



CFEL Research Newsletter



Centre for Endangered Languages (CFEL)

(A UGC, New Delhi Sponsored Centre)

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It gives me immense pleasure to bring out the second edition of the CFEL news letter. The Centre has carried out a series of research and documentation activities in 2017-2018. The multidisciplinary research team carried out an extensive field study and documentation on the Meyor community in Anjaw District of Arunachal Pradesh and documented the language and cultural practices of this lesser known border community. We have also documented the rare ritual of installation of *Pao niu tham* (Log drum) among the Kasiks/Khapas in Khonsa village of Tirap District. Apart from the field studies, the research reports on Kasik/Khapa and Tangam languages have been finalized and it is ready for print. These monographs will be released in a short while. The Centre also organised a workshop on linguistic tools, and several special lectures. I am happy to share that our Centre has produced an ethnographic film on the Tangam community in vernacular language with subtitles in English, and I am sure it will be appreciated by all. The Centre has also built a sound proof audio recording studio and Archive which will be further developed with modern technology in due course. In the third year, we are planning to carry out field studies on more undocumented lesser-known endangered languages, produce films, publish monographs and organise a national seminar. We are also planning to have collaborative programmes with other CFEL cluster in Tezpur and Sikkim Universities. All these activities will be possible only when we receive the next financial support from the UGC. Keeping fingers crossed, our team is enthusiastically working to fulfill the tasks.

I take this opportunity to thank Prof. Tamo Mibang, Vice Chancellor RGU, Prof. Tomo Riba, Registrar, Prof. Amitava Mitra, Finance Officer, Shri Thomas Kurian, Deputy Registrar and all the other administrative staff for their support of the effective functioning of this centre.

Prof. S. Simon John

Coordinator

National Workshop on “Documenting Oral Traditions of North East India”

A four days (22nd to 25th March, 2017) National Workshop on “Documenting Oral Traditions of North East India” was organized by Arunachal Institute of Tribal Studies (AITS), Centre for Endangered Languages (CFEL), Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh in collaboration with Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi.

During the workshop, the resource persons from RGU, JNU, Malayalam University, Sahitya Akademi, Vishwa Bharati Santiniketan, IGNCA, Gauhati University, Pondicherry Central University and eminent film makers (Prof. Anvita Abbi, Prof. A.C. Bhagabati, Prof. Jawaharlal Handoo, RGU Vice Chancellor Prof. Tamo Mibang and Bappa Ray) spoke on various concepts and methodologies for documenting oral traditions of Northeast India.



***Cover Photo:** Smt. Achung Meyor (61), one of the oldest native speakers of Meyor, Walong Village Arunachal Pradesh, India.
PC: Kombong Darang

The Minority Factor

- Chera Devi

Arunachal Pradesh attained complete statehood on the 20th of February 1987. In these three decades of statehood, the state has witnessed a considerable growth in all sectors and spheres. It has undergone various developmental activities, ranging from communications, economy, infrastructure and necessary amenities that a modern state requires to function. Along with these physical and aesthetic growths, the state has also witnessed a huge boom in its population. From 8,65,000 in 1991 to a growth of 13, 83, 727 in 2011, the state has undergone a shift in its demographic composition. The indigenous group's accounts for about 2/3rd of the entire population while the non tribal immigrants, most of which are composed of Bengali, Hindi, Assamese, and Nepali speaking groups accounts for a third of the total population size.

The tribal groups within themselves have also been and become a part of this constant change and development. There are as many as twenty three major tribes and numerous sub-tribes in the state. Ethno linguistically the state is divided between populations of tribes with similarity in cultural degree with the tribes speaking cognate language and sharing similar traditions. It houses tribes with population that vastly range from 253 (Tangam)¹, 428 (approx) (Meyor)², 36,299 (Nocte)³. There exists a wide range of gap when it comes to the demographic distribution of the different tribal population of the state.

The central and upper reaches of the state is designated to the Tani group, with the Adi, Apatani, Galo, Nyishi and Tagin groups falling under this category of language classification. The eastern part of the state comprises of the Mishmi group, which clubs together the Idu Mishmi, Digaru Mishmi and the Miju Mishmi and the Meyor community. The western part is home to the Bodhic group, where the Monpas, Sherdukpens, Brokpas and numerous other minor sub groups. In between the central and the western part are the existence of the transition zone- where tribes such as the Bugun, Aka, Miji and Hrusso are found. Meanwhile the south east part of the state is occupied by the Khamptis, Singpho, Tangsa and the Lisu tribes. Moreover the areas bordering Nagaland is home to the Nocte and Wancho Communities. Many tribes of the larger group speak closely related but mutually incomprehensible language. It has to be understood that these tribes do not exist in isolation or in its entirety. Many of the aforementioned tribes are composed of numerous smaller sub groups, whose culture, traditions and language may range from a little similarity to that of total difference. For instance, with respect to the Tangsa community, there are as many as thirty five different sub tribes within the larger Tangsa group. The Tani group- which forms one of the largest ethno linguistic group is also a product of this factor- i.e. there is a clubbing together of numerous smaller subgroups or minor groups that speak a similar language but, varying in sounds and lexical words, sharing a common ancestor and a common point of origin fall under one big umbrella of tribe.

The Adis of the Tani group is perhaps one of the most largely populated tribe, where there is an existence of a large number of sub groups. A huge conglomerate of subgroups comprising of the Aashings, Bori, Bokar, Komkar, Minyong, Milang, Pasi, Padam, Pai-lobo, Pangi, Ramo, Karko, Shimong and the Tangams come together to form the larger Adi group. One of the major factor of similarity in this clubbing together of sub tribes is language and various cultural factors that range from origin myths, tribal folklore and migration histories. These factors play an important tool or acts as markers in the process of assimilation. It simultaneously increases the number of one group and diminishes the size and consequently the political potential of the other group.

The real concern of this article lies with the status and situation of the minor tribal groups. It aims to exclusively deal with the minor groups of the Adis in general and the situation of the Tangam community in particular. The Tangam community are an indigenous community of the Adi tribe population, residing in the corner most area of the upper reaches of Siang district of the state of Arunachal Pradesh. The Tangam's as a community identifies itself with the larger Adi group but with a population of 253, the community is often subdued of its status and identity. Many of the larger Adi groups are unaware of the Tangam Community. The most immediate Adi neighbours of the Tangams are the Adis of Tuting and Yingkiong areas. The Minyongs of Tuting through constant contact via economic and socio cultural exchanges are up to some extent aware of the Tangams yet the Minyongs of Yingkiong region (excepting a few of the community elders) are immune to the existence of the Tangam people.

According to John Samuel, many languages in the north east region have lesser speakers and may be far behind in comparison to other major languages, but this does not "diminish the functional and symbolic validity and emotional appeal of these languages to the respective speech communities". Such types of situations lead one to wonder as to whether a community that is already living in apprehension of losing its language and culture can survive. Moreover, the demographic composition of the Tangam community is also a serious issue that researchers cannot ignore. Such cases of ethno linguistic minority issues are not exclusive to the Tangam situation alone. In a state like Arunachal Pradesh where there are hundreds of indigenous communities with small populations living in pockets of small areas, along with other smaller groups, exchanging socio culture elements everyday, thereby adopting other's culture and in turn losing its own, it is not uncommon for many of the smaller groups to be labelled as ethnic and linguistic minorities.

The International Labour Convention of 1957 gives the definition for the indigenous people of India as, "those who are the descendants of the original settlers of a territory and who have been victims of alien, military and technological intervention and colonisation. Secondly, those whose control of the traditional territorial resources constitute their very identity and collective existence. Thirdly, those who have a unique socio cultural ethos, which defines their identity and distinguishes them from other dominant group or groups. Fourthly, those who today occupy a subordinate position in relation to the institutions of state and the wider society and are generally victims of cultural and racial discrimination" (Ekka). By all the above given definitions the Tangam's and many other hundreds of tribal population of the state are indigenous to the lands that they occupy.

¹Source- Field Survey, 2016 (CFEL)

²Source- Field Survey, 2017 (CFEL)

³Source- 2001, Census. (The 2011 Census could not be given because with bifurcation of Longding district the census is not up to date)

If population is the one factor that determines whether a tribe falls into the minority or the majority group then by all means the Tangams and the Meyors are a minority in a state that houses numerous other minor groups. The Tangams with a history inter tribal wars and also loss of culture that is happening everyday, will the tribe be able to re-constitute itself? The relevant question is if the Tangams begin to loose their identity, and membership within the community begins to shrink due to external factors, which could range from cultural influences, economic opportunities, educational factors, loss of language vitality. Where by the members of the community leave their villages and their domestic spheres to migrate in search of better opportunities only to return to their native lands once in four or five years. In such cases then do the Tangam community cease to exist? What is to become of the future of a once thriving, living indigenous group that once populated as many as twenty five villages but now remains restricted to one single village? What happens to the future of such a group in a few years or a few decades down the line?

Many of the minor groups face questions as to whether they should try and assimilate within the larger group or maintain a separate identity for themselves. For e.g. the Bangru community, which is a sub tribe of the larger Nyishi group, are often posed with questions of whether the Bangrus should assimilate within the Nyishi group or try and maintain their separate identity? While such questions receive mixed responses from the community members it is felt by a few members of the community that the Bangrus in trying to assert a strong Nyishi identity for themselves are losing out on their culture and language. It shall not be long before the Bangru traditions and customs shall be lost to time. Who then shall be held responsible for this loss of cultural diversity? This situation is also the same for many of the smaller groups within the other major tribes of the state. It is the responsibility of the government both at the centre and the state to safeguard the rights and look into the welfare of such minor communities. The constitution lays down certain provisions that aim at safeguarding the interest of the minor communities but at the same time the state government has to make efforts at uplifting the minor groups within the state. A recent trend in the state has come up where many minor tribal groups are merging into the larger communities and asserting identities of the larger groups for themselves. This type of trend makes us question as to why there is the need for such merging. Identity politics have given rise to a situation where there is inequality amongst the tribal groups resulting in a situation where there are unequal opportunities and chances to take advantage of the resources of the state.

The government has to chart out a map locating the minor communities within the state. Excepting a few pockets of areas that are either gradually developing or have come up as semi urban centres, the entire state is virtually underdeveloped. Communications and connectivity has also been a major problem. In such circumstances where many tribal groups are facing similar problems, it is even worse for the minor groups. For the Tangams, Kuding village being situated on the periphery of the border area has always been neglected by the authorities. In absence of schools and educational facilities till date not a single graduate member exists within the community. In an era where the government is coming up with slogans that assert for equal educational opportunities for boys and girls, there still exists within the country a community that is being deprived of education at all.

