

A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF PHOM LANGUAGE

**THESIS
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT FOR THE
REQUIREMENT OF THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**IN
LINGUISTICS**

**BY
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**UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF
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DEDICATION

To my late mother Rabia Khatoon

DECLARATION

I, Atiqua Bano, hereby declare that the subject matter of this thesis is the record of the work done by me, that the contents of the thesis did not form the basis for the award of any previous degree to me or to the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and the thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other university/ institute.

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(Atiqua Bano)

ABBREVIATION AND SYMBOLS

Abl	Ablative
Acc	Accustive
adj	Adjective
adv	Adverb
Asp	Aspect
asp	Aspirative
c	Code
C	Consonant
Caus	Dative
cc	Consonant cluster
Comp	Complementizer
d.obj	Direct object
Dec	Declarative
Emp	Emphatic
FUT	Future
Gen	Genetive
I.obj	Indirect object
Imp	Imperative
Ins	Instrumental
Int	Interrogative
IPA	International Phonetic Alphabet

Loc	Locative
n	noun
neg	Negative
Nom	Nominate
O	Onset
Obj	Objective
Perf	Perfective
Pl	Plural
Poss	Possessive
pp	Post Position
Pr	Present
Prog	Progressive
pron	Pronoun
Pst	Past
Q.P	Question particle
R Pst	Recent Past
R	Rhyme
Rd	Rounded
RI Cl	Relative clause
Rm Pst	Remote Past
Soc	Sociative
Unasp	Unaspirated

Unrd	Unrounded
v	Verb
V	Vowel
Vd	Voiced
Vl	Voiceless
&	Syllable boundary
#	Word boundary
∅	Zero
/	Environment
ˆ	Rising tone
˘	Falling tone
[]	Phonetic transcription
	Phonemic transcription
+	Presence
-	Absence

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CHAPTER 1

ETHNOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION

1.0 Introduction:

Ever since the phrase 'Look East' has been coined North East linguistics is now being viewed as the next opportunity for the linguists. On analyzing the phonology and morphology of Phom, which forms the subject of this work, it is de rigueur, at the outset, to discuss linguistic ecology of India. This also emphasizes the fact that languages must be frequently investigated as immediate expression of the interaction between humans and their environment. It goes without saying that theoretical approaches always consider the social, man made environment. It is essential because Phom, situated in the extreme east, is the part and parcel of the India's linguistic Ecology. Such explanation will help us in identifying the 'value' of Phom in overall realm of Indian multilingualism. Moreover, 'language ecology stands to be a determining force' in dealing the language value (Singh, 2001: 89). Haugen (1953: 329) rightly says:

Ecology suggests a dynamic rather than a static science, something beyond the descriptive that one might call predicative and even therapeutic, what will or shall be, for example, that role of "small language"; and how can they or any other language may be made "better", "richer" and more "fruitful" for mankind.

We must look for a theory of language ecology in India, which can integrate naturalist and critical traditions across many disciplines. It could rightly be pointed out that notion of ecology in the field of linguistics has come into fore

recently. The metaphor and notion of ecology can fit into all areas of linguistics. Diversity is a defining characteristic of all functioning of languages. In diversity, one can always find an enormous potential for development of human ideas.

In the words of Singh (2001:85):

Language values are constructed transformed and implemented in concrete and given linguistic ecology through certain processes. The values of language are compounded in their intrinsic and extrinsic constitutive utility framework. The intrinsic fact of language stands for the inherent property of language. As every individual is born with certain inherent qualities, languages are born with these inherent qualities as well. The symbolic value of one's mother tongue is an inherent quality. Extrinsic utilities of language are adoptive. Languages acquire extrinsic qualities through ecological conditions. Today, English, for example, has accumulated communicative, institution and economic values because of favorable ecological conditions. In order to understand extrinsic facts of 'language value', it is essential to understand those variables, which assign values to language.

India shows the world's greatest linguistic diversity. India is the seventh largest country of the world and it is one of the seven nations of South Asia. It is the second largest populated country in the world with the biggest democracy. India is also known for its multi ethnic, racial, linguistic and cultural diversity and it has one of the oldest civilizations in the world.

