

# **An Ethnosemantic Study of the Mao Language**

By  
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Under the Supervision of  
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Submitted

In Partial Fulfilment for the requirement of the Degree of Doctor of  
Philosophy in Linguistics,  
North-Eastern Hills University, Shillong-793022

2008

Thesis

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*Dedicated*

*In Loving Memory of  
My Mom and Dad*

*&*

*My Sister Ozha Aji  
for their unseen prayer*

**DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS  
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*The 16<sup>th</sup> Oct. 2008*

**Declaration**

*I Losü Heshu hereby declare that the subject matter of this thesis is the record of my work done by me, that the contents of this 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 that the thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other university/institute.*

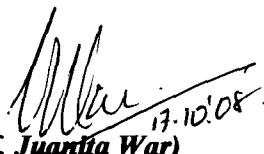
*This is being submitted to North Eastern Hill University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Linguistics.*



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## Abbreviations and Symbols

Hab. M.	Habitual Marker
SM	Sentence Marker
NOM	Nominative Marker
ACC	Accusative case
Det.	Determiner
Pp.	Postposition
Fut.	Future
Conj	Conjunctive
Lit.	Literally
Neg.	Negation
CON	Connective
PL	Plural
Mkr.	Marker
pst.part.	Past participial
EQ	Equational Marker
∅	Empty
≡	Equivalent sign; bilateral implication
⊃	Inclusion-sign; includes, used for 'implies'
*	Ungrammatical or unacceptable
♀	Female speaker
♂	Male speaker

# **Introduction**

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

---

### 1.1 Land and People

Manipur, “Jewel of the East”, is one among the ‘Seven Sisters States’ situated in the eastern frontier of India having a total area of 22,327 sq. km. Topographically, Manipur is divided into two physical divisions: hills and valley. The hills cover an area of 20,089 sq. km. i.e., about  $\frac{3}{4}$ <sup>th</sup> of the total area of the state. With five administrative units or districts which are Senapati, Ukhrul, Tamenglong, Chandel and Churachandpur, the hills are home for 33 Scheduled Tribes; the major tribes among them are Nagas and Kukis, while the plains area is the home for the Meiteis. The present study is based on a major group of people inhabiting the district of Senapati, i.e., the Mao community who co-exists with other groups such as Poumai<sup>1</sup>, Maram, Thadou, Zeliang, Tangkhul, Maring, Kom, etc. The district has an area of 3271 sq.km situating on the northern most part bordering Nagaland.

Mao is a term referring to an indigenous community inhabiting the hilly terrain along the eastern foot hills of Mt. Esü on Japfü mountain range of Senapati district, in the northern part of Manipur. Spreading mostly along National Highway 39, the Maos neighbours like the Angamis, Rengmas and Chakhesangs in the north, the Marams and Zemes in the west, and the Poumai and the Tangkhuls in the east and

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<sup>1</sup> Poumai comes under Mao before they got the status of Scheduled Tribe vide the Govt. Order No. 10 of 2003, dated 8<sup>th</sup> January 2003, Gazette of India, 2003.

the Meiteis in the south. With 58,212 speakers<sup>2</sup> distributed among the 36 revenue villages, the biggest among them includes Fürodzū (Punanamai), Charanho (Shajouba), Chakre Chovu (Song Song), and Ikhranu (Makhan), the tribe holds a significant place in the district. Most of the areas inhabited by the Maos are on rocky hills and uncultivable land covered with deciduous forests. A negligible part of areas which is cultivable are in the form of meadows and valleys along the bank of river Barak. However, these hills are creatively carved out in the form of terrace for wet cultivation. The hills and mountains of the area serve as the house of biodiversity where varied flora and fauna exist. Also different varieties of high-value medicinal and commercial plants are found. The most common natural vegetations in the area are oaks, alders, rhododendrons, etc. The meadow/grassland favours them for domestication and rearing of animals for their livelihood.

Earlier reference in literature on Mao can be seen in the following writing: Grierson LSI Vol. 3 part 2 (451-461) refers to Mao as Sopvomā or Māo Nāgā. Hodson (1911) also uses Mao and Sopvoma to refer to the people. Sopvoma could be a derivation from Shipfumai which is a combination of *Shipfuo*, who is considered as the first forefather of both the Mao and Poumai and *mai* meaning people. The difference in the spelling of the earlier writers could be because the writers are unable to capture the exact pronunciation, or the language has undergone considerable change. The first assumption would be more valid because Shipfumai and not Sopvoma is still in use in folk songs. Hutton (1969) addresses Mao as Memi also. Memi is believed to be a corrupted form of Memeo who is the forefather of the Maos,

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<sup>2</sup> According to Census on Population of Communities Hill house tax on Senapati district 1999-2002 conducted by the District Information Centre, Senapati. The population of Mao is not included in 2001 census of India.

or from the term the people called themselves that is, Memai. Hutton's observation or reference could have been acquired from that. McCulloch's usage of Mow could be a matter of spelling. Later writers like Marrison (1967), J.P. Mill (1937) and others use Mao to refer both to the people and the language.

## 1.2 Origin and Migration

Every civilisation has its own theory of origin be it mythical or scientific. The theory revolves around the origin of creation or how man came into being. These theories may be totally mythical by bringing about elements that are found in the mythical stories of that culture and are scientifically inconceivable or the theory may be scientifically relevant showing a high sense of deductive capability. Some other theories may incorporate mythical element with a touch of scientifically applicable sense of explanation in their theory. One such scientifically viable theory of origin can be seen in the theory of origin of Mao. The theory revolves around a mystical and godly woman named *Dzüliamosüro* literally meaning one who befriended the crystal clear water. The myth goes that one day when *Dzüliamosüro* was resting a cloud named *Ranarü* covered her up, after which droplets of water dripped into her private parts. She then conceived and gave birth to three children: *Ora* 'gods/Spirit', *Okhe* 'Tiger' and *Omai* 'Man'. Thus the three domain came into existence comprising of 'Ora' (gods/spirit) who dwells in the *rukhrü kashi* 'steep rocks' which includes deep forest, steep rocks, bushes, deep water, big trees etc., 'okhe' (Tiger) occupying the *ove Katie kozü* 'deep dark forest' that is jungle away from the human habitat, Omai (Man) inhabits on *Ojü kakhile* (dry land). The three domains represent the three realms of life. The realm **Ora** represent the gods or spirits that are believed to be loitering around. This includes both the benevolent and malevolent spirits. **Okhe**

represent the animal kingdom which includes animals, birds and fishes. **Omai** represent human race.

Therefore it is clear from the myth of the Mao that the origin of life begins from water which is in tune with the scientific theory of origin<sup>3</sup> of life. This implicates the high conceptualisation and analytical power among the Mao's even in the past.

The origin of the Mao like all the other Naga tribes is shrouded in mystery or cannot be traced due to absence of written record in any form. However, majority of the Naga tribe beliefs that the human life begins from a place called **Kheso** and so also is the Mao. Thereafter from the place of their origin they started moving to look out for their settlement following a river name **Chuhrürü** as their main route and decided to settle down at an open location/place where they can view clearly both the topography of east and west of that place. The selected place/location is the present Makhrai Rabu (Makhel) situated in the present Mao region. Thus Maos settled down at Makhrai Rabu and started living their life and the others dispersed to different direction to their respective present settlements. An evidence to this claim is the *Chütebu-kajü* (literally big wild pear tree referring to The Great Wild Pear Tree) which marked as symbolic representation of the dispersals of the brothers. The Great Wild Pear Tree more importantly symbolises the oneness of the Nagas. A general practice by those tribes that trace their origin to Makhrai Rabu is that when a branch of this tree fell, a genna (a religious observation day<sup>4</sup>) is observed from one village to another as it receives the news even if it were to be after a month or so. This

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<sup>3</sup> This insight is from Dr. Xavier P. Mao in one of my personal communication. I am thankful that he gave me this information.

<sup>4</sup> See Hutton, 1969.

observation covers areas from *Shina Pijü no pfo Pisho Kazhe kotu* that is, every nook and corner of the land occupied by those people dispersed from Makhrai Rabu.

### **1.2.1 Migration**

The migratory route of the Maos (Nagas) as stated above is from Kheso and followed the river Chohrürü till they reached Makhel. However the exact location of Kheso is unknown though Chohrürü is a river which is originated from the present Mao. Therefore it would be interesting here to look at some of the observation given by historians and anthropologists about the migration and the migratory route of the Nagas. Their views are given by Sanyu (1996) as follows:

#### **Buchanan's statement**

“Over hundreds of years the pre-Chinese peoples of Central Asia were displaced into the upland areas of Indo-Chinese lands far to the South and their pressure in turn triggered tribal movements which affected the whole mainland South East Asia and the adjoining island worlds”. (op.cit. 11)

#### **Horam's view**

“There can be little doubt that at one time the Nagas must have wandered about before they found their permanent abode; from their myths and legends one gathers that there is a dim relationship with the natives of Borneo in that the two have a common traditional headhunting; with the Indonesians, as both use the loin loom for weaving cloth. The embroidery on the Naga cloths resemble the kind done on Indonesian cloths”. (op.cit. 12)

### **Alemchiba's View**

“That branch which came to the hill range moved further west and entered Naga Hills. Another wave from South East Islands taking a north-westerly direction and entered Naga Hills using Burma as a Corridor”. (op.cit. 12&13)

### **Hutton's View**

“The history of how the Naga tribes came precisely to occupy their present position has, of course, passed into the dim obscurity of vague traditions. But enough of them remain to give some indication of the course which the migration took... And all weight of tradition points to migration from the south, except in the case of Kacha Naga”. (op.cit. 13)

Smith (2002 quoted in Sanyu) claimed that these immigrant tribes took different routes. Some took the Himalayan section which extends down through the Patkai, Arakan Yoma, and Banda Arch towards Sumatra and Java and some took the Pacific section which extends from Formosa through the Philippines, Borneo and on to Japan.

### **Visier Sanyu's view**

Speaking in favour of the view of Keviselie, (Arbervirolas Naga Mussihkka Tromso 1985) he quotes ‘... perhaps the Nagas were among those tribes who migrated from China through the Patkai section and settled on the way in the Naga Hills. There are living examples to illustrate how during migration some of the tribes broke away and settled down en route. In Borneo and Formosa, there are some indigenous groups who

still have the same traditions, cultures, socio-religious organizations as the Nagas in the Naga Hills’.

Thus he is of the view that the Nagas who migrated from China took the route of Patkai Himalayan section and made their first settlement at Makhel, then dispersed to settle at their own present homelands in present day Nagaland and Manipur. This view could be nearest if not the exact explanation about the route taken by the Nagas in their journey towards the present land.

It would be worth noting here that though the migratory routes remain ill-defined and still demands a deeper research, yet all the writing about the origin of the Nagas and also the folklore talks of migrating from some distant place. The writings also talks of different waves and the passing of some oceans. The crossing of oceans can be justified by the conch and sea-shell which is considered as an important ornament and donned by the Nagas during festive occasions.

### **1.3 Settlement**

The Maos like other Naga tribes build their village on top of the high mountain ranges. This is strategic from the point of view of warfare as one can see from a distance the approaching enemy. However, life is hard and difficult since vegetation, especially wet cultivation, is usually done along the river bank which is far from the villages and the rice is brought home climbing ranges of hills. Likewise water, firewood and other basic means of livelihood are to be brought from long distant places. In spite of this hard life yet a Mao would continue to opt for similar location for his safety, and for war strategy. Hutton could clearly understand this fact about the

Nagas and stated that, “This site, though generally in a position highly defensible if not impregnable from the point of view of Naga warfare” (1921: 43). Each village has village gates; one is the main gate and the other gates could be secondary gates depending on the position of the village. The surrounding village is fortified with sharp-pointed bamboo stakes varied in sizes and length planted around the village which could cause severe injury; pitfalls in the path covered with thin layer of earth and leaves to trap the incoming enemies. The approaches to the village are often uphill passage through byzantine or narrow lanes with high banks on each side and devised for only one person to walk at a time. This path leads up to the main gate of the village. The gate is built with an embankment on both sides and closed with a strong and heavy wood hewn out of a single tree.

#### **1.4 Community life**

The Maos have a very strong sense of community life. The social bond or attachment in the mind of the people develops because of reason of security and other basic necessities which they could benefit out of living together as a community. The wellbeing and integrity of the community is given a priority over individual benefits. Every member has the moral and social obligation towards the welfare of the community. Many aspects of their lives either it be in working, feasts, and even in performing of rites or rituals are carried out as a community.

The sense of social/community life is promoted through various activities which they perform in their daily life. They join hands in building houses, clearing of forest for the jhum fields, digging of canals, construction or repairing roads and paths etc. Other forms of cooperative system of working together also includes *Ava Kochu*

and *Chokhro Kasa* which motivates them to develop a sense of closeness and oneness (the spirit community) within the society. When few individuals form a working group to work for each other in the field or other works on rotation basis, such system of working together is called *Ava Kocho*. A group usually consists of boys and girls from the same dormitories. Such group works are also an occasion for celebration as they work and share meat and rice beer in plenty. On the other hand, *Chokhro Kasa* is a more intensive and occasion-based work activity. For example, if an individual's paddy field is destroyed by a landslide or on the occasion of constructing new paddy field, a person invites the whole village or a member from each family to help him. The concerned person has to feed the helpers with meat and rice-beer in return to the help he gets. It is obligatory for the villager to extend their helping hand in such work.

Most importantly, the Mao community follows an egalitarian system. Every member is equal and no one is discriminated on any basis unlike in some communities where discrimination is meted out due to an individual's colour, creed, caste, status, position, sex or power. Traditionally, the Maos live a harmonious community life without any events of theft, corruption, favouritism, nepotism and injustice. The community aims at strengthening each other for peaceful co-existence and creating a sense of brotherhood and oneness among members.

### **1.5 The family and Dormitories**

The Maos practise monogamy and follows patriarchic social set up. Families are usually big in numbers (sometimes ranging from eight to ten children and above). The mental attitude of the people is 'a large family is a happy family'. This may be due to the fact that the Maos are agriculturists and larger number of family would mean more

workers which would bring more harvest. Also in the past where basic medical facilities were unavailable and child mortality was high, a person who could bring up a large family is considered a blessing from god. The blessing is attributed due to one's righteousness. Therefore, the bigger the family, the higher the status rises. It is every individual's prayer that they are blessed with a big family (especially male members). Another possible reason could be the practice of head hunting tradition. A psychological fear is always created to the enemies if a village or community has a larger number of populations than the other. Also in situation where any work outside the premise of the village need someone to stay as sentinel, be it fetching of water or firewood or even in the field, more number of people are needed by the community.

Family functions as an institution to impart basic education for the child in moulding them to live a better moral and social life. When the child attains teenage, he/she is sent to the dormitories: *khruçhüzü* for the boys and *lochüzü* for the girls. Here in the dormitories, a child not only learnt from the peer group but also from elders about moral values, industriousness, social codes of conduct, customary laws, religious practices and others traditional values through narration and sharing of folk-tales, folk-songs, etc. Thus, dormitories serve as the most important informal institution for the Maos to educate and socialize themselves.

## **1.6 Head Hunting**

The culture of head-hunting is a practice that dates back to a very early period. How it came to be practised by the Nagas is not known but it was widespread among them. Nor could one definitely cite the reasons. For some cultures, as Havemeyer (1929) reports, heads are taken so that the spirits of the victims become slaves in the next

world. Other cultures believe that it transforms enemies into guardians and friends to their benefactor. Such a reason does not hold good for the Nagas, for whom head-hunting is considered a depiction of strength, courage and skilfulness. However, for a Mao the necessity of taking an enemy's head arises when he attains a certain age because only after taking a head he would be considered as a 'man'. According to Paul Lokho (1991) a man needs a lock of enemy's hair for construction of his house which is to be buried under *ote*, the main pillar of the house. He further cited that a man would only be wooed by the pretty girls if he takes a head. Also only a successful head-hunter could perform the feast of merit which is considered as a series of ceremonies to climb the ladder of status. This also raises one's social status in the community, when people could evaluate a man's valour and his way of manoeuvring things to achieve his goal. This also shows one's maturity and manhood. Hodson rightly quoted Davis (1891) about the mentality and the aspect of head-hunting with a young adult as "The desire for head-hunting was more the fault of the women than of the men, who were laughed at if he turned out at the village festivals without the decorations assigned to the successful warrior. Success in head-hunting was at one time, if not essential to marriage, regarded at least as a token of having passed from adolescence to maturity" (1974:121).

### **1.7 Feast of Merit or Zhoso Mozö**

As stated above a successful head hunter holds high status in the community yet, the highest status a man can achieve in his life is to perform a ceremony called Zhoso Mozö 'Feast of Merit'. This feast is the highest sacrifice an individual can perform for the community and in return achieved social recognition and status in the society.

Such feast can solely be given by rich individual as the feast involves a lavish celebration of meat and rice-beer for the whole community which goes on for days. To mark that an individual has carried out such a generous act a stone is erected in his name and the individual can also build a mound for the village. Also he will appear in public with a shawl of special design called *zhososa* 'shawl of the feast of merit' (a black shawl dotted with white colour of leaf form) which is restricted to the general public. He will thus be respected wherever he is and is also considered. The act is also considered honourable even before God for he has offered God the highest acknowledgement of bravery, industry and goodwill towards his fellow man.

The intention of the feast is declared to the public during *Saleni* festival in the assembly of the village elders where rice-beer and meat is served along and the elders pronounces good omens on the course of action to be carried out. This is followed by cutting down of firewood (usually *süchusü* 'oak') and preparation for making rice-beer by the village folks for the big occasions. While rice is been ground for making rice-beer the master of the ceremony touches the powdered rice and blessed it so that the wine will be good and last till the completion of the feast. This ritual is known as *Opa kove*.

On the sixth day pigs are killed and the meat would be made ready and the brine water are collected by a small girl and boy selected for the purpose from the spring of brine water.

On the eight day at sunrise the chief of the village is called for inauguration of the rice-beer after which the elders are called. Then the villagers are called to eat and

drink to their fill. The cow meat killed on this day is distributed by a measure according to the membership of the village in which everyone gets equal share. This distribution of meat among the people is called *Chüvü kovü* which means family-wise distribution of gift. The liver and lungs of the animals are cut into pieces and each piece is distributed to the children. The remaining pieces after distribution are thrown towards the children who would compete with others in gathering them. This game of collection of meat is known as *Pihra chüshe*. The celebrant who is the father of *Zhoso Mozü* family accepts gifts from the people who come to the feast. The gifts are mostly in terms of coins ranging from one anna (about 25 paisa) to four annas. Apart from the receiving gifts, the father keeps sober and accepts the pronouncement of the blessings and good wishes from the people.

The celebration goes on for days but for the celebrant family it has to go on for a full year. Throughout the year the family observe gennas, taboos, and the laws of the community and never undertake any journey in a strict manner. For this purpose the meat and rice-beer have to last to the family for a full year.

In continuation with the celebration a day is kept aside for pulling the memorial stone. The stone is planted erect and firmly at a selected place so as not to fall under any condition. However at any point of time if the stone tilted before the dead of the owner, it is a belief an unfortunate thing will happened and even considered as a sign for a fast approaching death to the celebrant. In addition if the celebrant wishes to build a mound for the village he can do so by spending more of his wealth for the same. The mound is raise with quarry stones and plastered with mud. Then when all the social rituals are completed *Sobomani*, a day of genna, is

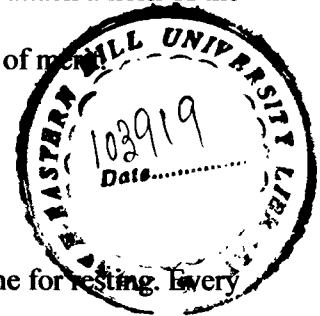
observed to limit the continuation of celebration to the celebrant and his family. To commemorate the completion of the celebration rituals a parcel of meat is sent to the chief of another village. Henceforth, the heads of the animals killed are eaten considering the sacrifice and celebrations are successful and complete. Thereafter the daily activities begin as usual like initiation to go to the fields (*Onho koso*) and prepared a new hearth for their kitchen. The shawl called *Zhoso Mozüsa* is made and worn by the celebrant in every meetings and functions. This symbolizes the act which calls for respect and regards from the community. The house is then decorated with the skulls of the animals killed for the celebration.

### **1.8 Mode of building house**

The houses are generally simple and big. The houses are made up of wood and bamboo with pillars which are made up of strong wood and the roof is thatched meticulously with thatching grass called *shingai*. The main pillar of the house '*ote*' is made of a huge and long trunk of a tree to support the whole structure of the house. The houses are roughly partitioned into two big rooms with a little space in front having only one entrance. The space in front of the house is called *chüphemü* where usually drying of paddy and other outdoor activities are carried out. The portico is called *tüzü* where usually cows and buffaloes are also kept. The size of the house depicts the richness of the person. The space of the portico can also be extended to a longer length to accommodate larger herds. On top of the portico, stage can be constructed for dormitory. The main purpose of the first room is to store the grains. In this granary *obe* 'barn', *opa* 'mortar' and *sode/komai* 'pestle' are usually kept. Domesticated fowls, delivering cattle which need care, pigs etc. are also kept in this room. If this room is also big enough, dormitories can also be made here. The next

room is called *chünhü* which serves as the kitchen, living room, bed room, is the most important part of the house.