However with the changing times, boys and girls from the Tangam community have started receiving higher education (though it is solely based on the determination of the parents and the children), with the first member of the community enrolling into a degree programme. It is sad but also encouraging to witness that within the same state, one tribe boasts of members of its communities carrying different roles and function as students in prestigious colleges and universities, as government officials at the state and central level, as successful business men, as educators in colleges and universities yet we also have a community like the Tangam that eagerly awaits its first graduate member.

The government of Nagaland have approved the Nagaland Backward Tribes Commission Bill 2016, in the Nagaland state legislative Assembly. The commission identified some six “backward tribes” in few pockets of the state and aims to focus and make recommendations on educational, employment and health aspects pertaining to these communities. The state authorities can take up issues like these and frame out provisions and guideline that aims at providing opportunities for the people of smaller groups like the Tangam’s. These special provisions and reservations (if any) can be provided for a few years as deemed necessary and once the tribe is at par with the other tribal groups these provisions can be stopped. Sectors like health, education, employment, entrepreneurship, communications etc can be focused on. Until the government takes stock of issues related to the numerous minor groups within the state and acts upon it, there shall be a time when the culture, traditions and language of these communities shall be lost and the state shall no longer be identified for its rich cultural diversity that is known for.

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Verb Reduplication in Hawa Nokte

- Wanglit Mongchan

This paper studies the verb reduplication in Hawa Nokte. Reduplication is one of the word formation processes. Basically, in this language, there are two types of verb reduplication such as partial and complete reduplication. The reduplication also has specific function in a language. They function either to indicate the recurrence of the event or the duration/extent of the event. The present study is mainly divided into three parts – (i) the first part gives a brief description of the verb in terms of its structure (ii) second discusses the types of verb reduplication and (iii) third discusses the functional properties of verb reduplication.

Introduction

Verbs in Hawa Nokte may be sub-divided into two types which include simple verb stems and complex verb stems. Simple verb stems are those which have single verb root. They cannot be further analyzed into smaller or independent units. Primarily, they are monosyllabic and monomorphemic. Depending on their syllabic structure, simple verb stems may be further categorized into two types such as open syllabic verb roots and close syllabic verb roots. In open syllabic type, a verb root ends in vowel. It consists of onset and nucleus. The onset is occupied by consonant such as *p*, *pʰ*, *b*, *t*, *tʰ*, *d*, *k* and *kʰ* (plosives/stops), *m*, *n*, *ŋ* and *ɲ* (nasals), *ʋ* (approximant) and *s* (fricative), *r* and *l* (laterals), and *c*, *ʃ* and *dʒ* (palatal), and nucleus slot is filled by vowels such as *i*, *e*, *ə*, *a*, *o*, *ɔ* and *u*. Examples are such as /pe/ ‘to carry’, /bi/ ‘to earn’, /tʰo/ ‘to say’, etc. In close syllabic type, a verb root ends in consonant. It has onset and coda occupied by consonant and the nucleus by vowel. In open syllabic types, the onset is occupied by the same consonants but the normal pattern of occurrence of the coda margin of the verb stems ending in a consonant is either *t*, *k*, *p* (stops) or *m*, *n*, *ŋ* (nasals) or *ʔ* (glottal). Examples are such as /nək/ ‘to kick’, /dʒun/ ‘to chase’, /tʰaʔ/ ‘to eat, etc.

The complex verb stems are generally of compound verbs. They originate from two erstwhile independent verb roots or with combination of other word classes such as adjective and noun.

Verb reduplication

Hawa Nokte has two types of verb reduplication such as partial and complete reduplication. They are discussed below:

Partial reduplication

In partial reduplication, only one part of the compound verb stems is repeated and not the whole verb stems. It is possible only in case of compound or polysyllabic verb stems. For instance, verbs such as *hetʰo* ‘to teach’, *pʰoŋsiet* ‘to move’, *rinkʰaʔ* ‘be angry’, *japʰe* ‘to drop’, etc., may be partially repeated as shown in (1). In case of verb-verb and adjective-verb compounds, either of the roots may be repeated as shown in (1a-c), but in case of noun-verb compound only the verb root is reduplicated as shown in (1d) and not the noun as shown in (1e).

- (1) a. *əte-me ram-nəŋ hetʰo-tʰo-t-aʔ* OR *əte-me ram-nəŋ he-hetʰo-t-aʔ*
 he-ERG ram-OBJ teach-PST-3SG
 ‘He taught Ram (again)’
 b. *titap-pe japʰe-pʰe-t-aʔ* OR *titap-pa ja-japʰe-t-aʔ*
 book-DEF drop-PST-3SG
 ‘(he) dropped the book(again)’
 c. *əte-me ŋa min cʰiʔtʰo-tʰo-t-h-əŋ* OR *əte-me ŋa min cʰiʔ-cʰiʔtʰo-t-h-əŋ*
 he-ERG I name defame-PST-INV-1SG
 ‘He defamed my name (again)’
 d. *əte rinkʰaʔ-kʰaʔ-t-aʔ o*
 he angry-PST-3SG SFP
 ‘He is angry (again)’
 e. **əte rinkʰaʔ-rin-t-aʔ o* (repetition of noun form is not allowed)

Complete reduplication

The complete reduplication is possible in case of simple or monosyllabic verb stems. Disyllabic or polysyllabic verbs cannot undergo complete reduplication. In complete reduplication, the whole part of the verb root is repeated or reduplicated as shown in (2).

- (2) a. *meri boəŋ-boəŋ-t-aʔ*
 mary dance-dance-PST-3SG
 ‘Mary danced (again)’
 b. *nacʰa-pa səp-səp-t-aʔ ne*
 baby-DEF cry-cry-PST-3SG QMK
 ‘Is baby cried (again)?’

In Hawa Nokte, the similar identical form of verb and noun may occur side by side or one after another in a sentence, however, such structural similarity of forms shouldn’t be mistaken as case of reduplication. Though, they share similar structural properties, functionally, they are different. In such constructions, the first form is generally the noun (the subject or object) and the second one is the verb (the predicate) having inflectional affixes attached to it as shown in (3a) and (3b). In case of reduplication, only the verb forms

get repeated. Also, nouns may be separated from verbs by adding inflectional affixes such as imminence or iterative marker to the verb roots as shown in (3c).

- (3) a. poŋ poŋ-k-a
wind blow-PRES-3SG
'The wind is blowing'
- b. ŋa cʰok cʰok-k-əŋ
I cough cough-PRES-1SG
'I am coughing' (Literally: I am cough coughing)
- c. poŋ la-poŋ-poŋ-k-a
wind PERF-blow-blow-PRES-3SG
'The wind is about to blow (again)'

Function of verb reduplication

Regarding the semantic function of reduplication, Abbi (2001) noted that the many languages employ the reduplication to "... emphasise the *content* (the central value) of the word in question" (p. 166). In Hawa Nokte, the reduplication has two important functions. For instance, in all the above examples (1), (2), and (3), it gives the meaning of the recurrence of the action; that is to say that repeatedly something is happening again and again. Mostly, such repetition of verb denotes negative meaning of the action on the part of the speaker. However, in example (4), it indicates the duration or the extent of the event or action. That is, it denotes the prolong consumption of the betel nut which caused the teeth to become red or decay.

- (4) kʰə]e-sali pʰək-pʰək me ŋa pa-he? tʰuen-cək-t-a?
betel nut eat-eat reason I tooth-PLMK finish-red-PST-3SG
'Because of eating betel nut, (all) my teeth has become red'

Conclusion

Verb reduplication is one of the major word formation processes in Hawa Nokte. There are two types of verb reduplication in this language. Partial reduplication is possible only in case of compound verbs in which only the verb form is repeated, whereas in case of complete verb reduplication, the verb is completely reduplicated. Reduplication has two basic functions such as it gives the meaning of the recurrence of the action and secondly, it indicates the duration or the extent of the event or action.

Abbreviation

1SG	first person singular marker	3SG	third person singular
DEF	definite	EGR	ergative
INST	instrument marker	INVS	inverse marker
OBJ	object	PERF	perfective first
PLMK	plural marker	PRES	present marker
PST	past	QMK	question marker
SFP	sentence final particle		

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Traditional Attires, Ornaments and Accessories of the Meyor Tribe

-Rumi Deuri

Meyor is one of the ethnic groups of Arunachal Pradesh, basically they are inhabitants of Walong and Kibithoo circle of Anjaw District in the Eastern part of Arunachal Pradesh. The socio-cultural life of Meyor is very unique and it is reflected in their beautiful attires and ornaments. The attractive dresses and ornaments give a curiosity to know about their cultural life. Dresses and ornaments is one of the integral parts of an ethnic group, the study of dresses of an ethnic group gives an idea about the climate of the area and also dyeing and weaving technique.

In the Meyor community, different kinds of ornaments are worn by Meyor people. Ornaments and jeweleries are made of gold (*sien*), silver (*ngih*) and other metals and also of different types of stones and pearls. They also wear earrings, rings and bangles. Mostly, Meyor ornaments are adopted from the Tibetan culture. In the earlier period, they bought ornaments from Tibet. However in recent times beads are easily available in the markets so, they can make necklaces on their own and also metal ornaments are easily found in the market.

Traditional Meyor Dress:

Zaiki or Mije (long cloak like garment, Fig: 1): *Zaiki* was the original dress of Meyor tribe of Arunachal Pradesh. It is a long and cloak like garment. However, now-a-days the *Zaiki* is not used (worn) anymore. It requires lots of time and effort to make one *Zaiki*.

The *Zaiki* was made using two types of threads, i.e. one was made out of sheep wool and the other was made of a kind of vine, which was very itchy in its raw form. First, they peel the bark from the vine and then leave it for drying in the sun for few days. After drying for few days, the barks are boiled with the ashes of the peeled vine to soften the bark and then it is taken to a nearby river and thrashed until the thread separates. After this whole procedure, they make balls of thread to weave. In the past, the Meyors used a kind of tree called *Shiram* to extract colour (i.e. green) for dyeing the thread. Now-a-days this tree is not available easily.

The *Zaiki* was used by both male and female and it was passed on to the next generation i.e. to their children. Meyor males used to wear hats (in Meyor language it is called *Yogar*) with the *Zaiki*, the hats were brought from Tibet. Now-a-days the Meyors stopped weaving *Zaiki* because of its long and tiring procedure and also because of the unavailability of the vine used for making the thread. *Zaiki* is the traditional dress of Meyor tribe however today very less number of *Zaiki* is available and the Meyors are adopting Tibetan dresses.

