INTRODUCTION
1. Explanatory note on Barpeta

A. The derivation of the name

The Barpeta dialect is a sub-dialect of Kamrupi, a dialect of Assamese language. It is called 'Barpetia' in std. Assamese language. The native speakers call it 'Barpeita'. It has become as a result of 'epenthesis' which is a common feature of the dialect. The word /b p rpetia/ 'belong to Barpeita' is derived from the word /b p rpeta/ by affixing the adjectival suffix [-ia] and drop the word-ending [-a].

The word 'Barpeita' is interpreted in different ways. Before offering our own interpretation, let us examine the etymological explanations of the word offered by different local people. In Assamese 'bor' means big and 'pet' means belly. Some says that Barpeta was in middle (pet-belly) of the river Brahmaputra at a time. Gradually it has become high and known as Barpeta. Some others say that there was a big 'pit' at this place at a time and so it is called Barpit (bor-big, pit-pitch) or Barpeta. On the other hand, some people says that this place is a nerve centre of the Assamese Neo-vaishnavite religion and culture. So the name of this place is Barpeta'.

Some other people like to connect the word 'Barpit' (big-pitch) with the word 'Barpith' (the best holly place). Barpeta is the best holly place of Sankari religion and culture. Therefore, it popularly known as 'Barpith'.

In articulation of the uneducated rural people the final aspirated sound 'th' of the word /borpith/ has changed into unaspirated sound 't' and then it has become /borpit/. But as 'pit' is a common word in the dialect no satisfactory explanation may be given to the change of 'pit' into 'ptt'.

The word 'Barpeta' may be derived from the word 'Barpat' (the first leaf). 'The seed of ęka-sarana Namadharma bringing from Baikuntha (Heaven) by Mahapurusa has grown at Bausi'. Tantikuchi is the first leaf of that plant growing at Bausi. Therefore, Tantikuchi was called 'Barpat' with the addition of the suffix {-a} and replacement of 'ę' by 'a', the word /b orpat/ has become /borpeta/.

The word 'Barpeta' seems to be originated from the word 'Barpat' (Bar-big, pat-door). Barpeta was the nerve centre of the Vaisnavite religion and hence the 'barpat' — a great way for salvation. Mahapurush Sankaradeva lived at Patbausi and his favourite disciple Madhavadeva lived at Sundari, Tantikuchi, Gankuchi etc, for many years. During that period Tantikuchi (now Barpeta) was the main centre of ęka-śarana Vaisnavite religion.

From the linguistic point of view, the term 'Barpeta' may be derived from the noted words 'Barpat' or 'Barpat'. Had it been a older form, the hagiographer should have mentioned it. We are almost certain that upto Sankaradeva's time the name of the place was 'Tantikuchi' and not 'Barpat' or 'Barpat'. Probably, the name...

of the place from Tantikuchi to Barpeta was changed afterwards. We donot get any reference even in the writing of the Katha Guru Carita (17/18th century). so the name must be of recent origin. In short, no satisfactory explanation may be given about the word.

II. Where the dialect is spoken

A. Situation of the dialect.

*Assamese language is spoken in North-East India. It is spoken in the Brahmaputra valley. There are a number of pockets in the Barak Valley as well as in the states of Arunachal, Nagaland and Meghalaya where Assamese is spoken like other languages.

Assamese is characterised by distinct dialect divisions. All the dialects of Assamese language can mainly be classified as belonging to Uzani, Kamrupi and Goalparia*¹ (Map No. 1). There are different sub-dialects in different localities. we can show the dialects and sub-dialects in terms of the following diagram.

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Even though the dialects are belong to the same Assamese language, the dialects may not be always mutually intelligible to the speakers using them. The causes of these dialect variations are the political, cultural, geographical and the restrictions of communication flow. The dialects are distinguished on the basis of differences regarding linguistic features — phonetic, grammatical and vocabulary. Such linguistic features are flotted on a map. Thus different isoglosses indicate the existence of sub-varieties within the same language. Isoglosses are drawn between linguistic areas. A particular dialect is identified with a specific geographical area which should not be confused with the political boundary.

The Barpeta dialect is a sub-dialect of the Kamrupi dialect. It is the western group of the Kamrupi dialect. It is spoken in the Barpeta district of Assam (Map No.2).

