathā, we get Buddhavacana, Tipiṭaka, Tanti, Pariyatta etc. as the synonym of Pali. In connection

---

40. Pali Language and Literature, op.cit.
41. ibid.
42. ibid., p-2.
43. ibid.
45. Pali Language and Literature, v.1, p-3, op.cit.
with this we find an interesting mention in Culavasā that Pali, which was synonymous with Tipitaka had been brought here (pālimattāṁ idhāniṁ natthi atthakathā eva).  However, it is to be noted that according to the Ceylonese tradition Māgadhī is the ‘mūlabhāsa’ (सा मागधी मुलभासा).  But it is not perhaps logical to infer that Pali is Māgadhī since primarily Māgadhī and Pali are characteristically different from each other and secondarily, despite the fact that Māgadhī was a regional dialect understood by a section of people, Pali became the universal one which had been made by Lord Buddha for preaching. In other words Pali as a language became the ‘lingua franca’ of the Northern India during 6th century B.C. while Māgadhī remained confined within a region.

Interestingly, there is a story in Vinaya Cullavagga, which opines an impression regarding the language of the Buddhavacana. The story is thus:— At that time two brahmin brothers, Yamelu and Tekula came to Lord Buddha and reported that the bhikkhus were propagating the teachings of Buddha through the medium of Sakāyanirukti (Pali Sakāyanirutti, probably means local dialect) instead of Chāndasa and they want to use the Chāndasa for Buddha’s teaching. Lord Buddha rebuked them ordered that do not propagate his teachings in Chāndasa, but in Sakāyanirutti. Buddhaghosa interpreted the term ‘chāndasa’ and ‘sakāyanirutti’ as ‘Vedic’ and ‘Māgadhī’ used by Buddha respectively. But from the story of the Vinaya Piṭaka (Cullavagga), it seems that ‘sakāyanirutti’ is the ‘local dialect’.  It may mention that though Lord Buddha ordered his pupils to promulgate his teachings in ‘sakāyanirutti’, but he was conscious about the situation that the use of local language or dialect would not distort his teachings and for that reason he ordered his pupils instead of using their own dialect, the words or dialect be used consciously according to the need.

46. ibid., p-3.
47. ibid.
49. ibid., pp.9-10.
Prof. Burnoff and Prof. Lassen also do not subscribe to the view that Pali is Magadhi dialect. They give reasons supporting their views. The salient features of Magadhi are — (i) the mutation of every ‘r’ into ‘l’, (ii) every ‘ṣ’ and ‘s’ into ‘ś’, (iii) the ending ‘-e’ in nominative singular masculine and neuter of ‘a’-stem inflected like them. While in Pali, change of ‘r’ into ‘l’ is frequent but not the rule, it has only ‘s’, but not ‘ṣ’ and ‘ś’ and the nominal forms mentioned above with ‘-o’ or ‘-aṁ’.

Westergaard and E.Kuhn consider Pali as the dialect of Ujjayinī because it has resemblance with the dialect of Asokan inscription, Girmār version (Guzerat). Another reason is that Mahendra (Pali Mahinda), son of Asoka, who was born and brought up at Ujjayinī and later on he went to Siṁhala (Ceylon) and propagated dhamma through the language of his native land, i.e., Ujjayinī.

According to Oldenberg, Pali is the language of Kaliṅga because it has similarities with the language of the Hāthūgumpha Inscription of Kharavela found in Khaṇḍagiri. E. Muller also accepted this view. But according to Lüders, Old Ardha Māgadhī (in which the Jaina canon is written) is the basis of Pali. P.V.Bapat argued against Lüders’ view because according to him Ardha-Magadhi belongs to the category of Prakrit dialect. On the other hand, Grierson and Nalinaksha Dutt thought Pali has resemblance with Paisācī Prākrit. According to Sten Konow, Pali and Paisācī is the language of the Vindhya region. Dr. S.K.Chatterjee, after examining phonological and morphological aspects, has drawn the conclusion that the original source of Pali is located in the region round about Madhyadesa or Śūrasena and Śaurasenī Prakrit bears close resemblance with Pali.

50. Geiger, W., Pali Literature and Language, op.cit.
51. ibid.
52. ibid.
54. ibid.
55. ibid.
56. ibid.
57. ibid.
58. ibid.
59. ibid.
In connection with the above opinion of B.C. Law regarding the origin of Pali, may be mentioned. According to him, the term Pāliḥasā or ‘Pali language’ is a comparatively modern coinage. Again, Rhys Davids holds the view that the original source of Pali is hardly be determined by the indepth analysis of languages. The dissimilarities between Pali and Māgadhī is more important though in Pali certain traits of Māgadhī Prakrit can be traced and also bears the view that the dialect of Kosāla is the basis of Pali. Prof. Windinsch opines that Pali belonged to the category of Māgadhī Prakrit and mentioned that such a lingua franca naturally contained elements of different dialects, yet it was free from the most obtrusive dialectical characteristics and it was not properly homogeneous. However, it is noticeable that scholars, both Indian and European, could not reach any consensus. It appears that Buddha regarding the medium of instruction for the propagation of his Dhamma, preferred local dialect while preaching in the region of Aṅga-Magadha, Kuru-Pañcāla, Śākya-Malla, Vatsa and various places in Central India. However, the conception of the lingua franca has been supported by the views of various scholars. H. Kern declared Pali as “kunts prache”, i.e., compromise of various dialects. Rhys Davids admitted it with giving probable reason that in the ancient days, there were wide highways running through principal cities, so as to maintain communication between the Western India and the Central India upto the limit of Vindhya ranges. Buddhist Sramanas, royal officials and traders used to avail of those routes frequently from Vaisāli and Rāja-grha on the east to Ujjaini on the west and to Pratishthānapura (near Narmada) on the south. As a matter of fact, a lingua franca gradually developed due to the mutual exchange of thoughts, understanding and transaction of various kinds. Therefore, Pali, which became the common language, came up as a mixture of various dialects used during that time.

