concern for social meanings as contained in linguistic materials is relevant in this study.

It is apparently believed that culture is transmitted through language. Manipuri society has apparently undergone certain structural and functional transformation religiously, politically in different historical events. In which one of the major manifestation occurs in its culture, tradition and religion by a factor call Hinduism. With the adoption of Hinduism in Manipur during the 18th century, certain Hindu practices came into the culture and tradition of Meiteis, as seen in the consecration of temples, worshipping of idols and more importantly sanskritisation. The acceptance of Hindu religion may be apparently because; it has been imposed by the king, who had favored Hinduism instead of its indigenous religion. The acceptance of Hindu religion may be also apparently because; ‘Hinduism’ being a superior or larger institution people started accepting it as a superior religion. With the advent of Hinduism in Manipur the conversational surface of Meiteis is greatly enriched with many borrowed words. Historically, Sanskrit is considered to be one of the ancient language in India. Important religious, instructive, philosophical, and literary works have been written in Sanskrit. The great epics \textit{Ramayana} and \textit{Mahabharatha} are composed in thousands of
Sanskrit couplets. Vedas and Upanishads are time-honored Hindu sacred books, which originated in Sanskrit and which are later on translated in Meiteiron.

The significant part of the adoption of Hinduism is reflected on the language used during religious ceremonies and rituals. Thus with the adoption of Hinduism by the speakers of Meiteiron many terms associated with the religion have also been assimilated in the lexicon of Meiteiron.

This chapter examines the borrowed religious terms (mostly from Bengali, Hindi and Sanskrit) that entered into Meiteiron. As the pioneers of Hinduism were Bengali speakers (Jhaljit, 1965), it is quite natural that loanwords have also been incorporated with the acceptance of Hinduism by the Meiteiron speakers. So, most of the loanwords takes the Bengali pronunciation, though their roots are traced to the mother language Sanskrit. It is natural for Meiteiron to adopt words from other language due to their contact with each other. Thus a particular focus is given on the phenomenon of the borrowing of the religious terms. Lexical borrowing can be defined as the adoption of individual words from another language. It happens when two languages are in contact and one language borrows lexical item from the other language. According to Matras and Bakker (2003),
lexical borrowing concerns about ‘the incorporation in one language of content words from another language’.

“One language may experience changes due to the influence of another language. The speakers of any given language are always in some kind of contact with the speakers of one or more other languages. When two different languages is spoken in adjacent areas, speakers on both the sides of the boundary will be exposed to the other language, and may often gain some fluency in that other language. Because of conquest or migration, speakers of two more languages may be mixed together in a single community. Speakers of one language may travel and become exposed to different language spoken to elsewhere” (Trask 1999).

Trask (1999) further states that the consequences of contact may range from the trivial to the far-reaching. At the simplest level, speakers may merely take over a few words which are called borrowing and the words borrowed are loan words in the receiving language. Borrowing is the process of incorporating linguistic items into one language which originally belong to another.

“It is common for one language to take words from another language and make them part of its own vocabulary: these are call loan words and the process is called linguistic borrowing” (Campbell 1998). Borrowing occurs when one language adds a
word or morpheme from another language to its own lexicon. Apparently the process is called adaptation. A language may borrow a word directly or indirectly.

Reasons for borrowing

a) The first reason may be because the recipient language does not have a word for a new concept from other language or culture and a word is needed.

b) The second reason is for prestige. Some language typically enjoy more prestige than others, the speaker of less prestigious language are often eager to show off their command to a more prestigious language by introducing some of its words into their own speech.

In most cases, borrowing takes place, on the motives of ‘need’ and ‘prestige’. Especially under the influence of Hinduism, in order to fill the gap in Meiteiron the language has borrowed a large number of Indo-Aryan loanwords. Such as the Indo-Aryan loanwords /sɔrgɔ/, /nɔrɔk/ have been borrowed to fill the gap of the concept of ‘heaven’ and ‘hell’ in Meiteiron respectively. And based on the motive of ‘prestige’ the Indo-Aryan words such as /dɔɔl/ ‘water’, /fɔrɔn/ ‘feet’ were incorporated in place of /isiŋ/ ‘water’ and /kɔŋ/ ‘feet’ respectively. In the Meitei religious beliefs and practices both the reasons are equally applicable, the borrowed
words are introduced in the religious recitation of mantras, like ‘omnammo: bhagabate, basu deva yunamo’ which is considered as the first process of Sankritisation and communication in the religious ceremonies which can apparently be seen with words like bhakti ‘devotion’, kannya ‘bride’, ‘girl’, prasad ‘the remnants of food offer to God’ etc.

Some of the loanwords that usually occur during religious ceremonies like, birth, marriage and even death though the loan words are spoken in their nativised forms as shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loanwords</th>
<th>Nativised</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>konja</td>
<td>kəiŋə</td>
<td>‘bride’, ‘girl’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jatra</td>
<td>zətra</td>
<td>‘journey’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mondapa</td>
<td>mandop</td>
<td>‘a pillared outdoor hall’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>divas</td>
<td>dibos</td>
<td>‘celebration’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>‘a day’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.3. Assimilation of loanwords through Hinduism

Most major religious traditions make use of more than one innate language, for their followers are drawn from different lands and talks about their faiths in their own local language for the same religion, however a particular ancient language is always held sacred, and used in worship even by those who do not naturally speak it. For instance Pali, is the sacred language for Buddhist, Hebrew for Jews and Arabic for Muslims. It can be said that there are special technical terms in religious vocabularies, as there are in legal, musical or astronautically. But it is not simply the presence of distinctively theological words like ‘incarnation’ or ‘apocalypse’ or names of divinities like ‘Vishnu’ or titles like ‘Christ’ or ‘Buddha’ that marks out a piece of language as religious, but rather the way any words play a role within some context of religious belief and observance. Language becomes religious language in being used religiously in the pursuit of the various beliefs which we find in religious ceremonies. Yet despite the fact that words form only a part of the whole business of religious life and faith, it is important to keep in mind just how much language does for religion. Languages system of communication, ways of expressing things and reflecting upon them, give religious experience continuing points of contact with wider human experience and knowledge. Without a medium such as language, religion would be largely a private affair, harder to share even their aesthetic
experience. There may well be an inexpressible side to religions, and there certainly is much more to religious behavior than the uttering of words. Yet language is essential for religions to have a form that can survive, transmit itself from one age to another, spread from place to place, and permeate human thinking and action. Furthermore, words reflect ‘content’.

The Sankritisation in language, religion, beliefs, ethos, myths and superstitions are the dramatic events that impacted enormously the Meitei cultural heritage in the 18th century. Language is not an autonomous entity as it is embedded in the society. Therefore, societal changes have linguistic consequences. This is seen in the effects shown by the changes occurring in the social system of Manipur upon Meitei ceremonial terminology. This is the enrichment of lexicon of Meiteiron through borrowing. Lexical borrowing is a common phenomenon that when a language comes in contact with another language. It is often explained in terms of lexical needs and sociolinguistics innovation. One purpose of using loanwords is to fill a lexical or semantic gap (Hock and Joshep: Kay 1995).

