

Tarao *Grammar*

Chungkham Yashawanta Singh

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This pioneering book is a primary one in the study of Tarao language describing phonology, morphology, morphophonemics, syntax and semantics with adequate illustrations. No scholar has so far done a scientific analysis on this mother tongue. This is one of the endangered dialects of Manipur. The book is the outcome of UGC project "Endangered Dialects of Manipur".

Rs. 350/-

Chungkham Yashawanta Singh is at present an Associate Professor, Department of Linguistics, Manipur University. He teaches Tibeto-Burman Linguistics and is an active field linguist. He is at present undergoing a Major UGC Research Project entitled "Endangered Dialects of Manipur". He has published several articles in national and international journals, and is also a contributor of articles in many books, specially on Tibeto-Burman Linguistics. He has participated a number of national and international seminars/conferences and workshops. He is writer of *Manipur Grammar* (2000). He is a Commonwealth Academic Staff Fellow and visited countries like Czeck Republic, Slovakia Republic, U.K., France, Belgium, Holland, Nepal and Thailand.

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By

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INTRODUCTION

The Tاراos are mainly concentrated in the hills of Chandel district. The number of villages have now increased to four. They are Tarao Khullen (Tarao Laimanai), Leishok Ching, Khuringmul and Heikamul with respect to their establishment. The village Heikamul is the latest one which is situated nearby Pallel. About 8 families are still at Shajkeithel (Ukhrul district) where the Tangkhul Nagas are also inhabiting. Once some of the Tarao families had tried to merge into the Tangkhul Naga. The Tاراos are concentrated in Chandel district like the Tangkhul in Ukhrul district.

The Tarao possess a distinct identity with reference to other tribes of Manipur. When we trace back their origin we must see into the origin of Old Kuki tribes, because the Tاراos are in Old Kuki by the earlier writers (T.C. Hodson, 1908; R.B. Pemberton, 1835; Shakespear, 1912).

The Tarao is one of the oldest tribes in Manipur because they arrived in Tengnoupal area (Manipur) before the 14th century as reported by G. Kabui (1976). Levi-Stranass says:

“Generalized exchanged, in a more or less pure form extends over a vast area of southern Asia. It is found among the so called Old Kuki groups (including the Tاراos) of Manipur, where although it has been well studied it appears in a form which seems to be very close to that of the Kachin” (1969:269).

The Tarao marriage system is asymmetrical based on external limits of generalized exchange by matrilateral cross-cousin (Mo Br Da) (Bokul Singh, 1999). It is no longer applicable today. Tarao marriage system was said to be close that of the Kachin Burma and extending a vast of south Asia (Levi-Stranss, 1963).

There are a mainly 6 (six) clans in Tarao. They are (1) Khullen, (2) Katrimsa, (3) Cana, (4) Siloy-Sanei, (5) Mathang-manci and (6) Kahlangsa. There are four sub-clans under Cana clan. They are (i) Leikhan, (ii) Tei-leap, (iii) Sarye and (iv) Thamon.

The main occupation of the Tarao are agriculture, hunting, basket making specially in bamboo and cane works. Comparatively the number of professional holders is quite low though most of them are educated. The whole community of Tarao is administered by the traditional village council under a Khulakpa. Head of the village.

The data of this work is collected from Leishokching, and Heikaipokpi 45 km and 30 km respectively from Imphal. The informants are Pishla and Lamtachao.

It is a descriptive grammar of Tarao. It makes an attempt to describe the language from sound system to the sentence level. The book has eight chapters the first chapter deals with sound system and syllable. The second and the third chapter deal with Noun categories and Verb categories respectively. The fourth chapter deals with Root and Affixes. Word Formation is discussed in chapter V. The chapter VI deals with Clause Structure analysing a complex and compound sentences. The chapter VII discusses about Sentences Processes explaining different aspect of Negation Imperative, Interrogative, Optative and Exclamatory sentences. The last chapter deals with Form of Address in this language.