61. Chowdhury, B.N., Bauddha Śāhitya, op.cit.
63. ibid., p-2.
64. ibid., p-5.
As the present work is concerned with the development of Middle-Indo-Aryan languages with reference to Buddhist literature and as only Tipitaka is taken for Pali literature as reference, so the time and period of compilation of Tipitaka has taken account. From the contemporary history we know that during the First Buddhist Council, which was held just a few months after the demise of Lord Buddha, Dhamma and Vinaya was recited at the Council by Ānanda and Upāli respectively. 65 Again, during the time of Asoka (3rd century B.C.), in the third Buddhist Council, Elder Therī Moggaliputta Tissa compiled the Kathāvatthu. 66 Apart from this, we get the name of the seven passages, i.e., (i) the Vinaya-Samukasa (the excellent treatise on Moral Discipline), (ii) the Aliya Vasas (the course of conduct followed by the sages — modes of ideal life), (iii) the Anāgata bhayas (fears of what may come about in future — dangers threatening the saṅgha and the Doctrine), (iv) the Muni-Gāthās (poem on ‘who is an hermit?’), (v) the Moneya-suta (Discourse on Quietism), (vi) the Upatissa-pasina (the question of Upatisya) and (vii) the Lāghula-vāda (the sermon to Rāhula beginning with the sermon on Falsehood, as delivered by the Lord Buddha) in the Bhābru Edict of Asoka. 67 Now, it can easily be apprehended that the name Tipitaka as the collection of Buddhavacana was not formed till the time of Asoka. Moreover, we get the information that compilation of Tipitaka or its written form is available from the time of Vattagāmāni Abhaya of Śrīlakā (1st century B.C.). 68 We come across a number of dialects used in Asokan edicts. Considering all the Points, it might be concluded that the dialects of Prākt, like, Māhārāṣṭrī, Sauraseni, Māgadhī, Ardha-Māgadhī, Paiscī had cast their influence on Pali and also western and middle-easter dialects of Asoka and language of Hāthīgumpha Inscription of Kharavela have some similarities with Pali and thus ‘Pālibhāṣā’ is a conglomeration of various languages.

65. Haldar(De), M.K., Bauddhadharmer Itihās, pp.135-136, op.cit.
66. ibid., p.151.
68. Bauddhadharmer Itihās, p.365, op.cit.
Pali is the language of Buddhism. In other words the entire Buddhavacana or Buddha's doctrine is written in Pali language. Now the question is, whether Pali truly is the language of Buddha's preaching or not. The answer can be given by referring two distinct viewpoints related to Pali Tipitaka and linguistic character of the language.

It is well known that Pali Tipitaka is the canon of Theravāda Buddhism. From the texts of the Tipitaka, we get various informations, which tend to prove the statement that the Pali is the language of Buddhavacana. We have already seen that in Cullavagga, a book of the Khandhakas, which is a section of Vinaya Piṭaka, a story has been mentioned when Lord Buddha asked his pupils “Anujānāmi bhikkhave Sakāya niruttīyā Buddhavacanaṁ pariṣṭhitam”. 69 Rhys Davids and Oldenberg translate the above-mentioned passages “I allow you, oh brethren, to learn the words of the Buddha each in his own dialect (Sakāya niruttīyā). 70

In this connection references can be made of Udāna, a book (3rd) of Khuddaka Nikāya, a section of Sutta Piṭaka. Udāna means solemn utterances of the Buddha. The Udāna is written in verse and the story before the verse is written in prose. However, before each sutta or verse, we see “... Atha kho Bhagavā etam-atthaṁ viditvā tayaṁ vaṁśāṁ imaṁ udānāṁ udānesi ....” 71 means by knowing the subject truly or consciously Buddha uttered these utterances.

Itivuttaka is another book (4th) of the Khuddaka Nikāya, also a section of Sutta Piṭaka, also known as a “book of quotations of the authoritative sayings of the Buddha”. Each of

the suttas begins these words — "vuttaṁ hetāṁ Bhagavatā, vuttaṁ arahatāṁ me sutta"
(This has been said by the Blessed One — thus I have heard) and ends with the words —
"ayamapi attho vutto Bhagavatā iti me sutanti" (this meaning was told by the Blessed
One — thus I have heard). 72

From the above discussion, it can be proved that Tipiṭaka is mostly Buddhavacana. Now
the question is, whether Pali is the language of Buddhavacana or of Tipiṭaka or not. If we
analysis it from the linguistic point of view, then we perhaps get the answer.

It is well known that King Asoka propagated the religion (Buddhism) in and outside
India. We have several edicts (major and minor rock edicts, pillar edicts, pillar and cave
inscriptions) of Asoka, which were directly and indirectly related to Buddhism. King
Asoka sent missionaries outside India for the spread of Buddhism. Again, we know the
fact that the Vedic language is the language of Aryans. It may be noted in this connection
that the language of Aryans, i.e., Vedic and the language of the Asokan edicts chronolo-
gically preceded the Tipiṭaka, which came to influence the later. 73 Hence, the influence
of local dialects on the language of Tipiṭaka can clearly be perceived. It is already
mentioned that the Tipiṭaka was first written during the reign of king Vaṭṭagāmanī
Abhaya (1st century B.C.) in Śrīlaṅkā. It is needless to say that the present one is that
particular literature written during the above-mentioned period.

In the language of Tipiṭaka, influence of several dialects can be noticed, i.e., western
dialect of Asokan Prakrit and Middle Eastern dialect of Asokan Prakrit (3rd century B.C.),
the language used in Hāṭhigumpha Inscription of Khāravela (1st century B.C.),
Māthāraṣṭrī, Śaurasenī, Māgadhī, Ardha-Māgadhī, Paisācī and Vedic. 74

72. Bandopadhaya, A.C., Buddha O Bauddhadharma, p-107, op.cit.
73. It is interesting to refer that we get the mention of seven suttas of Buddhist texts in the Bhaṭru
edict of Asoka, but the term Tipiṭaka is not used there.
74. Majumdar, P.C.,Saṅskrita O Prakrit Bhasar Kramavikāś, pp.297-301, op.cit.
Now the similarities between Pali and each of them will be stated respectively.