B. Origin of the dialect.

The Barpeta dialect is originated from the parent language Sanskrit through Magadhi Prabhamśa of the eastern group of Middle Indo-Aryan language. Coming from Magadha through North-Bengal Assamese entered into Kamrupa of western Assam. According to the 'Kalika Purana'¹ (supposedly of the 10th century A.D.) and 'Yoginirantra'² (supposedly of the 16th century A.D.) the permanent western boundary of ancient Kamrupa was to the river 'Korotoya'.

1. Kalika Purana (supposedly of the 10th century A.D.), Part- xx xxx, pp. 65-66
2. Yoginirantra (supposedly of the 16th century A.D.), Part- ix, pp. 17-21
in North-Bengal. The Copper Plate inscription and the Bargonga Rock inscription proves that, the present Dabaka, Srihatta, Tripura, Moimansing was under the kingdom of the Kamrupa king Bhuti Barma (553-54 A.D.).

G. A. Grierson has pointed 'Magadhi was the principal dialect which corresponded to the old Prakrit. Magadhi Apabhramsa may be considered as spreading out eastwards and southwards in three directions. To the North-East it developed into Northern Bengali and Assamese, to the south into Oriya and between the two into Bengali'.

Dr. S. K. Chatterjee divides Eastern Magadhi Pkt. and A.P. into four dialect groups — (1) Radha, (2) Varendra, (3) Kamrupa and (4) Vanga. Kamrupa comprehend Assamese and the dialects of North-Bengal. Kamrupa comprehend Assamese and the dialects of North-Bengal. Based on the above two theories Dr. B. Kakati remarks 'they are all related to one another as having emanated from one centre of radiation and yet following their own lines of development'. According to Dimbeswar Neog Assamese language is derived from the Kamrupi dialect; but he has not shown the origin and features of the Kamrupi dialect.

Based on few Non-Magadhi features Kaliram Medhi remarks that Assamese language is originated in a mixture form of Eastern and Western Pkt. Among the above theories we support the first theory

2. As quoted by Kakati, B.: 'A.F.D.', p. 6, 1987
putforward by Grierson, S.K. Chatterjee and B. Kakati in the respect that the origin of Assamese language can be understood through Mahādhi Prakrit. Regarding the original source of pkt. from which Assamese originated, at least four different opinions are offered by the linguists. As my study restricted only to a dialect, I did not elaborate those different opinions.

Relationship with Indo-Aryan languages

Assamese is an Aryan language and Barpeta dialect is a regional variety of it. It is natural that this dialect will bear almost all the linguistic speciality of the Aryan language of Eastern variety. Yet we have pointed out here some salient features of this language.

Phonology:

1. Use of epenthetic i, u, e.g.;

   -i- kāṟī(y)ā > kā[rī(y)ā (M.B.), kā[rī(y)ā (E.B.) 'having done
   anya(O.I.A.) > ain (B.D.) 'Other'.
   sūnya(O.I.A.) > xūn (B.D.) 'Zero'.

   -u-
   sāthua > sāuthua (M.B.), sāuṭhā (E.B.) 'Companion'.
   māruka (O.I.A.) > mārua (M.I.A.) > māmrā (E.B.) 'epidemic'.

(ii) Use of vowel mutation\(^1\), e.g.;

- nāṇi > nāṇi > noni (B.g) "cream of milk".
- pāti > poti (B.g); poti (B.D) 'husband', 'master'.
- madhu (O.I.A.) > modhu (B.g); modhu (B.D) 'honey', 'the name of a person'.

(iii) Presence of two a sounds in adjacent syllable\(^2\), e.g.;

- cakra (O.I.A.) > cāka (B.g); sākā (B.D) 'wheel'.
- tārā (O.I.A.) > tārā (B.g); tārā (B.D) 'star'.

(iv) Dropping of medial vowel due to strong initial stress\(^3\), e.g.;

- mākāsā (Std.O) > mākā (O.I.A) 'spider'.
- mākārā (Std.Ass) > mākārā (B.D)

(v) Replacement of 'r' by 'l'\(^4\), e.g.;

- rohit (O.I.A.) > lōhid (O.I.A) 'red colour'.
- sārīra (O.I.A.) > xoril (B.D) 'body'.