The house of the village chief is much bigger than the individual houses and more decorative. It is designed with carved skull, heads of buffaloes and bulls, tigers and other design. This view is also given by Hodson: “Among the Nagas of Mao and Maram the houses of the village chiefs are distinguished by the curved and carved beams crossed in front (1974: 43).” An individual house on the other hand is usually simple yet decoration with curve structure called *ochi kai kada* ‘to attach a horn of the house’ can be added to those persons who had performed the feast of merit.



## 1.9 Festivals

Festival in the Mao community is a time of merrymaking and a time for resting. Every feast is marked by adornment of colourful dresses and valuable ornaments giving an air of glamour and liveliness. To add to this, dances, games and feasting on meat and rice beer are important part of the menu in every feast. Besides the joviality, festivals are accompanied by series of rites and rituals performed by the Chief/King. Every festival is a thanksgiving ceremony for the blessings they received in the by gone days, and a call and supplication to god for their future life. The different festivals of the Mao people are as follows:

### Chithuni

This festival falls in the month of *Chithuni* (between December and January), which is the first month of the year. This can be compared to New Year celebration in other communities. The celebration continues for six days uninterruptedly. It is a

celebration of New Year, a Thanksgiving Day for a good year they had experience and the good harvest they just brought home, a petition that the coming year should be a fruitful one and also a prayer for favourable climatic condition for the agricultural activities in the coming year. The festivity is accompanied by different types of games like wrestling, shot-put, dance, etc which are played on competition basis. On the last day of the festival, members of the community would adorn themselves with traditional attires and climb up the hill-top (*khürdzü/pfoki kapra*) where they would perform rituals and also long-jump competition for the man and dance competition for the woman folks is carried out. This festival is the biggest festival of the Mao tribe.

### **Saleni**

*Saleni* is also celebrated for five days in the month of Sale (June-July) which falls right after the transplantation of paddy. The celebration culminates with *Chüjüni* ‘feast of the earth’. This is a festival which is celebrated to compensate the energy they lost during the process of transplantation of the paddy. This period is considered as one of the most strenuous times of the year in their agricultural activities. It is also believed that if one does not make up his/her energy by eating well with nutritious and protein-rich food, particularly on *chüjüni* then he would become poor. In fact this is festival of relaxation.

### **Beluni**

This feast is celebrated with fish. No one is allowed to eat meat or vegetables. Even elders who are not able to fish are given some by the younger people.

## 1.10 Fishing and Hunting

Hunting of birds and wild animals is considered a sport in which every male member of the community takes part. Animals and birds of every size and shape are hunted down for fun as well as for consumption. Even the smallest of the birds are hunt down may be to test their dexterity in their aim or shooting skill. Every meat is relished by the community and some are even considered as medicinal. Hunting is done usually in groups and on some special occasion, by the whole villagers. When hunting involves a larger number of people the strategy of hunting is usually rounding up of the game which is known as *kohe kochu*. At other occasions when hunting is carried out by individuals or along with one or two friends, they go for *oto kada*, lay in wait from the place where animals feed or *ozü kada*, lay in wait for the lair. Similarly birds can also be haunted down if one finds out their place of resting. The use of traps, snares and pits are done very efficiently to catch birds and animals. For the birds, *chütetu* ‘birdlime’ can be set around a place where they usually come and drink water or on branches of fruit trees where they come and feed. *Phirü* ‘trap’, sometimes with different lure for different animals and birds and running nooses are also set for birds and smaller animals. While *okhru* ‘pit’ were dug and cleverly set up by camouflaging with thin branches of shrubs and trees along with their leaves on top of which is carefully sprayed with earth and leaves and the pit is armed with spikes made from bamboos and woods. This technique is commonly employed to trap bigger animals such as bear, wild boar, stag etc. The pits are usually set up on the path of the animals and the size of the pit is designed depending on the size of the animals they meant to trap.

Spears made up of wood or bamboo sharpens at one or both ends are used to hunt down the game which was later replaced by guns. Interestingly people learnt the way of manufacturing gun powder and bullets in course of time. Bullets of different shapes and sizes are used for different animals and birds. Dogs are also employed to sense the presence to ambush and chase animals and birds. This allows the hunter to locate the game. The skull of the animal is then used as a symbol of adroitness which is preserved as a show piece and skill.

Fishing is carried out both by men and also by women. Water insects of different varieties are considered a delicacy by the Maos; these are caught by sieve-type baskets made from bamboo and usually carried out by the women folks. Fishing in larger proportion are done by changing the course of water of the stream or river and also by poisoning fishes with the bark of trees such as *Schima Khasiana* which is pounded and washed into the course of water. The fish after consuming the water would be rendered unconscious and become standstill and float on the surface of water and the same is collected on the spot. With the coming of chemicals and certain types of explosive, such methods are also employed in fishing in big rivers where lakes or pound are formed within the river course.

### **1.11 Religion**

In every culture, there exists a practice of communicating with what is considered as a power superior to man. This practice results from a complex system of beliefs, ideas, and values sanctioned by members of the community. The practice of supplication and propitiation through rites and rituals establishes into religion which in Mao is known as *Pfupe Chüna* 'religion of the forefather'. Mao religion is nature-centric and

thus branded as animistic. They believe in the existence of a Supreme Being called *Oramai*, who is ascribed with goodness and humility, the creator and the sustainer. They also believe in the existence of spirits: benevolent and malevolent. The benevolent spirits are considered as good and helpful whereas the malevolent spirits are the evil ones who cause sickness and suffering to mankind and therefore need to be appeased through sacrifices and offerings.

*Oramai* is the source of everything: the protector and sustainer who protect the righteous with good health, good harvest, multitudes of progeny etc. and also the destroyer who punishes the unrighteous by sending sickness, epidemics, hailstorms, bad harvest, etc. This necessitates one to live a virtuous life and continuously observe all the rites and rituals laid down for observance of gennas of different types in order to appease the *Oramai*. In times of mistake, a man can propitiate *Oramai* by making offerings to him.

#### **1.11.1 The Gennas**

According to Hutton (1969), genna refers to 'forbidden' or a 'non-working day' or a 'taboo'. Gennas are therefore religious observance day which every member of the community has to abide by with strict observation. Negligence and carelessness in honouring the rites and rituals laid down would not only invite punishment from the king/chief and fellow members but also call upon himself the wrath of god who would punish him in the form of sickness, poor outcome of vegetation, etc. If the whole community ignores the genna, bad weather such as hailstorms that destroy vegetation, famine, loss in war, high mortality rate in the village etc. is belief to occur and which is considered a punishment from *Oramai*. The genna or the observance day is called

*Mani* in Mao. There are nineteen *mani*, which can be considered as common to all the villages. Out of the nineteen, monthly occurrences are five in winter and four in summer. The other fourteen seasonal *mani(s)* are common to all the Mao villages. The *mani(s)* that are proclaimed every month, **the monthly *mani(s)***, are the following:

**Ora Mani (The Genna of God)**

This *mani* is proclaimed as a day set aside from work to worship Oramai and acknowledge his supremacy. It is believed that a person or the community who observes the *mani* strictly is protected by the supreme God from sickness, epidemic etc. and blessed him with good health and prosperity.

**Omi Kayi Mani (Good fire Genna)**

This *mani* is observed so that the community may be saved from accidental fire. Accident would occur to person(s) or a community where loss of property (both in the field and at home) and life could happen.

**Tokho Mani (The Genna of asking food and Wealth)**

This *mani* is proclaimed on the ninth day of the month to appease God so that their harvested food grains may last till the new harvest. A general belief in Mao is that those people who violate the gennas, their acquired wealth would exhaust in no time where as for others it would last much longer.

**Pfureshi Mani**

This *mani* is to be proclaimed on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the month. The king and villagers pray to God to control their appetite so as to maintain balance diet and not to cause greediness. If this *mani* is not observed, their wealth would deplete fast and would not last till the next harvest.

### **Phehre Mani**

This *mani* is proclaimed to perform the bamboo divination (*Projü Kopfü*) to ascertain the fate of the community for the current year. Through this divination, they examined the life span of men and animals, climatic condition for the year, rainfall and fate concerning water, fate concerning fire, the community's prospect with the warring enemy groups, hunting of wild animals, safety in travelling, etc. The *mani* is not about predictions of personal tragedies or fortunes rather it is for the community.

Seasonal *mani* (*s*) are listed as below:

### **Osüpukakha Mani**

This is a day of rest after sowing of millet. This is a concept that one should not only crave after wealth but also take care on one's health. This shows that health care is taken up at the community level as well.

### **Khrehre Kashi Mani**

This *mani* is announced to pray to God for protection of all the living beings from evil spirits and other destructive forces.

### **Ojü Kathe Mani**

A day of prayer to make the barren soil fertile and on this day digging of the ground is prohibited. Fertility is considered as blessing in this agrarian society.

### **Probvü Ra Mani**

A day of prayer set aside to pray for healthy growth of vegetation and other agricultural product.

**Chūthu pirū Mani**

A day set aside to pray to God not to send hailstorm when the rice plantation has started. There are occasions when the whole field has been destroyed before the harvest thus nullifying their hard work and rendering them poor.

**Osūra Koso Mani**

This *mani* is proclaimed twice in a year after the completion of the sowing of the millet.

**Ochi Kozū Mani**

A day of prayer asking God not to cause darkness but to let the sun shine everyday so that everyday activity can be carried out. This *mani* is observed after every solar-eclipse. Solar eclipse is considered as a bad omen by the people.

**Dzūkho Mani**

A special day for prayer so that they get adequate rainfall before and after the transplantation so that crops could grow well and bears fruits in plenty. Monsoon is the main source of water for wet cultivation even though people adopt canal system as well.

**Thopre Mani**

A day for inaugurating transplantation of rice is also a day of prayer so that the paddy they plant would grow up in good condition.

**Doshu pirū Mani**

A day of prayer after transplantation, imploring God to protect them so as hailstorms and destructive wind should not destroy their plant.

### **Omo Chakri mani**

This *Mani* is observed imploring God to give good crops and speedy growth of their sowed crops.

### **Okheshi Mani**

A day of prayer pleading God to protect their crops against destructive force such as pests, insects, birds and animals so that the crops could bears in plenty.

### **Ochi Kayi Kokho Mani**

This *mani* is proclaimed when the crops are flowering and start bearing paddy to give good sunshine for good harvest.

### **Molu Kosū Mani**

A day of prayer against earthquake: this *mani* is proclaimed on the last month of the year which is called in Mao 'Okro khro'.

*Mani(s)* are to be observed in its strictest sense and violation of the laid procedure is believed to call for fateful consequences; an invitation of curse and damnation from member of the community and also from the supreme God. Activities such as agricultural works, trades, travelling should not be carried out by any one on such days.

## **1.12 Agricultural settings**

In spite of the bad terrain and the geographical landscape people put their hard efforts to make the terrace fields at the slopes or foots of the mountains and along the river bank. In other words, the hard work of the people can be judged from the exquisite

craftsmanship of converting the hilly terrains into delicately beautiful and continuous terraces covering ranges for the purpose of wet cultivation. Every family of the Mao community has their own terrace fields and cultivate for their own sustenance and sustainability. The people adopt different methods of cultivation systematically. Vegetables are also grown in abundance to last through out the year. In this agricultural setting, domestication of varieties of fowls and livestock are reared for consumption. Pisciculture is also practice. Cultivation of maize, millets, corns, etc is practiced which can be sowed after the jhum plantation is done. Maos also make farms on the hills slopes to cultivate cash crops such as cabbage, potatoes, tomatoes, beans, pumpkins, cucumbers, brinjals, chilies, spring onions (kofüpro), sweet potatoes etc. They are also well known in the state for growing varieties of fruits like palms, passison fruits, peaches, pears and different varieties of wild fruits. They follow a pattern of rotation of crop plantation and sometimes mixed cropping system. Therefore, it is not surprising that salt was once considered as the costliest and most precious possession. This is because of the fact that everything is available and self sufficient except for salt which is usually transported from Imphal, the capital of Manipur. With the lack of transportation system, people had to travel on foot which takes them weeks together, though the rich could buy or exchange by barter system but not common man. The brine water or salt water on the other hand is not available in plenty and they are usually found in distant places. Fetching of brine water was considered dangerous because enemies would lay in wait for people who come alone or with few companions. Fetching of brine water is usually done before dawn because one cannot afford to waste the whole day just to fetch it. Therefore, salt was considered a luxury in the community which only few could afford or in other word the 'diet of the rich'.

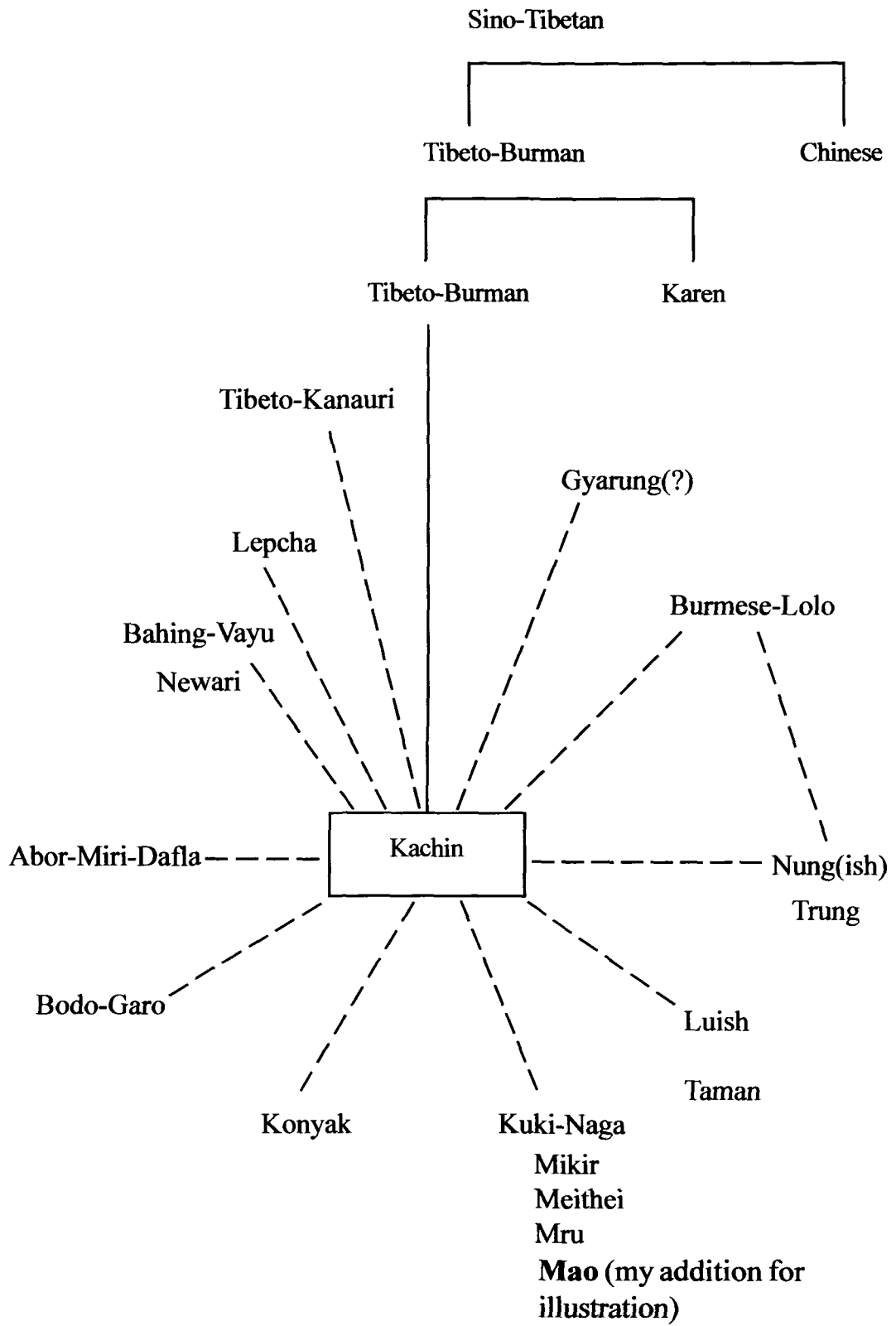
### **1.13 Status and Genetic Classification of the Language**

The language belongs to Naga group of the Tibeto-Burman language family and is surrounded by the Angamis on the north, the Poumais on the east and south and Marams on the west and part of the southern region which are also grouped under Tibeto-Burman family. Mao does not have a script of its own. The script as a myth goes that it was given to the Nagas on a skin of animal by their father. The ancestor was a little careless and thus left the skin on which the script was encrypted. The skin was taken by rat and thus the Nagas loses its script. Thus the language was put down in its written form adopting the Roman script in the late 1920s. Subsequently, bible was translated into the language in 1927. This was followed by translation of hymnals and Biblical stories into the language by missionaries. Mr. Kashiprü then published the first book in Mao in 1935. However, with the introduction of the language in electronic media (AIR) in 1962 and setting up of Mao Literature Committee in 1963, awareness has been alerted to further improve the status of the language. Yet, the real ground works were carried out when the foundation for preparation of school textbooks was laid by the literature committee. This resulted in the introduction of the language in evening classes in 1979 under adult literacy program. However, it was only in 1998 that the language made its entry into the school level when it was recognized as a subject up to class VI level which was upgraded to class VIII in 2002. Since then more literatures, penning down of folk tales and folk songs etc. made an ample progress. The first batch to write Exams with Mao as a subject under Major Indian Language is in 2008. It may be worth mentioning here that Mao is the only language in the senapati district of Manipur that has been introduced at the school level.

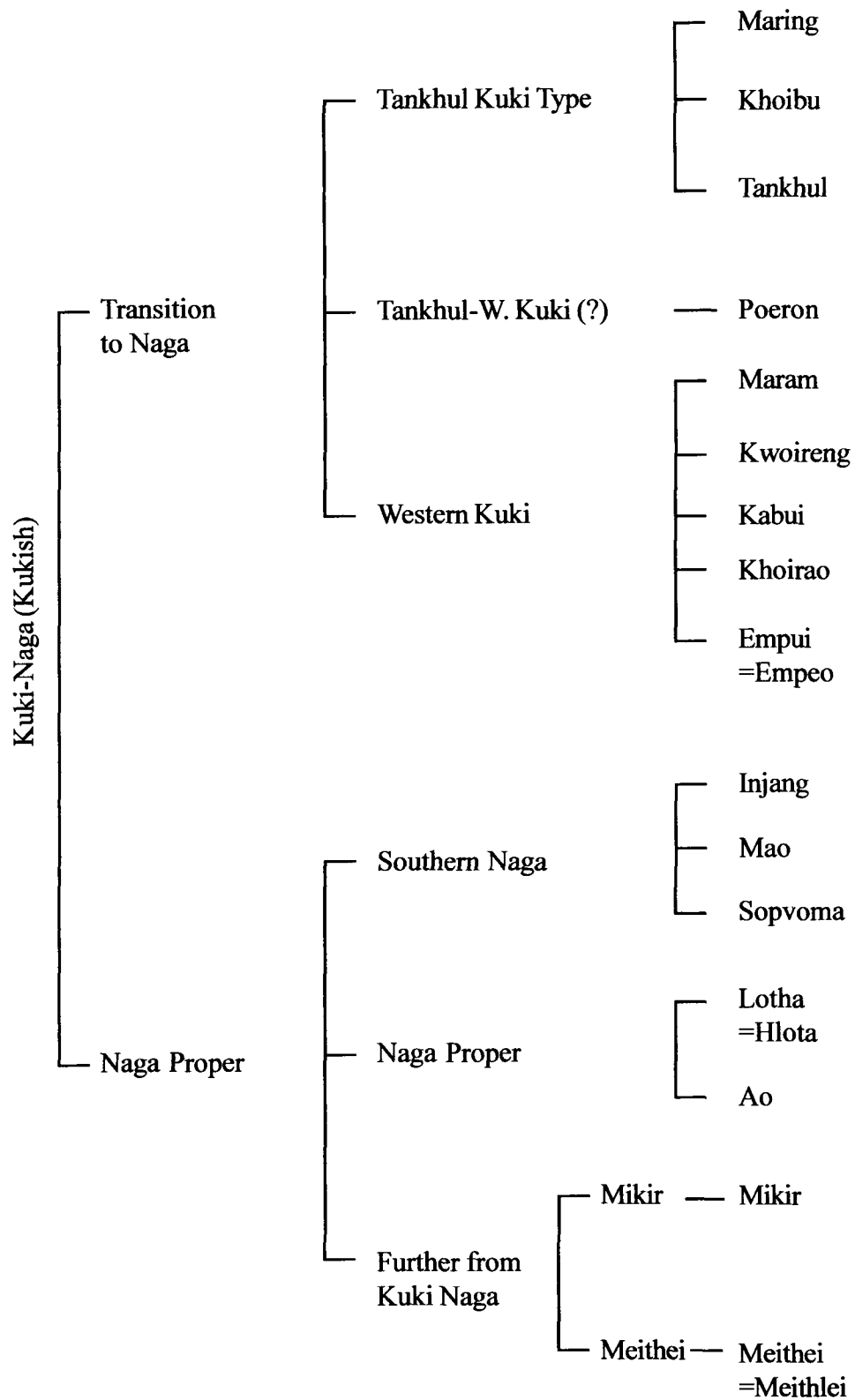
Classification of Naga languages was first attempted by Nathan Brown (Marrison 1967: 19). However, G. A. Grierson was the first to give an extensive study on Naga languages in 1903 and placed the language under the Naga-Kuki group. Later this classification was called into question by scholars. All the same he also found that Mao has close affinity to the Western Nāgā languages consisting of Angāmi, Sema, Rengma and Kezhāma. This observation is better understood when we check out his enumeration: “Their (referring to Mao – my addition) language is the one of the Nāgā-Kuki group which most nearly approaches the true Nāgā languages. Of these it possesses the closest resemblance to Kezhāmā ... Indeed Sopvomā is so closely connected with all the languages of the Western sub-group (Angami is placed here – my addition), that it might with equal propriety be classed as belonging to it as to the Nāgā-Kuki one”. Hutton and Hodson following Grierson classify the language under the Nāgā-Kuki group of languages. Hutton further goes on to say that “...the linguistic grouping of the Naga tribes does not seem to be absolutely conterminous with what may be styled their racial grouping, as the Memi (Mao) are in every respect but that of language very intimately allied to the other Angami tribes (op.cit.: 294)”.