**PALI AND WESTERN DIALECT OF ASOKAN PRAKRIT:**

(i) ‘-aya’ and ‘-ava’ is retained.
(ii) Presence of ‘r’.
(iii) Cerebralisation is not extensive.
(iv) ‘ʃ’, ‘ʃ’ > ‘s’
(vi) Final ‘-ah’ > ‘-o’. 75

**PALI AND MIDDLE EASTERN DIALECT OF ASOKAN PRAKRIT:**

(i) ‘ŋ’ > ‘n’ in some cases.
(ii) Sometimes ‘r’ > ‘l’.
(iii) Sanskrit ‘tv’ and ‘tm’ > ‘tt’.
(iv) ‘ks’ > ‘kkh’, ‘st’ > ‘tt’.
(v) Consonant with ‘r’ is assimilated.
(vi) Final ‘-ah’ > ‘-e’. 76

**PALI AND THE LANGUAGE USED IN HĀTHĪGUMBHA INSRIPTION OF KHĀRAVELA:**

(i) ‘n’ is retained.
(ii) ‘r’ does not became ‘l’.
(iii) ‘ʃ’ and ‘ʃ’ > ‘s’.
(v) Final ‘-ah’ > ‘-o’. 77

75. ibid., pp.297-298.
76. ibid.
77. ibid.
PALI AND MĀHĀRĀṢṬRĪ:

(i) All intervocalic single plosives are elided and elided consonants are represented by 'y' or 'glide' (like Ardha-Māgadhi) in Pali and in Māhārāṣṭrī, elided consonant reduced to 'h' in case of aspirate.

  e.g. Sanskrit 'suka', 'nija', 'svādate' > Pali and Māhārāṣṭrī 'suva', 'niya', 'sāyati'.

  Sanskrit 'laghu', 'rudhira', 'sādhu' > Pali and Māhārāṣṭrī 'lahu', 'ruhira', 'sāhu'.

(ii) Sanskrit 'kṣ' > Pali and Māhārāṣṭrī 'cch'.

78. ibid., pp.297-298.

PALI AND ŚAURASENĪ:

a. Intervocalic single consonant often voiced.

b. Sanskrit 'ṭm' > Pali and Śaursenī 'tt'.

79. ibid., p-298.

PALI AND MĀGADHĪ:

(i) Intervocalic single consonant become voiced.

(ii) Sanskrit 'r' becomes 'l', but it is not a general rule for Pali but the use of Sanskrit 'l' as 'r' also found in Pali.

(iii) Sanskrit 'ṇy', 'jīn' > 'nī'.

80. ibid.

PALI AND ARDHA-MĀGADHĪ

(i) Presence of 'ṛ'.

(ii) Final 'āḥ' > '-o'.

(iii) The elided intervocalic consonants are often represented by 'y' or 'v' glide.

81. ibid.

---

78. ibid., pp.297-298.
79. ibid., p-298.
80. ibid.
81. ibid.
PALI AND PAISACI:

(i) Voiced consonants become unvoiced.
(ii) According to Hemchandra, there are twenty-two characteristics features of Paisaci and fourteen of them have resemblance with Pali.

\[ \text{e.g., 'jṅ' > 'ṅ', 'ṇy' > 'ṛṅ', 'ṇ' > 'n', 'l' > 'l', 's' and 'ṣ' > 'š' etc.} \]

PALL AND VEDIC:

(i) Intervocalic 'd', 'ḍh' becomes 'l', 'ḷh'.
(ii) Vocabulary, e.g., Vedic 'śimbala' (cotton flower) = Pali 'simbala', 'simbali'.

\[ \text{Vedic 'kivant' = Pali 'kivaṁ' (how much?, how far?)} \]

However, from the biography (not continuous) of Lord Buddha, it has been seen that he went to Vāraṇasī, Uruvelā, Rājagṛha, Kapilavastu, Śrāvasti, Vaissālī, Bhanḍagāma, Pāvā, Bhargadesa, Kauśāmbī, Kuśinagara etc. for the preaching of his Dhamma. It appears from Cullavagga that Buddha told his disciples to use local dialects in course of his preaching and as a result, we get influence of various dialects and languages on Pali, which is the language of Tipiṭaka. Considering all the aforesaid facts it seems to us that Tipiṭaka is Buddhavacana and therefore, Pali is the language of Buddhavacana.

PHONOLOGY OF PALI:

(1) SOUND SYSTEM:

VOWELS:
\[ a, ā, i, ī, u, ū, e, o. \]

CONSONANTS:
\[ k, kh, g, gh, ŋ, c, ch, j, jh, ṇ, ḍ, ḍh, ṇ, t, th, d, dh, n, p, ph, b, bh, m, \bar{r}, \bar{l}, \bar{ḥ}, y, v, s, h, ŋ. \]

---

82. ibid., p.299.
83. ibid., pp.300-301.
a. Sanskrit vowels 'r' and 'l' are absent and diphthongs 'ai' and 'au' are also.
b. The consonant 'l' stands for intervocalic 'd' and 'lh' for intervocalic 'dh'. In the manuscripts 'l' and 'lh' are always confused. Some spellings seem to be arbitrary.

(2) TREATMENT OF SANSKRIT VOWELS IN PALI:

(i) Sanskrit 'r' becomes 'a', 'i', 'u' in Pali.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>Pali</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hṛdaya</td>
<td>hadaya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rṣi</td>
<td>isi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rṣabha</td>
<td>usabha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ii) Sanskrit 'r' becomes 'ri' and 'ru' in Pali.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>Pali</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rṣe</td>
<td>rite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vrksa</td>
<td>rukha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(iii) There was no place have the long 'ṛ' in Pali phonology. It was entirely lost.