(vi) Use of aspiration after x, s and in the neighbourhood of another aspirate in the same word\(^5\), e.g.;

- sūṣka (O.I.A.) > sukku (M.I.A) > sukhu (Hin); xukhna (B.D) 'dry'.
- caksu (O.I.A.) > cakkhu (M.I.A) > cokh (B.g); sokhu (B.D) 'eye'.
- bubhuksa (O.I.A.) > bhukkha (M.I.A) > bhukh (Hin); bhukh (B.D) 'hunger'.

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(vii) Use of anaptyxis, e.g.;

janma (O.I.A) > zanam (B.D.) 'birth'
svapna (O.I.A) > sapan (Bhoj.); xapan (B.D) 'dream'
rakta (O.I.A) > rakat (Awa); rakat (B.D) 'blood'

Morphology:

(i) Use of some words suggesting plurality in which case the noun remain unaffected, e.g.;
gila, -gla (N.B.), -gula, -gulā, -gulan (B.G), -gilā, -gilan, -gilā (B.D.)

(ii) Loss of dative case-ending.

(iii) Replacement of locative for dative-accusative, e.g.; 'koka za' or 'kot za' (B.D) 'where do you go?'

(iv) Use of past base '-l-' and future base '-b-' e.g.;
ela, -illa (A.P) > -l-, -il- (B.D)
ibba, -ibba (A.P) > -b-, -ib- (B.D)

(v) Use of present participle '-ant-', e.g.;
ant- (O.I.A) > -anta- (O); -antā (B.D)

(vi) Use of instrumental '-di' e.g;
dā (std, Bg, E.Bg); dei (O); -di (B.D)

   Kakati, B. : 'A.F.D.', p. 145
5. Goswami, U.N. : 'A Study on Kamrupi, a Dialect of Assamese', p. 177, 1970
(vii) Addition of definitive '−tu', e.g.;
manustā (Bg.,0); manuhtu (B.D.) 'the man';

(viii) Addition of plural suffix '−hun', e.g.;
dun-hun, don-hun (E.Hin.); saba-kāhun (E.Hin.) 'all';
vāhun (E.Hin) 'these'.
tu-hun (B.D.) 'you (inf.) all'; ā-hun (B.D.) 'these persons'; tā-hun (B.D.) 'those persons'.

**Relationship with Non-Aryan languages:**

In Assam many non-Aryan speakers live and speak their own dialect. They are belong to Tibeto-Burman, Austroic, Shan-Chinese and Dravidian. The Western boundary of ancient Kamrupa was to the North-Bengal. The Bodos live from the extreme North-East of Assam to the district of North-Bengal. They came in almost daily contact with the Aryanised people. As a result many non-Aryan features entered into Assamese language. Therefore, Assamese though originally is an Indo-Aryan language the non-Aryan elements enrich it in various respects. The Barpeta dialect as a sub-variation of Assamese language has a close-relationship with non-Aryan languages. The following non-Aryan features are found in the Barpeta dialect.

phonological:

1. Use of alveolar in place of cerebrals and dentals.
2. Use of alveolar in place of palatals.
4. Use of initial stress.

Morphological:

1. Presence of plural suffixes - gila, -la, -nya.
2. Use of personal suffixes to nouns of relationship.
3. Use of formative affixes -m, -sa.
4. Prefixation of negative particles.
5. Use of reduplication.
6. Use of compound verbs.

Vocabulary:

A large number of vocables in the Barpeta dialect have been attributed to non-Assamese influence by Dr. Kakati. Some of them are cited below:

Austric influence — zunzal 'trouble', xalmrn 'pimple', mai 'term used in addressing girls', tupura 'round', dhuma 'big', ata 'grand-father', kaka 'elder brother', hapa 'wild cat' zy 'small twings of tree', teki 'cold' etc.

Tibeto-Burman influence — abra 'a simpleton', haba 'silly', saj 'a plate form', ukhi 'dandruff', douk 'a gali-nuli', zali 'small pumpkin', bhajna 'a kind of fish', hudu 'screetch' etc.