Grierson along with Konow which became to be known as Grierson-Konow (1903-1928) puts Mao under the Nāgā-Kuki sub-group of the Tibeto-Burman language family along with Maring, Khoibu, Tangkhul, Khangoi, Phadang, Maram, Khoireng and Liyang (Hale: 1982). They placed both Sopvoma and Mao as different language the identity of which cannot be traced. Following this nomenclature later works done by different scholars adopt the same classification by putting Mao and Sopvoma as different language. Shafer (1955, 1966) classified Mao under the Eastern

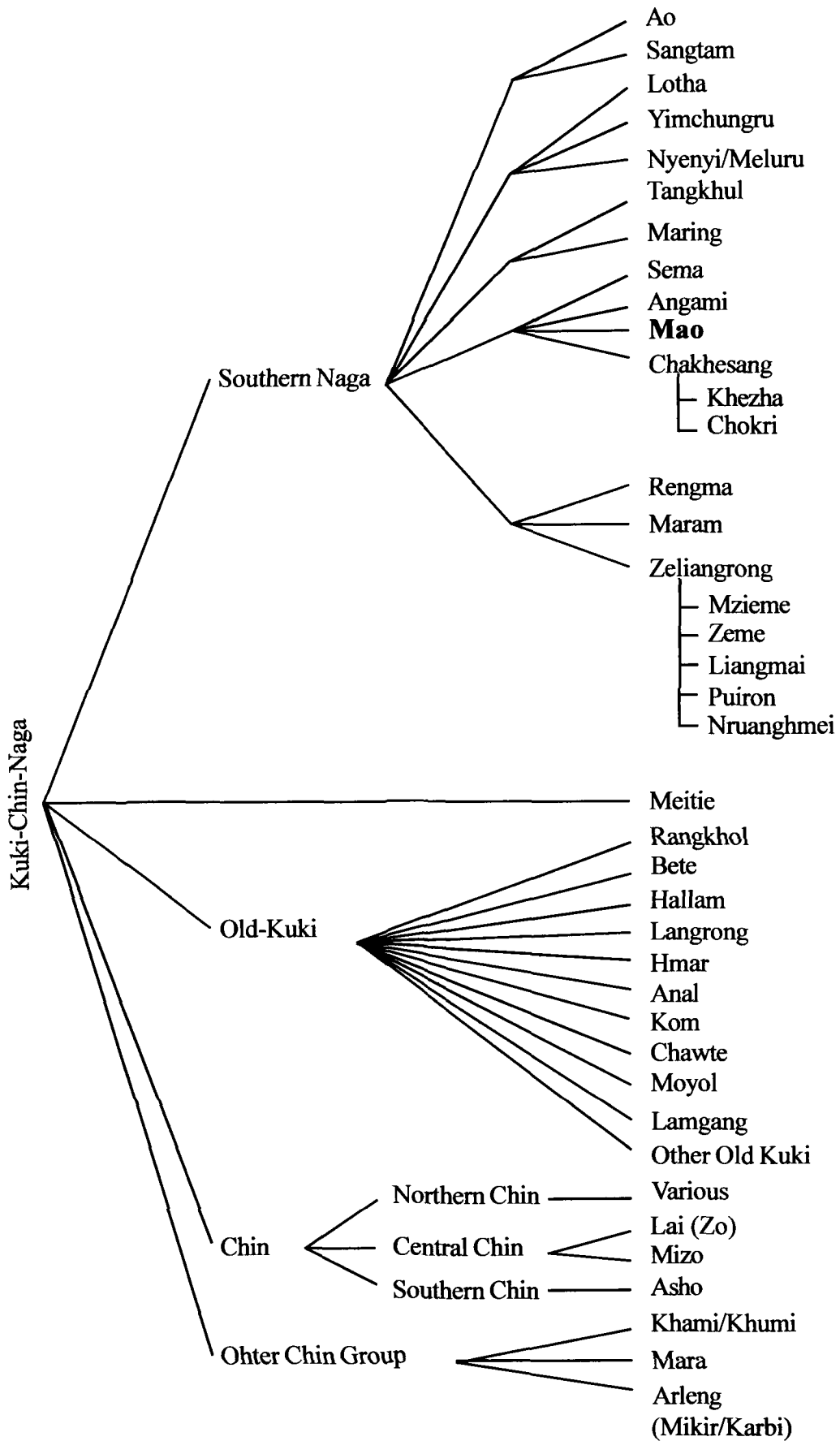
Branch of the Kukish Section which has close affinities with Sema, Khezhama, Dayang, Simi and Zuomomi languages. Marrison (1967), improving over Grierson's classification gave a more descriptive study of Naga languages and classed Mao under Angami-Zeme Group which consists of Angami (Khonoma), Angami (Kohima), Chokri, Kezhama, Mao, Sema etc. Benedict (1972) puts Mao under the Southern Naga group of the Kuki-Naga branch along with Injang and Sopvoma. Benedict's classification can be seen from the chart given below. Voegelin-Voegelin (1977) place Mao under the Easter Naga group of the Naga-Kuki-Chin branch. Though different writers might have placed the language under different sub-groups, it is to be noted that the language belongs to Tibeto-Burman group of family. Latest classification of the Naga languages can be seen from Bradley's (1997). Bradley groups Mao under the Southern Naga of the Kuki-Chin-Naga family. In his classification, he groups Mao along with the Sema, Angami, Chakhesang (Chokri and Khezhama) from the same branch.



Sino-Tibetan Groups (Benedict: 1972)



From Benedict 1972

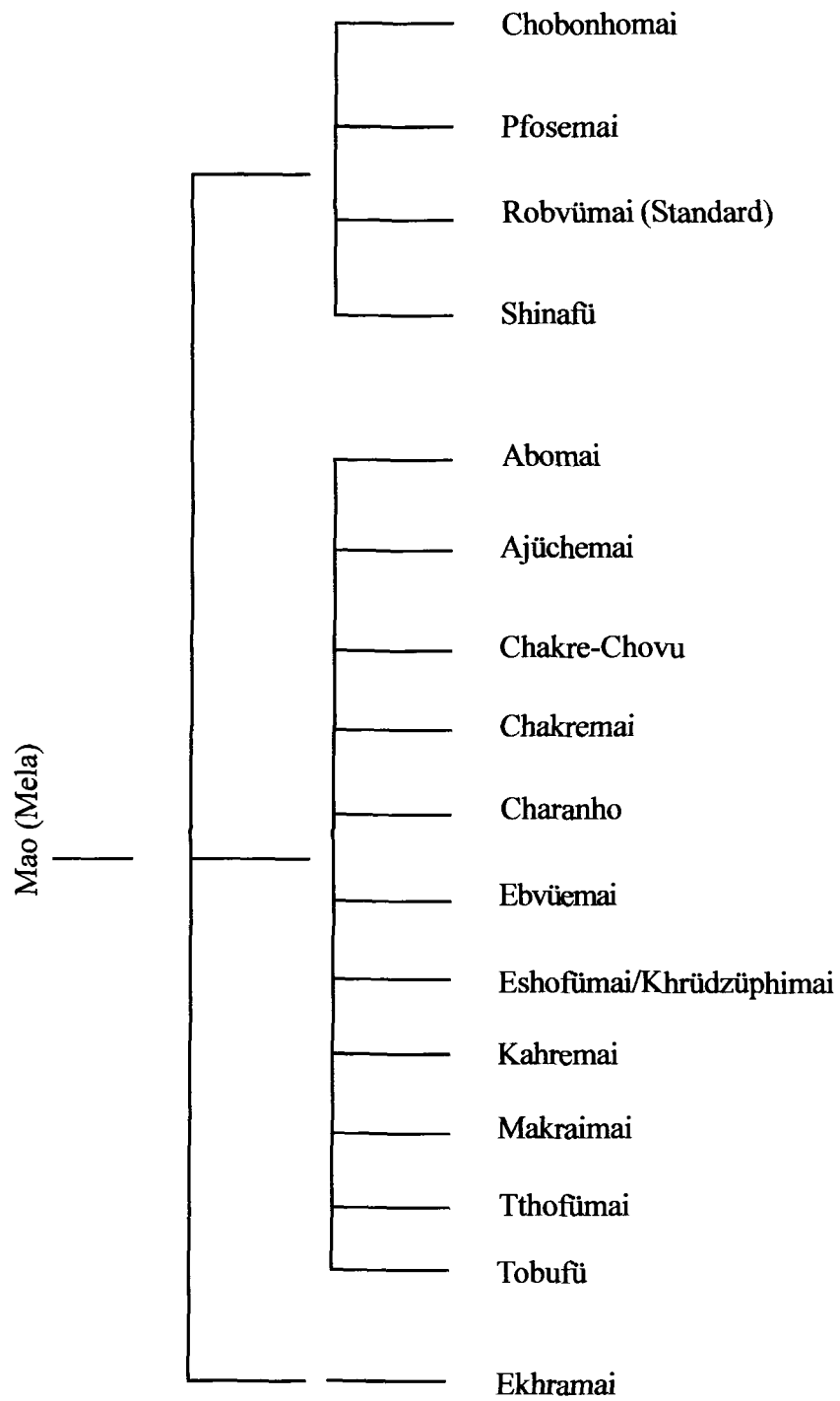


Kuki-Chin-Naga (Bradley 1997)

Classification on the varieties of Mao has never been attempted by any scholar(s) who have worked on the language. The works on Mao in the above discussions as we have seen are based on genetic classification. Although not much works had been done on the language, mention may be made of Giridhar's 'Mao Naga Grammar' which is the most extensive work on the language. The work is concentrated on the grammar of the language. However, he has noticed variation within the language and states that "The internal variation in the language spoken natively by the Maos is wide-ranging, mind-boggling. The language varies significantly from village to village. Even within a village, one could find variation, within limits set by intelligibility, of course". (1994: 5). He exemplifies the intra village variation wrongly by giving the same lexical item *ozhü* 'name' in both the varieties taken. It should have been *ozhü* for the **Chapremai** variety and the **Likhrumai** variety as *ozhu*. The variation nonetheless is more prominent when one considers the inter-village variety. There are 36 (thirty six) revenue villages and totally 54 (fifty four) recognised villages by the Memai Council (highest organization of Mao) at present. These villages can be said to be an offshoot of the original sixteen (16) villages which are given in the chart below and which shows the highest variation. The offshoot villages though show variation from the mother villages, yet they can be classed as a variety of that particular mother village dialect and thus not taken into account here. It is worth mentioning here that a concept which prevails among the Mao is that when a new settlement is made, the new settlers have to change their language from the mother language. Therefore it is more of a compulsion to the new settlers according to this concept to at least alter the language in whatever form from the existing language. This gives rise to differences in languages amongst the Nagas in general and variation within the tribe in particular.

Mao language can be broadly classified into sixteen varieties representing the sixteen original villages with differences mostly in terms of its pronunciation. All these village varieties can be grouped broadly under three main varieties. The present classification is done purely on the basis of the pronunciation/phonetics (non-technical/loose usage of the term 'phonetic'). However, this is not a claim to be a perfect classification of the varieties of Mao and further research is needed. The present classification is to show that variation is very much present in the language and the classification is based on marked phonetic differentiation. It is worth noting here that there exists perfect intelligibility among the varieties.

The Standard variety can be said to be the Robvūmai dialect. This is because of the fact that missionaries and earlier writers in the language use this variety and also Bible translators uses it to translate hymnals and Bible which influence the usage of this particular variety even in AIR (All India Radio) programs. It is worth noting here that Bible, the most wide-spread book in the language is translated into this variety by Mr. Lohrū who speaks this variety. However, the Robvūmai (Punanamai) variety is not accepted by everyone as the standard variety. Therefore, different writers from other varieties use their own variety in their writings. This raises certain problems with regard to the standard variety as every variety is being promoted to be accepted or included in the standardisation of the language. This motivates some enthusiasts to come up with a mixed variety which would incorporate vocabularies from different varieties to bring out a standard variety of Mao. But this should not be taken as the loss of influence from the earlier writers or from the Robvūmai variety.



Classification of varieties/regional dialects of Mao

### **1.14 Data**

The researcher being a native speaker, the primary data is his own. Consultation and rechecking of data is done with different people from different varieties in the course of the study. Mentioned may be made of Dr. Lokho Abba (Pfosemai), Mr. N. Salew (Pfosemai) and Mr. N. Saleo (Makhraimai), who is also the president of the Mao Academy) who speaks different variety, among others. The present data is mostly from Charanho (Shajouba) variety to which group the researcher belongs. However, all the data that is given in the present study cannot be claimed as belonging to this variety. The standard variety is also included and also some other varieties are used as data. Since the present study is not a descriptive analysis of Mao where only one variety is usually used, the researcher has incorporated other varieties also, to illustrate concepts.

### **1.15 Aim and Objective**

The aim of the present study is an attempt to present aspects of relationship between language and culture. Therefore, the present study encompasses diverse topics to make sure that every facet of the community is taken into consideration before coming to a final conclusion. The study focuses on looking at the world view of the Maos from the perspective of their language. Thus aspects of language which could show certain characteristics of the culture of the people would be examined.

## **1.16 Methodology**

The approach to the study is descriptive in nature. However, in dealing with sub-topics, related framework is followed whenever possible. Analysis and interpretation of the data is both from linguistic and anthropological view point.

## **1.17 Organisation of the Thesis**

The present study has been divided into seven parts which are organised as follows:

The **First Chapter** begins with an introduction about the people and their ways of life as it was in earlier times. The researcher tries to be concise and succinct in attempting to portray the general environment and the world view of the people which are important from the view point of understanding the succeeding chapters.

The **Second Chapter** introduces the theoretical framework of the main chapters. In this chapter, a literature review is given both from the general studies and also on the existing literature on Mao. Attempt has been made to include major works on all possible topics and sub-topics.

The **Third Chapter** deals with grammatical categories of nouns and verbs. However, it is not a descriptive analysis of the grammatical categories given but deals only with those aspects that are important from the cultural view point.

The **Fourth Chapter** addresses sense relationship of lexical items. The study of sense relation probe into the ways of classification both hierarchically and also

senses that hold between lexical items. It is hoped that understanding the concept of classifications of object of the world as per the perception and the conception will also reveal the importance that an object has in a particular community. The importance given to a particular object will again reveals their world view.

The **Fifth Chapter** considers semantic/lexical fields of different categories. Those lexical fields that are of interest from the point of view of culturally related fields where a sense of the behaviour and habit of the community is embedded in the lexicon are taken for analysis.

The **Sixth Chapter** investigates metaphors and its relations to idioms and similes in Mao. The cultural influence in conceptualization of abstract ideas of an object extends to another in an exaggerated fashion, gives rise to different linguistic expressions of that concept. This conceptualisation naturally becomes a part of everyday usage in the language of a community, showing how one could understand the cultural background of the speaker through language.

The **Seventh Chapter** will be the concluding remarks and summing up of the thesis. The finding and also unresolved issues (if any) will be taken in this chapter.

# **Literature Review**

## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

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Benjamin Lee Whorf's observation on the relationship between linguistic and non-linguistic phenomena drew the attention of many a scholar and arouse in them a sense of motivation to probe further. In the study of the relationship between linguistic and non-linguistic phenomena, Greenberg (1967) is of the opinion that one has to deal with questions such as:

1. What kinds of linguistic facts are being adduced in evidence?
2. With what other phenomena is a connection being made?
3. What is the nature of this connection? (1967: 4).

The first question deals with linguistic facts concerning phonology, grammar or semantics. The second deals with questions about the association of linguistic phenomena with facts of sense perception, logic, individual behaviour, or cultural behaviour. The third concern the criteria of connection and its causal factors.

In the 1900's Sapir comes up with the inter-relationship of language and thoughts. He opines that every individual is affected by the confines of their language. Refining on Sapir's concept, Whorf propounded that language is not only a way of communication or transferring ideas, but is the very thing which shapes those ideas which became known as Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis and then later became Whorf Hypothesis. Our thinking is also determined by our language. This results in different

languages developing their own world-views. Whorf also believed in linguistic determinism; i.e., language determines what one thinks, and also linguistic relativity, i.e. differences in language reflect the different views of different people. Whorfian hypothesis has contributed to the development of cognitive anthropology. According to Brown (1976) cognitive anthropology, also known as ethnoscience or ethnosemantics or ethnographic semantics, is an approach to the study of human cognition. Ethnoscience is the study of people's perceptions of their surroundings as reflected in their use of language. It is also an organized examination of thought across cultures, modelled after the principles of linguistics. However, in Ethnosemantics emphasis is more on the study of the standardized semantic structure of a cultural group. Therefore, in ethnosemantics, understanding the native culture and how they relate this association through the use of language is the motive of investigation. The ethnosemanticist thus probes into the ways the native view themselves and their environment. Ethnographic semantics on the other hand deals with those aspects of meaning in a language that are culturally revealing. The ultimate goal of the ethnographic semanticist is the understanding of the evaluations, emotions, and beliefs that lie behind word usage<sup>5</sup>. All these deal with aspects of language and culture and therefore, it is the usage of terminologies that differ from field to field. Yet, the subjective correlation between these terminologies is the study of different human culture bound by different focus which in whole could be termed as an ethnosemantics study.

Culture is here taken as defined by Goodenough (1964[1957]), "A society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a

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<sup>5</sup> See Colby 1996

manner acceptable to its members... Culture is not a material phenomenon; it does not consist of things, peoples, behaviour, or emotions. It is rather an organisation of these things. It is the form of things that people have in mind, their models for perceiving, reacting and otherwise interpreting them” (Quoted in Foley, 1997:19) Language on the other hand is a system of communicating with other people using sounds, symbols and words in expressing a meaning, idea or thought. This language can be used in many forms, primarily through oral and written communications as well as using expressions through body language.

The study between language and culture enables an outside observer to perceive the native perception of the environment and how it affects their cultural and social behaviour. Though at times native explanation or accounts of cultural activities may be a false representation of actual behaviour, in other occasions they may not perceive the interrelationships of their behaviour and their cultural implication, yet they are the best interpreter of their action as an outside observer cannot comprehend the implications of the same behaviour. The cultural implication in language can best be understood by probing into the semantic structure of that particular cultural group. This view is best expressed by Hymes, when he stated “Semantic patterns, whatever their role in present perception and cognition, reflect past acts of perception and cognition, which, collectively repeated and approved, have passed from individual experience into cultural habit. Consistent differences between languages in productive semantic patterns can be described as historically derived differences in cognitive style, and their significance can be interpreted in relation to general anthropological concepts, such as those of drift and tradition trend (1964: 118)”. Those aspects of meaning that are culturally revealing in the language that could lead one in

understanding the cognitive behaviour behind the usage of the language is the main goal of ethnosemanticist.

## **General**

A. Tyler (1969) has shown the growing shift of researchers investigating into the cognitive aspects of the people they study. From mere description of the culture or the language of a group, emphasis is given to probe into the mental set up of why and how this cultural group see things as they see: what is the world view of this people. The book provides theoretical approaches from different authors for different fields and sub-field that can be taken up within the scope of cognitive anthropology. This shows that it is an interdisciplinary field of study. Tyler's book gives a theoretical guideline in carrying out research work discussing problems and results of earlier works.

Hymes (1964) brings out the relationship of language and culture in his edition *Language in Culture and society*. Both language and culture shares certain processes and properties. This shared property is meaning. Though different disciplines deal with culture and language from their own approaches, the author points out the missing link and suggest a novel approach which would bring out the study to a higher level. He points out that language is so central and so intricately interwoven with culture that one cannot study cultural aspect of a community without studying language or language without taking into account the aspect of culture. This is because many cultural implications are embedded in language itself. The book covers varied aspects, of the interrelationship between language and culture.

Duranti (1997) provides introduction to a range of topics and approaches of linguistic anthropology. The author introduces the subject as an interdisciplinary field that studies language as a cultural resource and speaking as a cultural practice. Though the discipline has its origin both from cultural anthropology and linguistics, the author provides excellent deliberation on theories and methods making linguistic anthropology a discipline on its own. The theories and methods of linguistic anthropology are introduced through a discussion of linguistic diversity, grammar in use, the role of speaking in social interaction, the organization and meaning of conversational structures, and the notion of participation as a unit of analysis. Different theories on contemporary linguistic anthropology and its practices are well knitted in his book to bring out an excellent reader to those interested in the field of language and culture. Starting with the scope of the field the books provides elaborate theories of what culture is and then takes the readers to deeper discussion about communicative practices as constitutive of the culture of everyday life and a view of language as a powerful tool in the study of culture rather than a mirror of social realities.