(iv) Sanskrit vowel 'ḷ' becomes 'u' in Pali.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>Pali</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>klpta</td>
<td>kutta</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(v) Sanskrit diphthongs 'ai' and 'au' become 'e' and 'o' in Pali respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>Pali</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>caityagiri</td>
<td>cetiyagiri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gautama</td>
<td>Gotama</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(vi) Sanskrit 'aya' and 'ava' become 'e' and 'o' in Pali respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>Pali</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kārāpayati</td>
<td>kārāpeti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avalokayati</td>
<td>oloketi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(3) CHANGE OF VOWELS:

(i) Before double consonants 'a' becomes 'e', 'i', 'u', 'o'.

  e.g., Sanskrit  |  Pali
  ------  |  -----
  sayya   |  seyya
  trapu   |  tipu
  pañcaviṁśati | paññuvīsati
  tiraska |  tirokkha

(ii) Sanskrit 'ā' becomes 'e', 'u' and 'o' in Pali.

  e.g., Sanskrit  |  Pali
  ------  |  -----
  mātra   |  metta
  sarvajñāḥ | sabbāññu
  dośā    |  doso

(iii) Sanskrit 'i' becomes 'a', 'u' and 'e' in Pali.

  e.g., Sanskrit  |  Pali
  ------  |  -----
  prthivi    |  paṭhavi
  gairika    |  gerika
  mañjistha  |  majjeththa

(iv) Sanskrit 'T' becomes 'e' in Pali.

  e.g., Sanskrit  |  Pali
  ------  |  -----
  grhītvā   |  gahetvā

(v) Sanskrit 'u' becomes 'a' and 'o' in Pali.

  e.g., Sanskrit  |  Pali
  ------  |  -----
  aguru    |  agaru
  anupama  |  anopama
(vi) Sanskrit ‘e’ becomes ‘i’ before double consonants in Pali.
   e.g., \text{SANSKRIT} \quad \text{Pali}
   presevaka \quad pasibbika

(vii) Sanskrit ‘o’ becomes ‘u’ and ‘ū’ in Pali.
   e.g., \text{SANSKRIT} \quad \text{Pali}
   jyotsnā \quad juṇhā
   viśoka \quad visūka

(4) \text{THE LAW OF QUANTITY}:

Long vowels are usually shortened before conjunct consonants:
   e.g., \text{SANSKRIT} \quad \text{Pali}
   śākya \quad sakka
   tīrtha \quad tittha
   pūrṇa \quad puṇṇa

(i) Sometimes double consonant is simplified and the long vowel is kept.
   e.g., \text{SANSKRIT} \quad \text{Pali}
   ūrmi \quad ummi, ūmi

(ii) Sometimes there was a shortening of a long vowel and to compensate that
    following single consonant is doubled.
   e.g., \text{SANSKRIT} \quad \text{Pali}
   uṣṇiṣa \quad unhissa

(iii) As a corollary of the above, the vowels ‘e’ and ‘o’ are to be mentioned as
     short a double consonant and long before a single one.
      e.g., seyyā, yobbana, upekkhā, mokkha.
(iv) Sometimes the long vowels become shortened without any compensation.
e.g., Sanskrit Pali
samkhyāta samkhata

(v) Short vowels are lengthened almost, in case of prepositions.
e.g., Sanskrit Pali
pravacana pāvacana
Some of these cases may be mentioned as compensatory for the loss of consonant.

(vi) There is dropping of the nasal, if the nasalised vowel is lengthened.
e.g., Sanskrit Pali
sīṇha sīha
Again, in some cases the nasal generally repairs the loss of some consonants.
e.g., Sanskrit Pali
āśru āṁsu

(vii) Sometimes vowels are dropped without any compensation.
e.g., Sanskrit Pali
duḥitā dhūtā
api pi

(5) THE LAW OF MORA

The Law of Mora plays an important role in the construction of Pali words. In Pali a syllable can contain only one mora or two moras, but not more than two. Therefore, it begins with short vowel (one mora) or long vowel (two mora) or it closes with short vowel. Every syllable with a nasal is mentioned as closed. There is no long nasal vowel.
Several changes have taken place in case of vowels due to the Law of Mora:—

(i) In Pali, there is long vowel before single consonant.
   e.g., Sanskrit  Pali
   valka  vāka

(ii) In Pali, there is short vowel before double consonant.
    e.g., Sanskrit  Pali
    mahāphala  mahapphala

(iii) Like the long, the short nasal vowel possesses two moras then in the place of a pure long vowel, a nasal sometimes appear.
    e.g., Sanskrit  Pali
    śarvarī  saṁvarī

Sometimes a long vowel is kept before double consonant.
    e.g., Sanskrit  Pali
    dātra  dākha.

(iv) A long vowel preceding the consonant group is shortened regularly even in the case of the separation of a consonant group by a vowel which is known as svarabhakti.
    e.g., Sanskrit  Pali
    mourya  moriya

(v) Without any compensation there was dropping of vowels.
    e.g., Sanskrit  Pali
    eva  va
(6) THE TREATMENT OF CONSONANTS:

(i) Pali possesses all the Sanskrit consonants, except palatal ‘ś’, cerebral ‘ṣ’ and visarga(h). The sibilants ‘ś’ and ‘ṣ’ are replaced by (dental ‘s’) only and ‘ḥ’ either being dropped or replaced by the nominative singular ending ‘o’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>Pali</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yasa</td>
<td>yasa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tiṣya</td>
<td>tissa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhah</td>
<td>Buddh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ii) In Pali cerebrals are found much more profusely than in Sanskrit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>Pali</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ghaṭa</td>
<td>duṭṭha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>duṇḍa</td>
<td>punṇa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(iii) Sanskrit consonants are sometimes changed in Pali.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>Pali</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lalāṭa</td>
<td>naiṭṭa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sarva</td>
<td>sabba</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(iv) Hard consonants are sometimes softened.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>Pali</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vyāpṛta</td>
<td>vyāvaṭa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rūṭa</td>
<td>rūḍa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(v) ‘y’ sometimes appears for ‘d’ in Pali.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>Pali</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>khāḍita</td>
<td>khāyita</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(vi) Reduction of an aspirate to ‘h’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>Pali</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>laghu</td>
<td>lahu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sāḍhu</td>
<td>sāhu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(vii) There are several Pali words where intervocalic voiced consonants become unvoiced.

e.g., SANSKRIT PALI
chagala chakala

(viii) In several cases aspiration is found.

e.g., SANSKRIT PALI
kubja khujja

(ix) Change is seen in the conjunct consonants, which show either simplification or assimilation.