III. Area and population

Barpeta dialect is spoken in Barpeta, Baghbar, Barnagar, Sorupeta, Jalal and Kalgasia circles of the Barpeta district. According to the census of India 1991 the total number of population of the Barpeta district are 11,85,774. The total numbers comprise Assamese Hindus 5,31,896, Bengali Hindus 1,23,935, Assamese Muslims 71,312, Bengali Muslims 3,53,147, Bodos 64,419, and Harijans 41,065. According to the same census the numbers of total speakers using Barpeta dialect are 348182. The Bengali Muslims and the Bengali Hindus use Bengali language. These people live in a bilingual situation. Assamese is the regional language and the medium of instruction of all the schools of this area is Assamese. The Bengali Muslims consciously trying their best to be Assamicised. As a result, though

Pathak, R. : 'Asamiya Bhasar Itihas', pp. 61-64
they speak their own Bengali dialect in their family, they immediately switch over to Assamese in school campus, market place, meetings etc. The Bengali Hindus are somewhat different. They are bilingual only in the public place. The Bodos, who were almost Assamised, suddenly become conscious of their language due to political movement for separate identity. They are also in bilingual situation now. The Bodo Hindus use the mixture of Hindi and Bodo dialect.

The following table shows the numbers of population and areas of circles of the Barpeta district, according to the Census of India 1991.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of circles</th>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Numbers of population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Barpeta circle</td>
<td>145.90 Sqr. miles</td>
<td>2,06,601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Baghbar circle</td>
<td>289.63</td>
<td>1,65,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Kalgachia circle</td>
<td>94.29</td>
<td>1,03,619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Barnagar circle</td>
<td>241.13</td>
<td>2,37,008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Bajali circle</td>
<td>65.78</td>
<td>85,703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Sorupeta circle</td>
<td>110.21</td>
<td>1,48,439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Jalal circle</td>
<td>82.48</td>
<td>1,08,393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Sarthebari circle</td>
<td>103.24</td>
<td>1,30,666</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV. Community

Different communities live at Barpeta, Baghbar, Jarnagar, Borupeta, Kalgasia and Jalah circles. They belong to Hindus (Assamese and Bengali), Muslims (Assamese and Bengali), Horizons and tribals (Bodos). There are different communities among the Assamese Hindus — general Hindus, Fishermen, Goldsmiths, Potteries and Devotees of Jatra. All these communities are tied-up as one family by neo-Vaisnavite religion.

During the time of Sankaradeva Barpeta and its surrounding areas were filled-up with deep wood, pool and creek. The local people lived in these places. A number of Muslim people also lived in the adjoining areas of Barpeta. For example, 'Chandrasain' and 'Joyhari' of Muslim community were favourite disciple of Mahapurush Sankaradeva. It is supposed that the Assamese Muslims of the Barpeta district are the new generation of the old Muslims of these areas. It has already mentioned that upto Sankaradeva's time the name of Barpeta was Tantikuchi. The weavers lived at Tantikuchi. Nathura Das Burhata, the favourite disciple of Madhavadeva was born at Tantikuchi. The old generation of Burhata came from 'Khanikhabara' village of Jibsagar. The Devotees of Jatra live inside the compound of the Jatra institutions. The Fishermen, the Goldsmith and the Potteries live in their own areas. The general Hindus live in all parts of different circles.

All these communities speak the Barpeta dialect. A few difference is to be found in their speeches in the sphere of phonology, morphology and vocabulary. Some of them are given below:

**Phonological difference**

Phonological difference underlying dialect difference among the communities is the use of different segmental sounds in similar positions of the words, e.g.

<table>
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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/za(e)/</td>
<td>/za(e)/</td>
<td>/za(e)/</td>
<td>/za(e)/</td>
<td>/za(e)/</td>
<td>(\eta \rightarrow u)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

'Son-in law'

\(/b\text{\&}\text{\&}\text{\&}r/ /b\text{\&}\text{\&}\text{\&}r/ /b\text{\&}\text{\&}\text{\&}r/ /b\text{\&}\text{\&}\text{\&}r/ /b\text{\&}\text{\&}\text{\&}r/ \rightarrow \rightarrow a\)

'Oil seeds'

Another phonological feature distinguishing one from another is the epenthesis, e.g.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/xalka/</td>
<td>/xalka/</td>
<td>/xalka/</td>
<td>/xalka/</td>
<td>/xalka/</td>
<td>'a kind of bird'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another phonological difference is the use of elision of sound e.g.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/m(\text{&amp;})hori/</td>
<td>/m(\text{&amp;})hori/</td>
<td>/m(\text{&amp;})hori/</td>
<td>/m(\text{&amp;})hori/</td>
<td>elision of sound '0'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

'mosquitonet'
Use of different segmental sounds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other groups</th>
<th>muslim groups</th>
<th>sound difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/mo'ori/’mosquito net/</td>
<td>/mosori/</td>
<td>h --&gt; r</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fishr. group**

| /ghoifel/’Crocodile' | /ghoiral/ | |

The following example may be treated as differential in- clining to anaptyxis; e.g.