Meyor Traditional Dress in the present context

Though Meyors have *Zaiki* as the traditional dress, they have adopted Tibetan dresses. The female dresses are *Brei* (blouse), *Khise* (long gown), *Pode* (aporn) and male dresses are *Khenjao* (shirt), *Kat* (long piece of cloth), *Longkhrab* (cloak like garment) and *Yogar* (hat). The dress which the males wear is called *Longkhrab* and those which are worn by the females are called *Khrablo*. Given below are the dresses worn by Meyor people in the present day:



Fig 1: A Meyor man with traditional dress *Zaiki* (long and cloak like garment)

Female:

Brei (Blouse, Fig: 2): *Brei* is a part of a female Meyor dress. *Brei* is a loose blouse with long sleeves and it is made of silk. The beautiful designs on the *Brei* are called *Muto*. The Meyor does not weave the *Brei* by themselves, they buy it from the market. A *Brei* cost about 500-600 rupees in the market.

Fig 2: *Brei* (Meyor blouse)Fig 3: *Khise* (long gown)

Khise (long gown, Fig: 3): *Khise* is a sleeveless loose long gown. In the waist area of the *Khise*, two belts are attached for the fitting of the gown. There is a button (*Doka*) in the upper part of the gown; the button is used for decorating the gown. Whole gown is covered by beautiful patterns; these patterns are called *Ghumok*. Very good quality silk material is used for the *Khise*. In the market one *Khise* cost around 1500 ₹ or even more.

Pode (aporn, Fig: 4): *Pode* is a piece of cloth and it has two belts, the belts are used to tighten at the waist area. *Pode* is worn by married women of the community and it is made up of multi striped woolen or silk cloth.

Fig 4: *Pode* (Aporn)**Male:**

Khenjao (shirt, Fig: 5): *Khenjao* is part of a full male Meyor dress. *Khenjao* is a loose shirt and it has two buttons in the right side of the neck and this two button help to tighten the shirt. *Khenjao* is worn under the *Longkhrab* (long cloak like garment) and *Khenjao* is made of thick silky fabric.

Fig 5: *Khenjao* (shirt)Fig 6: *Kat* (long piece of cloth)

Kat (long piece of cloth, Fig: 6): *Kat* is a part of male Meyor dress. It is a long piece of cloth and it is wrapped in the waist area. For weaving a *Kat*, they use different types of bright colourful threads. These threads are mainly cotton threads. Because of the colourful threads the *Kat* looks very beautiful.

Longkhrab (cloak like garment, Fig: 7): *Longkhrab* is a loose and long cloak like garment with belts on its right side. In the earlier period, *Longkhrab* was used as a regular dress. It is very comfortable male Meyor dress. *Longkhrab* is also available and bought from the market.

Fig 8: *Yogar* (hat)

Yogar (hat, Fig: 8): *Yogar* is a part of male Meyor dress. In the past, *Yogar* was bought from Tibet. But now-a-days it is available in the local market. It is usually made of leather and worn with *Longkhrab* and *Zaiki*.

Fig 7: *Longkhrab* (cloak like garment)

Ornaments of Meyor community



Fig 9: *Kuh*



Fig 10: *Jithuk*



Fig 11: Yellow Beads and White Pearls Necklace



Fig 12: Red Beads Necklace



Fig 13: *Pema lugah* ,Ring



Fig 14: *Suruh* , (necklace)

The Meyor community also have lots of ornaments which add beauty to the dressing. Some of the ornaments include necklaces, earrings, bangles, and rings etc which are made of silver, gold and brass metals. They also use ornaments made of stones and pearls.

***Kuh* (Fig: 9):** *Kuh* is one of the very beautiful necklaces of Meyor community, which is made of silver. The Pendant is square shaped with four tiny red beads in the corners. The borders are beautifully carved with beautiful design and in the centre is a hollowed bead slightly larger than the beads in the corner. In total nine beads are used (in the photo: one bead is missing) in the pendant, out of nine beads four beads are placed in the outer four corners and five beads are placed in the middle part of the pendant. Red colour beads are called *Kurn* and the chain is called *Chutha*.

***Jithuk* (fig: 10):** *Jithuk* is a necklace usually made of yellow beads. It has three ends tied together where the beads are slightly larger than the others. It is worn by Meyor women. *Jithuk* is generally worn by women during festivals.

Necklace (Fig: 11): It is not a traditional Meyor necklace but is a creation of some creative womenfolk in recent times. It is worn as a regular necklace. Pearl like beads are called *Mitik*.

(Fig: 12): It is a necklace of red colour beads and it is worn by menfolk of Meyor tribe during the ritual time. The Meyors don't recollect the name of the necklace anymore.

***Pema lugah* (Ring, Fig: 13):** *Pema lugah* is a ring which is worn by Meyor women. It is made of silver and beautiful designs are carved on it. Red colour stone is embedded in the centre of the ring. It is worn during the festive occasion.

***Suruh* (Fig: 14):** *Suruh* is a necklace made of black beads with three blue stones in three places between the black beads. *Suruh* is also worn only by Meyor women during the festival time.

***Lungskur suni* (fig: 15):** It is a locket made of brass metal beautifully carved with 12 animal symbols (viz. monkey, snake, pig, rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, horse, sheep, rooster, and dog). These symbols are counted clockwise by the priest to identify the zodiac sign of the new born baby. The medallion is usually put on to a new born child to protect him/her from all evils. It has been borrowed from the Tibetan culture.

The Meyor community has unique and significant dressing. Their traditional dress and jewellery reflects their rich heritage and traditions. They don't wear their traditional attire everyday but on special occasions like marriage ceremony, festivals and other cultural ceremonies. Now-a-days they normally wear the cloths which are available in the market like jeans pants, t- shirts, shirts and various modern ornaments.



Fig 15: *Lungskur suni*



Fig 16: Meyor couple in their traditional attire

Hawa-Nokte and Khapa/Kasik-Nokte¹:

A Comparative Sketch of Sound Inventories

- Rebeka Borang

Abstract

The Nokte language of Arunachal Pradesh has six varieties (*Hawa-jap*, *Phothung-jap*, *Khapa-jap*, *Tang-jap*¹, *Jope-jap*², and *Laju-jap*) which are mutually unintelligible. This work is a pioneering venture in understanding the extent of variation among the two varieties (Hawa-Nokte and Kasik-Nokte) of the Nokte language which lead to their being mutually-unintelligible with each other. To serve the purpose, the comparison will be carried upon the sound inventories (consonants and vowels) of these two varieties of the Nokte language. This comparison will establish a hint that *differences and gaps in sound inventories in the said varieties greatly contributes to their mutual unintelligibility*. No doubt, mere comparison of sound inventories is a basic and initial baby-step, nonetheless, this will give some insightful evidences which will serve as lead in obtaining a full understanding in future researches.

Introduction

Tirap district is the homeland of Nokte and Tutsa tribes. It is situated in the southeastern part of the state of Arunachal Pradesh sharing state border with Assam in the North, an international border with Myanmar in the South, and a district border with Changlang in the East, and Longding district in the West.

Nokte language is categorized under Tibeto-Burman language. Bradley (1997) classified Nokte under Sal subgroup of Tibeto-Burman language family as shown in Figure (1) below. He has clubbed Nokte under Northern Naga group which is further sub-divided into two sub-subgroups such as *Konyak-Chang* and *Tangsa-Nocte*. Nokte falls under *Tangsa-Nocte* which includes *Tase* (Tangsa) *Nocte* and *Tutsa*.

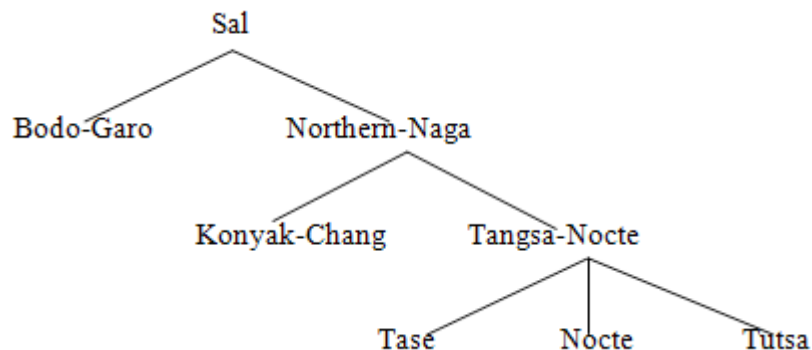


Figure 1.: Classification of Sal group (Bradley, 1997)

Nokte, according to Das Gupta (1971), has six dialects such as *Hawa-jap*, *Phothung-jap*, *Khapa-jap*, *Tang-jap*³, *Jope-jap*⁴, and *Laju-jap*. These dialects are supposedly mutually unintelligible. *Hawa-jap*/Hawa-Nokte is the major variety which is spoken in 33 villages with and Kasik-Nokte is spoken only in three villages⁵ *Noksa*, *Tupi* and *Pullong* with just 1807 population (inclusive of children age 0-6) according to 2011 census. The scenario of mutual-unintelligibility among varieties of same language is not uncommon especially in linguistically diverse area like Arunachal itself, but what is common is that, in most of such cases the minor varieties usually adhere to dominant varieties as their intra-language lingua-franca. The nearest example is the Adi language of the state where

¹Based on the information and data acquired from the native Kasik speakers and informants from Noksa Village, 'Khapa' is a xenonym which has been termed by people of other Nocte and other language speakers. The native Khapa speakers called themselves 'Kasik' and prefer this term/name for the reference of their identity, people and language. Henceforth, Kasik will be used in this work.

²linguistically this dialect has affinity with Wancho language (of Wakka region)

³it also known as Tutsa which has now been considered as separate tribe of Arunachal Pradesh

⁴linguistically this dialect has affinity with Wancho language (of Wakka region)

⁵it also known as Tutsa which has now been considered as separate tribe of Arunachal Pradesh

⁶total 5 villages including *New Tupi* and *Tupi tea Garden*.

the Padam-Adi and Minyong-Adi being the dominant varieties, most of the other varieties use them as intra language lingua-franca. In this regard, Hawa-Nokte and Kasik-Nokte deviate from this general principle by using a third language (Assamese) for their communication. This deviation piques our curiosity to understand the extent of variation among these varieties of Nokte language. To admit the limitation of this work, it is just an initial step in this quest, as the larger works are yet to be done to get a bigger picture of the whole.

Most of the Nokte speakers are multilingual with communicative skill of Assamese and Hindi. Many educated speakers also have good command over English. The Kasik-Nokte data provided in this paper is first hand data which were collected during the CFEL fieldwork in Noksa village and also during workshop on Kasik-Nokte language at Centre for Endangered Languages. It is first of its kind as there is no earlier work or data available for this language. On the other hand, Hawa data are secondary data collected from secondary sources already available in the form of book, articles and thesis the details of which are given in *Bibliography* section.