When Meiteiron came into contact with Indo-Aryan language which was of dominant culture, there have been replacements, restriction of meaning, expansion of meaning of the
term borrowed and subsequently some phonological modification
as a result of the process of acculturation. Vaishnavism came to
 Manipur, and we can see the two different faiths the Hindu faith
and Meitei faith mingling and going together like in any cultural
contact situation. And what needs to be stressed is that the ethos of
Meitei culture has been systematically subsumed within the values
of an increasingly powerful socio-cultural hegemony of Hinduism.
The history of Meiteiron is interesting for several reasons, including
its flexibility in borrowing from other languages namely, Bengali,
Hindi, Assamese and English at various times in history. In
studying borrowing, it is possible to see layers of influences from
these languages. This as a result, has enriched its vocabularies over
the centuries. The first major influence on Meiteiron is from
Bengali with the advent of Hinduism in the 18th century through
Bengali speaking religious leaders. The most observable
intercultural contact between Meitei and Bengali cultures is the set
of loanwords imported into the vocabulary of Meiteiron. It had a
great impact from 18th century onwards and to a lesser degree its
sister language Hindi has been a continuous source of loanwords.
The most obvious domain to see Bengali borrowing used in
Meiteiron is in religious and ritual aspects.

Major assimilation of loanwords in Meiteiron began only
after 18th century (the time that marked a series of mostly Bengali
speaking Hindus came to Manipur). As Meiteis adopted Hinduism,
it is quite natural that the Bengali language, the custom and culture soon provided the basis for a thorough Hinduisation of Meiteis. The Bengali influence through Hinduisation on Meiteiron went on a good deal farther than religious terminology. It also spreads to other aspects of Meiteiron relating to education, literature, administration and communication etc. Although the Bengali and Meiteiron were genetically different from each other the linguistic superiority of Bengali language became overt; some knowledge of Bengali language and culture was considered a sign of education and status.

It is a well known fact that during the 19th century a larger section of Meitei intelligentsia was attracted and influenced by the language, literature and culture of Bengali. The tendency to regard the Bengali intelligentsia as a model of imitation in the spheres of language, culture and other reformative ideas among others became very prominent. It is needless to say, as a process of socio-religious change the change of imitating Bengali became much wider which even included dresses, food habits, Bengali songs etc. In the process, Meiteis have completely transformed their life style; they left their meat eating habits which includes eggs but continued eating fish as a delicacy. It appears that everything Bengali was superior to Meitei counterparts.

This view as a whole, however, may not be correct. However, it would not much of an exaggeration that if we say Meiteis have
been thoroughly influenced by Bengali life style. Over the last three centuries, a large number of Bengali words entered into Meiteiron. Some of these words have their etymology to other languages such as Hindi and Sanskrit. It is important to remember that many Sanskrit terms were introduced to Meiteiron largely through the medium of Bengali.

### 3.3.1. Importation and Introduction of Bengali Orthography

A point worth noting of the heavy impact of Hinduism at this juncture, during the reign of king Garibniwaz (1709-1748) the indigenous Meitei script was completely replaced by Bengali orthography. The 18th century saw the definitive triumph of Bengali orthography over Meitei orthography. The Meitei orthography rapidly caused to be the medium of writing. The adoption of Bengali orthography was also probably instrumental in the process of lexical importation of Bengali into Meiteiron. Quite apart from revealing changes, the new orthography gave Meiteiron quite a new look. A number of new consonant symbols were introduced for example, b, d, q, bʰ, dʰ, qʰ, vowel contrasts for example short and long ı and short and long ū were also introduced in the writing of Meiteiron. Not all these changes were important because there are a lot of confusions and ambiguities created with spelling system
of Meiteiron which continued till date. This situation even makes Meiteiron more difficult to learn. The spelling varies from writer to writer and even within the work of one writer. However it is very clear that it was the cultural and religious interaction with Bengali that primarily brought about a noticeable influence of Bengali on Meiteiron. The early loanwords were so well assimilated into Meiteiron that they were soon felt as not in any way foreign. Thus the adoption of those lexical items impinges on the broader area of religious culture cognition and intricately connected to the establishment of a broadly based layer of Bengali vocabulary in Meiteiron. This probably made it easier for the language to accept later Hindi loanwords. Indeed, one of the results of the influx of Indo-Aryan loans was probably to make Meiteiron more generous to IA words and less prone to use its own resources for word creation in the last three hundred years or so.

The heavy influences of Bengali language and culture is also perceptible in fact that Bengali language was the medium of educational instruction in Bengali school established in Manipur (1934). While one might like to argue that Hinduism is not held in the same reverence and awe as it once enjoyed, there is still a tangible force among Meiteiron speakers to this day. Deeply held cultural values make themselves present in the lexicon whether they would like it or not; this is evident in the kinship terms of this language, for example, bôba ‘father’, dôda ‘brother’, kôka ‘uncle’,
k\textsuperscript{b}ura ‘uncle’, m\textsuperscript{a}ma ‘uncle’ etc. which have been well integrated that they became part and parcel of Meiteiron without which Meiteiron cannot do away. (Pramodini, 2011).

The study of borrowed words points to at least two important facts. One is a historical background which is found in the study of religious terms of linguistic origin. This reveals a wide variety of influence from an entirely different language. As said earlier, in addition to the native Bengali words, there are a myriad of specialized religious words from Sanskrit such as s\textit{akti} ‘power’, d\textit{h}\textit{ar}\textit{ma} ‘religion’, d\textit{e}bi ‘goddess’. On the other hand, the usages of the borrowed words may point to the fact that there was a strong intensity of religious devotion. This has, and then revealed the significance and importance of Hinduism to Meiteis’ indigenous culture and belief so deep that the words became intimate and integrated part of the lexicon of Meiteiron. This is clearly visible when many speakers of Meiteiron were to show off their command of the donor language (obviously a prestige factor) by spattering their speech and writing with the words and phrases, they borrowed from Bengali in the past. Loanwords may serve the function of tagging the status of the speaker as trendy or advanced. Meiteiron has borrowed many loanwords which highlight the prestige factor at the social facade. As mentioned earlier, by the time, Meiteiron speakers have accepted Hinduism, Bengali was the language that
people considered prestigious. Therefore, this language was the mark of learned person. Later on, Hindi and English have also become important and useful languages. These languages are considered as signals of progress and modernization. The use of loanwords symbolized power, wealth and prestige of the countries of the source languages and this naturally gains momentum towards standardized use of Meiteiron. As a result, an enormous amount of loanwords have been imported into Meiteiron primarily on the basis of prestige motive. As the borrowing of lexical items largely comes from Bengali even though there are sources of borrowing from other Indo-Aryan language like Hindi, to a much lesser extent from the Assamese and of course, Sanskrit the language of religious rituals, for our study we will be focusing primarily on the borrowed lexical item from Bengali sources. As in any kind of language contact situation the contact between Bengali and Meiteiron too, the influence is strongest in the field of vocabulary. As the Meitei society change there are new things that need new names, values, concept etc, hence new words are borrowed to handle them confining only to the area of vocabulary. However, it does not mean to say that there will not be any marked influences on grammar and syntax of Meiteiron. This aspect could be an important area of future research.
The considerable impact of Bengali loanwords on Meiteiron is discussed in different sections which include hybridization and nativisation.