<table>
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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/pi'par/</td>
<td>/pipra/</td>
<td>/pipra/</td>
<td>/pipar/</td>
<td>/pipar/</td>
<td>'ant'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Morphological difference**

The pronouns of all the communities except the devotees of Jatra are same. The first personal singular pronoun /bä/ is not found in the speech of devotees of Jatra. The first personal plural pronoun /ami/ 'we' is used in place of /bao/ also. The pronoun /tara/ 'he' or 'thou' is used in place of an eminent man or God.

Certain classifiers are phonetically different in communities, e.g.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gen. Hindu, muslims, goldsmith, potteries and Dev. of Jatra</th>
<th>Fishr.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>{-saklə} /ɛksaklə/ 'one piece'</td>
<td>-{-saklə} /ɛksaklə/ 'one piece'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vocabulary difference

In the sphere of vocabulary certain community exhibit partial phonetic similarity. Some such examples are given below:

e.g,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gold.</th>
<th>pott.</th>
<th>Dev. of Satra</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/panpipeli/</td>
<td>/pantipeli/</td>
<td>/pantipeli/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/modph v'l/</td>
<td>/modph v'l/</td>
<td>/modph v'l/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/pathar/</td>
<td>/pathar/</td>
<td>/pathar/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/khutta/</td>
<td>/khutta/</td>
<td>/khutta/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/kirpin/</td>
<td>/kirpin/</td>
<td>/kirpin/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A few vocables are to be found completely different in some communities. Some of them are mentioned below; e.g.,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/dhama/ 'bucket'</td>
<td>/balti/</td>
<td>/dabar/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ghuti/ 'waterpot'</td>
<td>/lota/</td>
<td>/surki/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/okhudh/ 'medicine'</td>
<td>/dana/</td>
<td>/daru/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/xvgr/ 'hole'</td>
<td>/phuta/</td>
<td>/xvgr/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gold Pott. Dev. of Satra</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/dhama/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ghuti/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/daru/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/po/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

V. Scope of the dialect

A language is made up of several dialects. The study of these dialects give a complete description of that language. They enrich the standard language in various respects. Assamese language is divided into several dialects. These dialects are divided into sub-dialects. As a sub-dialect of Kamrupi, a dialect of Assamese language, Barpeta dialect shares a large number of linguistic features. The scientific study of these linguistic features is highly necessary.

According to Bloomfield "the origin and history of the standard and sub-standard types of speech can be understood only
in the light of the local dialects."¹ The study of the Barpeta dialect also helps to derive the source of some Assamese words; e.g., O.I.A. garta > M.I.A. gatta > B.D. gāta > std. gā.  
gat, O.I.A. Suska > M.I.A. Sukkha > B.D. xukhna > std. xukh,  
xukan, O.I.A. Svapna > M.I.A. Sibino > B.D. xapan > std.  
As. xapon (dream).  

Different local scholars pointed out that 'Dak' was born at  
Lehidangara village, seven miles distant from Barpeta.² It is  
supposed by the scholars like Hemchandra Goswami and Dr.  
Moheswar Neog that Dak was born at Lehidangara near Barpeta in 4th/5th  
century. In this respect the Barpeta dialect will help in the proper  
study of the proverbs of 'Dak'.

The Barpeta dialect gives an idea of the geographical boundary of ancient Kamrupa. According to B. Kakati "when Hiuen Tsang visited the country in 643 A.D. he knew it as Ka-mo-lu-p'o (Kamarupa). Its western boundary was the river Karatoya in North Bengal."³ Therefore, the spoken language of North Bengal and Barpeta dialect is seems to be similar.