Phonemic sound inventory: As said above, the comparison of the two varieties will be done by comparing the vowels and consonants. This will reveal enough evidences to understand the cause of mutual-unintelligibility between the two varieties.

Vowels: Hawa-Nokte has 7 vowels and Kasik-Nokte has total 15as presented below;

	Front	Central	Back
Close	i		u
Mid Close	e		o
Mid Open		ə	ɔ
Open	a		

Vowels of Hawa-Nokte

	Front	Central	Back
Close	i i:	ɨ	u u:
Mid Close	e e:		o o:
Mid Open	ɛ	ə (ə:)	ɔ
Open	a a:		

Vowels of Kasik-Nokte

It is clear from the above presentation that there is a vast difference in number of vowels in Hawa-Nokte and Kasik-Nokte. The onus of this huge gap in number of vowels is credited to the presence of vowel quantity in Kasik-Nokte. Long vowel in Kasik-Nokte is phonemic whereas it is not present in Hawa-Nokte. The phonemic status of Kasik-Nokte vowels /ɛ/ and /ə:/ needs further investigation as the informants often (but not always) interchanged it with /e/ and /ə/ sometimes according to intonation but sometimes according to different environments.

Hawa-Nokte vowel examples:

Vowel	Hawa	Gloss
i	ɲipa	Mother-in-law
	hiʔ	Stool
e	se	Song/music
	veʔ	Count
ə	ɟap	Speak
	ɲa	I
u	ɟup	Sleep
	tʰun	Mouth
o	mok	To work
	lo	To catch
ɔ	mɔ	To get affected
	ɟɔ	To demean
ə	səp	Cry
	vək	Pig

Kasik-Nokte vowel examples:

Vowel	Kasik	Gloss
i	ɲin	Money
	kəɲi	Two
i:	i:po	Flower
	mi:	Human being, person
e	menu	Bend
	oɟet	Cut
e:	me:taɲ	Many
	kehe:	Whip (n)
ɛ	mɛpʰɛ	Late
	tələkʰu	Tongue
ə	ja	Bamboo
	apa	Father
a:	ba:lu	Far
	ta:ɲi	Seven
ɪ	ɟaɲliʃa	Axe
	riho	Cord, Rope
ə	odəɲ	Bind, tie
	kəpʰa	Rub
ə:	pə:lonɲ	Tree branch
	pə:ɟak	Tree bark
u	kʰua	Boat
	ohua	Tall
u:	pu:	Granary
	ku:cʰu	Grey hair
o	roman	Slow
	oluat	Dance
o:	ro:ɟaɲ	Always
	ro:re	(be) stubborn
ɔ	kuapʰɔ	Naked
	mebəkke	Hunchback

Kasik-Nokte has more than twice vowels than Hawa-Nokte. This difference in number of vowels greatly contributes to the mutual-unintelligibility as vowels are syllabic in this language forming the peak (nucleus) of all syllables.

The outcome of this gap in number of vowels can be seen in the examples below:

Kasik-Nokte	Hawa-Nokte	Gloss
1. təkʰi	kʰu	Nine
2. lik	lit	Necklace
3. tələkʰu	tʰeli	Tongue

In example (1) above it can be seen that, /i/ in the word *tək^{hi}* ‘Nine’ in Kasik-Nokte is /u/ in Hawa-Nokte *k^hu*. This is because Hawa-Nokte does not have vowel /i/. The same can be seen in the rest of the examples like /i/ of *lik* in Kasik-Nokte is /i/ in *lit* in Hawa-Nokte in example (2), and /ε/ is /e/ in example (3). No doubt, there are various other diachronic reasons in such vowel variations, but synchronically, it is clear that absence of various vowels in Hawa-Nokte is one of the main driving reasons for this variation.

Consonants:

Following are the consonants in Kasik-Nokte and Hawa-Nokte. Kasik-Nokte has 25 consonants whereas Hawa-Nokte has 22 Consonants. Just like the case in vowels, Kasik-Nokte has larger set of consonants than Hawa-Nokte. Voiced post-alveolar fricative /ʃ/ and Voiced palatal approximant [j] are present in Kasik-Nokte but absent in Hawa-Nokte as denoted in square brackets in the IPA consonant chart below:

	Bilabial	Labio-Dental	Labio-velar	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive	p b p ^h			t d t ^h	c ʃ c ^h	k g k ^h	ʔ
Nasal	m			n	ɲ	ŋ	
Trill				r			
Fricative				s [ʃ]			h
Approximant		v			[j]		
Lateral				l			
Approximant							

Consonants in Hawa-Nokte and Kasik-Nokte

Examples of consonants:

Sl. no.	Consonants	Hawa-Nokte	Kasik- Nokte
	p	pək ‘Hold’	pə ‘Tree’
	b	bəm ‘Wait’	ba:lu ‘Far’
	p ^h	p ^h in ‘Stitch’	p ^h adak ‘Uncle’
	t	təp ‘Punch’	tək ^{hi} ‘Nine’
	d	doak ‘Cut’	duataŋ ‘Innocent’
	t ^h	t ^h u ‘Dig’	t ^h ui ‘Lime’
	c	co ‘Find’	ciɲɛʃa ‘Few’
	ʃ	ʃok ‘Drink’	ʃɪŋki ‘Neck’
	c ^h	c ^h oan ‘Run’	c ^h ejonɲ ‘Adult’
	k	kəm ‘To spread’	kattan ‘Break’
	g	gawaŋ ‘Personel name’	hage ‘Here’
	k ^h	k ^h am ‘To look after’	k ^h a ‘Jaw’
	m	mo ‘Work’	mit ^h am ‘Bamboo shoot’
	n	nək ‘Kick’	naŋ ‘You’
	ŋ	ŋa ‘I’	ŋa ‘I’
	ɲ	ɲet ‘to mix up’	ɲin ‘Money’
	r	riak ‘Buy’	ronko ‘Sugarcane’
	s	səp ‘Cry’	saŋma ‘Poor’
	ʃ	-----	ʃi:ti:k ‘Bladder’
	l	ləm ‘to dry	laho ‘Pumpkin’
	h	hap ‘Shoot’	han ‘Iron’
	ʔ	huʔhuʔ-ma ‘Quietly’	sa:haʔ ‘Dawn’
	v	vət ‘Beat’	k ^h vaʃep ‘Be guilty’
	ɲ	-----	ja ‘Bamboo’

In Hawa-Nokte, voiced velar plosives /g/ is found in personal names and is rather rare in other lexemes. Even in Kasik-Nokte, its occurrence in word initial position was not witnessed. Glottal stop is phonemic in both the varieties, as the presence or absence of glottal stop in a word make a difference in the meaning. For example, in Hawa-Nokte, /i/ is Agreement marker in Present and Future tense and /iʔ/ is agreement marker for Past tense. As it can be seen in the consonant chart above, both Hawa-Nokte and Kasik-Nokte have aspiration and in both the varieties aspiration is phonemic. Following are the minimal and nearest minimal pairs for aspirated consonants in Hawa-Nokte and Kasik-Nokte:

	/p/		/p ^h /	
Kasik	opoŋ	‘Male’ (animal)	op ^h oŋ	‘Help’
Hawa	rəŋpa	‘winter’	rəŋp ^h a	‘lightning’
	/t/		/t ^h /	
Kasik	te	‘Language’	t ^h e	‘Bridge’
Hawa	təm	‘Back’	t ^h əm	‘logdrum’
	/c/		/c ^h /	
Kasik	rocu	‘White’	oc ^h u	‘Measurement’
Hawa	cu	‘Demand’	c ^h u	‘Grandchild’
	/k/		/k ^h /	
Kasik	kam	‘House’	k ^h am	‘Gold’
Hawa	koʔ	‘Give’	k ^h oʔ	‘above/on top’

Minimal pairs for aspirated consonants in Hawa-Nokte and Kasik-Nokte

The aspiration is generally associated with voiceless stops and affricates. No aspiration is possible without voiced counterparts. The aspirated sounds also cannot occur in the word-final position.

Just like it was in case of vowels, variations in consonants in Hawa-Nokte and Kasik-Nokte leads to variation in realization of the similar word as it can be seen in the examples below:

Kasik-Nokte	Hawa-Nokte	Gloss
1. ʃa	c ^h a	son/daughter
2. ʃi	sa	Urine
3. ja	va	floor (made of bamboo)
4. luajaŋ	loʋaŋ	Village- Chief

In the example (4) above, /ʃ/ in the verb *ʃa* ‘Eat’ in Kasik-Nokte is /c^h/ in Hawa-Nokte *c^ha* as Hawa-Nokte do not have /ʃ/. Same can be seen in the rest of the examples like /j/ in Kasik-Nokte is /ʋ/ in Hawa-Nokte in example (6) and (7).

Conclusion:

As per the data above, Kasik-Nokte has more sound inventories than Hawa Nokte. Hawa-Nokte has 7 vowels and Kasik-Nokte has total 15. The huge gap in number of vowels is mainly attributed to the presence of vowel quality in Kasik-Nokte. Regarding consonants, Kasik-Nokte has 25 consonants whereas Hawa-Nokte has 22 Consonants. Voiced post-alveolar fricative /ʃ/ and Voiced palatal approximant [j] are present in Kasik-Nokte but absent in Hawa-Nokte. Both the varieties have phonemic glottal stop /ʔ/ and also have phonemic aspirated Consonants.

Given the evidences above, it can be safely concluded that the gap in sound inventories (vowels and consonants) in the two

varieties is one of the prime reasons for mutual-unintelligibility. Since vowels in the Nokte language are syllabic, even a slight change in quantity or quality of vowels in words make a huge difference in speech which eventually lead to the varieties being unintelligible.

As said, this work is merely a piece of the whole puzzle which will be completed when proper and systematic comparison of phonological, morphological and syntactical aspects is done in holistic manner.

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Anggan Festival Documentation

A documentation fieldwork was carried out by the Centre for Endangered Languages (CFEL), AITS, Rajiv Gandhi University, as a part of its documentation work in Tangam. The fieldwork was done in Kuging Village, Upper Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh and the *Anggan* Festival of the Tangam which falls during the month of February and March 2017, was closely observed and documented during a span of 20 days. The documentation was carried out by CFEL team consisting of two researchers namely Mr. Kombong Darang, Documentation Officer cum archivist and Mr. Kaling Dabi, Junior Research Fellow. Around 2000 photographs and 15 hours of Audio-visual recordings were collected during the festival which includes entire rituals, folksongs/folkdance performed and interviews from the native participants who are involved directly in conducting the rites and rituals.