Foley's (1997) *Anthropological Linguistics* is encyclopaedic in its description. It provides a remarkably complete elaboration both in the disciplines of linguistics and anthropology, yet presents a coherent, unified view of cross-disciplinary field. The book provides a descriptive study of language and its place in social and cultural contexts. The author based his studies on the assumption that humans are fundamentally biological beings and their life processes and practices are biologically based. Therefore, cognition is not a disembodied mental process, but a biological process of the organism. Thus, the relationship of language and culture or language

and environment is reemphasised. An understanding of the role of language in forging and sustaining cultural practices and social structures is excellently presented. The book begins from a theoretical viewpoint of both language and culture as conventionalised forms of situated practice and uses this as a unifying framework to cover the full range of topics normally treated under the rubric of language and culture. The book provides a careful evaluation of current issues and research questions in each subfield. With introductory note on the background of theories of culture and structure of language the book discusses the evolution of language, and deeper topics where language and culture interacts or are interdependent. The study of language, according to the author, needs the knowledge of culture of that particular group; likewise the study of the culture of the people cannot be complete without the study of language.

Lehrer's (1974) *Semantic Fields and Lexical Structure* explores the properties of lexical fields and their relationship to lexical structure in an attempt to analyse the semantic property of language. She covers a great deal of the theoretical aspects of semantics and semantic field. The study goes deeper into the area of mental construction of a particular community where selection and categorisation of semantic or lexical field differs from one cultural group to the other. She covers varied topics of semantic fields and lexical structures, discussing it minutely and illustrating it taking examples from different languages that demonstrate a complete diversion of cultural affinities. Lexical sets discussed in the book consist among others, words for animals, colour categories, cooking terms, body parts, kinship terms, containers, folk taxonomies, etc. which are elaborated with examples from different languages. Going further with the discussion, the author proposed a universal, showing that though there

are differences in the classification, a shared property can also be there among different languages as well.

Knowles and Moon (2006) introduces metaphorical theory illustrating its practical approaches with detailed examples in the analysis of texts. Possible ways where metaphor could permeate language and its function in communication are shown. The book provides a thorough grounding in metaphor starting with definitions and means of identifying different aspects of figurative language. The authors provide clear-cut theoretical approaches substantiating with elaborated examples. In order to bring home the point, relationship of word-meaning and phrase; metonymy and non-verbal metaphors that are present in art, cinema, and music are also given a detailed comparative investigation. The book also deals with a system of metaphor and understanding of the ways of conceptualisation of ideas through everyday experiences, be it politics, sports, advertising or in normal discourse.

According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980) metaphor is a concept the use of which not only affects the way we communicate ideas, but also structure our perceptions and understandings. Using both linguistic and sociological evidence, they claim that figurative language performs essential functions beyond the realm of literature and philosophy. Metaphor allows us to use what we know about our physical and social experience to understand countless other subjects. It structures our most basic understandings of experiences. To a large degree therefore, human conceptual system is metaphorical, it is a fundamental mechanism of the human mind. It has developed within the cognitive sciences to become central to the contemporary understanding of how we think and how we express our thoughts in language.

Metaphor permeates our daily experiences not only through systems of language, but also in terms of the way we think and act. Metaphor is found in everyday usages in every culture and almost every concept can be metaphorically mapped to another which is more remote than the source domain. Taking the study of metaphor by philosophers and linguists as the base, but delving deeper into the topic, they come up with the theoretical approaches to claim that metaphor reflects the conceptual system of the speakers. Therefore, concepts of a community are seen to be shaped both by the physical and cultural environments. The key to understanding a metaphor's effect on behaviour, relationships, and how we make sense of our environment can be found in the way humans use metaphorical language which meaningfully maps all the experiences of our daily activities.

Cruse (1986) explores the field of meaning which are been sidelined by the current literatures. The study of meaning according to the author should not only be the sentential meaning and its relation to formal systems of logic, but equal importance should also be given to the semantic behaviour of words. Along with facts and theories about lexical relations, different topics are minutely discussed. Topics that are elaborated by the author consist of hierarchical relations such as hyponymy and meronymy, idiomaticity, lexical ambiguity, synonymy, and various types of oppositeness. Along with the theoretical treatment of different topics, illustration of the theories has been carried out with ample examples.

Burling's book *Man's Many Voices: Language in its Cultural Context* (1970) explores into the differences between language and culture bringing different discipline such as linguistics and anthropology into its purview. The author also deals

with interferences and interdependencies of language and culture. The influence of culture and other environmental context on language is given a due place. This is a diversion from the normal description by scholars of linguistics who usually gave description of the internal structure of language, and hardly on the influence of culture on language. The author goes to the extent of arguing that even the structure of a language has direct linkage with the environmental factors. To substantiate his claim diverse topics are touched upon though kinship terminology occupy a major portion of his discussion to bring forth semantic implication which serve as a medium between language and culture.

Kittay (1987) provides a detailed revision and refinement of the semantic theory of metaphor. The book also gave a comprehensive philosophical theory and its contribution to cognitive behaviour of metaphor. According to the author, metaphor is transference of meaning mapping not only different domains but between two structured domains of content or semantic fields. She argues that metaphors bring together two different semantic fields and transfer the component parts and their relationships from one field to another. The book departs from general literature on metaphor by establishing a relationship between metaphorical and literal meaning. This new understanding is brought about by taking into account pragmatic considerations and recent linguistic and psychological studies. The theory of linguistic metaphor built in this book approaches from understanding the structure of linguistic metaphor to formulate the cognitive force behind systematic application of thoughts. Thus, a link is established between understanding a language to understand the nature of thought of a particular community.

Gibbs and Steen (ed.:1999) discusses in detail linguistic and conceptual metaphor. The systematic and abundant presence of metaphors in languages reveals the nature of thoughts that triggers in its metaphorical mapping of different domains. The mapping of different domains shows how conceptualising similar concepts metaphorically give rise to different linguistic expressions related to those concepts. Metaphor is partly constitutive of everyday cognition. Different scholars contributed their views about the cognitive aspect of metaphorical mapping and thus show the growing impact of cognitive linguistics.

Steen (1999) concentrates on determining conceptual metaphors from those of linguistic one in his article *From Linguistic to Conceptual Metaphor in Five Steps*. He is of the opinion that there is a generally accepted procedure of deriving conceptual metaphors from linguistic metaphors which at the moment is not formalised. In his attempt to formulate definite steps of determining conceptual from linguistic metaphor, the author investigates both linguistics metaphor and also conceptual metaphor and the linkage between the two. He is of the opinion that a conceptualised system can be determined from linguistic metaphor which takes the study of metaphor to a more cognitive formation of language. Therefore, the author clears many doubts about conceptual metaphor and the approaches that are been adopted by earlier writers on conceptual metaphor.

W. Gibbs. Jr. (1999) raises the question whether metaphor is linguistic, conceptual or both. The question according to the author needs to be investigated because of the fact that metaphor is considered as linguistic, rhetorical device and thus serve only as a figure of speech. Later researchers started to investigate into the areas

where metaphor mapping are linked with the way people conceptualise the world around them. Thus Gibbs (1999) in his article *Taking Metaphor out of our Heads and putting it into the Cultural World* argues that a direct metal mapping of abstract ideas to another domain is influenced by the social and cultural world. This conceptualisation of ideas again differs depending on the world view of a particular speaker showing its cognitive dependency.

Lyon's *Introduction to Theoretical Linguistics* (1968) is a comprehensive introduction laden with different theoretical approaches to linguistics. The book provides a very basic introduction defining the terms as they are being introduced and then gives a rigorous and technical discourse to a wide range of topics. The introductory commences with the scientific approach to the study of language and how they are dealt with in different approaches. The book then takes the reader to a more concrete study of language by bringing the structure and sound system of language. Grammatical principles with its structure, categorises and functions are explained in a very simple terminology with definitions. The book concludes with semantic aspects, such as semantic principles and semantic structures of language giving a totally new outlook. Thus the book covers a wide range of topics taking the study of language from the start to the most recent approaches to give a better view of how linguistics should be dealt and why it is called the scientific study of language.

Kapfo (2003) gave a description both on the ethnology and the grammatical analysis of the Khezha language. The present work on Khezha could be the first of its kind and the author has rightly included the ethnology section so that one could know

the people and its cultural element. On the language part his grammar contains phonological features, morphological analysis and syntactic structures.

Jones (2002) points to a new approach to the study of antonymy from a corpus-based perspective. Updating on the traditional linguistic theory, and re-evaluating on the existing categories of antonym the book raises a wider issues and addresses them using statistical evidence. This was made possible due to the fact that a larger corpus on real usage was used to arrive at a better understanding of the nature of antonymy. In general therefore, the author provides a very unique approach based on corpus analysis and a new method of study of antonyms.

Berlin and Kay (1969) argued that there is universal of basic colour term used across languages and cultures, which can be taken as a universal feature of perception and cognition. The physiology of colour perception is roughly the same across languages, but the way how colours are categorized and termed differs widely from culture to culture. These colour terms are acquired in a certain order which are predictable and which follows specific developmental stages. This means there is a fixed sequence of evolutionary stages through which a language must pass as its basic colour vocabulary increases. Thus, from the eleven basic colour categories from which any given languages draws their basic colours,- white and black form the most primary colour terms which every languages will have. Languages that have eight or more terms will have terms for purple, pink, orange, grey , or some combination of these as their basic colour category besides red, green, yellow, blue and brown. Berlin and Kay, propose an onto-methodology of cross-cultural colour research realised by the Munsell system. They claim the relation between Munsell, the workings of the

visual system, and the colour naming behaviour of people, is so tight it can be taken to be a causative law. The study takes into consideration different cultural groups having different numbers of colours as basic colour terminology.

Saeed's *Semantics* (1997) is an introduction to current trend in semantics. The book explains concepts in a very simple terms yet dealing comprehensively on each and every topics that has been discussed. The book targets the readers who have an interest in semantics. This includes the students, teachers and even those that do not have any basic knowledge about semantics. Therefore, the book starts with the place of semantics within linguistics and the relationship that it has with other disciplines such as Philosophy and Psychology. The author introduces the concepts lucidly and explains why and how the topic is interdisciplinary and not only confined to linguistics. The author then takes the readers into the core of semantics and shows the study of meaning from words and sentences level. Though he gives in detail the lexical relationship yet more detailed study is given on the sentences. The interference or contextual dependency of the meaning of utterances and speech acts is also discussed. The current trend of theoretical approach to the study of semantic is reviewed, thus introducing the readers to different approaches. Different exponents on componential theory, formal semantics and cognitive semantics are discussed and their works reviewed bringing out the concept in simplified form.

## **Journals**

Bin and Millward (1987) in their article *Personal Names in Chinese* attempt to diffuse the confusion of Chinese names which are considered as a mystery when compared to

the Western tradition. The paper highlight that there are influences in the judgement of people which is pointed towards what they call 'Eurocentrism'. Therefore, a comparison is set up with the Western convention to clear the confusion by explaining the naming system of the Chinese personal names. A discussion is made on the system of arranging the surname, generation name and given name and the implication that it has accordingly with the traditional belief and its implication in this arrangement. The study investigates into all the possible Chinese names some dating back to their early historical name to the present trend of naming system. Taking the study deeper in the understanding of the culture of the people, meanings of personal names are given along with reasons associated with them. They elaborated on how genealogical linkage can be connected by the study of personal names. Besides personal names, courtesy names, assumed names, childhood names and epithet names are being studied.

Hvenekelde, Marak and Burling (2000) on *Personal Names in a Mande (Garo) Village* make a study on the naming system of the Mandes who does not have a fixed inventory of personal names. Thus instead of giving a conventional name to a child they try to find sequence of sounds that are totally different from the existing name. More or less giving a new name which is different from the existing one is the normal criteria, and therefore, names in this community usually lack meaning excepting a conventional sound that could indicate the gender of the child. In this community it is very difficult to get namesakes though people of the same kinship group share the same kinship names. However, there are influences both from the Western names which are usually nativised and also influences from the Bengali

names. Yet there are people who still maintain the traditional Mandes names even though majority of the people resort to finding unique names for their child.

Majid (2006) investigates into the system of rules as to how categorisation differs or is similar in different languages i.e., between the universals and the cultural specific principles of categorisation. The author in the study of *Body part categorisation in Punjabi* provides the inventory of body parts and show how the Punjabis segment and categorise different body parts. Given a detailed inventory, the author points out that many of the categorisations share with the English system of categorisation which is considered as universals. However, there are categories that are specific to the Punjabi which shows the cultural specific elements. The author further gave detailed semantic properties of the body parts showing the motivation behind which is considered as innate concept.

## **Mao**

Grierson (1903) under the *Linguistic Survey of India* has given Sopvoma or Mao Naga a section in his study. The author classified the language under the Naga-Kuki group of languages, yet with some reservation when he says that it 'nearly approaches the true Naga languages'. Besides the classification, the author has also given a brief introduction about the language dealing with topics such as prefixes and suffixes, grammatical categories and also specimens of the language in the form of stories.

Hodson (1974) *The Naga Tribes of Manipur* was first published in 1911 and therefore is a very old account on the Naga tribes of Manipur. The book is compact in

nature and gives a coherent relationship of the Naga tribes bringing out their similarities and differences in their ways of life. Approaching from anthropological description of the appearance and the physical characteristics of the people, the author brings about the affinities of the group basing on the theories of origin that each tribes has. References to these tribes at his time are scanty and therefore the major source of information is based on the folk tales and folk songs. The author in his direct contact with the people brings about a more authentic account of the people. The book elaborates on the domestic life highlighting activities such as agriculture, house building and village fortification, hunting and fishing among others. Investigation into the structuring of the community, the author dealt the customary laws of different tribes that constitute what is considered as Nagas of Manipur. Different topics such as the internal structure, tribal organisation laws, head hunting culture etc. are dealt under this topic. Religion is also given a very elaborate discussion by the author. Therefore, the present book reveals the attitude of the people towards what they believe and their ways of life showing in a way the conceptual system of the people.

Hutton (1969) attempted a portrayal of the most advanced group of the Nagas of that time in his book *The Angami Nagas*. He was successful in his attempt as he brought out an original piece of work through his close association with the people and his knowledge about other groups of people of the world around. At the appendix of this book, the author provides a note on the Mao (Notes of the Memi: 337-350) which was derived from the manuscript of Colonel Shakespear where a description on the cultural practices of the people is given lucidly.

Giridhar's (1994) *Mao Naga Grammar* is the most comprehensive and the only commendable work done basing on the modern approach to the study of language. Approaching his study from a taxonomic, morphological orientation rather than the transformational or syntactic approach, the author deals varied topics elaborately. Being the first of its kind in the language the author approaches the study starting with the sound system of the language. The sound system is first described with its phonetic realisation and then its phonemes. This is then given a graphic representation with suggestions as per the existing writing system. Mao is a tonal language and the author has also dealt on it as well. The book then takes up morphology and which constitutes the major portion. This section analyses the morphological behaviour of noun, verb, particle and word formation processes. Many issues have been raised and analysed on the same. The next is the syntax portion where surface constituents and structures of sentences are dealt. This is followed by a short discussion on ideophones and amenities. On the whole the book provides the grammatical categories and their functions in the language. Therefore, the book will be very helpful for those who pursue their studies on the grammar of any particular undocumented languages, especially those belonging to Tibeto-Burman language family.

Lokho (1991) in his unpublished M Phil. dissertation entitled *A Study on the Customary Laws of the Mao Nagas* gave a panoramic view of the Maos from a socio-historical construction point of view. The author introduces the important aspects of Mao culture. He then briefs about the theory of origin that has been passed through oral tradition and the everyday life of the people. With that introduction, the author takes the study to a deeper level by highlighting about the rituals that is associated

with an individual as he/she grows up. This is particularly important from the fact that conceptualisation of ideas are framed based on the cultural practices and these practices are the result of the beliefs of the people. This is followed by the societal conception of the importance of individual action which results in the formation of the customary laws of the society. The researcher also talks about the influence from other societies which are considered higher or more advanced especially the western culture which is blended together with Christianity.

Daniel's (2004) unpublished thesis deals with a philosophical study on the concept of the good life of the indigenous Mao people in Manipur. The study makes the comparison of the Maos concept of good life with some of the philosophers like Aristotle, Kant and others. The Maos believe that a good life is a life of happiness and community works bring about good life for their tribesman. The Maos practised head hunting with the adjacent groups like the Angamis, Marams and so on, but not within their own community. Bringing enemies' heads into the village is lauded by all and is considered as a sign of victory, bravery and a blessing to the community. But with the coming of Christianity head-hunting was discouraged as sinful and illegal. The traditional Maos conception of good life is very balanced in its approach to both the spiritual and the material outlook. Thus the researcher talks about what constitutes *good* and what are considered *bad* in this community. A conceptual analysis on the action of man is also done in this work.

Maheo's (2004) on *The Mao Naga Tribes of Manipur* is the latest book on the shelf about the tribe. Her study is primarily on the birth control measures among the Mao Nagas. Therefore, from the point of demography, the researcher has contributed

a great deal in her study. The present book would of interest for those studies related with demography, reproductive and fertility, mortality, health care, etc. and related topics.

The above reviewed literature reveals that no studies have been done specifically on ethnosemantics study of Mao. It can also be seen that related studies such as ethnoscience or cognitive anthropology or ethnographic semantics have been dealt more as topic of study. It also shows that culture and its influence to language is concrete and undeniable. Though this study has been carried out mostly from other disciplines who study it from their own perspectives, they leave aside crucial cultural-linguistic perspective which is to be taken into account if any worthwhile result is to be achieved. Therefore, it necessitates one to take up a detailed study on the subject matter from linguistic perspectives which will hopefully throws more light on the language and culture of the Maos.

Literary works on Mao as seen from the above review are very limited. Besides text books, few collections of works such as books on folk tales and cultural aspects and traditional beliefs are published by the native speakers. Linguistics-based works such as Grierson's brief description of the language in his Linguistic Survey of India could be found. A more exhaustive study was done by Giridhar in his Mao Naga Grammar. Yet nothing has been done on the relationship between language and culture. In view of this, research is needed and the present work hopes to pave the way for further research in related fields.

# **Ethnosemantic**

## **Study of Noun and Verb**

## **Chapter 3**

### **Ethnosemantic study of Nouns and Verbs**

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Reference, the relationship between words and things, if systematically studied, reveals to follow a coherent system basing on one's analytic skill and cognition. This may not be applicable to all the words and its relation to things they denote but it is certain that many of the references to the things they are being labelled are cognitively governed. The present study will take the grammatical categories of nouns and verbs to investigate into the cognitive aspect of the language and see how they can as well reveal the cultural aspect. In the study relating linguistic to cultural data there are two possible methodological directions according to Mathiot which can be from 'cultural content of linguistic classes' or from 'linguistic content to cultural classes' (1964: 155). If looking from these two methodological directions, the present study would bear closer resemblance to the later one that is, from linguistic content to cultural classes. However, it is to be noted that the present study does not follows Mathiot's methodology in a strict sense of the term. The main focus of the present study here is to find out how linguistic content can manifest cultural aspect. In other words, the study is to find out how far the study of linguistic aspect of language can also reveal the cognitive aspect of the people of that particular speaker of the language.

#### **3.1. Nouns**

In the study of language, traditional grammarians have classified language into different grammatical categories in order to make the study more systematic and scientific. According to this classification every language has nouns as one of the

grammatical categories. The present study does not look into the noun class and see how it behaves in the language but would take only cases of proper names and place names to see how this category can reveal the cognitive aspect of the community.

### **3.1. 1. Proper Name**

The name of a person in some societies has its own cultural significance. To some it may serve as a chronology of important events, to others it may be just the fads<sup>6</sup> of the parents to let their child bear the names of famous and important persons, still to others it may serve as a representation of the clanship or the genealogical lineage. Some tribal communities of the North East like the Naga and Kuki-Chin groups usually link personal names to socio-cultural realities, hence most names are meaningful unlike the Mandes (Garos) whose 'names are meaningless'<sup>7</sup> and surprisingly even avoid using lexical items that are meaningful in the language. Name in the Mande community according to Hvenekilde, Marak and Burling (2000) is more to do with selection of unique names for their children. The present study will throw light on how names are bestowed in the Mao society and most importantly analysis will be done on lexicon of the personal names and its relation to socio-cultural beliefs of the community. In other words, the derivation and the circumstances that lead to choosing a particular name for a child and the depiction of culturally significant elements through the names will be elaborated.

In Hindi speaking communities, a given name is followed by a middle name and then followed by a surname/title which is patronymic in nature to indicate the

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<sup>6</sup> See Bin and Millward (1987)

<sup>7</sup> Hvenekilde, Marak and Burling (2000)

patrilineal system which passes on from father to the children. In English speaking countries a surname is followed by one or more given names and in some European countries the second name is patronymic. However, in Mao the surname is patronymic but derived purely from one's biological father and not from paternal ancestors. This is followed by the first/personal name and there is no generation name as used in the Chinese system of naming (Bin & Millward; 1987) which consists of surname, generation name and given name. The generation name serves to indicate both the generation of a particular descent and also form an indication for the term of address where violation of the rules of address is considered to be a serious social offense in the Chinese community. But it is worth mentioning here that in the present Mao situation, with influence from different cultures, especially Hindi and English speaking communities, there is a random use and arranging of one's personal name. In earlier practice the system is that personal names follows surname but in present times people tend to use personal name first. Not only that, usage of title which is more to indicate the clan or in some earlier occasion, the tribe, in lieu of middle name, are very much practised by the younger generation.