Geographically, Indian land is divided into four different regions: (a) the great mountain zone, (b) the Indo-Gangetic plain, (c) the desert region, and (d) the Southern Peninsula. Linguistically, it is also divided into four linguistic groups: Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, Tibeto-Burman and Austro-Asiatic. It is hard to establish

one to one correspondence between the two, but such boundaries sometimes overlap.

India has a total population of 1,027 million according to the census of India, 2001. There is a growth of 1.93 percent of total population from 1991-2001 and the density of population per square mile is 324. There are twenty-eight states and nine union territories in the Indian Union. Many religious practices, faiths and boundaries are functional in India. The major religions are: Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism and Jainism. It gives clear evidence that diversity is not confined at linguistic level but also at socio-cultural and political levels. There are about 1,652 languages and dialects that are spoken in India and twenty-two of them are the scheduled languages. According to the **Ethnologue: Languages of the World (2005)**, the listed languages in India are 428 in numbers, of those 415 are living and 13 are extinct languages and among the four major language families in India; the numbers of Indo-Aryan speakers are 76 percent, Dravidians are 21.6 percent, and the numbers of Austro-Asiatic speakers are 1.2 percent and Tibeto-Burmans are 1 percent. India's social, economic and cultural diversity makes it an interesting point of reference for studying language value within the linguistic ecology.

1.1 Nagaland:

Nagaland is one of the independent states of the Indian Union. It is in the northeastern part of India. Nagaland came into existence on December 1, 1963. It

was the sixteenth state of the Indian Union. Nagaland is situated between 25⁰⁶ and 26⁰⁴ North latitude and between 93⁰²⁰ and 95⁰¹⁵ East longitude. It is surrounded by Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, and Manipur and by external border of Myanmar in the east. Nagaland has an area of 16,759 Square Kilometers. The State has altogether eleven (11) recognized districts: namely, Kohima, Mokokchung, Tuensang, Zunhebuto, Wokha, Phek, Mon, Dimapur, Peren, Longleng and Khiphere. The main tribes of Nagaland are- Angami, Ao, Chokri, Chang, Khiamniungan, Kheza, Konyak, Lotha, Phom, Pochury, Rengma, Sangtam, Sema, Tikhir, Yimchunger and Zeliang. The ethnic people of Nagaland are called Nagas. The Nagas belong to the Indo-Mongoloid family.

The capital of Nagaland is Kohima. It is a hill station, which is situated at an altitude of 1,444.12 meters above sea level. It is a beautiful town with a touch of nostalgia. There are many places that have history of their own. The Kohima War Cemetery was constructed in the memory of the people who sacrificed their lives in Second World War. There is a state museum that has rare collections of artifacts of almost all the Naga tribes of the state to depict the various aspects of the lives of the people. The Catholic Cathedral at Aradurah Hills is an important place at Kohima. There is a Khonoma village which lies 20 Km west of Kohima. It is known for its strength of fighting in the past. The British infiltrated the Naga Hills in 1879 from Khonoma village. In order to protect an endangered pheasant (a wild bird) of the state Blythe's Tragopan, and other wild lives, the Khonoma Nature Conservation and Tragopan Sanctuary (KNCST) was set up in the year

1998. This sanctuary covers an area of around 70 Square kilometers. Dzüküo Valley, which is also called the valley of eternal charm, is situated at an altitude of 2438.4 m behind the Japfü ranges that is about 30 kilometer at the south of Kohima and 40 kilometer at the west of Kohima and at 2133.6 meters above sea level. Japfü Peak, the second highest peak in Nagaland is situated at 3048 meter above sea level and is about 15 kilometer far from south of Kohima. In the Japfü ranges, the tallest Rhododendron tree, which is featured in the Guinness Book of World Records, can be seen. On the National highway of Dzüküo, Japfü, some Southern Angami Villages such as Jakhama, Kigwema, Viswema, Phesama are seen where the remnants of the ancient cultures are present.