The Barpeta district is surrounded by non-Aryan speakers.  
Bodos live from the North-East of Assam to the North-Bengal. Khasis  
live in the south of Assam. Therefore Barpeta dialect is largely

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¹ Bloomfield, L.: 'Language', p. 50
² An article by Tilak Das, published in 'Sahitya Sanskriti' Aru Barpeta', p. 3, translated from Assamese to English by self.  
An article by Akshay Kr. Misra, published in 'Sahitya Sanskriti Aru Barpeta', p. 82, translated from Assamese to English by self.
³ Kakati, B.: 'A.F.D.', p. 5
influenced by the non-aryan elements. They will enrich Assamese language.

The Barpeta dialect has a close relationship with Saryu songs. The few Buddhist Siddhacarya are recognised as belonging to ancient Kamrupa. It has already mentioned that the western boundary of ancient Kamrupa was to the North Bengal. According to Dr. B. Kakati "Certain phonological and morphological peculiarities registered in the Baudha dohas have come down in an unbroken continuity through early to modern Assamese."\(^1\) According to Dr. Bagchi dohas are composed between the 8th and the 10th centuries A.D.\(^2\) Therefore the Barpeta dialect shows the early form of Assamese preserved in dohas. Certain phonological, morphological and vocabulary features are cited below.

**Phonological**:

(i) Presence of 'i' in place of 'j' e.g., /zai/ (Car- 42), /li/ (Car- 36) etc.

(ii) Use of front vowel in place of back vowel, e.g., /jel/ (Car - 2, 7, 8) etc.

**Morphological**:

(i) Presence of nominative 'e', e.g., /kumbhite/ (Car- 2), accusative 'k', e.g., /thekuri/ (Car- 12), genetive 'r' e.g., /horinir/ (Car- 6), locative 't' e.g., /talot/ (Car- 33).

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1. Kakati, B. : *F.D.,* p. 11
2. Quoted by Kakati, B. : *F.D.,* p. 11
(2) Use of present participle 'once', e.g., /zəndata/.

(3) Use of post-position — i.e., /taka kali 1- i,

(4) Best base '1', e.g., /āssilo/ (Car- 35), future base e.g. /hāito/ (Car- 5).

Vocabulary:

/tuti/ (Car- 37), /phāl/ (Car- 20), /ādiri/ (Car- 6),
2, 7, 8), /bēya/ (Car- 33), /rupa/ (Car- 9).

The Sarpeta dialect may enrich the standard Assamese in various respects. It must be mentioned here that a number of words of this dialect have already contributed to the standard Assamese literature, certain dialectal forms like /apa/ 'boy', /gir/, 'girl', /ata/ 'grand-father', /abu/ 'grand-mother', /bhiza/ 'wet', /bhatikala/ 'evening', /zori/ 'rope' etc. used in the standard Assamese literature. The Sarpeta dialect is more rich in phrases and idiomatic expressions. Some examples /saka patot bōhā/ 'evening', /boler pua/ 'early in the morning', /haura kora/ 'to hope', /gāghilo/ 'lazy', /atah jora/ 'to feel coldly' etc. These can be used to fill-up some gaps in the standard Assamese.

Sometimes various words are used to denote one thing. For instance the words for 'well' in Sarpeta dialect are, /ara/, /inra/ and /inra/. These words can be used in standard Assamese and thereby enrich the vocabulary of Assamese language. Since several dialects are part of the same language, they are mutually intelligible to the speakers using them.
the vocabularies of several dialects in the standard language, the
dialects may be mutually intelligible to the speakers.

Language changes due to simplicity, influence of sounds,
influence of stress, quick pronunciation etc. They are assumed
by some processes. For example, the following words in Barpeta
dialect may be noted.

/ˈkʊmra/ 'pumpkin' (use of initial stress)
/təpot/ 'hot' (use of anaptyxis).
/zʊila/ 'liquid' (use of vowel mutation)
/pʊnima/ 'name of a person' (use of assimilation)
/bhukh/ 'greed' (use of aspiration).
/giˈd/ 'song' (use of voicing).

After knowing the particular process, the speakers of several
dialects would be able to understand that all dialects are of
equal value. In the words of Hall "all languages and dialects
are of equal merit, each in its own way. There is no such thing
as good and bad (or correct and incorrect, grammatical and
ungrammatical, right and wrong) in language."¹

The Barpeta dialect is more rich in folk song and literature.
The scientific study of these songs and literature will enrich
the Standard Assamese literature.