Field trip to Walong

The CFEL team consisting of Dr. Lienjang Zeite (Linguists), Kaling Dabi (Jr. Research Fellow), Rumi Deuri (Jr. Research Fellow) and Kombong Darang (Documentation Officer cum Archivist) carried out a Field trip to Walong village under Anjaw District of Arunachal Pradesh in the month of August, 2017. The study was carried out in order to document the language and culture of Meyor tribe of Walong and surrounding Meyor villages. Along with a Linguistic data (1600 words and 150 sentences) around 1500 photographs, 3 hours of Audio recording and 2 hours of video recording were also collected during the documentation period.



The *Lha-Chuth* Festival of the Meyors

- Kaling Dabi & Kombong Darang

Out of the three festivals, namely, *Lha-Chuth*, *Losar* and *Shngau* of the Meyor tribe of Anjaw district of Arunachal Pradesh, *Lha-chut* festival is considered as their main festival. The general *Lha-chut* festival is celebrated every year on the 3rd of January at Tinai village. However, each Meyor village performs their own *Lha-chut* ritual as per the village community's convenience. Walong village, the target area of the Centre for Endangered languages (CFEL), Rajiv Gandhi University, Itanagar had their celebration on 31st January 2018.

The word *Lha-chuth* in Meyor means “offerings to the Gods” where in “*Lha*” means “God” and “*Chuth*” means “to offer”. The ritual is performed on the “*chepo-chenga*” (fifteenth phase of the moon) which is the eve of the full moon night. This particular day is regarded as a sacred eve to perform the *Lha-chuth* ritual. The ritual is usually performed in the month of January or February. *Lha-chuth* is a pre-agricultural ritual to propitiate the guardian spirits of Land, mountain and forest. *Lhu* is the guardian of the land; *Yabdak* is the mountain spirit and *Yikri* the guardian of the forest and wild animals. Ritual sacrifice of a cock and a hen is offered to propitiate the spirits which ensures over all well-being of the village community. Overall well-being includes abundant harvest, protection from sickness and diseases, untoward incidents, etc.

Two shamans indigenously known as *Lamchut* perform the ritual. An assistant who helps in burning the *Songtong* (bonfire) sits just opposite to the *Lamchut* facing towards them. He is also assigned to look after the *Teng* (conchs) which are placed beside the fire. At regular intervals the conch has to be blown in order to invoke the spirits.

The village community unanimously selects one male and one female to help supervise and manage the whole ritual. They are called *Dingpun*. Their role is to look after the management of the *Lachut* ritual. Besides the supervision of the ritual, the *Dingpuns* are obliged to donate the sacrificial fowls; a cock and a hen and to host the *Lamchuts*. The *Dingpuns* collect rice, vegetables, maize etc from each household as their share of contribution for organizing a feast on the day of the ritual.

The women folk make rice beer (*Rungkuh*, *Bommak*) out of the rice donated by the village community. The *Dingpuns* prepare a list of the invitees from neighboring villages and sent them invitations. The *Dingpuns* are also responsible for the persuasion of the *Lamchuts* as the latter has the sole authority to conduct a *Lha-chuth* ritual.

Wild meat and fish is mandatory for the *Lha-chuth* ritual. A month before the ritual, the men folk of the village goes out for a hunting expedition. After a successful hunting expedition, they involve themselves in fishing activities. Since fresh red meats are prohibited during the ritual, all the hunted meats and fish has to be nicely dried or smoked. The Meyors believe that any type of blood lures the evil spirits to harm the people present during the ritual. Any type of glittering objects such as utensils, clothes red in color etc are also prohibited. Silence is maintained throughout the ritual.



Figure 1: *Lamchut* preparing *Turmo*

A day before the *Lha-chuth* ritual, the village community cleans the area around the *Yonyi* (altar). *Yonyi* is a structure erected by accumulating flat oval shaped stones which are piled straight up. Each household cleans their house and decorate their walls by painting the images of livestock, fowls, paddy, the sun, maize, *Yindung* (swastika) etc. with rice paste. They believe what they seek from the spirits has to be drawn. The men folk gather fire woods and the necessary items that have to be put into the *Songtong* (bonfire). The bonfire has to be kept ablaze until the ritual is over. The bonfire is made out of *Chosa* (pine leaves) and plants that are indigenously known as *Shingkar*, *Shindan* and *Lumishing*. At regular intervals rice mixed with water and butter is sprinkled into the *Songtong*.

Day 1: On the day of the ritual, the *Lamchuts* wake up early in the morning and take a bath. The *Lamchuts*, *Soyok* and *Dingpuns* with some volunteers proceed towards the *Yonyi*. The male *Dingpun* presides over the management of preparation of the *Yonyi*. The female *Dingpun* looks into the preparation of the meal that has to be served to the community, guests and the *Lamchuts*. The *Dingpuns* are responsible for the hospitality that has to be extended to the guests. The *Lamchuts* starts preparing *Turmo* (small cone shaped mashed boiled rice) which has to be placed on top of each stones of the *Yonyi*. The *Lamchut* sprinkles rice powder and rice paste solution in and around the *Yonyi* to purify the area. Meanwhile, the male *Dingpun* appoints some men from the village to prepare four *Shingkar* (staffs which is of ritual importance). Some of them install the *Lunglah* (branch of a pine tree which of a trident shape) in the *Yonyi*. Each family put *Khui khui lungter* (thin bamboo branch with leaves on it) on the main alter along with the *Lunglah*. A *Khada* (silk cloth) is tied on each *Khui khui lungter*. The *Soyok*; one who is in charge of lighting the bonfire, lights the bonfire. The sacrificial cock and hen is kept in a bamboo basket near the *Yonyi*.



Figure 2: *Turmo* (Mashed boiled rice)

The *Lamchut* starts their chanting and incantations in a seating position. There are series of chanting sessions. During the intervals the *Lamchuts* and *Soyok* are served *Bommak*. Before the sun rises, the first meal is served where including boiled fish is mandatory. A special dish called *Chambai* (a mixture of cooked rice, salt and finely chopped salad given a triangle or round shape) is served. Triangle shaped *Chambai* with a whole fish and soup in traditional wooden plates is served to the *Lamchut* and the *Soyok*. The

village community is served with the round shaped *Chambai* with a chunk boiled fish wrapped in a leaf.

When the sun rises, the *Lamchut* offers prayers towards the sun. After the sunrise, the incantation is done in standing position. The *Lamchut* now faces towards the mountains which stands tall on the western side of the village. The *Lamchut* simultaneously faces towards west, north and south during his spells of incantations. After two sessions of incantation, the sacrificial fowls are brought out of the basket. The *Lamchut* holds it in his hands and some chants are uttered on it. All the while, two *Shingkar-jam* (one who holds the *Shingkar*) will stand behind the *Lamchuts* holding two *Shingkar* each in an upright position. They follow the movement of the *Lamchuts*. Then, the cock and hen is sacrificed. The neck of the sacrificial fowls has to be chopped by a single blow of a machete. The headless body of the fowls is to be thrown towards the sun. It is considered a good omen for the village community if the chopped neck lies towards the west facing the *Yonyi*. Chicken liver divination is sought. Now the *Shingkar*s are smeared with the sacrificial blood and the feathers are stuck onto the staff. The two *Shingkar-jam* again holds the *Shingkar*s and follow the movement of the *Lamchuts*. The chanting and incantation is uttered the entire day of the ritual.



Figure 3: *Shingkar*



Figure 4: *khui khui lungter*



Figure 5: Sacrificial cock and hen



Figure 6: *Yonyi*



Figure 7: *Lamchut* installing the *Turmo*



Figure 8: *Soyok*



Figure 9: *Chambai*



Figure 10: Boiled fish

The second meal or the main course of the day is served after the sacrifice of the fowl. The sacrificial fowl is boiled and shared by the community and the guests. The leg piece is the share of the *Lamchut*. The *Lamchuts* donates a part of their share which has to be chopped into small pieces and shared equally amongst the women folk present there. This practice is called *Tekyum*. This gesture is in appreciation of the hard work rendered by the womenfolk and also to etch the values into their minds that hard work never goes unrewarded. *Chambai* is prepared by mixing the sacrificial meat into it. In the main course, wild meat is served. *Rungku* and *Bommak* are served sufficiently. After the meal, the *Lamchuts* gears up for the last rites of the ritual. When the ritual is over, the *Shingkar-jams* take the four *Shingkar*s and dig it into the village entrance which is believed to shoo away the evil spirits that inflicts incurable diseases and sickness on the village. Then, the people present on the ritual day, seeks blessing from the *Lamchut*. *Lamchut* blessings secure them from any unfortunate accidents, diseases, sickness and



Figure 12: Conical *chambai*

showers them luck till the ritual is conducted in the next year. They take back the plants from the *Yonyi* to be burn it into their own homes. The families who had installed the *Khui-khui lungter* in the *Yonyi* take it back to their homes and pace it on the ceiling of the house. While marching back to their homes, people sing a song together all the way to their residences:

Yola khaye..... yola khaye

Yakoi chakoi hoi..... (We request the spirit of prosperity to our village and to our homes)

It is believed that one shouldn't turn back while marching back to their homes. If done so, an individual might fall sick. The last one in queue in the return procession is the two *Lamchuts* who carries on their chants by sprinkling rice powder around the village. This act is to purify the area of the village. Each household burns the plants in their *Thapko* (hearth) which makes the entire village smoky. They indulge themselves in merry making feasting afterwards.



Figure 13: Sacrificing



Figure 14: Spell on the sacrificial fowl



Figure 15: Chicken liver divination



Figure 12: Shingkar jam holding Shingkar



Figure 16: Smearing sacrificial blood on the Shingkars

Day 2: The next day after the *Lachut* ritual is called *Yolan* ritual. This ritual is performed at the *Dingpun's* residence. The two *Lamchuts* wakes up early and take a bath. The *Lamchut* begins their incantations while simultaneously burning *Chosa* and *Sorji* (mixture of rice powder, *Bommak* and butter). *Kochu* (rice paste) is sprinkled in the *Thapko* to purify it. The *Lamchuts* has two sessions of incantations before sunrise and one after the sunrise. Then the *Lamchuts* moves outside the house towards a corner of the village area facing the west towards the mountains. The incantation is followed by sprinkling rice powder and rice paste. The main *Lamchut* sprinkles the rice powder and the second *Lamchut* sprinkles the *Kochu*. Then the same blessing ceremony is performed like on the day of *Lachut* ritual. After the blessing ceremony, the *Lamchuts* march back to the *Dingpun's* house to perform *Khoi-Khoi* ritual.