e.g., SANSKRIT PALI
pūṇa punṇa
śabda sadda

(x) The conjunct sometimes dissolved by an intervening vowel.

e.g., SANSKRIT PALI
ācārya ācāriya
sūrya suriya

(xi) Interchange of 'ṛ' and 'l' is not rare.

e.g., SANSKRIT PALI
pari pali
kira kila

(7) Due to the Law of Mora, several changes have taken place in case of consonants
also:—
(i) **SANSKRIT** | **PALI**
---|---
krṣṇa | kāṇha
gandharva | gandhabba
caitya | cetiya
sthavira | thera
prajñā | paññā
rakta | ratta
śākya | sakka

(ii) **Change of Sanskrit consonants.**

(a) **SANSKRIT** | **PALI**
yasti | latṭhi

(b) **Softening of hard consonants.**

* e.g.,

SANSKRIT | PALI
uta | uda

(c) ‘y’ becomes ‘d’.

* e.g.,

SANSKRIT | PALI
Khādita | khāyita

(d) **There was a change in the conjunct consonants.**

* e.g.,

SANSKRIT | PALI
mukta | mutta
śabda | sadda
(iii) In Pali, ‘t’ retains and it very often tries to show r’ when in the corresponding Sanskrit form there is ‘t’.

- **e.g.** SANSKRIT | PALI
  - mahāphala | mahapphala
  - kira | kila

(iv) There was the assimilation of conjuncts in Pali.

- **e.g.** SANSKRIT | PALI
  - cakra | cakka
  - rakta | ratta
  - satya | sacca

**EXCEPTIONS:**

(a) ‘r’ retain with initial conjuncts.

- **e.g.** SANSKRIT | PALI
  - Brahmajāla | Brahmajāla

(b) Initially there was no assimilation of conjunction, but there was a system of simplification.

- **e.g.** SANSKRIT | PALI
  - sthita | thita /ṭhita

(v) Assimilation of medial visarga.

- **e.g.** SANSKRIT | PALI
  - puṣkara | pekkhara

(vi) Loss of final consonants, except anusvara.

- **e.g.** SANSKRIT | PALI
  - devāt | devā
Sometimes Sanskrit ‘y’ and ‘m’ changed to ‘v’.

\[\begin{array}{l}
e.g., \text{SANSKRIT} \quad \text{PALI} \\
\text{āyuśmān} \quad \text{āvuso} \\
\text{trayatriṃśat} \quad \text{tāvatiṃsa}
\end{array}\]

Beside, the Pali, other language of early stage of MIA is Asokan Prakrit, which will be discussed below.

**(2) ASOKAN PRAKRIT**

Asoka, the great king, was a prince of the Maurya Dynasty and grandson of Chandragupta Maurya. According to northern and southern legends, Asoka’s succession was disputed, he slaughtered his ninety-nine (99) brothers, for the sake of throne for which he is dubbed Caṇḍāsoka. But after Kaliṅga war he has a great change and he became Dharmāsoka. In the Rock Edict VIII, we see: “For a long time past, kings used to go out on tours of pleasure (Vihāra-yātra). Here there were chase and similar diversions. Now, King Priyadarśin, Beloved of the gods, is repaired to Sambodhi (Bodhi tree) when he had been consecrated ten years. Hence, this is touring for dhamma (Dharma-yātra). Therefore, we see that before that King Asoka used to find his relaxation or recreation in tours of pleasure, like, hunting etc. But, after the awful Kaliṅga war, he left the idea of ever going on this pleasure tours forever and started religious tours. However, as a result of Dharmayātra, we got many inscriptions, like, pillar edicts, major and minor rock edicts, two separate rock edicts, etc. which are found in various places of his empire. Therefore, inscriptions of Asoka have been engraved either in rocks, stone pillars or in caves. A list of inscriptions given below which I take as reference:---

1. **On Rocks:**—

   A. (i) Fourteen major rock-edicts — Gīmār, Kālsī, Shāhbāzgarhī, Mānsherā, Dhaulī, Jaugaḍā.

   (ii) Two separate Kaliṅga rock edicts ---- Dhaulī and Jaugaḍā.

---

B. (i) Minor Rock Edicts — Rūpnāth, Brahmagiri and Māski rock inscription.

2. On Stone Pillars :

(i) Seven Pillar edicts — Delhi-Toprā, Delhi-Mirāth, Lauriya-Ararāj, Lauriya-Nandangarh, Rāmpurvā, Allāhābād.

(ii) Minor pillar edict — Kausāmbī pillar edict.

(iii) Minor pillar inscriptions — Sāncī, Sārnāth, Rummendei and Nigālī Sagār.

Again, all the inscriptions mentioned above can be divided into two separate divisions — (i) directly related to Buddhism and (ii) indirectly influenced by Buddhist ethics (mainly ahimsa) and rituals as the form of proclamation.

The following list shows the distribution of inscriptions under the proper heads :

(A) Directly related to Buddhism :

(i) Minor Rock Edict — Calcutta-Bairat rock edict / Bhābru edict.

(ii) Rummendei and Nigālī Sagār pillars.

(iii) Kausāmbī, Sāncī and Sārnāth pillar edicts.

(B) Indirectly influenced by Buddhist ethics and rituals as the form of proclamation :

(i) Fourteen rock edicts — Girnār, Kālsī, Shāhbāzgarhī, Mānsheerā, Dhaulī, Jaugāḍa.

(ii) Two separate Kalinga rock edicts — Dhaulī and Jaugāḍa.

(iii) Seven pillar edicts — Delhi-Toprā, Delhi-Mirāth, Lauriya-Ararāj, Lauriya-Nandangarh, Rāmpurvā, Allāhābād-Kosam pillar.

(iv) Minor rock edicts — Rūpnāth, Māski and Brahmagiri Rock Inscriptions.
The list of the inscriptions has already given. Now, the place of findings as well as a short description of the inscriptions is stated below:

1. **Bhabru edict / Calcutta Bairat rock edict**

Captain Burt in Bairat, near Bhābru, Jaipur district, discovered it in 1840, Rajasthan. At present, it is preserved in the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta (Kolkata). The inscription bears the name of seven texts of Tipitaka which are recited by Buddhist monks and nuns and both male and female devotees.