No research work has been done of the Barpeta dialect till
now. Therefore the scientific study of this dialect is highly
necessary. There are several dialects in different localities.
The proper study of these dialect will give a complete descrip-
tion of Assamese language.

¹ Hall A. "All languages and dialects are of equal merit, each in its
own way. There is no such thing as good and bad (or correct and
incorrect, grammatical and ungrammatical, right and wrong) in
language."
VI. Materials for the study

The present work is based on principles of modern descriptive linguistics. The model of analysis adopted for the investigation is that of the Bloomfieldian or American structural school. The phonetic and phonemic symbolizations are basically as per as the tenets of the International Phonetic Alphabet with modifications indicated in the appropriate places. For materials, the form spoken in the Barpeta district has been taken.

The copper plate inscriptions of the kings of Kamrupa have helped greatly for materials. The inscriptions give some idea of the ancient Kamrupi language from the fifth to the twelve century A.D. I have collected the data for the analysis from the inscriptions of Subhankara patak plate of Dharmapala (12th century), Saahati Grant of Indrapala (11th century), Nidhanpur plate of Bhaskar Varmā and Guākuchi plate of Indrapala (11th century).  

The Carya songs present a good material for the Barpeta dialect; because the Carya songs have a very close relation with the Barpeta dialect. They share many linguistic features of the Barpeta dialect.

The literary works composed by the poets of early Assamese period are good examples for materials. 'Prahlāda Carita', 'Jayadratha Badha', 'Ushā-Parinaya' composed by Hemsaraswati (14th century), Kaviratna Saraswati (14th century) and Pitumbara Kavi (later part of the 16th century A.D.) respectively are helpful for  

the supply of its materials. The Ankiya hitas and Sargitas composed by Jankaradeva and Madhavadeva (15th-16th century) also help to a great extent. The book 'Dun-mula' written by Jankaradeva in one night only also helps for its materials. The form of Sarpe dialect is also contained in the 'Kartika' and 'Kathā Maṭyāvata' composed by Rai Kumar and Chaitanya Chakravarta (16th century). The Ankiya hitas written by Jankaradeva and Rāmcarana Thākura are another example for materials.

The short puthi like 'Nadi Shurit Sūta' of Sūta Chandra Lekhārū is obtained from Sarpe dialect. It presents a good picture of the Sarpe dialect. Therefore this book is excellent material of the Sarpe dialect.

A good number of literary works written in a certain period also have helped greatly in supplementing the Sarpe dialect. 'Ningin Bhawarii Aah-shyaa' composed by Jadav Kh. was an example for materials. This book is filled up with folk-songs and proverbs. A book of poems entitled 'Aarshita' written by Srijira Ch. also helps for the materials of the drama 'Nalinanmaya' by Ambikagiri Raychaudhury composed in the Sarpe dialect. The dramas like 'Kumbhakonam' by Fakirbandar, 'Rupai More Rupri Ho' by Khampa Jik, 'Banche Son' by Pramod Jis, 'Kbir Pahar' by Khampa Jis are most helpful for the supply of its materials.

The folk-song and literature in the Sarpe dialect like Ujapali (a choral song), Siam (mourning song), Khiyel,
group song singing in Baul festival), Jau—heli (a group song), Juba (a group song to drive mosquitoes), Old proverbs, riddles etc. They are excellent examples of literature. The educated people of hapota though they speak and write in public meeting, educational institutions etc., they used the hapota dialect at home. Therefore the dialect is being confined in the educated people. Therefore they have published folk literature in this dialect.

The proverbs of Baul supply a large number of for the because the hapota dialect has a close relation with the verbs of Baul. They present a good picture of the dialect.

The analysis is primarily based on the speech of the dayen, Khandai Jio, Akram Hussain, Amine and a tof of hapota, Nizam Ali of Senia, Lekhi Ali of Ali of Howly, Sohail, Ali of Shahnipur, Nishat Ali of Borapata, Nazrat Ali of Palamati and some other intelligentsia. They speak the hapota dialect as their first language as their first dialect and the speech is also free from linguistic influence. The Khandai is a native of the hapota dialect; but she is a diglossian in the sense that she speaks the standard dialect of Assam with the hapota dialect with equal competence. Yet her knowledge of the hapota dialect has been helpful for the supply of the dialect.