Khoi khoi is a ceremony specifically to bless the *Dingpuns*. The ritual is performed in the house of the *Dingpun*. The ceremony is performed in the *Champak* (the area meant for the owner of the house). The *Dingpuns* dress themselves up in their traditional attires called as *Longkhrab* (male) and *Khrablo* (female). The owner lights the fire in the *Thapko* and libation of *Chosa* and rice powder is offered by the *Lamchut*.

The main *Lamchut* starts his incantation while the other *Lamchut* holds the *Khui khui lungter* and circles it around the *Dingpuns*. The two *Dingpuns* alternately places a *Dhung* filled with *Bommak* before the main *Lamchut*. The *Lamchut* places four small *Turmos* around the brim of the *Dhung* while concurrently chanting. The *Dingpuns* has to consume the *Turmos* and drink the *Bommak*. The remaining *Bommak* in the *Dhung* is offered as an oblation to the people present in the ritual.

The sequential ritual after *Khoi khoi* is *Tapshir*. The womenfolk offer a full *Dhung* of *Bommak* to the men while whipping them with burning *Chosa* and vice versa. The offered *Bommak* has to be consumed in a single gulp. The women whip the men while asking them to provide more wild meat and fish in the coming year. The men, in turn, seek sufficient *Rungku*, *Bommak* and rice for the next *Lachut* ritual.

The village community observes *Zine* (taboo) for five days from the day of the *Lachut* ritual. They are prohibited to clean their house and wash clothes. They are restricted to go to their fields. Any ritual that involves animal sacrifice is forbidden. After the *Zine* period is over, the *Yomdo* (a curtain raised in the champak area) is hung down.



Figure 18: Blowing Teng



Figure 19: Boiled wild goat's meat for the feast



Figure 20: Lamchuts share of the feast



Figure 21: Tekyum



Figure 22: Feasting



Figure 23: Incantation after the meal



Figure 24: Seeking blessings

Figure 25: People with their *Khui Khui Lungter*Figure 26: *Lamchut* returning to the *Dingpun's* house

Figure 27: Purification

Figure 28: Lighting the *Thapko*Figure 29: Beginning the *Yolan* ritual

Figure 30: Chanting outside



Figure 31: People seeking blessings

Figure 32: A *Dhung* filled with *Bommak*Figure 33: *Dingpuns* seeking blessingFigure 34: Male *Dingpun* drinking *Bommak* an oblationFigure 35: *Bommak* given to a child as an oblation in the *Yolan* ritualFigure 36: *Tapshir* ritualFigure 37: *Yomdo*
(The curtain raised in the *Lhachuth* festival)

Case Marking in Tangam

- Rejhoney Borang

1. Introduction

This paper provides a description of case marking in Tangam, a Tibeto Burman language of Tani¹ languages group spoken in the Upper Siang District of Arunachal Pradesh, India. An attempt has been made to discuss different types of case marking systems in Tangam. Case marking in Tangam is employed through affixation process, and the suffixes are *-loke*, *-m(e)/-en*, *-bi*, *-me/-pe*, *-ke*, *-roke* and *-lo/ro*

The paper is divided into three sections. The goal of the paper is briefed in the first section §1. In §2 a brief introduction of the people, land, and linguistic typology of Tangam is provided. The next section in §3 is the focal topic of the paper with an introduction of case marking system and its types and forms are discussed in detail.

In this paper every sentence has four levels of analysis. The first line is the representation of the widely accepted orthography of the Adi Agom Kébang² (pronounced as /adi agom kəbaŋ/) keeping in mind the wider range of audiences. The second line is the representation of the phonetic realization and cited in italics, the third line labels the morphemes and glossing, the complex morphemes are parsed in-line. And the fourth line is the nearest or the approximate English translation.

2. A brief typological overview of Tangam

Tangam is a language spoken by the Tangams in the hilly terrains of Kuging (pronounced as kugiŋ) with a population of 253³ in the administrative circle of Payendum in the Upper Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh, India. The village lies east of the Hidang (known as Siang by other communities) River and at a distance of 23 kilometers from the district sub-headquarter Tuting. It is the only village that is inhabited by the Tangam community. Kuging is bordered by the Bodic groups on the north and east, Minyong on the west and Shimong and Ashing on the south. There were hardly any records of this community, except for Roy (1960), where the existence of the community was recorded. Apart from Roy, Bhattacharjee (1975), studied some of the cultural aspects of Tangams. Gammar (2010), after a gap of thirty five (35) long years had made an attempt to study the cultural aspects of the Tangams. The linguistic reports of Tangam appeared in Badu (2004) and prior to this Sun (1993) had placed Tangam under Eastern Tani languages and assumed it to be a northern variety of Damu language spoken in Tibet due to unavailable sources. More Tangam linguistic information can be seen in Post, Liipir and Modi (2016).

The phonemic inventory of Tangam consist of twenty five (25) phonemes of which seven (7) are vowels i.e. /i, e, a, ə, ɪ, o and u/ with distinction in its length, and eighteen (18) are consonantal phonemes i.e. /p, b, t, d, k, g, c, ʃ, s, h, ʈ, m, n, ɲ, ŋ, r, l and j/. There are three high and three mid vowels at front, central and back, and one low vowel at central. All the vowels can occur in all the three positions of the words i.e. initial, medial and final. Some of the consonantal phonemes like- /t/, /k/, /g/, /m/, /n/, and /ŋ/ in Tangam can occur in initial, medial and final position of words. However, the other phonemes like- /c/, /p/, /d/, /b/, /s/, /h/, /ʈ/, /l/, /r/, /j/ does not occur in the final position of a word, and the phoneme /ʈ/ does not occur in the initial position of a word. In Tangam, monosyllabic and disyllabic are the most common types of syllable, however trisyllabic and tetra syllabic words are also found. Consonant cluster doesn't occur in final position.

Tangam language is agglutinating and synthetic in nature, and the basic word order constituent in Tangam is subject-object-verb (SOV) and word order has possibility of shifting in focus. Matisoff argues that “notions of subject and object are in fact alien to Sino-Tibetan grammar, as are such grammatical categories as active and passive voice” (Matisoff 1991:494) rather they are topic focus languages and postpositional. The major lexical classes are nouns, verbs and adjectives, and adverbs are derivative in nature. There is no grammatical gender in the language like most of Tibeto-Burman languages.

¹Tani group or languages comprises of the tribes such as Adi, Apatani, Galo, Mising, Nyishi, and Tagin, as these groups claim to share a common legendary ancestor Abotani or Tani. The word Tani was first proposed and used by N.Padun (1971) and C.N.Pegu (1981), later extensively used and accepted after Sun's (1993) doctoral thesis.

² Adi Agom Kébang is the official organisation which deals with matters related to preservation and development of Adi language and literature. It was established in the year 1982.

³Detailed household census was conducted by the Centre for Endangered Languages (CFEL), Rajiv Gandhi University in the month of February 2016 in Kuging village.

	Front	Central	Back
Close	i/i:	ɨ/ɨ:	u/u:
Close-mid	e/e:	ə/ə:	o/o:
Open		a/a:	

Table 1: Vowel Chart



Place 	Bilabial		Alveolar		Palatal		Velar		Glottal	
Manner 	-v	+v	-v	+v	-v	+v	-v	+v	-v	+v
Plosive	p	b	t	d	c	ɟ	k	g	ʔ	
Nasal		m		n		ɲ		ŋ		
Fricative					s				h	
Approximant				r		j				
Lateral				l						

Table 2: Consonants in Tangam

3. Inflectional Morphology in Tangam

An inflection process must always involve a closed grammatical system, and the nature of the system associated with word class varies (Dixon 2012:219). Inflection is a productive phenomenon and it does not make any changes in the word class category. Inflectional processes in nouns are inflected for gender, case marker, number and person in Tangam language.

Case is a category of morpho-syntactic properties, which distinguish the various relations that a noun phrase may bear to a governing head (Spencer and Zwicky 2007:23). It shows the relation of a noun to a verb at the clause level and at the phrase level it shows the relationship of a noun to another noun (Blake 2001). Case marking system is a grammatical category to affect and signify the syntactic relationship between words in a sentence. Tangam has seven case marking systems; ablative, accusative, benefactive, dative, genitive, instrumental and locative, and agentive case is unmarked in the language. Case markers in Tangam are given in the table.

Case	Marker(s)
Ablative	-loke
Accusative	-m(e)/-en
Agentive	ϕ (unmarked)
Benefactive	-bi
Dative	-me/-pe
Genitive	-ke
Instrumental	-roke
Locative	-lo/ro

Table 3: Case markers in Tangam

3.1 Ablative

Ablative case marks the distance or the movement away from the source of origin mentioned by verb. And the ablative case marker is *-lokke* and sometime it is realized as *-rokke* due to phonological governing processes in Tangam, alternation can take place between /l/ and /r/ sounds. Ablative case marker *-lokke* is a complex morpheme which is a compounding of locative marker *-lo* and genitive marker *-ke* and resulting of geminates of the /k/ sound. Ablative marker occurs with time adverbial, as in example (1) and deixis expression in (2).

- (1) lo:ro lokke taktor duré dí
lo:ro-lokke *taktor* *du-rə-dí*
 tomorrow-ABL tractor run-IRR-PQ
 ‘Will the tractor run from tomorrow onwards?’

- (2) nodí arang mero te lok ke doto do
nodí arang mero te-lokke do-to-do
 3.SG house top up-ABL fall-PFV-PQ
 ‘Did he jump from the top of the house?’

3.2 Accusative

Accusative case is to identify the direct object of a transitive verb in a sentence, and the accusative case markers are *-en* and *-m(e)*. When the direct object of a sentence is either -human or inanimate the accusative case marker *-en* is suffixed to a noun as in sentences (3), (4). *-m(e)* marker is attached when the direct object is +human and animate as in the given sentences (5), (6) and table 4. Accusative case is unmarked in Tangam if the object is non-specific/indefinite as in example (7).