2. **Rummendei pillar inscription**

Dr. Führer discovered it in 1896 near shrine of Rummendei Temple, in the village Parariya, Nepalese Tarai. King Asoka visited the spot and erected the pillar as it is the birthplace of Lord Buddha Sākyamuni and that is why king exempted the village of Lūṁminī from paying taxes.

3. **Nīgālī Sāgar pillar inscription**

Dr. Führer discovered the inscription in 1895 on the western bank of a large tank called Nīgālī Sāgar in Nepalese Tarai. The inscription refers to King Asoka’s enlargement of the Stūpa of the Buddha Konakamana to the double (of its original size) and later on visited the place in person and erected the pillar.
(1) **Kausāmbī pillar edict:**

It is found inside the Allahabad Fort. It is addressed to the Mahāmātras at Kausāmbī ordering them to take steps schism in the monastery and also to punish the monks or nuns trying to break up the samgha.

(5) **Sārnāth pillar edict:**

This edict is found at Sārnāth, district Benares (ancient Rṣipatana or Mṛgadava), U.P. It is probably addressed to the Mahāmātras at Pāṭaliputra ordering against them to take steps schism in the monastery and punishments also mentioned for the monks and nuns trying to break up the samgha. Again, it bears the order for lay-worshippers to come on every fast day (posatha) at the samgha in order to be inspired with confidence with this very edict.

(6) **Sānčī pillar edict:**

This pillar inscription is found in Sānčī, ancient Buddhist site, which is situated in Raisen district, Madhya Pradesh, Central India. This inscription also contains suggestion against the schism in the monastery.

**PHONOLOGY OF THE ABOVE INSCRIPTIONS:**

Among all the inscriptions, except, Bhābru edict and Sānčī pillar inscription, the places of findings of these inscriptions can be located in the middle-eastern region, still they bears the same phonological features like others.
(i) ‘r’ is generally replaced by ‘l’.

- **E.g., Sanskrit**  ASOKAN PRAKRIT
  - rājñā  ḍajīna
  - rājā  ḍajā
  - cirasthiṅkā  cilasthistike
  - āhāraḥ  āhāle

(ii) Conjuncts ‘s’ and ‘r’ are always assimilated.

- **E.g., Sanskrit**  ASOKAN PRAKRIT
  - ṛṣṭha-bhāgikaḥ  ṛṣṭha-bhāgiye
  - samagraḥ  samage
  - grāmaḥ  gāme

(iii) Conjunct ‘kṣ’ becomes ‘kh’.

- **E.g., Sanskrit**  ASOKAN PRAKRIT
  - bhikṣu  bhikhu
  - bhikṣuṇī  bhikhuni
  - nikṣipta  nikhita

(B) A STUDY ON THE ASOKAN INSCRIPTIONS INDIRECTLY INFLUENCED BY BUDDHIST ETHICS (MAINLY AHIMSA) AND RITUALS AS THE FORM OF PROCLAMATION:

It may be noted that a list of the inscriptions in connection with the above has already been given.

Now, the finding places of the same are given below.

(1). There are altogether fourteen rock edicts, which have been found in six different places, i.e., Shāhbazgarhī, Mānsheṛā, Girnār, Kālsī, Dhaulī and Jaugaḍa.
(i) The **Shāhbāzgarhi** Rock :—

The Shāhbāzgarhi Rock is found in Shāhbāzgarhi, Peshawar district, North-West Frontier Province, now situated in West Pakistan.

(ii) The **Mānsherā** Rock :—

The Mānsherā Rock is found in Mānsherā in the Hazara district of the North-West Frontier Province, now in West Pakistan.

(iii) The **Gīrār** Rock :—

The Gīrār Rock is found in Gīrār Mountain, Junāgarh district in Kāṭhiwār peninsula, Guzerat.

(iv) The **Kālsī** Rock :—

The Kālsī Rock is found near Kālsī, Dehra Dun district, United Province.

(v) The **Dhauli** Rock :—

The Dhauli Rock is found at Dhauli village in Puri district, Orissa.

(vi) The **Jaugada** Rock :—

The Jaugaḍa Rock is found at Jaugaḍa in Ganjam district, Orissa.

(2) There are seven pillar edicts of King Asoka, which are found in six places, i.e., Delhi-Ţoprā, Delhi-Mirāţh, Lauriya-Araţj, Lauriya-Nandangarh, Rāmpurvā and Allāhābād.
(i) The Delhi Topra Pillar:
This pillar is originally in Siwalik Mountain range in the village Tobrā (present Topra), in the district of Sālurā and Khizrabad (90 kos from Delhi). The pillar standing to the present day on the roof of the three-storied citadel of Firoz Shah outside the 'Delhi-Gate' to the south-east of modern Delhi. It bears seven edicts of Asoka.

(ii) The Delhi-Mirath Pillar:
This pillar is carried by Firoz Shah from Mirath (in the district of United Provinces) to Delhi. It bears the first five edicts of the Delhi-Topra pillar. A fragment bearing portions of the two last lines of the sixth edict was offered to the British Museum in 1913 and from its dimensions, it seems that it belonged originally to the Delhi-Mirath pillar.

(iii) The Lauriya-Ararāj Pillar:
This pillar stands near a village named Lauriya, in the Champaran district, North Bihar. The name Ararāj is after the neighbouring Siva temple, named Ararāj. It bears the set of the first six edicts.

(iv) The Lauriya-Nandangarh Pillar:
This pillar also stands near village named Lauriya, in the Champaran district, North Bihar. Nandangarh is a ruined fort in its vicinity, due to which Cunningham combined these to separate two sets of six edicts — Lauriya-Ararāj and Lauriya-Nandangarh.
(v) **The Rāmpurvā Pillai** :---

Another copy of first six edicts was discovered at Ram-Champaran district, North Bihar by Mr. Carlleyle.

(vi) **The Allahābād Pillar** :---

It is found in Allahābād and now, it stands inside the fort at Allahābād. It is a set of six edicts.