### 3.3.2. Cultural influence of Hinduism on Meitei speech community

The adoption of Hinduism by the Meiteis brought profound changes in the uses of language. Certain loanwords began to be used in the cultural context as an integral part of the socio-religious culture. The area where influence of Bengali is most clear is unsurprisingly, the lexicon particularly word related to Hindu religion. In some cases the native words co-exists alongside the loanwords for example *irat-puja* ‘worship’. The expansion of religious vocabulary and others during the last three centuries has gone up as an ever increasing pace that has also resulted in the formation of a large number of hybrid compounds. Cultural influence on the Manipuri language can be seen in the discussion below.

1) It has become a custom in the Meitei religious context that in a religious feast before starting to eat it has become a ritual customary to announce by one of the head Brahman cook /mahaprasad-lewa-anand/ this means maha Prasad ka lo anand (enjoy the mahaprasad). Similarly when the eating is over till the head Brahman announce /mahaprasad-lewa-səməptəŋ/ this
means the end of mahaprasad no one is allowed to leave the eating place or even stand up.

2) With the penetration of Hinduism another religious cultural influence came in the form of invitation card which is known as /nimèntronô/ which is a loanwords. Meiteis started sending invitation card as they believe that the person will become a crow if he/she participates in any kind of religious ceremonies without receiving a /nimèntronô/.

3) When a person dies, the usual expression used is sikʰrô ‘he/she died’ or in a more cultured way as lôikʰidrô ‘he/she is no more’. However after the advent of Hinduism we find a number of loanwords assimilated in the same expression sikʰrô ‘he/she died’ as /nam-sônkʰrô/ (recited the name of god), or /vēisʰnêbô oîkʰrô for a male and vēisʰnēbi oîkʰrô for a female/ (has become a follower of Vaishna sect of Hinduism) and /praptî oîkʰrô/ ‘he is no more’.

4) After the advent of Hinduism during the month of August-September which is the dark half of the month known as Langban in Manipuri. Meiteis began performing the practice of a religious
ritual known /tərpən/. The word is nativised as /tərpən/ where the vowel /ə/ becomes /o/. The word is usually pronounced as /tərpən/ but the nativised version is mostly used by the older group of people or the uneducated group of people. The practice as well as the term is borrowed from Hindu religious practice. According to the other parts of India it is practiced by offering edible fruits to the water and chanting scared hymns (mantras). It is a ritual of offering homage to departed souls. Similarly the same ritual is also practiced in the Meitei society. The Meiteis also practice by cutting the fruits into small pieces and offer it in the water by chanting the scared hymns along with the names of their departed ancestors. The offerings are usually made in the sea. But since Manipur does not have sea the alternative water bodies are used such as rivers, and for those who do not have a river nearby will perform it in a pond. But for most of people in urban areas where it is hard to find even a pond or a river nearby are found to use a big vessel which is called locally kompak. This vessel is filled with water and is being used as a replacement of a pond where its offering is done.

5) The Meiteis have a belief that when a person reaches its death bed it has been a practice to rename the person just before his or her death takes place. If he is a man he will be renamed as /mohan das/ and to a woman as /radʰa dasʰini/. The
significance of such name change lies in the belief that the person who is going to die when he dies and joins gods, up in the heaven he will become the server of the particular god, hence the name of the dying person is rechristened by the name of the god. So it has become a custom to rename the dying person. And the word /das or das\textsuperscript{hini}/ means male and female servant respectively. Thus an excerpt from an invitation card of a death ceremony testifies this statement as

/sirigurugi krip\textsubscript{dagi} bes oll\textsubscript{e}g\textsubscript{e} p\textsubscript{e}r\textsubscript{e}meswar shr\textsubscript{i}ri kris\textsubscript{h}n\textsubscript{o} ch\textsubscript{e}it\textsubscript{e}n\textsubscript{e} dasi haib\textsubscript{e} nam p\textsubscript{h}\textsubscript{e}nz\textsubscript{e}dun\textsubscript{e} brindab\textsubscript{e}n prapt\textsubscript{i} oik\textsubscript{h\textsubscript{e}r\textsubscript{e}}\textsubscript{/}

This means that by the blessing of guru, the person who died has been privileged to rechristen as shr\textsubscript{i}r\textsubscript{i} kishn\textsubscript{n}e ch\textsubscript{h}yt\textsubscript{e}yn\textsubscript{e} dasi and thus become the servant of god Krishna.

6) In performing ceremonies and rituals Hindus are supposed to be assisted by Brahmin priest. Priest who act as intermediaries between worshippers and god in temples are known as puzari in Hindu religious tradition. The same word is borrowed in Meitei, but the meaning of puzari has been entirely changed as it refers to only the Brahmin who cooks for ceremonial feast.
3.3.3. Hybrid compounds used in Meitei Religious Ceremonies

Hybrid compound in linguistics is often a term used to describe a language being blended with another language; it can be in word level or phrase level. Thus hybrid compound are the words of two different language families, they are combine in such a way to form a new word. The term "hybridization" is loosely used in various industries. Basically, hybridization is the process of combining two things together to form something new. The new item is often similar to the original item of each. In fact, it may have the characteristics of the original sources and its own unique characteristics as well after the combination. However, in linguistics hybridization‘ is often a term used to describe a language being blended with another language; a hybrid word is a word made up of elements (or morphemes) from different languages; it can be in word level or in phrase level. ‘Television’ is a hybrid word from Greek ‘tele’- far and Latin visio seeing‘. As such one aspect of acculturation in the Meitei society is the formation of hybrid compound words. In the Meitei religious ceremonies, the religious lexicon of Meitei are rich with words formed by the combination of Meiteiron and an Indo-Aryan language. Meiteiron, classified under the Tibeto-Burman language family, is observed to be taking the agglutinative nature that is by forming hybrid-compound to accommodate the semantic connotations. This phenomenon can be viewed from the angle of religious agglutination of Hinduism and
Meitei religion of lexical item being formed by a loan word and a Meiteiron word. In Meitei religious ceremonies we can find many terms formed by combining with another language like- Sanskrit, Bengali and Hindi. When a borrowed word is combined with the native word, the meaning of the loan word are sometime extended, restricted or sometime the meaning is retained. The socio-cultural and religious contact between the Indo-Aryan languages and Meiteiron is considerably to a large extent and historically quite old. When a loan word is compounded with the Meiteiron in the religious context the basic meaning is mostly retained. Most of the hybrid compound forms in the religious domain follow the sequence as Loan words +Native words. It is important to note that all these loan words came from Sanskrit largely through Bengali. We will see that the compound words, as they have become established, they underwent phonetic changes which they have become quite different from the words they originally made them up.