- (3) nodí ta:tung en atto
nodí ta:tung-en at-to
 3.SG bird-ACC kill-PFV
 ‘He killed the bird’

- (4) ado hi kitat en bon du:
ádò hi kitat-en bon-du:
 one’s own boy this dog-ACC carry-IPFV
 ‘This boy is carrying the book’

- (5) ngo nom e keto
ŋo no-me ke-to
 1.SG 2SG-ACC see-PFV
 ‘I saw you’

- (6) ngo dukba me ga:to
ŋo dukba-me ga:-to
 1.SG dukba-ACC catch-PFV
 ‘I caught Dukbang’

- (7) nodí pyone ga:to
nodí pjoφ-ne ga:-to
 3.SG steal-NMLZ.AGNT catch-PFV
 ‘He caught a thief’

Person	Case marker		
	Singular	Dual	Plural
1 st	<i>ɲome</i> ‘Me’	<i>ɲoɲim</i> ‘Us two’	<i>ɲorum</i> ‘Us’
2 nd	<i>nome</i> ‘You’	<i>noɲim</i> ‘You two’	<i>norum</i> ‘You’
3 rd	<i>nodiϕ</i> ‘Him/Her’	<i>dɒniϕ</i> ‘Him/Her two’	<i>datəϕ</i> ‘Them’

Table 4: Accusative case marking in Tangam pronouns

3.3 Agentive/Nominative

The agent of an action in a sentence that is featured by the verb is agentive or nominative case. The agentive/nominative case is unmarked in Tangam language. In examples (8) and (9) the language doesn't mark any nominative case marking. The marker *-e* has two syntactic functions, as copula in (8) and generic in (9) when it is attached to the subject NP.

- (8) kedo kiding e ho:man du:
kedo-kidiŋ-eϕ *ho:-man-du:*
 boy-PL-COP play-playful-IPFV
 ‘The boys are playing’

- (9) ake e kyat du:
ake-eϕ *kjat-du:*
 dog-GENR bark-IPFV
 ‘Dogs bark’

3.4 Benefactive

Benefactive mark the role of interest of an individual and the benefactive case marker in Tangam is *-bi*. The suffix *-bi* can be attached to only verbal roots in Tangam.

- (10) ngo anne ke legape agya en lebi to
ŋo anne-ke lega-pe agja-en le-bi-to
 1.SG mother-GEN reason-DAT cloth-ACC buy-BEN -PFV
 ‘I bought a cloth for my mother’

- (11) nodi ngorum anying nyibi du:
nodi ŋo-ru-m ɒniŋ ɲi-bi-du:
 3.SG 1.SG-PL-ACC work work-BEN-IPFV
 ‘He works for us’

3.5 Dative

The indirect object of the sentence is the beneficiary or recipient of the direct object. The case markers *-m(e)* and *-pe* marked the dative case in Tangam. The indirect object always precedes the direct object and dative case is marked on indirect object in Tangam as in sentences (12) and (13). In sentence (12) *-me* marker is suffixed to proper noun, as the indirect object is the recipient. In sentence (13) *-pe* marker follows indirect object and plays the benefactive role. *-me* can also be suffixed with pronouns as in the following table 5.

- (12) dugbang lamem me pesil en bi to
dugbaŋ lamem-me pesil-en bi-to (Recipient)
 dugbang lamem-DAT pencil-ACC give-PFV
 ‘Dugbang gave Lamem a pencil’

- (13) ngo anne ke legape agya en lebi to
ŋo anne-ke lega-pe agja-en le-bi-to (Benefactive)
 1.SG mother-GEN reason-DAT cloth-ACC buy-BEN -PFV
 ‘I bought a cloth for my mother’

Person	Case marking		
	Singular	Dual	Plural
1 st	<i>ŋome</i> ‘Me’	<i>ŋoŋim</i> ‘Us two’	<i>ŋorum</i> ‘Us’
2 nd	<i>nome</i> ‘You’	<i>noŋim</i> ‘You two’	<i>norum</i> ‘You’
3 rd	<i>nodiŋ</i> ‘Him/Her’	<i>daŋiŋ</i> ‘Him/Her two’	<i>datəŋ</i> ‘Them’

Table 5: Dative case marking in Tangam pronouns

3.6 Genitive

Genitive case marked the possessive relationship or possession of a thing of an object in a sentence. The genitive marking in Tangam does not show any individual possessive relationship rather the possessive marking is very general. The genitive case marker is *-ke* in Tangam and in other varieties of Adi languages it is *-k* and *-ke*. Unlike other varieties of Adi language Tangam does not mark genitive marking in first, second and third person singular pronouns as shown in Table 6 and in sentence (14). The genitive case is marked on proper nouns to show the possession, as in examples (15) and (16) in Tangam. In sentences (17), (18) and (19 (a),(b)) all the varieties of Adi neighbouring to Tangam like Bori, upper Minyong, Aashing and Komkar do marked genitive case for first, second and third person possessive pronoun.

Person	Case marking		
	Singular	Dual	Plural
1 st	<i>ŋoŋ</i> ‘My’	<i>ŋoŋike</i> ‘Our two’	<i>ŋoruke</i> ‘Our’
2 nd	<i>noŋ</i> ‘Your’	<i>noŋike</i> ‘Your two’	<i>noruke</i> ‘Your’
3 rd	<i>nodiŋ</i> ‘His/Her’	<i>daŋike</i> ‘His/Her two’	<i>datəke</i> ‘Their’

Table 6: Genitive case marking in Tangam pronouns

- (14) ello ngo a:bo e
ello ŋoŋ a:bo-e
 DIST.SAME LEVEL.LOC 1.SG father-COP
 ‘That man is my father’

- (15) micu ke arang e
micu-ke araŋ-e
 michu-GEN house-COP
 ‘Michu’s house’

- (16) dukba ke té:rang e
dukba-ke *tə:raŋ-e*
 dukbang-GEN village-COP
 ‘Dugbang’s village’

Bori

- (17) é ami é ngok a:bo hé
 ə *ami* ə *ŋo-k* *a:bo-hə*
 DIST.SAME LEVEL.LOC man DIST.SAME LEVEL.LOC 1.SG-GEN father-COP
 ‘That man is my father’

Upper Minyong

- (18) é na ngok abu e
 ə *ŋo-k* *abu-e*
 DIST.SAME.LEVEL.LOC 1.SG-GEN father-COP
 ‘That man is my father’

Komkar

- (19) (a)hi ngok ekum kídár e
hi *ŋo-k* *ekum-kidar-e*
 this 1.SG-GEN house-PL-COP
 ‘These are my houses’

Aashing

- (b) ere ngok abo e
ere *ŋo-k* *abo-e*
 DIST.SAME.LEVEL.LOC 1.SG-GEN father-COP
 ‘That mn is my father’

3.7 Instrumental

Instrumental case encodes the instrument with which an action is carried out or mentioned by the verb. The instrumental case markers in Tangam are *-roke* and *-ke*, as in sentences (20) and (21).

- (20) ngo yocik roke àdó gja to
ŋo *jocik-roke* *ado* *gja-to*
 1.SG knife-INS vegetable cut(chopping)-PFV
 ‘I cut the vegetable with a knife’

- (21) ngo ahíng en yopa ke pato
ŋo *ahɪŋ-en* *jopa-ke* *pa-to*
 1.SG tree-ACC dao-INS cut(striking)-PFV
 ‘I cut the tree with a dao’

3.8 Locative

Locative case marker identifies and relates the location of referent in time or space. The locative marker is *-lo/-ro*, as alternation can take place between /l/ and /r/ sounds in Tangam. Locative case marking in Tangam can be marked for both spatial and temporal. Temporal locative can be marked for nouns, time adverbial and derived nominals as in (22), (23), (24) and (25). And deixis expression or spatial locative precedes the general locative marker as in (26), (27), (28) and table 7 and is marked for directional space.

- (22) ngo arang lo a:to rama
ŋo arang-lo a:-to-rama
 3.SG house-LOC come-PFV-HORT
 ‘Come to my house’

- (23) hí:rit lítpu ne ahí ane lo bí du
hi:rit lítpu-e ahi ane-lo bi-du
 beehive-COP tree-LOC hang-IPFV
 ‘And beehive is hanging on the tree’

- (24) ngo ho:ma ko ro gíra mayi
ŋo ho:-ma-ko-ro gi-ra-ma-ji
 1.SG dance-playfull-NMLZ-LOC go-NF-NEG-IRR
 ‘I will not be able to attend the party’ (I will not be able to attend the dance party)

- (25) daté lokon lo a:yi
datə lokon-lo a:ji
 3.PL morning-LOC come-IRR
 ‘They will come in the morning’

Function	Forms	Gloss
Location on the same level	<i>ello</i>	dist. same level
Location on the upward/above level/east	<i>tello</i>	dist.up
Location on the downward /below level/west	<i>mello</i>	dist.down

Table 7: Tangam spatial directional locative

- (26) tel lo ke do:nyi cadu:
tello-ke do:ni ca-du:
 DIST.UP.LOC-GEN sun ascend-IPFV
 ‘The sun rises in the east (from up there)’

- (27) el lo ngo a:bo e
ello ŋo a: bo-e
 DIST.SAME LEVEL.LOC 1.SG father-COP
 ‘That man is my father’

- (28) mel lo arang kepyo du
mello arang ke-pjo-du
 DIST.DOWN.LOC house see-AZR-IPFV
 ‘That house is beautiful’ (down there)

Conclusion

In this paper, I have briefly discussed about case marking system in Tangam and there are seven types of case marking. Case marking system is very productive and a common strategy in Tangam to inflect noun and nominals. Case is marked by the process of suffixation of case markers and there are nine suffixes that function as a case marker for seven types of case marking in the language. The case marking systems in Tangam are; ablative, accusative, benefactive, dative, genitive, instrumental and locative, and agentive or nominative case is unmarked. The case marker for ablative case is *-lokke/-rokke*, the ablative case marker is a complex morpheme and it marked case for time adverbial and deixis expression. Accusative case markers are *-en* and *-m(e)*, and *-en* marked the case for the direct object when the direct object is either -human or inanimate and *-m(e)* marker is attached when the direct object is +human and animate. In Tangam accusative is unmarked when the direct object is non- specific or indefinite. Benefactive case marker in Tangam is *-bi*. The suffix *-bi* is attached to only verbal roots in Tangam. The dative case markers *-m(e)* and *-pe* marked the dative case in Tangam, and the indirect object always precedes direct object. *-me* is used when the indirect object is a recipient and *-pe* for benefactive role. The genitive marking in Tangam does not show any specific individual possessive relationship rather the possessive marking is very general. The genitive case marker is *-ke* in Tangam, and one of the most distinct features is unmarking of genitive case in first, second and third person singular pronouns. Most of the Tani languages group do marked genitive for personal pronouns. The instrumental case markers in Tangam are *-roke* and *-ke*, and locative case marker is *-lo/-ro*. Locative case marking can be both spatial (in reference to space) and temporal (in reference to time). Temporal can be marked for nouns, time adverbial and derived nominals, and spatial locative precedes the general locative marker. Phonological alternation can take in between /l/ and /r/ sounds such as in ablative case marker *-lokke/-rokke* and locative case *-lo/-ro*.