Naming of a child in Mao culture involves few ritualistic processes known as *Ona Sakapra*. A child is *sapra* literally meaning 'to take out' to be given a name on the fifth day in case of first born or on third day<sup>8</sup> for second birth and after, from the day a child is born. During the rituals of naming, the baby is carried by children<sup>9</sup> between 5-10 years of age, and of the same gender who would pronounce the name

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<sup>8</sup> According to Hutton (1969) it is on the fifth day. However, it should be noted here that naming practice differs in different village and also the difference in the number of days can also depend on the health of the mother. In present situation, naming ceremony is carried out in church and usually on Sunday. Also specific number of days for naming depends on parents.

<sup>9</sup> See Hutton, 1969, Lokho (1991)

bestowed by the parents of the child. The child selected to utter the name would carry a *shekosö* ‘staff for women’, and *oha* ‘a bottle gourd use for carrying rice beer’ and clothe in *kodzö* ‘raincoat’ made from reeds/grass for a baby girl; and *irö* ‘shield’, made from the bark of a berry tree (*Zizyphus*), *inho* ‘spear’ etc. for the baby boy. Taking the child out of the house and facing towards the east as the sun rises, the child would call out the baby’s name and say *kava nileshe* ‘let us see the light’. Facing the east has the significance of something that is good, the beginning of something and a symbolic representation that the child would grow up and shine bright in his life, contrasted to the west which is considered as bad or an end to everything. From then on the name becomes an inseparable part of the child and an individual’s sense of identity. However, a given name can be changed if anything unusual happens to the child after being given a particular name, such as constant sufferings from any ailment or if the child keeps on wailing. This is believed to be so when a child is given a name based on social importance like taking the name of an individual who has a very high status in a the community for his achievements in war or other qualities, and also the name which has some cultural significance, and that the child is not able to take the name of such a person/events/quality bestowed on him or her. In such occasion, the Mao expression “*ozhu pfüpeihrotie/ozhu jölotie*” which means ‘the name is too big/great for the child to bear/carry’ (burden of the given name) signifies their belief.

According to Daniel (2008), the purpose of human life in the Mao community is three-fold and is as follows:

- To procreate off-spring to inherit and protect the God-gifted land of their forefathers

- To procreate off-spring to take care the parents when they are old and infirm
- To procreate off-spring for perpetuation of their race.

Therefore, it is necessary that the child grows up healthily, strong and at the same time courageous enough to protect the land that has been passed down to him from the hands of the enemies who are in constant warfare. Adding to it, he needs to procreate in abundance and continue the genealogical lineage. To ensure this every boy child in the Mao community has to undergo *macha kozö* 'purification' ritual after he attains the age of two or three years. This ceremony is celebrated with pomp and gaiety and the process of purification and blessing is carried out. The child is thus blessed to lead an exceptionally heroic life and be blessed with many children in his adult life.

Naming of a child in the Mao society can be classified under the following main headings:-

1. Material expectation in the form of wealth and people.
2. Names indicating ill fate of the family.
3. Indication of season of birth.
4. Indication of parents' wishes and desires.
5. Imploring God's blessing to strengthen the child.
6. Indication of position of a child in relation to the elder ones.
7. Based on physical structure of a child.
8. Names to indicate respect/appreciation of the life/quality of the forefathers.
9. To indicate the modesty/humanity by giving names that is ordinary/modest.

### **Material expectation in the form of wealth and people**

Names under this category are usually given to the eldest though not restricted to the eldest along. Some of the names under this category are as follows:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Derived from</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
1. Chakho /c <sup>h</sup> a k <sup>h</sup> o/	Chamai kokho	asking for people
2. Chamailo /c <sup>h</sup> ameilo/	Chamai ilo	welcome people
3. Tokho /tok <sup>h</sup> o/	Oto kokho	asking for wealth
4. Chape /chape/	Ocha tope	exhaust late
5. Chania /chania/	Ocha kani	rich wealth
6. Lonio /lonio/	Olu kani	rich in land
7. Ninio /ninio/ (M)	Oni kani	rich
8. Ninia /ninia/ (F)	Oni kani	rich

The derivation and meaning of the above given names are from wealth and people. Chamaikho is made up of *ocha* 'wealth in the form of crops', *omai* 'people' and *kokho* 'to ask'. Another interpretation of the name is the derivation of the name from *Chamai* which is an archaic form of *omai* 'man'. Likewise in Chamailo, *lo* stands for *elo* meaning 'welcome' indicating the new born baby would bring both wealth and more members to the family. This indicates the importance of wealth in the form of food crops when famines<sup>10</sup> were events experienced and dreaded by the community. The factors leading to famines could be altogether a different story which need not be elaborated here. Also, importance of the size of population is a necessity in a head hunting culture because it was might that ruled and which mostly depended on the number which a particular community has. Other factors that contribute to lesser population could be high mortality rate (including child mortality rate) which

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<sup>10</sup> A folk story narrates about seven years of famine.

can be attributed to lack of proper medical treatment for various ailments and diseases. Tokho which is derived from *oto* ‘food’ is also an indication of wealth and *kokho* ‘to ask’. Chape is a shortened form of *ochatope* where *ocha* refers to ‘wealth in the form of cereal crops’ and *tope* refers ‘to last for a longer period of time’ for daily sustenance. It is worth mentioning here that there exists a concept in Mao that the acquired wealth is easily exhausted for some, while for others who are destined to be rich, it would take a much longer time to exhaust. Similarly Chania is given to a female child. Here, *ni* is derived from *kani* ‘rich’. Lonio from *olu* ‘land’, *ni* ‘rich’, likewise, *ninio* and *ninia*, where the first *ni* from *oni* ‘wealth’ and the second *ni* from *kani* ‘rich’ with ‘o’ as suffix for male and ‘a’ for the female counterpart<sup>11</sup>. The name is given to a person so as to make him rich and famous in future. This is so because in olden day *ozho koso* ‘feast of merits’<sup>12</sup> could be carried out by rich individuals alone.

#### **Names indicating ill fate/tragedy of the family**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Derived from</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
1. Manga-a /maŋa:/	amangai	regret
2. Mangaili /maŋeili/	amangai	regret
3. Mangu-u /maŋu:/	amangai	regret
4. Modo	amodo	lament
5. Modoa /modoa/	amodo	lament
6. Akha	kakha	bitter
7. Akha-a	kakha	bitter
8. Sokha-a	oso kakha	bitter meat
9. Hrūkha	ohrū kakha	living bitterly
10. Boni	obo	faeces

<sup>11</sup> This suffix does not indicate gender in all occasion.

<sup>12</sup> Feast of merit is a symbol of status. The more an individual gives feast to the villagers, the higher his social standing raises. There are different stages an individual can perform the feast of merit.

11. Obo-o	obo	faeces
12. Vobo	ovo bo	pig's dung
13. Sobo	oso bo	animal's dung
14. Kashisü	kasha kosü	welcome bad
15. Kashiprü	kashi prü	fear of bad
16. Thisho /t <sup>h</sup> ešo/	thimosho	Survivor
17. Katheprü	kathe kaprü	fear of death
18. Makhabo	makabo	Retention from death

This group can be classed into two categories. The first category indicates/implies ill fate/tragedy of the parents and the second category indicating ill fate/tragedy of the children in the family. Ill-fate/tragedy here refers to the occurrence of tragic incident from the time of conception of the child till to the time a child is named. The tragedy referred here is by and large loss of a family member, particularly either one or both parent(s) thus making the child becomes partially or completely orphaned. In the first three instances in this category the name is derived from *amangai* means 'to regret'. Manga-a is a female name and Mangaili and *Mangu-u* are male name. Similarly, Modo and Modoa are from the root word *amodo* 'lament'. These names are given to a child whose parents, especially the mother passes away during the time of his/her birth and thus is an indication the child would always regret or lament for the loss of his/her parent.

The second category of names is given to those children born after the elders dies. It is generally believed that the death of a child is because the gods has taken/eaten the young and tender soul of the child. It is also believed that the nature of the child also depends on the name and therefore to avoid the attraction of gods from the child, names are given in such a way that the attention of the gods who always

keep an eye on the child is distracted<sup>13</sup>. Therefore names with negative meanings or connotations such as Akha, Akha-a, Sokha-a, Hrökha are given with *kakha* meaning 'bitter' attached to it. Also, 11-14 of this category are names given with root word *obo* 'faeces' attached. This is to feign that the child is also unwanted to man and thus hope to distract the attention of gods. 15 and 16 under this category are names derived from *kashi* meaning 'bad'. In Thesho, *the* is derived from *kathe* 'death' *sho* from *mosho*, meaning 'left over'. The name thus should actually be Themoshö to indicate that it is not the parents but the children in the family who have all died and the child is the only one who had survived and is alive. In Katheprö, *prö* is from *kaprö* 'afraid/scare/fear' and *kathe* 'death'. The name indicates that nothing bad like death should happen to them as they are afraid or scared of it. Makabo would literally mean not to lose but survive on. Thus the child under this category bears a name which has a story of past incidents that had happened.

#### **Indication of season of birth**

Seasons in Mao are *Chibvo/probvo* (spring consisting of orolopra, khranö and khrana), *Chohro* (summer consisting of pfuzö, sale and rolai), *Chitto* (autumn consisting of onu, mazhalopfo, dopfo/belu) and *Chisai* (winter consisting of okro, chithuni and chisö lopra). Here the reference of season would entail the activities carried out during a particular period and do not refer to the name of the season itself. The activities can be those that are carried out by the community, be it agriculture, festivals, war, or any other memorable event.

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<sup>13</sup> Kerrigan Black (1996) reports a similar practice among the Kaiama of Nigeria.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Derived from</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
1. Saleo /saleo/	sale	name of a month
2. Besü /besü/	belusü	”
3. Besa /besa/	belusa	”
4. Kapesa /kapesa/	kape	season of transplantation
5. Chisa	oche	harvesting
6. Chopfoza	pfuzö	name of a month
7. Dosüsa	doshosüa	transplantation of paddy
8. Chüthuni /chüt <sup>h</sup> uni/	chithuni	name of a month
9. Lidzösa	lidzö	Act of ritual
10. Neli	oni	feast
11. Nelia	”	”
12. Nisa	”	”
13. Onia	”	”
14. Ozhu	ozho koso	feast of merit
15. Ozha	ozho koso	feast of merit
16. Asosü	asosü	annually
17. Roli	roli	name of a month
18. Roni	roli	name of a month

Another way of naming children is to indicate the season or month of their birth through their names. However, all the months of the year are not portrayed in the names but only those which have significance to the community are only considered. Being an agrarian society practicing both jhum (slash-and-burn cultivation) as well as terrace cultivation and paddy being the staple food, the seasons for such activities bear social significance and therefore, many names are given based on the different activities carried out during a particular season. Therefore, Chopfoza from *pfuzö* ‘month of May-June’ is the time of the year when intense preparation for transplantation is on and also seed-sowing season for millet/cereals which also hold

an important place. Saleo from *sale* ‘June-July’ Kapesa, ‘preparation for transplantation’, Dosüsa ‘transplanting of paddy’ are all related with transplantation period and also signify the magnitude of importance agricultural activities holds within the community. Besü and Besa are related to the month *Belu* ‘Oct-Nov’ of harvesting the crops, whereas Chisa is derived from *oche* ‘harvesting of paddy’ which is also equally given importance in the community. Chüthuni ‘December-January’ is the beginning of a new year, a time to start everything anew forgetting about any misfortune and bad fortune that had happened to them in the previous year and so is the name. Lidzüsa, Neli, Nelia, Nisa, and Onia are all indications of different feast. While Lidzüsa, a derivation from *lidzö*, a ritual that is conducted during feasting period or other ritualistic ceremonies, the other names are given to a child born during festive season, though the particular feast is not mentioned. Ozhou and Ozha are given to a boy and a girl child respectively when he/she is born during *ozho koso* ‘feast of merit’. Asosö from *aso koto*<sup>14</sup> ‘reconciliation’ on the other hand indicates that the child is born during the reconciliation between any two or more villages.

#### Indication of parents’ wishes and desires<sup>15</sup>

<u>Name</u>	<u>Derived from</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
1. Athehrü	athe	crazy
2. Athili	”	”
3. Athikho	”	”
4. Athishu	”	”
5. Athuo	”	”
6. Athini	”	”

<sup>14</sup> Reconciliation between two villages is marked by feast.

<sup>15</sup> Bin and Millward (1987) reports that parents choose names to express their own aspirations for the child in Chinese system of naming.

7. Athiphro	”	”
8. Athia	”	”
9. Athisa	”	”
10. Edehrü	ede	expectation
11. Hepuni	hrüpu	wanting more
12. Kholi	kokho	implore
13. Kholia	”	”
14. Lokho	”	”
15. Nikheni	nikheni	wanting more
16. Nipuni	nipu kani	wanting more

This group denotes the passionate and intensive craving of the parents in choosing a child in terms of the sex of a child. Though the degree of yearning could be more for a male child in case the couple does not bear a male child, yet this does not indicate that the female child is looked upon with any contempt. This fact can be substantiated by names like Athini, Athiphro, Athia, Athisa, Kholia, and Roni where *athi* is a derivation of *athe* ‘crazy’ signifying the constant desire of the parents, also Kholia is from *kokho* ‘implore’. Roni is derived from *koro* ‘intent’ and *ni* is also associated with feminine marker. Where in such names constant longing has been expressed, in names like Nipuni, Hröpu, Nikheni, the wish that more male members be born to the couple has been shown.

However, names of male child are comparatively more in this category due to the fact that it is through them lineage is continued in the patriarchal Mao society. Here it would be interesting to compare the view given by Lokho (1991: 51) where he states that due to certain elaborate rites and rituals with regard to the birth, naming and initiation related ceremonies which are also more lavish and complicated in case

of the boy child, the Maos prefers a boy to a girl child. These ceremonies have in fact nothing to do with regard to the preference of the male over a female child. It is to be noted here that Maos practices head hunting culture and it is only male members<sup>16</sup> of the society who carry that out. The belief goes that if such rites and rituals are not performed he would not be able to win against his enemies rather he would lose his head to the enemies.

### **Imploring God's blessings to strengthen the child**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Derived from</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
1. Hraili	hraikazhü	robust
2. Matia	mate	Seed
3. Mateso	”	”
4. Pfokreni	pfokre pfuzho	productive
5. Pfokrehrü	”	”
6. Pfokrelo	”	”
7. Runio	oru kani	warrior

Hraili refers to the robustness or strength of the person who is dynamic both mentally and physically. Matia (female name) and Mateso (male) can be given two different interpretations. While the first interpretation could be with regard to the seed sowing season during the time of birth of a child yet the second and more relevant one is that the derivation of the name is from *mate* 'seed', a prayer that they bear many offspring through whom the lineage should continue. Pfokreni, Pfokrehrü and Pfokrelo are derived from *pfukre pfuzho* 'large family' but the family here is

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<sup>16</sup> The only case of female bringing a head as a trophy is the story of Kapaini (female), who took vengeance of her brother.

especially about the large family where there would be a large number of male members. Runio is derived from *oru* ‘war’. The name implores god to give strength to the child to let him have an upper hand when it comes to enemy in battle or war.

**Indication of position of a child in relation to the elder ones**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Derivation</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
1. Ashihrü	Ashohrü	consecutive
2. Ashikho	Ashokho	”
3. Adaphro	ada kochu	immediate numbering
4. Adazöo	Adao hrii kozii	Beside / immediate
5. Adapi	Ada kapi	immediate
6. Adani	Adao hrii kani	Beside / immediate
7. Heshu	Hrüshu	continuing
8. Ashiphro	Ashophro	Beside / immediate
9. Ashuni	asho-a kani	consecutive

These are groups indicating the continuity of a child of the same sex. That is names like Adaphro, Ashiphro, Ashuni, etc are names given to a girl child when the immediate elder one is also a girl child. Similarly, Ashihrü, Adani, Adazöo, Ashikho, etc are given to a boy child. These are the names deriving from *asho* and *ada* ‘continuous/immediacy’. Usually a family in the Mao community is large and at time the number of children can go up to twelve thirteen even though normal number ranges from six to eight.

### Based on physical structure of a child

<u>Name</u>	<u>Derivation</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
1. Katia	Kattie	small
2. Kateni	kattie	small
3. Chokhoni	Chokho	small and frail
4. Kajüni	Kajü	big

It is true that some children are born with different physical structure which is considered distinct from other normal children. But naming of a child in Mao community basing on distinct physical appearance is mainly based on the structure of the child and has nothing to do with the physical disabilities which are also a very rear occurrence, and these names mostly implied to a girl child. Thus names such as Katia, Kateni, etc. are given with the root word *kattie* ‘small’. Likewise, Chokhoni is a name given to someone who is small and at the same time frail and of sickly nature. Contrary to the smallness Kajüni from kajü meaning ‘big’ is also given to a girl child. Name indicating smallness in size with regard to a male child is never given. This shows that name is considered in the community as a part of the individual. Giving a name signalling small would induce the child to have an attitude that is negative. He would consider himself insignificant, small and not competent with others in any field. In a warring society like Nagas with such kind of attitude, the child will not be able to achieve anything that a male member of the community ought to carry out. Therefore, such names are avoided. With regard to the physical size the only name that can be found in Mao is *Kajökho* which literally means ‘one who ask for bigness/greatness’. However, this name is also a recent origin.

## **Names to indicate respect/appreciation if the life/quality of the forefathers**

### Name

1. Akajü
2. Charani
3. Kapaini
4. Krepe
5. Mattali
6. Peli
7. Shekache
8. Tolujü

These are group of names bearing the names of the great forefathers to maintain family linealogy, as remembrances, to show respect and also in appreciation of the quality that their grandparents once had in their life shown. This may be considered as the fads of the parents to let their child bear the names of famous and important persons as mostly names in this category are of famous personalities whose stories are being passed down to the present generation through folk songs and folk tales. However, some of these names are no longer semantically transparent and to analyse these names has become a difficult task as only the stories prevails and not their derivation.

## **To indicate the modesty/humanity by giving names that is ordinary/modest**

Only few names come under this category which is as follows:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Derivation</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
1. Komou	komo	sluggish

- |           |           |          |
|-----------|-----------|----------|
| 2. Komuni | komo      | sluggish |
| 3. Koheni | kohe kani | sluggish |

This category shows rather a negative connotation by indicating that the child should not be bright and active but dumb and slow in activities and even in decision making. Komou and Komuni are boy and girl's name respectively to indicate that the child should be sluggish/ dumb intellectually. Koheni would mean one is always indecisive and full of confusion. The reason for such practice could be that in this agrarian community if the child is too naughty, the parents would not be able to carry out their work. To carry a child on their back and at the same time perform their agricultural work is an extra burden for them. Therefore, they give such kind of name so that the child would not wail but sleep the whole day so as to carry out their work efficiently.

Apart from the agricultural activities, hunting is heavily depended upon for food, yet there is no name related with this aspect of culture excepting for Oso-o derived from *oso* 'meat' or animals that are usually hunted for meat. However, where nicknames are concerned, different names of animals are given to an individual such as *ovu* 'bear', *okhro* 'stag', *oshu* 'deer' etc, may be due to an individual's skill or similarity in one's physical structure.

In Mao naming practice, physical beauties, symbolic qualities, longevity are avoided as names. Apart from some few names of the great people which has already become a symbol of great quality, other names does not in its totality indicate such quality. Also if any names symbolises such quality, it would still be a prayer to make the child with quality. This is because in olden days it is believed that one cannot

name a child which signifies things which are gorgeous, beautiful, charming and other desirable quality. It is believed that such a name would attract the attention of benevolent or malevolent spirit and would take the spirit of the person away. Therefore it is with greatest caution that especially the firstborn child of the family is named to avoid any such attention. However, if the first ones survived, names indicating good quality or of people having high status in the society are also given to the younger siblings.

Works in Comparative Linguistics has well demonstrated that language continuously change its meanings and inferences and to a certain extent even the structure. At the same time anthropological studies also demonstrate that cultural behaviour of a particular community changes with time. Therefore, language being a part of culture, adapt itself to accommodate the changes that happens over time. This applies to the process of naming a child in Mao society. Also with the increasing of number of persons with the same name due to a relatively small corpus of names available, new names are coined. Thus, names like *Maphröo* 'shinning brightly'; 'Shihrani' 'blessing'; *Kavani*, *Mavani* 'to let shine', etc are given which connote strong or masculine qualities and some dainty or feminine qualities or in some other cases names may be selected because of other connotations. Name in Mao society is usually addressed along with the name of the father preceding the personal names. This may be due to the fact that personal names are rather limited, and thus identifying someone from others some more details such as the father's name is a necessity. The other reason to add the father's name could be to show respect to the head of the family who is the father, who is also considered next to god. Another way

of identifying a person is by giving him a nick-name which is very popular in the society.