We will first give a word list of loanwords, this is followed by a detailed expose in which the words borrowed are evaluated and an account of cultural factors which affect the transfer of each individual term is given:

3.3.3.1. List of the hybrid words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loanwords</th>
<th>Meiteiron</th>
<th>compound</th>
<th>gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
mandop  khənbe mandop-khənbe  ‘Process of constructing a makeshift mandop’

dibos  kətpe dibos-kətpe  ‘Feast offered on the next day of the death ceremony’

zətra  təubə zətra-təubə  ‘To start a journey at an auspicious hour’

zətra  pubi zətra-pubi  ‘The woman who is carrying the zətra’

zətra  hunbə zətra-hunbə  ‘The laying the first stone of foundation’

diuti  okpə dihuti-okpə  ‘The religious ritual of welcoming the bride/groom in wedding ceremony’
presadi    khnbə    presadi-khnbə  ‘To pick the remnants of food offer to God’

kəjnə    kətpə    kəjnə-kətpə  ‘Marriage without religious rituals’

bʰəkti    kətpə    bʰəkti-kətpə  ‘Respect by prostrating on the ground’

məntra    sonbə    məntra-sonbə  ‘To recite the scared words’

məngol    oibə    məngol-oibə  ‘To be auspicious’

dan        thadəbə    dan-thadəbə  ‘To drop the money on the child’

gʰot       chapʰu    gʰot-chapʰu  ‘The earthen pot use for religious ritual’
mēitei bamon mēitei-bamon ‘Manipuris who belong to Brahman community’

dokʰine  kətpə dokʰine-kətpə ‘Religious gift in the form of cash or kind’

tulsi  boŋ tulsi-boŋ ‘A mound where tulsi is planted’

sonskar təwbə sonskar-təwbə ‘cremation’

(a) /mandop-kʰənbə/ ‘the process of constructing the mandop’

/mandop-kʰənbə/is a hybrid compound from Sanskrit word /məndapa/ ‘a pillared outdoor hall or pavilion for public rituals’, but the word is naturalized as /mandop/ or /mantop/. Even though this word is originally from Sanskrit it may apparently be derived from Bengali as it is revealed in the pronunciation of /mandop/ where /a/ becomes /o/. Where /mandop/ is a pillared hall or porch fronting a Hindu temple and also a temporary platform or scared tent used for Hindu wedding or other religious ceremony. Whereas /kʰənbə/is a
derived noun in which /kʰɔn/ is the verb root which means to cover and /-bɔ/ is the nominal marker which means the process of constructing the mandop. In Meitei society /mandop-kʰɔnbɔ/ is a very religious process, as such an auspicious day has to be fixed before a religious rituals or a ceremony. On that day a Brahmin will fix a particular time and he will lay the first pillar then the construction will be continued by young boys and set the temporary tent.

Loanword has proved to be very productive in the Meitei lexicon the same word /mandop/ here, when compounded with another word /mɔpu/ ‘owner’ gives another hybrid word /mandop-mɔpu/ ‘owner of the mandop’. An elderly religious person usually is the owner of the makeshift /mandop/ for the religious function to carry out.

(b) /dibos-kətpɔ/ ‘the feast offered on the next day of death ceremony’

/dibos-kətpɔ/ is a combination of two words, /dibos/ borrowed from the Sanskrit word /divas/ ‘celebration’, ‘a day’, ‘morning’, ‘day-break’ and it is naturalized as /dibos/. Even though this word is originally from Sanskrit, the word has come from Bengali is visible in the pronunciation where the voice labio-dental fricative is substituted by voice bilabial stop as /dibos/, which
means – a vegetarian feast offered to god first and later consumed by the people and /kətpə/ ‘to offer’.

But in Meiteiron the meaning of the word is restricted only to the feast offered on the next day of the death ceremony /sorat/ (shraddha) which includes fish curry. However the fish curry is not offered to the God. According to the Meitei beliefs and practices during the days of mourning that is generally thirteen days from the day death occurs till the /sorat/ (religious death ceremony) the family members and the kin relatives refrain from eating fish or any non-vegetarian food and pan. As a mark of respect and solidarity some of the close friends are also sometimes found to join the mourning of the deceased person by voluntarily prohibiting themselves from eating fish and pan. However, the prohibited food items are resumed with the celebration of /dibos/.

It is important to note that Meitei belief system has a strict code of conduct that if they do not start consuming on this day they would not be allowed to eat such things for the whole year, i.e. till the completion of one year of death ceremony which is known as /phiroi/. But for some people this same ritual is performed without any religious connotation at the night of the /sorat/‘death ceremony’ day where fish curry is cooked primarily for the family and its close kin relatives who have abstained from consuming the above said food items. Though not very elaborate the elderly person of the
family generally invites the people who have been involved in the process of cremation of the deceased. The organization of the feast is known as /ŋa-tɔŋbɔ/ literally ‘to taste fish’ in the local vernacular. Today with the influence of Hinduism the process is performed more elaborately with religious connotation of cooking vegetarian food to be offered to god and fish curry cooked separately to be consumed by the family, kin relatives and others. This ritual is known as /dibos-kɔtpɔ/ ‘to offer dibos’. Thus the contextual use of /dibos/ in the Meitei religious practices is restricted only to this ritual function. These two functions may seem different but they are not different functionally as it is the celebration of resuming the consumption of prohibited items, the only difference one can find is that /dibos/ is celebrated more elaborately with religious rituals and with more invitees on the next day of /sɔrat/ ‘death ceremony’.

(c) /zɔtra-tɔubɔ/ ‘to start a journey at an auspicious hour’

/zɔtra/ is a loanword which originally comes from /jatra/ which means ‘procession’, ‘journey’, ‘festive’ or ‘solemn occasion’ in Sanskrit. It is naturalized by the substitution of /j/ with /z/ in Meiteiron, but interestingly the substitution of the sound does not directly come from the Sanskrit to Meiteiron. As seen from the pronunciation of the word it is indeed closer to Bengali /dʒatra/, it is an indirect borrowed word from Sanskrit like many other loan
words in Meiteiron. Whereas the word /təubə/ “to do” hence the compound word /zətra-təubə/ means to begin a journey at an auspicious hour.

Another hybrid compound used in Meiteiron is /zətra-pubi/ ‘a lady who carries zətra’. The meaning of /zətra/ has been entirely shifted away from its original meaning. Here /zətra/ means a scared pot, full of rice grains exclusively used in marriage context. This scared pot full of rice grains would be carried by a lady who would be leading the marriage procession to the bride’s home. Hence the title /zətra-pubi/ has been assigned to the lady as ‘lady who carries the scared pot’. It is indeed considered a privilege for a lady to lead the procession with the scared pot on the head. According to Meiteis strict customs and practices this lady cannot be any woman but should be the one who possesses certain qualities that she must be a married woman whose first born child must be a boy. In any circumstances a widow, even though her first born child is a son will not be allowed to perform this function.

On the auspicious day of marriage an auspicious moment that is /zətra-təubə/, in the local vernacular, is always fixed before the ritual and at that particular time once the religious process begins the ceremony cannot be stopped. Another hybrid-compound with the loan word /zətra/ is /zətra-hunbə/ which is a combination of the verbal noun /hunbə/ means to plant, but in this context it means the
laying of the foundation stone which is also done through a religious ritual, after which the construction of a building will begin. The ritual is strictly performed with the recitation of *mantras* by a bhramin ‘priest’. Thus the word /zətra/ is used in different context of Meitei religious ceremonies but meaning of the word remains the same that is, ‘the beginning’.

The word /zətra/ is now being used beyond the religious context, even in our day to day conversation for example, when a person is to go for a journey in regards of profession, education or medical treatment. However, it is mostly used by elder people as for example,

- laiŋb cətp ni zətragi punhəm soihən gənu

‘Since you are going for treatment do not make mistake to begin at the auspicious moment’.

(d) /diyuti-okpə/ ‘the religious ritual of welcoming the bride/bridegroom in a wedding ceremony’

The word /diyuti/ is a nativised form, from the Sanskrit word /dipitə/ which means set on ‘fire’, ‘inflamed’, ‘illuminated’. The word is derived from Sanskrit, but the word has most probably come from Bengali, the term might have been nativised from
Bengali /diyuti/ because the phonologically it is nearer to Bengali. /diyuti/ means ‘light’, ‘radiance’ and ‘splendor’. However in the Meitei religious context, it is symbolically signified by a collection of three sticks torches which will be held by three persons and /okpə/ is to welcome.