Abbreviations

φ	Unmarked	GEN	Genitive
1	First Person	GENR	Generic
2	Second Person	HORT	Hortative
3	Third Person	INS	Instrumental
ABL	Ablative	IPFV	Imperfective
ACC	Accusative	IRR	Irrealis
AGN	Agent	LOC	Locative
AZR	Adjectivalizer	NEG	Negation
BEN	Benefactive	NF	Non final
CLF	Classifier	NMLZ	Nominalizer/nominalization
COP	Copula	PFV	Perfective
DAT	Dative	PL	Plural
DIST.DOWN.LOC	Distal down location	PQ	Polar question
DIST.SAME LEVEL.LOC	Distal same level location	SG	Singular
DIST.UP.LOC	Distal up level location		

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Installation of New Logdrum at Noksa village

During the month of September, 2017 (from 13th to 21st September) the Centre for Endangered Languages (CFEL), AITS, Rajiv Gandhi University, documented the whole process of the installation of new logdrum at Noksa village of Tirap District. The installation of the new logdrum is an important ceremony for the endangered language Kasik speakers. Weighing several tonne, the logdrum (*khaam* in Kasik) is made from a cylindrical hollow tree trunk which plays a vital part in the traditional communication system of the Noktes. It is the mode for notifying the village people and other villages during festivals, fire accident, community fishing and hunting and during the time of enemy attacks. Today, the instrument is a symbol of unity among the Nokte communities. More than 1000 photographs and audio-visual recording of around 5 hours was collected.



Lha-Chuth Documentation

In the January and February, 2018 (from 29th January to 3rd February), a team of two researchers namely Kombong Darang, Documentation Officer cum Archivist and Kaling Dabi, Jr. Research Fellow carried out an audio-visual documentation of one important pre-agricultural festival of the Meyor tribe called *Lha-Chuth* at Walong village. An extensive audio-visual documentation was done and interviews were conducted throughout the study and documentation. Around 500 photographs, 5 hours of video and 2 hours of Audio recordings were collected during the course of study.

A Brief Description of Meyor Language

- Lienjang Zeite

Meyor is the name of the language and the group of people who speak the language. Linguistically, Meyor is included under the Tibeto-Burman linguistic group. It belongs to one of the lesser known and endangered languages of Arunachal Pradesh, India. Native speakers inhabit Wallong and Kibithoo circle of Anjaw District. Besides Meyor, most of them are also fluent in Hindi and Miju Mishmi and they use these languages to interact and converse with the other neighbouring tribes. A few of the Meyor speakers are also fluent in Assamese language.

The data compiled and analysed for this article is based on the preliminary fieldwork conducted by the Centre for Endangered Languages, Arunachal Institute of Tribal Studies, Rajiv Gandhi University (Arunachal Pradesh). The entire fieldwork consists of information on the socio-cultural aspects, language and documentation of festival and other ritualistic ceremonies of the Meyors. The article is to present a brief sketch of the language based on the data of over one thousand six hundred word list and one hundred sixty sentences recorded, transcribed and translated during the fieldwork.

Meyor has forty-four sounds that are phonemic. The phonemic inventory consists of thirty-one consonants and thirteen vowels (Table 1 and Table 2 below).

p b t d k c ʔ h n ŋ ɲ m ʃ j s ʃ ʈ ɖ ʒ w r l
p^h b^h t^h d^h k^h c^h g^h ʃ^h (aspirated)

	Bilabial	Labio-velar	Alveolar	Post alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive	p b p ^h b ^h		t d t ^h d ^h		c ʃ c ^h ʃ ^h	k g k ^h g ^h	ʔ
Nasal	m		n		ɲ	ŋ	
Trill			r				
Fricative			s z	ʃ ɖ	ʃ		h
Approximant		w			j		
Lateral Approximant			l				

Table 1: Inventory of Consonant Phonemes

2. The thirteen vowels in Meyor are as follows:

i, i:, i, e, ε, ə, a, a:, ɔ, o, o:, u, u:

	Front	Central	Back
Close	i i:	ɨ	u u:
Mid Close	e		o o:
Mid Open	ε	ə	ɔ
Open	a a:		

Table 2: Inventory of Vowel Phonemes

(3) There are fourteen gliding vowels - ai, io, ei, əi, ui, ie, uo, au, a:i, ia, eo, ua, iu, iə

tjau	– lower	hiponietipim	– pregnant
nuo	– relative	teoc ^h erk	– spine, backbone
la:i	– news	giatmiŋ	– listen
liu	– flute	gaikiʔiŋ	– touch, feel
ɲiəpim	– speed	knaŋei	– senile person
ɲiowlo	– (be) born	jawmua	– impotent
suisəitek	– fierce	juilo	– drunk

(4) Mayor has many interesting consonant clusters. Some examples are as follows:

ʃma	- intestine	ciŋgʃət	- listen
tʃau	- lower hip	mehʔiŋ	- taste
kʰcikso	- boy	retwət	- right/be correct
cmikcmik	- blink	mpʰan	- bad

(5) Mayor has SOV word order. The subject precedes the object and the verb usually comes after the object. For example:

ra:ʃi kumən doʔ.uŋ
ra:ʃi peach cut asp.
Raji cut the mango.

(6) Noun

Cardinal Numbers

one (1)	cek	sixteen (16)	citruk
two (2)	ʃi	seventeen (17)	cepdiŋ
three (3)	som	eighteen (18)	cepʃet
four (4)	zi	nineteen (19)	cergu
five (5)	ŋa	twenty (20)	miso
six (6)	tuk	twenty-one (21)	nisucacek
seven (7)	deŋ	thirty (30)	simʃu
eight (8)	zet	forty (40)	ʃipcu
nine (9)	gu	fifty (50)	ŋəpɕu
ten (10)	cu	sixty (60)	tukcu
eleven (11)	cokce	seventy (70)	deŋcu
twelve (12)	cuni	eighty (80)	zetcu
thirteen (13)	cəksəm	ninety (90)	gəpɕu
fourteen (14)	cɕʃi	hundred (100)	za:
fifteen (15)	ceŋŋo/ceŋŋa	two hundred (200)	niza:

Ordinal Numbers

(be) first	tma:n
(be) second	ki:p
(be) third	ma:r
(be) last	ʃoŋ

Gender

<p>(a). For male gender, /kʰcik/ is used and for female gender, /mai/ is used. Example:</p> <table> <tr> <td>child</td><td>- so</td></tr> <tr> <td>boy</td><td>- kʰcikso</td></tr> <tr> <td>girl</td><td>- maiso</td></tr> <tr> <td>adult</td><td>- pʰəsər</td></tr> <tr> <td>young man</td><td>- kʰcikso pʰəsər</td></tr> <tr> <td>young woman</td><td>- maiso pʰəsər</td></tr> </table>	child	- so	boy	- kʰcikso	girl	- maiso	adult	- pʰəsər	young man	- kʰcikso pʰəsər	young woman	- maiso pʰəsər	<p>(b). For animate gender, /-kʰcik/, /-pei/ and /-duŋ/ are used to denote male and /-nəw/ and /-now/ are used to denote female gender. Example:</p> <table> <tr> <td>goat</td><td>- rə:</td></tr> <tr> <td>he-goat</td><td>- rə:kʰcik</td></tr> <tr> <td>she-goat</td><td>- rə:nəw</td></tr> <tr> <td>horse</td><td>- proroŋ</td></tr> <tr> <td>stallion</td><td>- proroŋpei</td></tr> <tr> <td>mare</td><td>- proroŋnow</td></tr> <tr> <td>pig</td><td>- lik</td></tr> <tr> <td>boar (male pig)</td><td>- likduŋ</td></tr> <tr> <td>sow</td><td>- liknow</td></tr> </table>	goat	- rə:	he-goat	- rə: kʰcik	she-goat	- rə: nəw	horse	- proroŋ	stallion	- proroŋ pei	mare	- proroŋ now	pig	- lik	boar (male pig)	- lik duŋ	sow	- lik now
child	- so																														
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<p>(c). For birds and fowls /-bo/ is used for male and /-nəw/ is used for female gender. Example:</p> <table> <tr> <td>chicken</td><td>- kraɪ</td></tr> <tr> <td>rooster</td><td>- kraɪbo</td></tr> <tr> <td>hen</td><td>- kraɪnəw</td></tr> </table>		chicken	- kraɪ	rooster	- kraɪ bo	hen	- kraɪ nəw																								
chicken	- kraɪ																														
rooster	- kraɪ bo																														
hen	- kraɪ nəw																														

7. Pronouns

There is no indication of gender in pronouns.

Pronouns	Demonstrative Pronouns
I	- ko
we	- ki
you (Sg.)	- no
you (Pl.)	- ici
he/she	- u:
they	- mise
this (man)	- e gzoŋ
that (man)	- u gzoŋ
some (men)	- tetme gzoŋ
other (men)	- la:ŋ gzoŋ

8. Reduplication

Reduplication process marks a grammatical or semantic contrast by repeating all or part of the base to which it applies. It is used abundantly in Meyor to emphasize, intensify and express distribution. Examples:

1. u knək knək tei-im
2Sg slowly slowly walk -pst.
He was walking slowly slowly.

2. u se se co-im
2Sg what what eat-pst.
What all did he eat?

3. tʰək.iŋ tʰək.iŋ co
hot hot tea
Very hot coffee.

4. kosər kosər gʰiun
red red apple
Very red apple.

Conclusion

The above analysis of Meyor is part of the ongoing documentation by Centre for Endangered Languages. A more detailed study and analysis is being developed into a book. Active documentation on the language and intangible cultural heritage of the Meyors are crucial for maintaining and preserving the critically endangered language.

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List of Technical Abbreviations

2	Second Person
ASP	Aspect
Pst	Past
PL	Plural
Sg	Singular

Two days Special Lecture series

The Centre for Endangered Languages (CFEL), Arunachal Institute of Tribal Studies (AITS) organised a 2 days special lecture by Dr. Roger Blench, University of Cambridge on the 22nd- 23rd of February. The Lecture series included talks on the *Development of a script for the Mishmi languages: launching of Idu and Kman reading and writing materials*. The second lecture included a special talk on the *Journey of the Dead in North East India: Eschatology of the Idu and Kman*. Dr. Blench highlighted on the whole process that went into developing a script for the Mishmi community. He stressed on the importance of having a written script, a script that inculcated the various aspects of the tribal languages, that which could accommodate the unique sound systems and aspects of the tribal languages. The second lecture provided the audience with an anthropological perspective into the death rituals of the Idu and Kman Mishmi community. Dr. Blench made an in-depth presentation of how the community's worldview was reflected in the way they treated the dead and how their journey into the underworld and the paths leading to this journey was a direct reflection of the community's effort at conserving culture.



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