Naming a child in the Mao community is never an arbitrary affair. Rather it has the significance both of the past and the future. The names are thus analyzable, meaningful and depict the cultural practices and beliefs of the community. Though some of these names are no longer semantically transparent yet that does not mean that they are just names and nothing more. The only probable reason is that the vocabulary that was once used in the olden days is forgotten by the younger generation.

Therefore, names in this culture are not arbitrarily chosen to identify one from the other, but they have deeper meaning which is significant and distinctive and the people of this culture believe and hold dear to their hearts. It is, as Bean (1980: 311) rightly points out, 'a part of, or identical with, the soul, self, or personality of its bearer'.

### **3.1. 2 Place Name**

Names of places are given according to the significance they hold in that particular community and therefore indicate not only the mental conception of a particular community but also signify their ways of life. It also relates to things which are of particular historical importance; an indication of war, a sign of peace treaty, socio-cultural beliefs, association with great people or it could also be just the description of the physical topography of the place. The significance depends on the experiences of the community. These experiences are then link to the places or some of the places are

named after it to commemorate the event or happening. The system could also be based on their beliefs, myths, or a thing that arises out of their own experiences. For instance, **Makhrairabu** is taken by the majority of the Nagas (especially the Tenyimia group) as the place of their departure. Breaking up the word, it is made up of *makhrai* 'purity', *ora* 'god' and *obu* 'place'. This is a place where a group of people pure/unadulterated and exclusively from a particular lineage came and settled. This place is also known by the name **Makhraifō**, where *fō* also means place or location. Another explanation to the derivation is given as, *makhrai* comes from *makhrō* 'secret' and its linkage is attributed to one of the folk tales about secret gun and documents that have been buried in this place of origin, so as start a new beginning, relinquishing the past. Likewise, **sozhe korō** is given to a particular river/stream in commemoration of a war between Mao and Maram (another tribe neighbouring Mao). *Sozhe* 'flesh and blood' and *korō* 'river', is so given to that particular river because during that war, many people were killed, and also the river where the battle took place was flowing with blood. Likewise **Chōkhrienho**, *chōkhrie* meaning 'wind' and *nho* 'edge' is named because this place is a hillock located directly in wind direction and the place is usually windy.

However, in naming a village, in addition to the reasons given, a village can be named after the first settler. The first settler here means the king/chief of the new settlement. It is worth mentioning here that due to increasing population, relocating to a strategic place as sentinels from enemies, and at times due to outbreak of epidemics, etc., movement of group of people to new settlements becomes essential. Therefore, the oldest male in the group usually assume the kingship/chieftainship and if so desired the village can be named after him. Or in other occasion, the bravest of the

group can also take the position of the chief. At other times a person having enough land can offer free land for the settlement in exchange of naming the place in his honour. Thus, village names like Puni inu, Daili Village are named, where Puni and Daili are names of the first settlers, and *inu* means village. Likewise, Charangho is derived from a legend of a mystical woman name *Charani* who is believed to have befriended god at this place which led to village being named after her.

Few names of places are given below to show how they are derived.

### **Khröbu**

The word khröbu is the name of a place/spot derived from the nature and location of the site in and around it. The word 'khrö' is taken from the word 'okhrö' which means gorge or ridge and 'bu' is taken from 'obu' which means place/spot. The place has named "Khröbu" as the place/spot located beneath the deep gorges/ridges. This is an instance of naming a place basing on its topographical feature.

### **Dzöshö**

It is a combination of two words viz., 'dzö' which means water and 'shö' refers to abundance/plenty. The name is derived with reference to the location of the paddy field at the bank of the river. As the water source is available for plantation throughout the year so is the name "Dzöshö". This indicates the importance of water on which wet/terrace cultivation depends, rice being the staple food of the Maos. Also rice is important for making rice beer which is also a staple food of the people in the past.

### **Kokhro**

The word 'Kokhro' refers to strength of varying degrees of an object and when referring to non-living things, usually means hard, tough, rigid and firm. An area, meant for growing paddy plant and other crops where the soil is found to be hard and difficult to plough when compared to nearby places. So the name of the area meant for paddy plant and other crops is derived from the nature of the soil. As can be seen, the name is given after the characteristic of the place.

### **Totsüfuekhro**

This is a combination of three different words 'Totsü' which means centre, 'fü' (plot/land) and 'ekhro' level/plane. The name of the plot/land has been derived based on the nature and location of the site of the place. The plot/land is situated at the heart of the surrounding villages and at one level/plane, so is the name "Totsüfuekhro".

### **Dzökuo**

The word "Dzökuo" is derived from two different words having different meanings. The word 'Dzö' means water and 'Kuo' the degree of coldness. The source of crystal clear and icy-cold water in the rivers and streams which run through the valley happens to be from the virgin thick forests, so is the name of the valley "Dzökuo" from the nature of water.

### **Solophe**

The name of a hunting ground is derived from three different words "oso" which means wild animals, 'Lo' take for the killed and "Phe" (back/surface) to mean area.

The hunters after chasing out the animals from their lair usually took aim and go for the killed at a specific location at the back of a hillock so is named “Solophe”.

### **3.2. Verbs**

Different cultures have different ways of perceiving, relating and interpreting the world around them. Embedment of cultural elements in the language has been emphasized over and over again and here is also an aspect that can add to this claim. It is not surprising that the Eskimos<sup>17</sup> have many lexical items to describe the different types of snow, or that the Car Nicobarese<sup>18</sup> having different words to describe different stages of coconuts or the Brazilian Indian<sup>19</sup> tribes having no words for parrot but only words for different kinds of parrots. This only implies that language is dynamic and depending on one’s need it could be expanded to meet one’s requirement. Mao is no exception to this phenomenon of adjusting the language to its need and the most productive categories exhibiting this trend are the verbs in the language which are discussed below. The present study would not only describe the different words for a particular action but also hope to bring out the deeper meaning which is considered as eminent to the community. This would be view from the point of their ways of life, the geographical and the climatic condition in which the people dwells. Different categories are taken under verbs which are as follows:

#### **3.2. 1 Ploughing or digging**

Different words are found for the action of ploughing or digging in Mao which are the following:

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<sup>17</sup> See also Foley, 1997

<sup>18</sup> I am thankful to Mr. Elangaiyan (CIIL) for this incite in one of my Personal communication with him

<sup>19</sup> Charles O. Frake, 1969

Kovou

Kashe

Kohu

Kare

Kade

Being an agrarian society Mao carries out different types of cultivation. Suitability for better growth and production of different crops or plants is something that the community learnt through their long practice. Apart from the climatic condition and difference of the soil suitable to a particular crop the requirements of the depth of the loose soil is taken care of by this simple cultivators. Practicing both jhum and wet cultivation and also farm type different degrees of depth for sowing the seed is a necessity. For instance, jhum cultivation needs only cleaning up of the ground without necessarily ploughing deep which is indicated by the term *kovou*, whereas wet cultivation needs deeper ploughing of the soil which is given by the term *kashe*. Still a deeper degree is given by the term *kohu* for the purpose of farm type ploughing where potatoes, cabbages, etc are grown. The term also refers to digging deep in search of rodents and other animals which are hunted down for consumption. *Kare* would refer to the English equivalent 'drilling'. This shows that the people through their experiences has developed a very systematic and at the same time scientific ways of cultivating different types of crops.

### **3.2. 2 Washing**

The morphological structure of the term for the act of washing is not the emphasis in the present study. Focus is given on the terms and analysis is done on the possible

circumstances for the language to develop such vocabulary for the action of washing. Some of the terms for washing are given which is followed by the possible explanation for the having such abundance of terminologies for a single act.

<b>Mao</b>	<b>English translation</b>
Kaphei	washing by act of pouring water on it
Pili	washing head
Mophü/piphrü	washing of face
Ado	bathing
Chitei	washing hand
Khrü	washing of utensils, etc.
She	washing clothes
Kotho	rinsing

Mao has different verbs to indicate washing different parts of body. This could be elaborated as *kaphie*, which is the act of pouring water on something for the purpose of washing it. But the word does not refer to the act of pouring water on plants and vegetables for watering, for which purpose *kozö* is used. The word is also used to refer to washing the head and any part of the body that involves the act of pouring. However, a more specific term for washing of head is *pili* which cannot be used to refer to any other usage. Likewise, *Mophrü/piphrü* refers only to washing of face. *Ado* does refer to the action when the act of washing involves the whole body. In situations where the washing takes place from the waist and above, a demarcation is made by pointing that only half of the body is been washed '*chökhe lerü ado*'. The term *ado* can be used to the action of bathing or even swimming which shows there is a complete emersion of the whole body under water. *Chitie* is used in washing hands

only which is usually done before and after the meal. *Khrö* is a more general term which can also be said to be an English equivalent term for 'wash' and can be used to refer to different types of washing such as utensil, cars, even the above mentioned parts of the body yet used only if one wants to generalize. *She* is used to the washing of clothes and *kotho* to the act of rinsing and also washing of vegetables etc. which usually involves using lots of water.

It is worth mentioning here that the Maos follows a head hunting culture and therefore settlement in a new site is carried out looking at the strategic location where incoming enemies can be viewed easily. For this reason normally the Mao villages are located on hill top and therefore accessibility of water source within the village is almost out of question, leading to a situation where water is used in a very limited manner. To add to this, the hills are usually cold which is not conducive to washing everyday as in hot places. Also engaging in agricultural activities and hunting and warfare, bathing every time becomes impossible and therefore the necessity to wash only partially takes place and hence the different terms to suit accordingly to the activities arises.

### **3.2. 3 Breaking**

Breaking of different substance has different terminologies depending on the shape and structure of the object which in Mao are the following:

acha

aprou

ahrei

ako

adu

apra

marakho

söhrie

Breaking up of objects are given different lexical words in Mao depending on the substance taking into consideration its size, shape and hardness. *Acha* refers to the action of breaking an object which is usually hard and at the same time has length. Thus, the breaking of a stick, pen, pencil and similar objects which are hard by nature is *acha* but if the splitting parts are rather small in size the lexical item *ahrei* would be used. If the same object is split into different pieces, the lexical item *aprou* would refer act of breaking. *Ako* on the other hand would refer to any object that does not have a very distinctive length compared with the breath/circumference, and can be used to any round or cylindrical objects such as bottles and other brittle substances, walls, etc. *Adu* is used with substances that are rather soft and at the same time long like thread, wire, rope etc. and *apra* is also used with soft objects but does not take length as a source of distinction in comparison with breadth like cloths, leaves etc.

The discussion so far has taken Mao as a special case in having maximum number of lexical items for terms that some other languages might be having only one or two terms to describe all those actions mentioned. Yet this is not a claim that Mao is the only language that has such types of categorisation. Therefore, it would be interesting here to compare with some other language sharing a similar cultural set up and see whether they share such types of categorisation. For the purpose of

comparative study, an endangered language called Chothe<sup>20</sup> whose settlement is quite a distance away from the Maos yet shares certain characteristic which is common to indigenous tribal communities living in north east India would be taken into the present study. The Chothes are found in the state of Manipur concentrated mainly in Bishnupur and Chandel districts respectively. They belong to Old Kuki group<sup>21</sup> of the Tibeto-Burman language family. They are believed to be one of the oldest tribes of the state. They have a population of about 2675 with a literacy rate of 72.35 % according the Census of India, 2001 distributed among 12 (twelve) recognised villages with five (5) new settlements. The tribe has been in the anthropological map of the world for their distinctive matrilineal cross-cousin marriage system which has become a focus of studied by scholars like Strauss (1949) in his ‘elementary structures’ theory and further expounded by Needham, (1960) as ‘Matrilineal Connubium’ theory in 1950s and 1960s, which are all based on the data of T.C. Das (1945).

<b>Chothe</b>	<b>Mao</b>	<b>English</b>
<b>Washing terms</b>		
shipa	khrü	wash
lu phengpa /lu phenpa/	pili	head wash
phipa /phipa/	mo/piphrü	face wash
tak/pum or tak buipa	ado	body wash or bathing
pun su:pa	she	washing clothes

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<sup>20</sup> The Chothe data is from Y. Charles Chothe, a research scholar from the department of Sociology, NEHU.

<sup>21</sup> See Shafer 1955, 1966; Benedict, 1972; Egerod, 1974; Voegelin-Voegelin, 1977. The tribe is referred as Purum in the earlier literature.

**Breaking terms**

tikpa	acha	break
kuipa	aprou	crack
tatpa	adu	snapping of thread
thiepa	apra	tear apart
thiepa	sührrie	tear apart

**Cutting terms**

tanpa	acha	cut
thingna phanpa	khou	
aru tupa	dzü	the act of cutting bamboo
huipa	de	chop (wood)
masha tanpa	kodzü	the act of falling trees
masha hikpa	kodai	cutting smaller branches
masha phenpa	kodai	trimming of leaves

From the above discussion we can conclude that such types of categorisation are not actually specific to a language but are also found in those communities that share a similar setup. The existence of the above mentioned terminologies for different activities is a common feature among most of the tribal languages of North East which can be attributed to similarity in perceiving, relating and then interpreting the world around them. It is not surprising that even though there is a wide difference between the beliefs, cultures and languages among these groups, yet there is close correspondence in perceiving, relating and then interpreting which could be due to the

similarity in geographical features, shared activities like hunting, agriculture and even warfare and parallel beliefs<sup>22</sup> etc.

### 3.2. 4 Carrying

Carrying word in Mao can be manifest in different terms depending upon the nature of how an object is been carried by an individual. The following terms shows this dimension:

Kopfū	to carry on the back with the support of a strap/sling
Kopfo	to carry with bare hands
Kappa	to carry a child with the help of a cloth at the back and similar actions
Korie kopfū	to carry a child with the help of a cloth at the front side
Depfo	to carry a child with the hands or on the lap
Kaka	to carry on the shoulder or on the head

The presence of the above given terminologies for the verb ‘to carry’ is ascribed to the fact that the Maos resort to carrying everything by themselves in the absence of any other means of communication or transportation. Horses or donkeys could have come to the people only at the later stage but was never utilised to carry goods and the animals that are earlier known to the people are buffaloes and cows. However, these animals are also mainly utilised for consumption. Therefore, the only beast of burden in this community could be buffalos which are used in the field not for ploughing but for powdering the soil just before the transplanted of paddy. Thus

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<sup>22</sup> Tribal religions are branded as animist.

transportation of goods and other materials are done by man. This results in inventing different terminologies for the act of carrying which requires different means depending on the object one has to carry.

### 3.2. 5 Meteorological verbs<sup>23</sup>

Man's understanding and conception are reflected in his beliefs. His rationality allows him to relate the cause and effect of things around him. His reasoning and relating of the natural processes may be savage or scientific yet he tries to relate the cause and its effect to his own understanding of the cosmological activities. In the process a belief is set up, and with this impression of understanding nature he is of the opinion that with his action he could either bring forth or stop anything that is not suitable to him. This relationship is the relationship that man has with nature and also with god. Therefore, the study of meteorological verbs reveals the inner conception of the community.

<b>Mao</b>	<b>Literal meaning</b>	<b>Nearest English equivalent</b>
Chönhie kapra	sun comes out	rising sun
Chönhie kolo	sun going in	setting sun
Chörö kroe	rain comes down	raining
Chakhrie mozö rövüe	sparrow urine rain comes	drizzling
Chörö mani sǔ sǔ vue	rain little comes	drizzling
Chöru kashi vue	rain bad comes	heavy rain

<sup>23</sup> I am very thankful to Dr. L Changte for giving the insight regarding the concept of meteorological verb through my personal communications with her (2006).

Chürü chini kaphi/kada	rain sunrays fight	raining while the sun shines
Pirü kokro	hailstone comes down	hailstone
Chüni prae	sunshine comes out	sun shining
Chü zhüloe	house dark going down	getting dark
Moluchü süvue	plank drag come	earthquake'
Kahe hevue/chevue	clouds cover come	getting cloudy
Ochü kophrü vue	house lightning comes	lightning
Chüsüe	thunder	thunder
Vumara kroe	snow comes down	snowing
Chükhrie mohrü	air/wind blowing	wind blowing
Chükhrie mohrü pho phoe	breeze	breezing
Mara mapepe	whirlwind	whirlwind
Chükhrie chürü kashi vue	wind rain bad comes	cyclone
Shübo vobo prae	dog's feaces pig's coming out	rainbow

Most of the meteorological verbs are self explanatory and an indication of cosmic activities. It would be interesting to note here that description of the cosmic activities is accompanied by 'motion verb' (Kapfo: 2005), which indicates that these are the things that come from somewhere. Thus the locutionary verbs such as *kapra* 'to come out', *kolo* 'to go in' *kro* from *kokro* 'to come down', *vue* from *kovu* 'to come from somewhere' etc. that accompany the meteorological activities show the concept of these activities having its origination. However attribution of the meteorological

activities to god can be seen in the belief that hailstones are an indication of the wrath of god. Therefore when such thing happens gennas are even observed imploring god not to sent. When hailstones come in a particular region and destroy crops, vegetations, etc. the general comment is that people of that particular region might have done or said something wrong; may be of god or even human(s) which results in the punishment of that particular region otherwise taken as a sign from god. In situations when the hailstones come on the day someone dies, it is generally concluded that the person is someone who in his life has done something great. In other occasion a person might have committed some reprehensible act such as stealing someone's dog (the meat of which is considered not only a delicacy but also is associated with medicinal values), etc. Attribution of human value/quality can also be seen in terms like *chörö chini kaphi/kada* literally meaning 'a fight between the rain and the sun' when there is intermingling of both rain and sunshine and if it stops raining then it is said that the sun has won the fight and vice versa. Likewise, *molu kosö* 'earthquake' is also referred by the elders as *chöjvö pro* meaning 'conjugal intimacy of sky and earth'. This comes from the beliefs that the conjugal relation between the sky also called *Orachimadai Apfu* 'Father Sky' and the landscape *Ojomashe apfü* 'Mother Earth' resulting in the production of crops and vegetation. However, it is worth mentioning here that *mane* 'Genna' is observed after the earthquake, imploring god not to send earthquake to destroy them. Another significant term is the term *shöbo vobo* 'rainbow' literally meaning dog's and pig's faeces. It is believed that rainbows sometimes come out on the back of crabs piercing its back, hence rainbow is regarded not only as disgusting but an indication of misfortune, and so the name is given. Also whenever one sees a rainbow it is spat upon and cursed so that the same fate (fate of the crab) may not befall on them. It may be worth

mentioning here that a particular bird called ‘Chana-apa’ which is actually beautiful with its multicoloured feathers is cursed saying *apfö mani mokhro ko onga zöshue* literally meaning ‘my mother’s undergarment is far better than your coloured feather’. It is taboo to say that this particular bird is beautiful; the belief is that if uttered, either of the parents would die. Therefore there could be a linkage between the bird and the rainbow which are taken as beautiful in other cultures, but not in Mao.

### 3.2. 6 Action verbs

Construction of meaning in a language may follow different procedures. In Mao reduplication comes as a productive means through which meanings are constructed. Reduplication in Mao can occur with verbs, nouns and adjectives. The repetition or reduplicating of words in Mao mostly implies semantic intensity of the particular word without really changing the semantic properties.

Reduplication of action verbs is always a complete repetition of the main verb to indicate the continuity or repetition of the action. Reduplication of these verbs can either be just the repetition of the main verbs or to add with a bound morpheme *khe* which indicate the continuity or a sense of repetition. However, the difference would be that more intensity would be added to the action when *khe* is being used. A few examples exhibiting such kind of semantic constructions are given below.

<b>Mao</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Reduplicated verb</b>
To	eat	to(khe) to(khe)
Chü	drink	chü (khe) chü(khe)
Ttho	put	ttho(khe) ttho(khe)

Pe	say	pe(khe) pe(khe)
So	do	so(khe) so(khe)
Ta	go/walk	ta(khe) ta(khe)
Ko	come	ko(khe) ko(khe)
Kro	come down	kro(khe) kro(khe)
Khru	go up	khru(khe) khru(khe)
Pi	give	pi(khe) pi(khe)
Kho	ask	kho(khe) kho(khe)
Anhu	shake	anhu(khe) anhu(khe)
Da	beat	da(khe) da(khe)

The intensity mentioned here does not indicate any positive or negative senses, rather a neutral one. Such kind of construction can be applied to most of the action verbs in the language.

# **Lexical Relation**

## Chapter 4

### Lexical relations

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#### 4.1 Introduction

Language is a set of sounds systematised meaningfully to form and convey concepts. This systematised set of sounds called language which is used for communication is difficult and at times baffling for serious study of meaning for its various and multifarious purpose. For the study of meaning, linguists divide these sounds into smallest units that carry meaning called morphemes. However it is to be noted here that this phonic substance called morphemes are rejected by Whole Word morphologist/seamless morphologists<sup>24</sup>, who claimed that the smallest meaningful sets of phonic material to be analysed in a language should be word itself. This rejection need not be the base nor be an argument for the study of lexical relation but it is to be noted here that in the study of lexical relations, a morpheme does not appear and the smallest meaningful sets to analyse should be the word or the lexicon of the language itself. This is also not a claim that any sets that are smaller than word (morpheme) or bigger than word (phrase etc.) does not carry meaning. The emphasis presented here is just to represent the meaning of each word, taking it as a basic unit having both form and meaning, a list of which constitutes the lexicon of a language, and the relations that holds between them. Word is not taken in the sense of grammatical word where for instance, *eat*, *eats* and *eating* belongs to three different grammatical word; but in the sense of ‘noninterruptibility’ (Giridhar, 1991:3) of a

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<sup>24</sup> Ford and Singh, 2003

linguistic unit or having no 'potential pause' (Giridhar, 1991:13) between components of a lexical unit or a string of sounds and usually separated by a space in the written form. Strictly speaking, word here means the lexeme which is a set of related meaning associated with a set of word forms. In other words, lexeme refers to form (linguistic label) the meaning of which cannot be determined from knowledge of anything else in the language<sup>25</sup>. Thus, in the above example, *eat*, *eats* and *eating* is a set of word form of the lexeme *eat*. Lexemes are those units which are listed separately in the main entries of the dictionary.