In Manipur /diyuti-okpə/ is a ritual practice in the marriage ceremony to purify the groom from the evil spirit which might have come across on his way to the bride’s home. Three sticks will be held by anyone available, on which the fire will be led and kabok ‘popped rice’ will be thrown towards the groom, then the mother-in-law will welcome the groom by embracing with white cloths or chadar because the Meiteis believe that white cloths signify purity. So in all the religious ceremonies all the family member will mostly wear white cloths. This ritual is a pagan practice of Meiteis which is known as /meibul-meijao-okpa/ (where /meibul/ means literally collection of fire but it means a big fire, /meijao/ also means big fire, and /okpa/ means to welcome) but the same ritual is now known as /diuti-okpa/ which suggest the influence of Hinduism. Similar to the Hindu practice to welcome her son-in-law bride’s mother welcomes the groom by performing the aarti (traditional Indian welcome ritual with a lamp or diya placed on a platter or thali) and places a tilak on his forehead.
This ritual is also performed when the bride goes to the groom’s home after marriage, with the same belief. The similar ritual with the similar belief is also practiced in the Chinese marriage, when the bride arrives at her new home the bride is subjected to a ritual treatment – the flashing of mirrors, purification by smoke – that brings her as free as possible of the evil adhering to her. [Rites and Duties, or Chinese Marriage: 267].

(e) /prəsadi-kʰunbə/ “to pick the remnants of food offered to god”

Like any other hybrid compounds the first word is always a loanword in the compound /prəsadi-kʰunbə/too the word /prəsadi/ which came from the Hindi/Sanskrit word /prəsəd/, but in Meiteiron it is naturalized by the addition of the sound /i/ which means divine food which has been offered to idols and the remnants of such food, favour, kindness and purity. /prəsəd/ as a whole is the remnant of any kind of food which have been offered to god such as fruits, sweets etc. In the Meitei religious context the meaning of the word /prəsadi/ restricts its meaning only to the remnants of the food that is specially the rice and different kinds of vegetables where /kʰunbə/ is a Meiteiron means ‘to pick up’. The word /kʰunbə/ also means the process of picking the food and eating it too. As according to the social norm ‘God’ is a superior almighty which cannot be equalized with man in anyways, so we human pick up his remains and do not
take directly. The word therefore, signifies not only of taking of the food, it also means eating of it too. It is considered as an honorific word. Thus it is apparent that the Meiteiron does not use words such as- */prəsadi-ləubə/ where /-ləubə/ ‘to take prasad’, thus it is considered inappropriate to use in the Meitei religious context because Meiteis have a belief that we human are the devotees of god. And god is the superior almighty, Meiteis use the word /-ləubə/ in a causal way in everyday conversation. Similarly another word */prəsadi-cəbə/ which means ‘to eat the prasad’, is also not used as it is considered very ordinary to use in anything connected with religious rituals. Because /-cəbə/ which means ‘to eat’ is an ordinary word which is used whenever they communicate with each other, like the word /ləubə/ ‘to take’ as mentioned above.

(f) /kəina-kətpə/ ‘marriage without much elaborate formation’

A compound word formed by a loanword /kəina/ is naturalized from the Sanskrit word /kən.jə/ which means a ‘girl’, ‘daughter’ and ‘bride’ or ‘a women in general’, but in Meiteiron the meaning is restrictedly used for a bride. Here the medial cluster of the loanword is nativised with the process of metathesis where the /j/ has preceded sound in the naturalized form, whereas /kətpə/ in which /kət/ is the verb meaning ‘offer’ and /-pə/is the nominal marker, together which means ‘the act of giving the bride to the
groom. Meiteis do not have a word as such */nupi-kətpə/ which can be a similar act of /kəinə-kətpə/. The word /nupi/ generally means the girl or the women. So, if we use */nupi-kətpə/ it will be very inappropriate in the Meiteis culture, it may mean like offering of every female. It can be probably said /kəinə-kətpə/ is one of the customary way of declaring a man and woman as husband and wife with minimum religious rituals of marriage. There are certain circumstances where the religious ritual of /kəinə-kətpə/ takes place. Generally, in the olden days, clan exogamy was very strict that intra-clan marriage was prohibited. Those who broke clan exogamy were not allowed to undergo formal marriage which is known as /luhoŋba/. The only option left for those men and women was the ritual of /kəinə-kətpə/. Another situation of /kəinə-kətpə/ worth citing is when the parents are poor and they cannot afford to spend much money that they decide that the man and woman undergo the ritual of /kəinə-kətpə/ instead of formal marriage. Such kind of marriage is usually performed in rural parts of Manipur still now. Such kind of marriage also takes place when the parents are against the wishes of their children. In such situation, as per to a social norms it is considered as humiliating, which demean the self-esteem of the family. So in order to hide such circumstance the religious authority are not even informed.
Thus the most elaborate ritual of marriage is substituted just by blessing by a relative. Another situation where the ceremony of /kəjna-kətpə/ may be performed is for example, when a married man marries a girl or a married man marries a divorcée or a widow. What emerges from the discussion is that the meaning is restricted to ‘marriage without much formalities’. It seems that before the advent of Hinduism, Meiteis did practice a ritual of a simple type of a marriage ceremony where a married woman was offered to a man. It is not an elaborate ceremony, but in accordance to the religious beliefs every marriage ceremony in Meitei community it is believed that god witnesses the marriage ceremony. In other words it assumed that he is there as a witness. With the changes in the society the ritual is now known as /kəjna-kətpə/ which shows the influence of Hinduism in the language use. For Meiteis any kinds of marriage was usually called /luhọŋbə/, so in the Meitei lexicon we do not have words like /nupi-kətpə/, but with the influence of Hinduism the semantic value of such ritual is filled by the compound word of a loanword /kəina/ and a native word /kətpə/.

g) bʰəkti- kətpə ‘to pay respect by prostrating on the ground’
/bhəkti/ is the Sanskrit word which is derived from the verb root bhaj, whose meanings include ‘to share in’, ‘to belong to’, and ‘to worship’. It also occurs in compounds where it means ‘being a part of’ and ‘that which belongs to or is contained in anything else’. ‘Devotion’ as an English translation for bhakti doesn't fully convey two important aspects of bhakti—the sense of participation that is central to the relationship between the devotee and God, and the intense feeling that is more typically associated with the word "love". An atavistic interpretation of bhakti goes beyond ‘devotion’ to the realization of union with the essential nature of reality as ananda, or divine bliss. Bhakti is sometimes used in the broader sense of reverence toward a deity or teacher. The word /kətpə/ means ‘to offer’. While in the religious context of Meiteis the word /bhəkti-kətpə/ has a restricted meaning, as it refers to an act of paying respect to elders by prostrating on the ground. It is usually used in the Meitei religious ceremonies like marriage, birth or death. For example in a marriage ceremony the elderly people pay respect to one another by saying as /bhəkti-kətcəri/

However beyond the ceremonial context /bhəkti-kətpə/ is also found used as a mark of respect given only to the elderly people or among themselves. As in their day to day practice they do not
prostrate on the ground but just stoop and touch the ground and wish each other as

/bhəkti-kətcəri-jojoi/

In the Meitei community such practice are not usually found among the younger generation. Very few young people who want to uphold such traditional practice also wish each other with the phrasal expression /bhəkti-kətcəri/ but only to the person who is older than them. It is also found when a son-in-law greets his father-in-law he stoops and touches the ground and says

/pabuŋ bhəkti təuəri/ ‘father I am offering my respect’

But such practice is found only among the sons-in-law and fathers-in-law who belong to the older generation.

