

## Re: Phonetic contrast between lenis unvoiced and lenis voiced?

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*Source:* <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.lang/2008-10/msg00768.html>

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- *From:* "benlizro@xxxxxxxxxx" <benlizro@xxxxxxxxxx>
  - *Date:* Thu, 16 Oct 2008 22:34:43 -0700 (PDT)
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On Oct 17, 6:21 pm, "ranjit\_math...@xxxxxxxxxx" <ranjit\_math...@xxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

On Oct 16, 9:46 pm, "benli...@xxxxxxxxxx" <benli...@xxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

On Oct 17, 5:07 pm, "ranjit\_math...@xxxxxxxxxx"

I'm not equipped for experiments, so I took VOTs reported for Mandarin [b] and [p] whose degree of aspiration seems similar to the corresponding sound in high Malayalam and interpolated a geometric series to come up with 2 more VOTs between the two figures.

Naughty! But is there not some actual phonetic research to verify that these four manners are in contrast?

Not that I know of. I've seen very dated discussion (such as from Kuiper's time) about degree of voicing in Tamil such as whether to describe the pronunciation of /anpu/ as [VnpU] or [anbU] or something inbetween but these observations were from an era before measurements were made. Tamil, though, doesn't have aspirated consonants or indeed more than one stop phoneme at any given point of articulation, so discussions of Tamil would have to be about what the allophones of a stop phoneme are.

If it could be demonstrated that these stops had "allophones" conditioned by the etymology of the word in question, that would be a most interesting finding.

Re: Phonetic contrast between lenis unvoiced and lenis voiced?

All of what you're talking about is spelling pronunciation. What "should" Brahui be (in English)?

[br.Vhwi] is what it is to one Pakistani English speaker (I've heard it only from one person).

Well this runs into more than one difficulty from an English point of view. I think "brahooy" is probably about the best one can do.

Now, I remember that he said that [brVhwi] is a formal pronunciation and that it's also called by other names such as [brAwi], [bro:hi], [bru:hi] and [bIru:hi]. He was a security guard but literally inclined; he published his own magazine with a small circulation.

The first of these pronunciations can be rendered quite nicely in English by <brahwi>. As a bonus, this spelling would also facilitate rendering the formal pronunciation by the cognoscenti that be.

I don't see that changing one letter would make it significantly easier for the "cognoscenti" (i.e. those who had access to a knowledge of the original pronunciation either by hearing it or reading a phonetic transcription) to render it in English. And the proposed spelling would be more likely to lead to something like "bra-wee" or "brow-y" among the other 99.9% of the population.

Ross Clark

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