Study of relationship of meaning between two or more words is known as sense relations. Sense relations can be studied under two main heads depending on the grammatical relationship between two words bearing senses. The firsts known as paradigmatic relations are those where relations are established between words which can occupy the same syntactic slot. In the second, called the syntagmatic relations, senses are established between words in the same phrases or sentences.

In semantic study of a particular language, different grammatical categories can be accounted for, however, in the present study only nouns and verbs are picked up for analysis of lexical relations.

## **4.2 Hyponymy**

The term hyponymy was first coined in linguistics by Bazell in 1955. The term refers to the relationship of semantic inclusion that holds between a more general term such as 'tool' and a specific one such as 'hammer'. The more general term is called the

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<sup>25</sup> See Nogle, 1974: 16

super-ordinate term or hypernym (sometimes also called hyperonym), and the included or more specific items, as the etymology suggests, are the hyponyms or the subordinate terms. This type of sense relation describes what happened when we say ‘an x is a kind of y’ – a hammer is a kind of tool, or just, a hammer is a tool. Thus the relationship obtained in hyponymy is in terms of the ‘is a’ relationship or as some puts it ‘is a kind/type of’ relation rather than the simple ‘is a’ – relation. This relationship between the lexemes can best be demonstrated in the form of a tree diagram where a more general term is placed on top of the tree and the more specific terms branches underneath. Thus in Mao sübo ‘tree’ would include different type of trees that are found in the region.

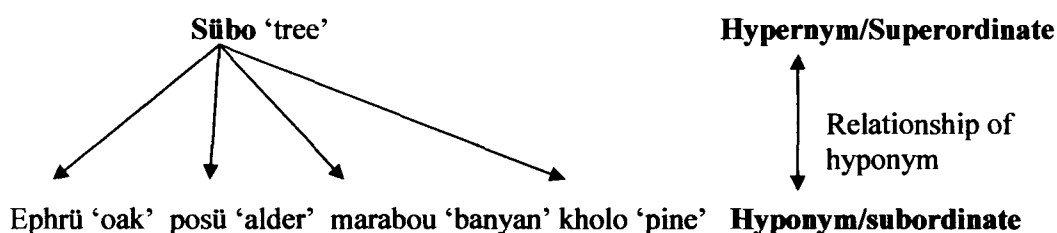


Fig. 1

Such type of classification where a division is made between the higher and the included terms is a concept that occurs in every language. However, the system works differently as this classification depends on how a particular community conceptualizes the relations between the superordinate and their subordinate. In other word, hierarchies in lexical structure represent the speaker’s conception of how the world is organized in that culture. This will be illustrated from examples for ‘vegetables’ and ‘animals’ below, where a distinction is made between the wild and non-wild varieties.

Thus in Mao *ovupro* ‘vegetables’ as a super-ordinate term would include both that are grown at home as ‘ovu’, and the other branch is ‘orulevu’ meaning those vegetables that are found wild. The etymology of some of the vegetable will be interesting to look at. For example, *kofüpro* ‘*Allium chinensis*’ (a kind of spring onion) is derived from *koprüpro*. The name of this vegetable is given because it serves as a medicine for the disease *koprü* ‘chicken pox’ and *pro* means ‘medicine’. It is worth mentioning here that almost an equal number of vegetables consumed by the community are found as wild.

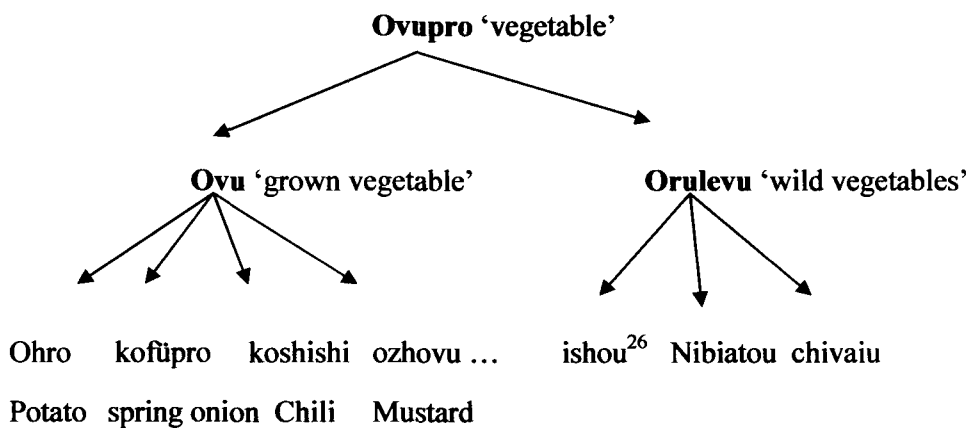


Fig.2

Other divisions of the general term into its specific inclusive items can be made of the animals that are found in the area. This is an area that would be interesting to look into because animals of every size and shape are hunted down for food and are relish by the community. Hunting as stated earlier are carried out not only by individuals or groups but at times carried out by the whole village especially prior to festivals.

<sup>26</sup> Ishou ‘impatiens’ *Impatiens annuliferer*; nibiadou ‘polygonum’ *Polygonum runcinatum*; chivaiu ‘spilanthes’ *Spilanthes paniculata*. Source of common name and scientific names are from Mao (1997)

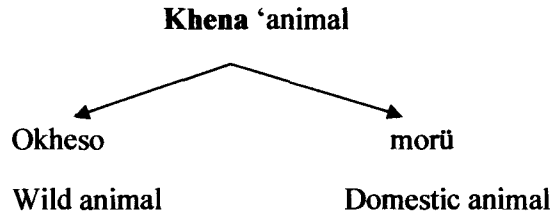


Fig. 3.

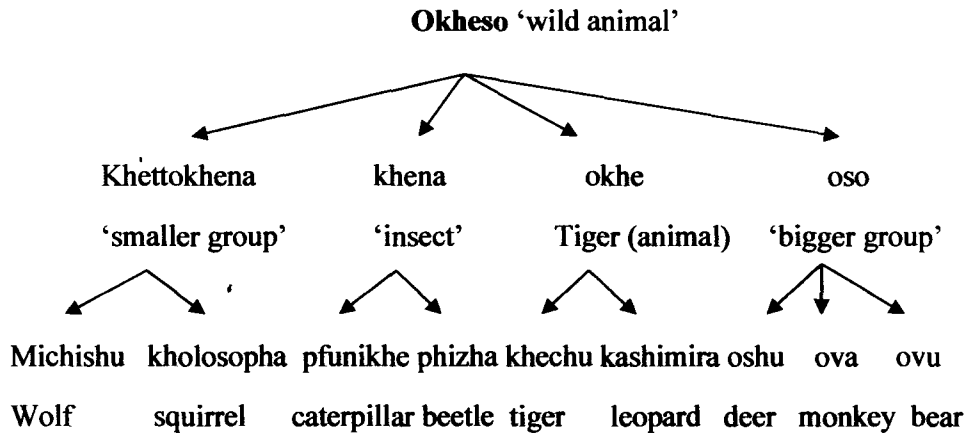


Fig. 4

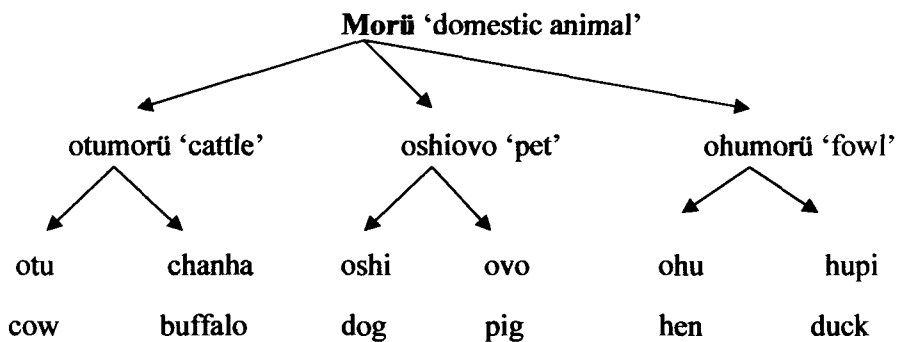


Fig. 5

The first task which confronts us in classifying 'animal' into its hierarchical taxonomies in Mao is the terminological problem. Mao does not have a parallel English term for animal. Therefore, a compounded word 'okhlikohrüna' was coined while Bible was been translated into the language in early 1950s. However, a literal translation of the word would mean 'all animal that lives' and thus, the purpose of

finding an equivalent English terminology was not actually succeeded. This claim can be substantiated by the fact that a Mao speaker would give a translation of animal in the language as 'khena' in an informal conversation which is considered as the closest English equivalent rather than the coined word 'okhelikohrüna'.

The super ordinate term 'animal' in English would include all of its kind as its hyponym without necessarily branching it into a more general term but the superordinate term 'khena' in Mao would first branches into *okheso* 'wild animal' and *morü* 'domestic animal' as shown in fig.3. Classification of animal in Mao would thus be more appropriate if *okheso* and *morü* would be placed under separate superordinate term without necessarily having another hypernym to incorporate it. Thus, unlike English system of classification which directly includes the specific items/lexemes under its super ordinate terms, in Mao *okheso* would again subdivided into *khetto-khena* (*tto* indicates diminutive) which is generally refer to lower/smaller animals such as *michishu* 'wolf', *kholosopha* 'squirrel' *korei* 'mongoose', etc. which is the actual hyponyms of the super ordinate term *khetto-khena*. Other subdivisions as given in fig. 4 are *khena* which is an English equivalent of 'insect' includes *pfunikhe* 'caterpillar', *phizha* 'beetle', *nhorü* 'centipede' etc.; *oso* a term referring to higher/larger animals which may include hyponyms such as *ipre* 'elephant', *ova* 'monkey', *oshu* 'deer', *ovu* 'bear' etc; and *okhe* includes *khechu* 'tiger' *kashimira* 'leopard' etc.

Coming to domesticated animals which is shown in fig. 5 we have *morü* as the superordinate term under which covers the classes *otumorü* 'cattle', *ohumorü* 'domestic fowl' and *oshiovo* could be pet but not necessarily English equivalent and

the literal meaning is 'dogs and pigs'. The included specific animals under *otumorü* are *otu* 'cow', *chanha* 'buffalo' etc; the sister taxonomies of *ohumorü* are 'chicken', *hupi* 'duck' *rahu* 'pigeon' etc. and the hyponyms of *oshiovo* are *oshi* 'dog' and *ovo* 'pig'.

From the above given example we can say that in the system of classification of animals in Mao the distinction/division is made basing on its size, utility and its closeness to the people. Thus, while *khetto khena* and *khena* are purely based on its size, *oso* is classified basing both on its size and its utility as this group of animals are considered as a real game hunting of which not only brings more prize but also gain one's status for his dexterity. *Morü* and *okhe* on the other hand are classed due to its closeness to the people. *Morü* is closed to the community as the number of cattle is considered as a depiction of one's wealth. Wealth as in every other community commands respect and therefore the Maos treat their animals well. This could be one of the reasons why cattle are not been used as beast of burden in the community. *Okhe* on the other hand commands equal respect from the people because it is considered, as a myth goes, an elder brother of man. It is believed and practice even today that one should not kill a tiger unless one is under attack. The belief goes that if a person meets a tiger on the way and if he commands him to go away from his path, the tiger would obey him.

### **4.3 Meronomies**

We deal with class-inclusive relationship in hyponymy. The semantic relationship that holds between parts and its corresponding whole is known as meronymy sometimes known as paronymy. Thus, while in hyponymy the relation that hold is 'is a/is a kind

of' relation, in meronymy the relation is 'is a part of' relationship. The branching of lexical hierarchies between the part-whole relationships is a phenomenon where all natural languages exhibit but the extent of relationship may vary from one language to another. This can be seen from fig. 9 below where Mao has a separate lexeme for 'in the sole' *philekotho* which is absent in many languages. For demonstration of the whole concept of meronymy, a general classification of the body and its parts or constituents will be taken for illustration:

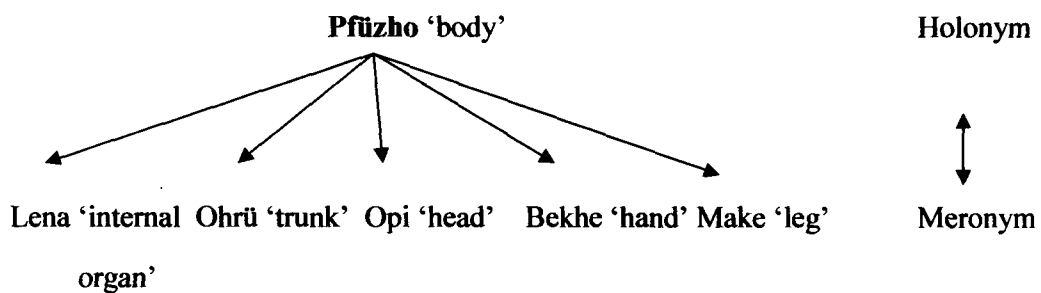


Fig. 6

In fig.6 *pfüzho* which is the holonym has been branched into five meronomies such as *lena*, which indicates the internal parts of the body, *ohrü* 'trunk', *opi* 'head' *bekhe* 'hand' and *make* 'leg'. However, the classification does not end there, rather goes further where the meronomies themselves becomes the holonymy. For instance, *lena* would further branches into *mosü* 'liver' *oprü* 'spleen', *korie* 'intestine', *bobvü* 'stomach', *ofou* 'lung' *molotho* 'heart' etc.

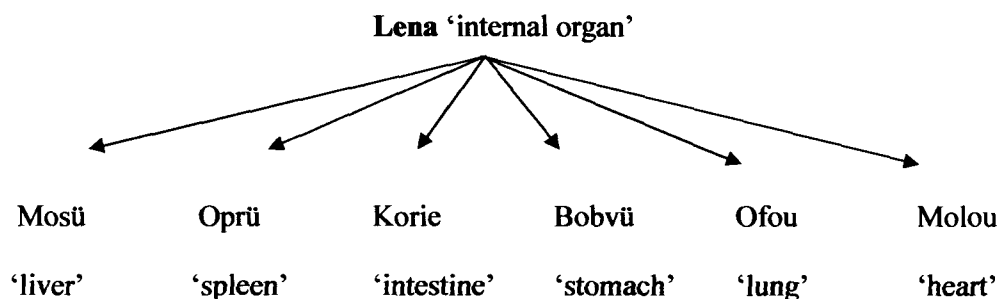


Fig. 7

Like in fig. 7 all the meronymies of fig. 6 could be branched to its constituent parts and further branched again to include the parts that this meronymies are made up of. To see such examples let us look again into the parts 'hand' is made up of:

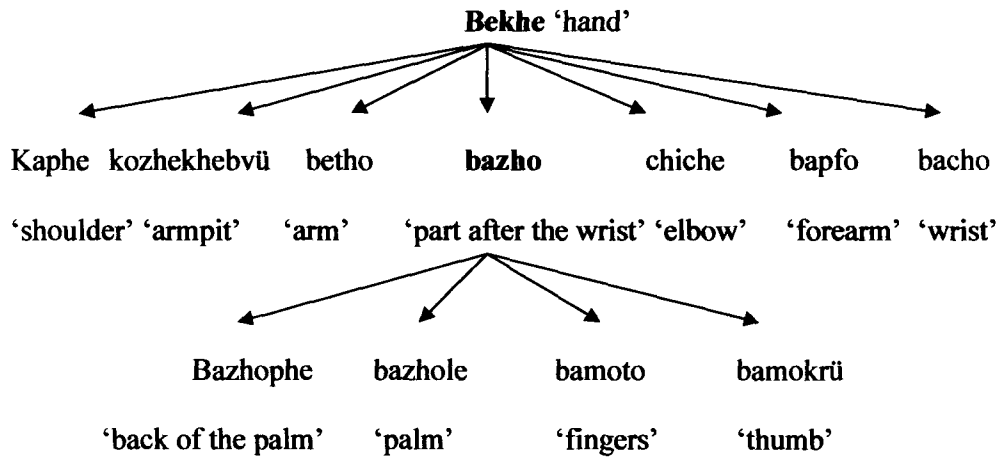


Fig. 8

From the above examples we can deduce that a classification could go on being branched till it reaches the smallest constituents where further division is not allowed in the language. In such a situation the hierarchical diagram would be of the sort as shown below.

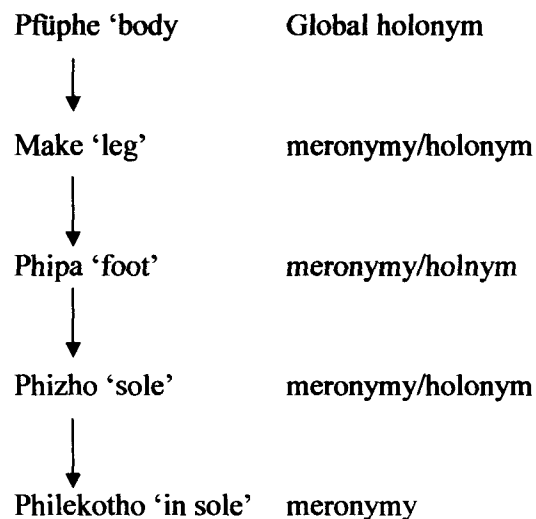


Fig. 9

*Pfüpfe* in fig. 9 is given as global holonym as the chain of relations stops there. *Make* 'leg' is the meronymy of *pfüphe* and at the same time a holonym of *phipa* 'front foot', which in turn is the holonym of *phizho* 'sole'. *Phizho* is again the immediate holonym of *philekotho* 'in sole'.

In arrangement of classification of items and its inclusive parts into its taxonomic structure, it is not necessary to carry out an anatomical dissection in order to arrange the parts in hierarchical order. For instance, Mao or for that matter many languages need not necessarily dissect a human body to know the heart, lung, lever etc, where it is considered to be a part of the human anatomical system. Hence Mao does enable its speakers to talk about, or to refer to the body-parts that form a whole, i.e. the body.

#### **4.4 Homonymy**

Homonymy is a phenomenon in which a phonological word exhibits multiple yet unrelated meanings of that word. Thus, a word 'bank' may mean a side of a river, a financial institution, and it is also a verb. In other words it can be said that homonyms are single phonological form with two or more unrelated meanings attached to it.

Homonymy and its structure can be studied and understood following a simple division of different types of homonymy as shown below:

*Words which have different meanings and different pronunciation but the same spelling*

These types of homonyms can be exemplified with English as follows;

sow /saʊ/	female pig
sow /səʊ/	to put seed in soil
lead /led/	name of a metal
lead /li:d/	guidance

The English system of classification as shown above does not work the same way in Mao context as Mao writing system follows closely the phonetic representation in its orthography. Mao is also a tonal language<sup>27</sup> though tones are not represented in its orthography. Tone in Mao is phonemic which give rise to the difference in the tonality would lead to changes in the meaning of a particular word. Therefore thus while discussing homonymy in Mao there is a necessity of taking tone into account as the change of meaning is also determined by its tone. It would be worth mentioning here that all minimal pairs of tone words in Mao that shows a change in its semantic property would fall under this category. These types of homonyms are also known as homograph: many senses of the same written word. The

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<sup>27</sup> Giridhar (1994) recognized four registered tone in Mao. He also notices the fifth but does not recognized terming it as an idiosyncratic feature which does not have effect on the majority of the speakers. However, it is to be stated that the fifth one which shows some characteristic of contour with a raising feature appears not only in one or two words but in many which is clearly different from the one which he puts together. Therefore, the total number of tones in Mao is five with high, lower high, mid, low and rising which are represented by 1,2,3,4, and 5 respectively. However, further research is needed.

difference of tone in Mao in its written form can only be understood through its context. This can be illustrated as below:

Example

(a)

1. ozhe /o<sup>3</sup>z<sup>h</sup>e<sup>1</sup>/ long jump
2. ozhe /o<sup>3</sup>z<sup>h</sup>e<sup>2</sup>/ rat
3. ozhe /o<sup>3</sup>z<sup>h</sup>e<sup>3</sup>/ sea
4. ozhe /o<sup>3</sup>z<sup>h</sup>e<sup>4</sup>/ wine
5. ozhe /o<sup>3</sup>z<sup>h</sup>e<sup>5</sup>/ blood



(b)

1. osü /os<sup>1</sup>/ swamp
2. osü /os<sup>2</sup>/ wood
3. osü /os<sup>3</sup>/ breath
4. osü /os<sup>4</sup>/ barley

(c)

1. omo /o<sup>3</sup>mo<sup>1</sup>/ vagina
2. omo /o<sup>3</sup>mo<sup>2</sup>/ no
3. omo /o<sup>3</sup>mo<sup>3</sup>/ pumpkin
4. omo /o<sup>3</sup>mo<sup>4</sup>/ name of a bird (quill)
5. omo /o<sup>3</sup>mo<sup>5</sup>/ brother-in-law

(d)

1. odo /o<sup>3</sup>do<sup>1</sup>/art/technique of politeness
2. odo /o<sup>3</sup>do<sup>2</sup>/attention caller
3. odo /o<sup>3</sup>do<sup>3</sup>/layer
4. odo /o<sup>3</sup>do<sup>4</sup>/field ridge
5. odo /o<sup>3</sup>do<sup>5</sup>/paddy field

*Words which have different meanings and different spellings but same pronunciation*

Few English examples of this type are:

Knight and night

Feet and feat

Hear and here

Deer and dear

This category of classification of homonyms is peculiar to English and perhaps few languages and cannot be applied to Mao language because the written system in Mao, as stated earlier, closely follows the phonetic system (non-technical/loose usage of the term 'phonetic'). Thus, written system of Mao does not allow usage of the different orthography for different words and yet have the same pronunciation. Therefore, there is hardly any possibility that two different words with the same pronunciation occur in the orthography of Mao. This type of homonyms are also known as homophones; distinct words with the same pronunciation.