(g) /məntra-sonbə/ ‘to chant the scared words’

/məntra/ is a Sanskrit word which means ‘words’ but with far-reaching implication of a scared power encased in a sound structure. The Sanskrit word mantra, consists of the root word /ˈmən/ – to think and /tra/, designating tools or instruments, hence a literal meaning will be “instruments of thought” the word
sonb means to chant. In the Meitei religious context, the same meaning is retained. In any religious occasion the Brahmin will chant the holy mantra from Hindu scared books which is known as mantra-sonb. But as the time passes the horizon of the word had expanded in the day to day life also, we mostly find elder people chanting the names of gods as mantra as follows

hare krishna hare krishna

krishna krishna hare hare

hare ram hare ram

ram ram hare hare

Chanting the names of gods is also termed as mantra-sonb in Meiteiron.

(h) məngol-oib ‘to be auspicious’

‘məngol’ in Meiteiron is a word which is derived from Bengali, though originally from Sanskrit word məngala which means auspicious, amulet, prosperity and bliss. The word oib means ‘to become’. Though the words is a compound word, the meaning of the two separate word complement each other that is to be auspicious in what a person is doing. The Meitei lexicon also has
another compound word /məŋol-pibə/ which means to give blessing, where /-pibə/ means to give.

(i) \(\text{dan-} t^h\text{adəba} \) ‘to drop the money on the child’

In this compound word /\text{dan-} t^h\text{adəba}/, the word /\text{dan}/ is a derived word from the Sanskrit /\text{dana}/ which means giving, granting, teaching, delivering, handling over and also means a gift, donation or present. Here, in the naturalization process the final letter /a/ is dropped. However, like many loan words, it is also apparent that it has been borrowed from Bengali.

It is an integral part of the ritual performed on the sixth day of the child birth which is known as swasti puja. On this day generally in the evening the ritual of gift giving to the child is celebrated. The gift could be in cash or kind. While the child is made to lie down on a mattress specially design for him/her, money and other gifts are given which literally means gift is dropped in Meiteiron. The reason why the word /\text{t}^h\text{adəba}/ ‘to drop’ is used when the gift is given to the child is probably because of the religious beliefs that the mother and the child are considered impure until they are purified on the 12\textsuperscript{th} day of the child birth. Since they are considered as impure until purified they must not be touched.
Anybody who comes in contact with them must purify themselves by taking a bath.

(j) \text{g}^{h}\text{ot}-\text{chap}^{h}\text{u} \quad \text{‘the earthen pot use for religious ritual’}

The word \text{/g}^{h}\text{ot/} is a word borrowed from the Sanskrit word \text{/g}^{h}\text{at/} ‘pot’ but from the pronunciation it is seen that it has been taken from Bengali. The word \text{/chap}^{h}\text{u/} also means the pot in Meiteiron. Here, in this hybrid compound we can see that the loan and the native words co-exist, of which these two words mean the same thing that ‘a pot’. But in the Meitei lexicon, this compound word symbolically means a pot which is filled with water and kept in the middle of the mandap decorated with mango leaves in the Meitei religious ceremonies.

l) \text{mёitёi-bamon} \quad \text{‘Manipuris who belong to Brahman community’}

\text{/mёitёi/} is a Meiteiron word which means a community or a group of people who live in Manipur, while \text{/bamon/} is a loanword which is naturalized form of \text{/brahmin/} which means a priest, or the high class community of Indian cast system. Here the
word /məitəi/ is a noun and the word /bəmon/ is also a noun however the word /məitəi/ is used as an adjective.

m) dokʰine-kətpə ‘remuneration’

/dokʰine/ is a naturalized word borrowed from the Sanskrit word /daksʰine/, where /o/ the mid vowel is changed to /a/ front vowel. /s/ is deleted and the word means a gift, offering or donation, fee, remuneration, a present or a gift given to the Brahmans at the completion of a religious rites. In the Meitei religious context the word is more relevant to mean a present or a gift given to the Brahmans at the completion of a religious rite. With the change in the Meitei society, the word is further used even by non Brahman. But, still the words are only used in any ceremonial context. In Meitei culture, in any rites of passage ceremony all the invitees are given gift/dan/ of money which usually starts from rs10- rs20.

They will say:

dokhinə phəŋ.lə.brə?

Have (you) got dokhina (money)?
dokhina kəyə thuŋ.lə.bə.gə?

How much dokhina (money) have you got?

But, when the word /dokʰinə/ is compounded with Meiteiron word /kətpə/- where /kət/ is the verb root which means ‘to offer’ and /-pə/ is the nominal marker. Thus /dokʰinə-kətpə/ means the money offered to the Brahman at the completion of a religious rite.

(n) tulsi-boŋ ‘a mound where tulsi is planted’

Hybrid compound words like /tulsi-boŋ/ clearly shows the influence of Hinduism in the religious practices of Meiteis. /tulsi/ which means ‘the holy basil’ is considered as one of a sacred plant in the Hindu customs. The Hindus worship the /tulsi/ plant as /tulsi-mata/ i.e. as one of the mother goddesses in every Hindu courtyard. Similarly the people of Manipur started to identify /tulsi/ plant as one of the natural deity. The word is compounded with the Meiteiron /boŋ/. Originally the word /boŋ/ is derived from the word /pəŋ/ which means a mound. Every
court yard of Meiteis household now has a place of /tulści/ planted with the belief of a Devi Mata residing in their courtyard.

o) सौंस्कर – तोबा ‘last rite’

The word /sौंस्कर/ in the compound word /सौंस्कर – तोबा/ is derived from Hindu rituals called samskaras. These samskaras are the life cycle sacred rituals that mark major transition in the life of an individual. After /सौंस्कर/, everyone must undergo with a purifying bath and must drink few drops of water of which tulasi leaves are dipped in and this water must be sprinkled on their bodies too as a part of purification rite. These ceremonies are performed with the help of officiating priest. There are as many as sixteen samskaras. In practice, however the most common samskaras performed are pre-birth ceremony (Simantoyannayananam), name giving ceremony (Nama Karana), first grains ceremony (Anna Prashanna), first hair cutting (Mundan), starting school (Vidyarambhana), the thread giving ceremony (Upanayana), marriage (Vivaha) and the funeral (Antyeshthi).

Even though all these ceremonies are referred to as samskaras, among Meiteis the word /sौंस्कर/ is used only in the context of the last rite that is, the cremation of the death body as /सौंस्कर – तोबा/. The meaning used of /सौंस्कर/ in Meiteiron is
narrowed to the use of cremation only as a more respectful word than the Meiteiron word /potloibə/ ‘cremation’

3.3.4. Compound words formed by Loanwords

There are many loanwords used in Meitei religious ceremonies. They are words formed by combining two separate loan words.