(3) Among all minor rock inscriptions, only three has been taken as reference and these are found from Rūpnāth, Māski and Brahmagiri.

(i) **The Rūpnāth Rock Inscription** :---

The Rūpnāth rock inscription is found from Rūpnāth, fourteen miles west of SliMANabad railway station on the line from Jabalpur to Katni, Madhyapradesh.

(ii) **The Māski Rock Inscription** :---

This rock inscription is found from Māski, a village in the Lingsugur Taluka of the Raicur district of the Nizam’s Dominion, Hyderabad.

(iii) **The Brahmagiri Rock Inscription** :---

It is found in Citaldurga district of Mysore State.
There is a controversy regarding the nature of inscriptions whether Buddhism influences them or not. In the opinion of a number of scholars that the inscriptions do not necessarily betray the impact of Buddhism since non-violence or ahimsā, which appears to be the predominant feature of all inscriptions is also a guiding principle of other religions too. Asoka's statecraft was also influenced by Buddhism. Yet there are so many reasons, which prove the fact that Asoka's edicts (which are not directly related to Buddhism) have indirectly been influenced by Buddhist ethics and rituals and they are found as the form of proclamation. According to the reading of E. Hultzsch, in Minor Rock Edict-I, Rūpnāth and Māski, king Asoka directly declares himself to be a 'sākyas' (sa sumi prakāsa sake) and a 'Buddha-Sākya' (aṁ sumi Budha-Sake), i.e., a Buddhist. In the Calcutta-Bairat Rock Edict, he speaks with an air of authority over the Buddhist saṅgha, pointing out some passages, viz., (i) the Vinaya-samukasa (the excellent treatise on Moral Discipline), (ii) the Aliya-vasas (the course of conduct followed by the sages — modes of ideal life), (iii) the Anāgata bhayas (fears of what may come about in future — dangers threatening the Saṅgha and the Doctrine), (iv) the Muni-Gāthā (poem on "Who is Hermit?"); (v) the Moneya-sūta (Discourse on Quietism), (vi) the Upatisa-pasina (the questions of Upatiṣya) and (vii) the Lāghulavāda (the sermon to Rāhula beginning with the sermon on Falsehood, as delivered by the Lord Buddha) from scriptures to be recited and meditated by the dwellers of the saṅgha, i.e., monks and nuns and also by the lay devotees, i.e., male and female and giving an account of his faith in the Buddhist Trinity. We also get that he stands out as the Defender of his Faith and proclaims the penalties for schism in the saṅgha as referred to in the Minor Pillar Edicts at Sārnāth, Kauśāmbī and Sāncī. Moreover, we have evidence of (i) his abolition of bloody sacrifices, (ii) his appointment of Dharma-Mahāmātras to look after 'the interests of the saṅgha' (samghaṭhasi pi me kaṭe ime viyāpaṭa hohanti ti hemeva bambahanesu — some Mahāmātras were ordered by me to busy themselves with the affairs of the saṅgha) 85 (pillar edict — VII), (iii) his observance of Uposatha Buddhist Holdings (tūs catimmaṁsāsū

Fish are inviolable and must not be sold, on three Caturmasis (and) on the Tishya full-moon during three days, viz., the fourteenth, the fifteenth (and) the first (tithi) and invariably on every fast day and śāhampi-khāye ātvudasaye ṣarṇadasaye tisaye punāvasune ṭishu cātuṁmaśisu sudivasāye gone cqa na nīlakhitaviye ajake ēṭake sūkale e vā pi aṁne nīlakhiyati no nīlakhitaviye — On the eighth (tithi) of every fortnight, on the fourteenth, on the fifteenth, on Tishya, on Punarvasu, on the three caturmāsas (and) on festivals, bulls must not be castrated (and) he-goats, rams, boars and whatever other (animals) are castrated (otherwise), must not be castrated 86 (pillar edict —V). Moreover, his attachment to a definite Buddhist symbol in the edicts, i.e., the symbol of the White Elephant, indicated by an inscription at Ginnār at the end of the Rock Edict XIII and represented by a figure cut on the rock at Dhauli and incised at Kālsī with the label ‘gajatame’, “the most perfect elephant” points towards Buddhist leaning of Asoka. Further, in Pillar Edict V, we find “tuse sajive no jhāpetaviye” (Husks containing living things must not be burnt), which is nothing but Lord Buddha’s compassion towards all living creatures, not only for human being and animals. 87

However, these inscriptions can be divided under four parts according to geographical distribution, which must be classified under five distinct dialect group. These are — (i) north-western, (ii) western, (iii) middle-eastern, (iv) eastern and (v) southern. Now, the list of the inscriptions according to distinct dialect group given below :—

(1) **North Western** :-
Shāhbażgarhi and Mānsheṛa rock edicts.

(2) **Western** :-
Ginnār Rock edicts.

86. ibid., p.128.
87. ibid., p.127.
(3) Middle-Eastern :
(i) Kālsī rock edicts.
(ii) Seven pillar edicts — Delhi-Topra, Delhi-Mirāth, Lauriya-Ararāj and Lauriya-Nandangarh, Rāmpurvā, Allāhabād.
(iii) Minor Rock Edict — Rūpnāth.

(4) Eastern :
(i) Dhauli and Jaugaḍa rock edicts.
(ii) Two separate rock edicts, Dhauli and Jaugaḍa.

(5) Southern :
Minor Rock Edicts — Māski and Brahmagiri.

PHONOLOGY OF THE ABOVE INSCRIPTIONS :

(1) North-Western Dialect Group :

(i) Sanskrit 'ṛ' becomes 'a', 'i', 'u', 'ri' or 'ru' (rarely) with or without the cerebralisation of a following dental plosive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>Asokan Prakrit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vyāṛta</td>
<td>vapāṭa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bhṛṭaryesa</td>
<td>bhaṭamayesa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kṛta</td>
<td>kita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vṛttam</td>
<td>vuttaṁ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vyāṛta</td>
<td>vapuṭa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mṛgah</td>
<td>mṛige</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mṛgah</td>
<td>mṛugo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ii) The conjunct 'kṣ' generally retain but sometimes became 'ch' or 'kh'.