Some the examples are given bellow:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Loanwords</th>
<th>loanwords</th>
<th>Compound</th>
<th>gloss</th>
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<td>dan</td>
<td>pində- dan</td>
<td>‘offering of rice balls’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bor</td>
<td>barton</td>
<td>bor-barton</td>
<td>‘invitation to the groom’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kəjnə</td>
<td>dan</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>kərmə</td>
<td>dʰəri</td>
<td>kərmə-dʰəri</td>
<td>‘the person’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
who is responsible for a particular ceremony’

sosti puzə sosti-puzə ‘the birth ceremony’

Some of such terms are discuss below

a) pində-dan “offering of rice balls to the spirits of the ancestor”

/pində/ is a Sanskrit word meaning balls of food either cooked rice or rice flour mixed with certain ingredients. /pində-dan/ is a particular feature of death ceremony where rice balls called /pində/ is prepared and offered to the spirit of departed soul during the death ceremony. In the Meitei death ceremony the Brahmin pujari will cook the rice and will make balls of three rice mixed with uncooked rice and thoiding on the banana stem and will be offered at the entrance of the place where the ceremony will be held. It is a mandatory rite performed in view of the belief that this rite will bring salvation to the departed souls. Like any other Hindu Meiteis also believe that no work can successfully be achieved without the blessing of the ancestors. /pində-dan/ is a must to do
obligation and moral duty of all the remaining family members to clear the debts of their departed forefathers.

It is also further believed that by performing the ritual of /pində-dan/ it wards off restless spirits that affect family members of the deceased (which they believe) the death rites were not performed properly. Sometimes we also came across people offering a kind of /pində-dan/ that is three balls of rice at the gate of the house when a person sees his/her deceased father or mother or any close relatives. By doing so, it is believed that it will help in bringing peace to the restless souls.

b) bor-barton ‘invitation to the groom’

In the marriage ceremony /bor-barton/ is one of the most important rituals among all the other rituals among Meiteis. It is performed on the previous day of the marriage ceremony. It is a ritual of inviting the groom and his parents and families to reach on the auspicious moment fixed for the marriage at the bride’s home. As according to the Meitei culture the invitation is to be given only by the younger brother of the bride. It is a traditional style of invitation that, the invitation contains nuts and betel leaves, properly designed and packed. Interestingly both the words are loan words where the word /bor/ means the “groom” which has been
derived from the Sanskrit word /var/ which has come to Meiteiron via Bengali. Similarly the term /barton/ is the Sanskrit word which means invitation. The same word is used in the Meiteiron. But in some cases the word is nativised as /baton/ by deleting the phoneme /r/. The nativised form is most economically or frequently used by the illiterate natives. In the Meitei community the role of brothers is significant, he is the friendly link of the two families as well as the protector of his sister. Similar role of a younger brother is also seen in the Chinese culture, bride’s younger brother is always assigned some role as link between the two families. In some places he travels with the bride to her new home, in others he appears to invite the bride and the groom to visit his house; they also believe that brother is in some sense protector of sister.[Maurice Freedmond:270]. Thus the ritual of inviting the groom by the younger brother of the bride is known as /bor-baton/ in the Meitei marriage ceremony.

c)  kəjnə-dan       ‘giving off the bride’

As it can be seen from the compound word /kəjnə-dan/, it is formed by the two loanwords, where the word /kəj.nə/ means a “bride”, “girl” and /dan/ means “to offer”, “favor”. In the Meitei
marriage ritual, /kəj.nə-dən/ means the giving off the virgin
daughter by the father or the brother of the bride to the groom. In
the Meitei society the ritual is done similarly as in other parts of
India that is the /dan/ is given by the father or the elder brother of
the bride.

d) zənə-mitra  ‘holy nectar’

In the Meitei religious domain, /zənə-mitrə/ is one of
the scared holy water which everybody wishes to have it if he/she
visits a temple. Where /zənə/ is derived from Bengali word
/dʒɔl/ ‘water’ and /mitrə/ came from /amitrə/ ‘pure’ so
/zənə-mitrə/ literally means a water which is pure meaning holy
water. The word is believed to have derived from /cʰɔ.rɔn-
a.mi.trə/ literally means ‘nectar from feet (of god)’. In the
religious context /zənə-mitra/ is the holy water which is the
water taken after washing the holy black stone which represents the
god’s idol called /səli.grəml/; this water is taken in a pure vessel
and will be kept in front of the temple door. Everybody who comes
to worship, after offering the prayer before leaving the temple will
have a few drops of this water.
e) \text{kərəmə-}dʰəɾi ‘the person who is responsible for a particular ceremony’

In the Meitei religious context, when a ceremony is performed it may be death, birth or marriage there will be a person who is responsible for the whole ceremony he is known as /kərəmə-dʰəɾi/. As the religious ritual begins he has to sit in the /mandop/ till the end of the ceremony.

The word is a combination of /kərəmə/ which means ‘deeds’ or ‘action’. The word is derived from Sanskrit word /kərəmə/ which came from the root /kri/ which means ‘to do’. It is a mental and physical deed that determines the effects of your life and rebirth and consequences from your previous lives, while the word /dʰəɾi/ means ‘lineage’ which is derived from the Sanskrit word /dʰəɾ/. Thus in the Meitei ceremonial context /kərəmə-dʰəɾi/ is a responsible person who belongs to the lineage of which the ceremony is performed. Any other person cannot perform the religious ritual, because such ceremonies seek a prior responsibility. So the person who take charge of the whole ceremony is call /kərəmə-dʰəɾi/ in the Meitei religious context.
f)  sosti-puzae ‘the birth ceremony’

The Meitei word sosti has been derived from Sanskrit Shasthi or Shashti meaning literally ‘sixth’. Shasthi is a Hindu folk goddess, venerated as a benefactor and protector of children. She is also worshipped as a bestower of children to the childless couples. In Bengal, Orissa and South India she is worshipped on the sixth day of childbirth. Like in other parts of India /sosti/ in Meiteiron personifies the sixth day of a child’s life. Unlike in other parts of India among Meiteis this puja is performed only on the sixth day of child birth. An officiating Brahmin priest of the locality will performed the /sosti-puzae/ in the living-in room in the parts of India but the performance on the sixth day of the child birth is common. For example in Orissa Shasthi is worshipped in the living-in room on the sixth day of the child birth, on the 21st day of the child birth and also on any subsequent birthday of a child until he/she reaches the age of sixteen years. In north India Shasthi is worshipped at childbirth, publicly and during naming rites. The first ten days after the birth are considered impure for the mother and the child. On the 12th day the mother and the child are given bath and the purification rite for the house is performed by Brahmin priest because the whole house is considered impure. During this period the family should not offer anything to deities.
3.3.5. Naming by the Names of Hindu gods and goddess

As the 18th century sees a definitive triumph of Hindu religion in Manipur Hindu names were rapidly assimilated and integrated well into Meiteiron. Most of the Meiteis have two names one of indigenous name and other usually a Hindu name. The borrowed Hindu names came to be used more and more officially. The clear evidence we can cite here is that the then king Pamheiba (1709) who patronized Hinduism rechristened his name as Garibaniwaz after the adoption of Hinduism as state religion. Similarly many kings after him also had Hindu names as the official names, for example Churachand Maharaj, Chandrakriti Maharaj, Maharaj Surchandra, Maharaj Bhagyachandra etc.

An interesting piece of evidence that can be noted here is that even though Meiteis adopted Hindu name, the ritual of Namakarna ‘name giving ceremony’ is not performed like in other Hindu communities. Namakarna ‘name giving ceremony’ is usually performed on the 12th day of birth according to Hindu tradition of samakaras. Among the Meiteis however after the birth of a child a family member will contact an astrologer so that a horoscope is prepared and name is determined according to the astrological chart.

In this a name is determined which is known as khuthigi ming literally means ‘a name given in the horoscope’. This name is
to be kept as a secret as it is scared name according the strictures given by the astrologer. He, however, would prescribe a first letter that the name of the child must begin with. Thus, a large numbers of Hindu names have made inroad into Meiteiron. The section will focus on the proper names borrowed from Bengali/Hindi. A number of Hindu names including the names of Hindu gods and goddesses have become a part and parcel of Meiteiron lexicon. A representatives list of Hindu god’s and goddesses names is given below

Male god’s names

krisʰnə

govinda

nəʁəjən

ram

gopal

Female god’s names

radʰə

lək.sʰmi
Thus such practice became significant after the adoption of Hinduism, with the belief that by giving the names of Hindu gods and goddess they got the frequent chance of remembering the idols. The Meitei culture also has an extended belief that when a person is on the death bed they remember their near and dear ones, so if their children are named by the names of gods and goddess, this serves two purposes, one of remembering their children and reciting the name of god as well.

There are also a number of names formed by combining a Hindu gods’ name with a Meiteiron word. The structure is of the sequence loan words and native words and it is being discussed below:

Loan words + Natives words

1) \text{red}^h + \text{manbi}

Loan word + native word
This name is invariably given to girls. The word manbi means ‘who appears like’ and it is also gender marked by the attachment of morpheme –bi. A girl who looks like the goddess Radha.

2)  kəinə + hən.bi

Loan word + native word

The name /kəinə-hənbi/ is a combination of loanword /kənja/ and a native word /hənbi/, like the structure of the previous name discussed the word /kəinə/ means ‘a girl’, ‘a bride’ and ‘virgo’ and the native word /hənbi/ means ‘older’ or ‘the first one’. Therefore this name is invariably given to the first girl child among all the siblings or the first daughter after a son or many sons.

3)  krisⁿə + tom.bi

Loan + native

The word is a combination of loan word and a native word. /krisⁿə/ is the name of the Hindu lord /krisⁿə/ and the word /tom.bi/ is the native word which came from the root ‘ton’ which means the youngest and /-bi/ is the nominal marker.

Loan word + Loan word

The compound words with the sequence of loan word + native word are not many in number in Meitei lexicon. But the Meitei lexicon is
rich with names formed by compounding with the names of Hindu Gods and Goddess. The following examples illustrates this (A list of similar names is given in the appendix 3).

1) \( \text{rad}^h\text{a} \ + \ r\text{ani} \)
   Loan word + loan word

The word is a compound formed by two words borrowed from another language family. The word /\text{rad}^h\text{a}-r\text{ani}/ means \text{rad}^h\text{a} who is a /r\text{ani}/. The word /\text{rad}^h\text{a}/ is the name of the Hindu goddess and ‘r\text{ani}’ means queen.

2) \( \text{kris}^h\text{ne} \ + \ n\text{era}j\text{en} \)
   Loan word + loan word

It is a compound name formed by combing the names of two Hindu god /\text{kris}^h\text{ne}/ ‘Hindu deity’ and /n\text{era}j\text{en}/ ‘Hindu deity’.

A consideration of the changing structure of personal names in Manipur illustrates how speakers are now consciously contesting the dominant ideology of Hinduism and Indo-Aryan language and culture. After the conversion to Hinduism, the names given to the Meiteis were replaced with names formed by hybrid compound of a Gods name and a Meitei word. Sanskrit derived Bengali names
invoke a larger “sacred community” (Anderson 1991). Sanskrit names may be based on abstract qualities that are often linked to a specific Hindu deity (Britto 1986:352) and so serve to evoke Hindu cosmology. While indigenous deity names were not used as personal names in pre-Hindu times, variant names for Krishna, the eighth reincarnation of the deity Vishnu, are often found in both male and female names today such as /krisʰn̪ə-ma.ni/ is a name given to male and /krisʰ.n̪ə-kumari/ is a name given to a female where Krishna is used in common for both the gender. The practice of basing personal names on the names of deities is contrary to indigenous Meitei beliefs, which holds that saying the names of the deities in day to day situations is blasphemous. In Hindu practice however the names of the deity may be repeated in religious chants and even in simple greetings to ensure good health and fortune (Pramodini 2004:96). For example the common Hindi greeting /rəm rəm/ ‘good day’ is simply the repetition of the name of the deity Ram.

3.4. Conclusion

It is generally agreed that the entry of loanwords in a language from other language correlates with acculturation and cultural diffusion (Lehmann 1962:216). The adoption of Hinduism
has tremendous impacts on Meiteiron. The influence of Indo-Aryan words especially Bengali, Hindi and Sanskrit on Meiteiron enriches the lexical words of Meiteiron. Many Indo-Aryan words entered the Meitei lexicon, through cultural assimilation for example, the usual expression used when a person dies in Meiteiron is /sikʰɾe/ ‘he/she died’ or /lɔiḵʰidɾe/ ‘he/she is no more’. But after the advent of Hinduism the same expression of ‘he/she died’ is expressed as /beisʰnɔbə-oikʰɾe/ for a male and /beisʰnɔbɪ-oikʰɾe/ for a female.

Meiteiron as a result of contact with the speakers of Indo-Aryan languages, particularly Bengali, which began from 18th century to the end of the 20th century, the Meiteis beautifully juxtaposed the two religious values and still sustained old practice of the pagan beliefs. Keeping traditional practice became a way of preserving a cultural identity in a society. Such juxtaposed culture is also clearly visible from the language the Meiteis used, the formation of different hybrid-compounds for example /kɔina-kɔtɔ̄/‘marriage without much elaborate formation’, /prasadi-kʰunbɔ/ ‘to pick the remnants of food offered to god’.

At the same time after the adoption of Hinduism, many other words flourished by the compound formation of the loanwords itself. For example /zənə-miʈʰɾa/ ‘holy nectar’, /kəjɲə-dan/ ‘giving off the bride’.
As the 18th century sees a definitive triumph of Hindu religion in Manipur Hindu names were rapidly assimilated and integrated well into Meiteiron. The borrowed Hindu names came to be used more and more officially. A large numbers of Hindu names have made inroad into Meiteiron. A number of Hindu names including the names of Hindu gods and goddesses have become a part and parcel of Meiteiron lexicon. For example some of the male god’s names- /krishnə/, /govinda/, /nērējən/, /ram/, /gopal/ and some of the female names -/radhə/, /lok.ș̃mi/, /uma/, /sē.ɾas.șə.ti/, /sə.ɾəɾə.ti/.

Loanwords from Hindi, Bengali and Sanskrit have occupied an important place in the religious domain in the Meitei society. People who are in charge of religious preaching and teaching are making the loanwords popular among the people. Meitei became deeply religious they revere everything attached to it. Language is no exception to this.

Thus cultural influence leads to language influence which leads to the entries of loanwords. This loanwords certainly enriches the lexicon of Meiteiron however, speakers must caution themselves in the excessive use of loanwords as it may not be a wise attempt as this may endanger many Meiteiron vocabularies.