64
(iii) Conjuncts in ‘r’ are generally not simplified (examples are found in both the versions).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>Asokan Prakrit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mokṣāya</td>
<td>mokṣaye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kṣaṇīti</td>
<td>kṣaṇīti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kṣudram</td>
<td>khuda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kṣṅoti</td>
<td>kṣaṅati,chaṅati</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(iv) Conjuncts in ‘s’ are sometimes assimilated with or without the cerebralisation of the following dental plosive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>Asokan Prakrit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dharma</td>
<td>dhrama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brāhmaṇa</td>
<td>brahmaṇa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>priyadārśī</td>
<td>priyadārśī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sarvatra</td>
<td>savrata</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(v) Conjunct ‘sv’ becomes ‘sp’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>Asokan Prakrit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>svasaṇa</td>
<td>spasana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>svasunāh</td>
<td>spasuna</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(vi) A nasal conjunct in ‘jn’ and ‘y’ is assimilated to ‘n’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>Asokan Prakrit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rājñāḥ</td>
<td>raño</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anya</td>
<td>aña</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(vii) 'h' is rather a weak sound in non-initial (medial /final) positions. 
   e.g., SANSKRIT ASOKAN PRAKRIT 
   brāhmaṇa bramaṇa [both version] 

(viii) It is very important that there is no use of long vowel in both the versions as they are written in Kharoṣṭhī script. 

(2) Western Dialect :--- 

(i) 'ṛ' becomes 'a' or 'u' if 'v' precedes. 
   e.g., SANSKRIT ASOKAN PRAKRIT 
   mṛgaḥ mago 
   vyāptaḥ vyāpaṭa 
   vṛtta vutta 

(ii) Conjuncts in 's' are almost always retained. 
   e.g., asti, hastidasana, nasti, but, ithi < Sanskrit stri. 

(iii) 'kṣ' becomes 'ch'. 
   e.g., SANSKRIT ASOKAN PRAKRIT 
   kṣudraṁ chudaṁ 
   kṣanati chaṇati 

(iv) Conjuncts in 'ṛ' are often assimilated. 
   e.g., SANSKRIT ASOKAN PRAKRIT 
   priyadarśinah piyadasi, but 
   devānampriyasya devānampriyasa
again, priyasino also available.

*dhuvo* (Sanskrit *dhruvah*).

again, subscript ‘r’ being used as the superscript.
e.g., Sanskrit *priyah* > Asokan Prakrit *piryo*

(3) Middle-Eastern Dialect Group ——

(i) ‘r’ is generally replaced by ‘l’.
e.g., Sanskrit Asokan Prakrit

ārāddhaṁ | ālādhe

cirasthitika | cilaṁthītika

sātirekaṁ | sātileke

(ii) Final ‘a’ is often lengthened.
e.g., Sanskrit Asokan Prakrit

āha | āhā

(iii) Conjuncts in ‘ṣ’ and ‘r’ are always assimilated.
e.g., Sanskrit Asokan Prakrit

aṣṭamī | aṭhamī

arddhā | aṭhati

(iv) ‘ks’ becomes ‘kh’ always, but also get ‘ch’.
e.g., Sanskrit Asokan Prakrit

kṣānti | khaṇati

pakṣe | pakkhāye
(4) **Eastern Dialect Group :—**

(i) ‘ś’ and ‘ṣ’ are always replaced by ‘s’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>Asokan Prakrit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>puruṣah</td>
<td>pulise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anuṣasti</td>
<td>anusathi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ii) ‘ṛ’ becomes ‘l’ in some places.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>Asokan Prakrit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>puruṣah</td>
<td>pulise</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(5) **Southern Dialect Group :—**

(i) ‘r’ is also used and not ‘l’ as in the dialect of the middle eastern and eastern group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>Asokan Prakrit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suvaṁnagirite</td>
<td>aragiya, sātireke</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ii) Only ‘s’ is observed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>Asokan Prakrit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>buddha-Śākya</td>
<td>budhasake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>śrāvaṇe</td>
<td>sāvaṇe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(iii) Use of ‘ṇ’ retained sometimes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>Asokan Prakrit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>śrāvaṇe</td>
<td>sāvaṇe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(iv) Want of assimilated consonants.

  e.g., SANSKRIT  ASOKAN PRAKRIT
  Ardha-tri  aḍhati, adhāti

SOME PHONOLOGICAL FEATURES WHICH ARE COMMON IN ALL ASOKAN INSCRIPTIONS:

(i) Sanskrit vowel 'ṛ' is everywhere changed to 'u', 'i' and 'u'.

  e.g., SANSKRIT  ASOKAN PRAKRIT
  mṛga  maga, miga, muga

(ii) Sanskrit diphthongs 'ai' and 'au' always changed to 'e' and 'o' respectively in Asokan Prakrit.

  e.g., SANSKRIT  ASOKAN PRAKRIT
  ātāḥ  sate
  jātāḥ  jāte
  laukika  lokika
  pautra  potra, pota

(iii) Sanskrit 'aya' and 'ava' changed to 'e' and 'o', but sometimes retains.

  e.g., SANSKRIT  ASOKAN PRAKRIT
  aṃjānapaya  anapaya /anape /ānápaya /āṇāpaya /anapaya

(iv) Intervocalic single unvoiced consonants sometimes voiced, i.e., 'k', 'c', 'ṭ', 't'

  'p' becomes 'g', 'j', 'ḍ', 'ḍ'.

  e.g., SANSKRIT  ASOKAN PRAKRIT
  hita  hida
  loka  loga
  acala  ajala
(v) Intervocalic single aspirate sometimes changed to ‘h’.

  e.g., SANSKRIT  ASOKAN PRAKRIT
    laghu       lahu

Therefore, the oldest example of MIA is to be found in Pali of the Buddha’s preaching or Tipitaka and the Asokan inscriptions. Pali is the medium of expression of orthodox Buddhism. The language and style of Asokan edicts are simple, lucid and forceful. The structure and characteristics of the language of the Asokan inscriptions may differ from the language of Pali, yet some points of similarities also found between the two.