*Words which have different meanings but same pronunciation and same spelling*

Example of this type are shown by pairs such as

ear     organ of hearing

ear     seed-bearing part of a cereal plants like wheat, barley, etc.

Here it should be kept in mind that when dealing with the pronunciation we are also taking into consideration the notion of tone in the language. Thus, the following groups of words have the same segmental phonemes, same tone, same

spelling yet they differ in meaning. These types of homonyms are homophonous and at the same time homographaphic. The meaning of these words can be understood only from the context of use. Following illustrate such types of category in Mao.

- (a)
- |   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| makəi /ma <sup>3</sup> kəi <sup>3</sup> / | gizzard                    |
| makəi /ma <sup>3</sup> kəi <sup>3</sup> / | twenty                     |
| makəi /ma <sup>3</sup> kəi <sup>3</sup> / | stare, esp. with bend neck |
- (b)
- |   |              |
|---|--------------|
| Make /ma <sup>3</sup> ke <sup>3</sup> / | leg/hind leg |
| Make /ma <sup>3</sup> ke <sup>3</sup> / | cold         |
- (c)
- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| Make /ma <sup>4</sup> ke <sup>2</sup> / | vomit esp. by babies |
| Make /ma <sup>4</sup> ke <sup>2</sup> / | to paste             |
| Make /ma <sup>4</sup> ke <sup>2</sup> / | to rear              |
- (d)
- |   |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| Mala /ma <sup>4</sup> la <sup>4</sup> / | (to) call out (someone) |
| Mala /ma <sup>4</sup> la <sup>4</sup> / | shallow                 |
| Mala /ma <sup>4</sup> la <sup>4</sup> / | reverse/inside out      |
- (e)
- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| Okhro /o <sup>3</sup> k <sup>h</sup> ro <sup>1</sup> / | moon  |
| Okhro /o <sup>3</sup> k <sup>h</sup> ro <sup>1</sup> / | stag  |
| Okhro /o <sup>3</sup> k <sup>h</sup> ro <sup>1</sup> / | month |

As we have seen in the above discussion classification of homonyms are based on factors like pronunciation, meaning and spelling. However, types of homonyms can also be studied by taking syntactic features as one of its characteristics. This type

of classification can best be studied if we follow the postulation laid down by Saeed<sup>28</sup> which runs as follows:

*Lexemes of the same syntactic category, and with the same spelling*

Illustrating this feature, Saeed has taken *lap* 'circuit of a course' and *lap* 'part of body when sitting down' which both belongs to the same syntactic category: noun.

We shall now compare this type of homonyms which belongs to same syntactic category with Mao examples;

i. Verb

(a)

Make /ma <sup>5</sup> ke <sup>2</sup> /	vomit esp. by babies
Make /ma <sup>5</sup> ke <sup>2</sup> /	to paste
Make /ma <sup>5</sup> ke <sup>2</sup> /	to rear

ii. Noun

(a)

Ozhe /o <sup>3</sup> z <sup>h</sup> e <sup>1</sup> /	flight
Ozhe /o <sup>3</sup> z <sup>h</sup> e <sup>1</sup> /	character

(b)

Ozhe /o <sup>3</sup> z <sup>h</sup> e <sup>2</sup> /	rat
Ozhe /o <sup>3</sup> z <sup>h</sup> e <sup>2</sup> /	share

(c)

makəi /ma <sup>3</sup> kəi <sup>3</sup> /	gizzard
makəi /ma <sup>3</sup> kəi <sup>3</sup> /	twenty

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<sup>28</sup> See Saeed, 1997

(d)		
Okhro	/o <sup>3</sup> k <sup>h</sup> ro <sup>3</sup> /	body lice
Okhro	/o <sup>3</sup> k <sup>h</sup> ro <sup>3</sup> /	present
Okhro	/o <sup>3</sup> k <sup>h</sup> ro <sup>3</sup> /	plain

*Lexemes of different categories, but with the same spelling*

English example of this type of homonymy is the verb *keep* and the noun *keep*.

Likewise in Mao *makʃ* ‘twenty’ and is a noun and *makʃ* ‘to stare esp. with bend neck’ is a verb. Also *make* ‘leg/hind leg’ is a noun and *make* ‘cold’ is an adjective.

*Lexemes of the same category, but with different spellings: e.g., the verbs ‘ring’ and ‘wring’.*

*Lexemes of different category, and with different spelling: e.g., ‘not’ and ‘knot’.*

As has been discussed earlier, Mao orthography system would not allow different spellings to have the same pronunciation and thus the question of these types of homonymy does not arise here. Therefore, the above two of Saeed’s classification does not come into picture when talking about Mao language.

#### **4.5 Polysemy**

The term polysemy is derived from Greek words *poly* – meaning ‘many’ and *sem* meaning ‘sense’ or ‘meaning’ to refer to a single linguistic form having multiple yet related senses. Though both polysemy and homonymy deals with a single phonological form having multiple meanings, the difference between the two is that polysemy deals with related meaning while homonymy with unrelated meaning. This

distinction is made clear by lexicographer while designing a dictionary by clasping polysemous sense under the same lexical entry whereas homonymous senses are given a separate entry. Following this we can say that polysemy deals only with a single lexical item, as in e.g. 2. below, while homonymy deals with two or more lexemes as in e.g. 1. below.

For example,

1. koso ‘long’	kovo koso	‘long bamboo’
	opi koso	‘headache’

2. ophi ‘feet’ has the following meanings:

- a. part of the body
- b. korü phi ‘side/bank of the river’ literally, ‘the feet of a river’
- c. obu phi ‘leg of stool’

Example (2) illustrates polysemy in the sense that in Mao it refers to the concept that a thing stands on its feet. This concept of foot/feet extends even to things like tree ‘sübo phi’ (sübo-tree), ‘pfoki phi’ foot of a hill/mountain (pfoki – hill/mountain), wheel, literally, legs of a vehicle ‘korü phi’ (korü – vehicle) etc. This shows that metaphorical extension has been carried forward to things that are recent but having similar characteristics. Whereas (1) exemplifies homonymous sense as the two meanings are completely unrelated even though the two forms have the same phonological structure. This is the reason why such types of words are considered different lexemes though they have the same phonological form.

One of the criteria that distinguish polysemy from homonymy besides the criteria of relatedness of meaning between the two lexemes/words is to see the historical derivations of a particular word; in other word the etymology of a particular word i.e., to see whether the polysemic senses of a word is etymologically related to particular source. Thus identical forms having different meanings yet the same origin are considered polysemous and the form that have different meaning and different origin as homonymy.

Examples of polysemy are:

3. opro 'grass'

a. grass or herb

b. medicine

4. okhro 'moon'

a. moon as heavenly body

b. month

c. tax

Mao language is reduced to its written form very lately that is late 1920s and thus to trace out the etymology of all the words might pose a great challenge even for etymologists. Yet, to relate example (3) and (4) to the same origin could be explained. Until recently, medicines for most of the ailments are extracted from medicinal plants which are mostly grass and herbs. Likewise, Mao follows a lunar calendar and the calculation of the days of the month is purely based on the phases of the moon. Also taxes are collected on monthly basis. This shows that there is clearly a derived sense relation between the two polysemic senses which can be attributed to the same source

of origin. However, this is not the case with homonymy as shown in example (5), below. Here there is no relation between the two homonymous senses that can justify the possibility of originating from the same origin.

Secondly, we have a type of polysemous words whose difference of meaning are rather regular and to some extent predictable which we attribute the derivation to metaphorical extension of the primary meaning. The literal or primary meaning of a word are extended to objects that shares a similarity in form or its function paving a way to refer the two together with the same word. The metaphorical extension of the literal or primary meaning results in forming polysemic senses of a word.

This type of relation between the primary meaning and its derived senses can be illustrated as under;

5. make

- a. leg
- b. cold

6. tu 'run'

- a) action verb
- b) elope
- c) escape

7. mata 'send'

- a) the act of sending article or things
- b) the act of sending a person

In examples (5), (6) and (7), a) indicates the literal/primary meaning and b) and c) the extended meanings. While in both the examples the metaphorical extension is based on the action of something changing its position, in (6a) the action of leaving a place is rather fast/hurriedly but in (7) hastiness is not the necessary condition for a change in its position.

From the above discussions we realize that the two lexical relations: polysemy and homonymy deals with ambiguity of words. While polysemy deals with those ambiguities with unrelated readings, homonymy deals with ambiguity with related readings. This can also be seen in the lexical entries in dictionary where homonymous words are given two main entries or more, polysemous variants are given under one main head.

#### **4.6 Synonymy**

Synonymy is derived from Greek words ‘συν’ syn meaning *plus* and ‘ὄνομα’ onoma meaning *name* to refer to two or more words which have a similar or identical meaning. Lyons (1968) provides a more technical definition of synonymy in terms of bilateral implication, or equivalence: ‘If one sentence,  $S_1$ , implies another sentence,  $S_2$ , and if the converse also holds,  $S_1$  and  $S_2$  are equivalent: i.e. if  $S_1 \supset S_2$  and if  $S_2 \supset S_1$ , then  $S_1 \equiv S_2$ . If now two equivalent sentences have the same syntactic structure and differ from one another only in where one has a lexical item, X, the other has Y, then X and Y are synonymous’. Here, Lyons is taking synonymy in term of ‘sameness of meaning’. However, there is a general agreement among semanticists that a synonym of these types is a phenomenon which is very rare in any natural language. Talking in

the same vain, Ullmann<sup>29</sup> noted that ‘it is almost a truism that total synonymy is an extremely rare occurrence, a luxury that language can ill afford’. Arguing further, Ullmann states that true synonyms are those words or lexemes which have exactly the same meaning in all contexts ‘without a slightest change either in cognitive or emotive import’. Total synonymy is therefore words which can interchange in all contacts without the slightest change in the meaning, while partial synonyms are those lexemes which overlap each other in certain domain of meaning. In other word, partial synonyms have the property of interchangeability in certain context yet substitution of the same leads to a change of meaning in another context. Following with the discussion stated above we are of the opinion that no two lexical items which bears the same semantic resemblance to one another survive in a natural language. If ever such a relationship exists, it becomes unstable giving rise to changes in its semantic traits either in its denotative or connotative or in other word cognitive or emotive sense. In this vain Ullmann (1972) quote Breal’s *law of distribution* in language where ‘words which should be synonymous, and which were so in the past, have acquired different meanings and are no longer interchangeable’. However, Ullmann while considering technical nomenclature such as scientific and industrial terminologies says that ‘absolute synonymy is by no means infrequent’ (1972: 141). He further says that while it is true about the infrequency of total/absolute synonymy in languages yet ‘it would be wrong to deny the possibility of complete synonymy’ (op. cit.: 141). Taking this as a based for study it would be interesting to look into the situation of Mao. Now whether to consider it as an exception or as one among the rarest of the case, examples of true or absolute synonymy can be found in Mao. However, in the lexemes one of its pair is a borrowed and taken into the language and

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<sup>29</sup> See Lyons, 1968

behaves like a native language. Here both the borrowed and the native word exist side by side with equal status and usage having the same denotative, connotative and emotive meaning. Thus, *alu* a word borrowed from Indo-Aryan through Manipuri and the Mao/native word *ohro* both stands for 'potato'. The two words thus replace each other in all contexts without a slightest change in the meaning.

Alu: Ohro 'Potato'

1. Ichu alu/ohro kali chilu kotie.

ichu alu/ohro kali chilu ko tie

now potato to sow time come perf. + SM

'Now the time has come to sow potato'

2. Atamai izho alu/ohro botoe

atamai izho alu/ohro bo toe

we today potato cooked eat + SM

'We had potato today (for meal)'

3. Tthoprü le alu/ohro zhü-te pra-e.

tthoprü le alu/ohro zhü te pra-e.

garden PP potato good very coming out + SM

'Potato is growing very well in the garden'

The list of sentences can go on without slightest difference in respect of its semantic traits in any context. Likewise a lexeme which exhibit a similar property is where a word is borrowed, nativized and used and then later coined an equivalent

native word for the same. This can be seen in instance where the nativised form ‘dosla’ (an Assamese/Hindi word) and then coined as ‘mipro’ for matchbox. Like in the previous example, a native speaker may be more inclined to use the coined word for any literature, yet in usage, it has the same status, perhaps, more weight can even be given to ‘dosla’ in everyday use. However, this does not deny the fact that sameness of meaning between the two lexemes is not altered in any sense.

1. mipro/dosla na ti moko pio

Match box nom det. Pass give

‘Pass me the match’

2. onatto khruno mipro/dosla bvüro no pfo kokru w e

Child Pl. match box empty acc. take play prog. SM

‘children are playing with empty match box’

3. doka leno ko mipro/dosla hrülo tara

Shop nom go match buy go

‘Go and match from the shop’

However, this should not be misunderstood with a coined word for *hour*, *nhuda*; *nheiphi* for *minute* etc. where such a word may be used in literature and most often used in radio program but in spoken language *baji*, a word borrowed from Hindi or Assamese and *minute* which is itself an English word is used.

As discussed, pure synonyms are extremely uncommon in a language, and synonymy which most semanticist talk about is partial synonymy where two or more

words shares identical semantic resemblance in certain context. Partial synonymy in Mao can be discussed under dialectal synonymy as an illustration.

#### **4.6.1 Dialectal Synonymy**

Dialectal Synonyms are those synonyms in which a pair of different words belonging to different dialects of the same language exhibits similar semantic property. In other words dialectal synonymy would consider the synonyms of two or more varieties in a language. As stated earlier, basically Mao is classified into three major varieties. The present analysis of the data will concentrate only to those pairs of lexemes which are very distinct from the other varieties and will ignore those variations which could probably be traced to the same root. The intonations or difference only in its sound patterns between the varieties will not be taken into account in the present study. To be more specific, a particular village variety which differs from all others and at the same time synonymous will only be considered. The dialect considered would be those lexical items which show maximum variation, that is, between the lexemes. The dialects that will consider in the present study are Pfosemai and Ekhramai variety which not only varies in pronunciation but also shows completely certain different lexical items from the majority of the varieties.

The following examples will illustrate dialectal synonymy between Pfosemai variety with other (here 'other' refers to all other varieties except the one taken for comparison) varieties.

<b>Pfosemai variety</b>	<b>others</b>
1. doli	opo
2. darü	opro

1. **opo: doli** 'fifty paise'

a. ozhe prai kali hi **opo** we (others)

rice beer glass one det. 50 p Hab. SM

A cup of rice beer cost 50 pieces

b. ozhe prai kali hi **doli** we (Pfosemai)

rice beer glass one det. 50 p Hab. SM

A cup of rice beer cost 50 piece

2. **opro: darü** 'medicine'

a. lishi moli **opro** kochuma to sho (others)

unwell neg medicine simply eat neg SM

Do not simply take medicine if you are not unwell.

b. lishi moli **darü** kochuma to sho (Pfosemai)

unwell neg medicine simply eat neg SM

Do not simply take medicine if you are not unwell.

The above synonymous pair belongs to different dialects. While all the other village varieties uses *opo* and *opro* as shown; Pfosemai variety uses 'dolai' and 'darü' however, some Pfosemai speakers also uses 'oprodarü' to refer to medicine. Thus it is likely that they can produce the following sentence:

c. lishi moli **opro-darū** kochuma to sho (Pfosemai)

unwell neg medicine simply eat neg SM

Do not simply take medicine if you are not unwell.

Similarly, the following examples will illustrate how the Ekhramai variety differs from all other in some lexical items.

3. **livo: tama** ‘bed bug’

a. ozū na va ti **livo** phro we (others)

bed Nom pp det bed bug plenty Hab. SM

There are plenty of bed bugs on that bed

b. ozū na va ti **tama** phro we (Ekhramai)

bed Nom pp det bed bug plenty Hab.SM

There are plenty of bed bugs on that bed

4. **Choko: Chakrū** ‘nine’

a. ochi olu le omai **choko** bu-e (others)

house within pp person nine have SM

There are nine persons in the house.

b. ochi olu le omai **chakrū** bu-e (others)

house within pp person nine have SM

There are nine persons in the house.

5. **oso: kanhi** ‘meat’

a. atamai izho **oso** bo to le (others)

we today meat cook eat fut SM

We will have meat today.

b. atamai izho **kanhi** bo to le (Ekhramai)

we today meat cook eat fut SM

We will have meat today.

The example in 5 has some exception as well. While other varieties do not differentiate between cooked or uncooked/raw meat, the Ekhramai variety differentiates between the two. The lexical item 'kanhi' refers to the raw or the uncooked meat and for the cooked meat is referred to as 'oso'.

#### 4.7 Antonymy

The word antonym is derived from Greek words *anti* 'against' and *onoma* 'name' and was first coined by C.J. Smith in 1867. Antonymy refers to a relationship of semantic contrast between words<sup>30</sup>. This definition according to Steven Jones (2002) is the semantic definition but,

The problem with an exclusive semantic definition of antonymy is that it fails to explain, or even acknowledge, the tendency for certain words to become enshrined as 'opposites' in language while others do not. Antonyms are semantically opposed words, but not all semantically opposed words are antonyms. Consider *rich* and *poor*, a pair of words which operate along a given scale, namely the scale of wealth. *Affluent* and *broke* also operate along this scale, but, intuitively, one would be reluctant to describe them as antonyms (or, at least, one would not want to describe them as having the same degree of antonymity as *rich/poor*). (Steven Jones 2002:10)

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<sup>30</sup> See Jones, 2002

Jones further goes on with another definition to handle aspects which have not been touched by semantic definition where antonymy is defined by referring to its lexical meaning which is 'specific to words rather than concepts'. In other words, antonyms are lexemes/words which are opposite in meaning. Thus, after giving the two different categories of defining antonymy he came to a conclusion saying that for any definition of antonymy to be satisfactory it should include the criteria of both the semantic as well as the lexical aspect.

Antonymy and its types have been dealt with by different writers under different categories. This prompted Crystal (2003) to give a cautious note when he says, 'It is a matter of controversy how many types of opposites one should usefully recognize in semantic analysis, and the use of the term *antonym* must always be viewed with caution'. The present study would follow Jones' framework of general classification of antonymy which is 1 Non-gradable antonymy 2 Gradable antonymy and 3 Reciprocal antonymy.

#### **4.7.1 Non-gradable antonymy**

Non-gradable antonymy popularly known as complementaries are pairs of antonyms in which the truth of one word in the pair implies the falsity of the other and similarly the falsity of one implies the truth of the other. In other words, negating either of the term logically implies the other. This is made clearer by Cruse (op cit) when he says

The essence of a pair of complementaries is that between them they exhaustively divide some conceptual domain into two mutually exclusive compartments, so that what does not fall into one of the compartments must necessarily fall into the other. There is no 'no-man's-land', no neutral ground,

and no possibility of a third term lying between them. Examples of complementaries are: *true: false, dead: alive, open: shut, hit: miss* (a target), *pass: fail* (an examination).

We can recognize complementaries by the fact that if we deny that one term applies to some situation, we effectively commit ourselves to the applicability of the other term; and if we assert one term, we implicitly deny the other. Thus *John is not dead* entails and is entailed by *John is alive*; and *The door isn't open* entails and is entailed by *The door is shut*.

(Cruse 1986: 198, 199)

Jones echoed a similar opinion when he says

The criterion necessary for an opposition to be considered non-gradable is that the application of one antonym must logically preclude the application of the other. For instance, if X is a *man*, X cannot be a *woman*; if X is *married*, X cannot also be *unmarried*, and so on. (Jones 2003)

Thus non-gradable or complementary antonyms are pairs that express an either/or relationship and the few Mao examples that could fall under this categories are;

kathe ~ kahrü	'dead ~ alive'
nitto ~ pfutto	'female ~ male'
inakai ~ izhokai	'left handed ~ right handed' etc.

It is worth mentioning here that Cruse (op cit) recognized four sub-type of antonymy under complementarity where instead of inherently binary sets of oppositeness he creates lexical triples. These are reversives, interactives, satisfactives,

and counteractives. The reversive complementarity is shown by the set *be born: live: die*. The reversivity is characterised by the changes in the opposing directions. Thus in the above example the outer pairs (*be born* and *die*) are reversives while *live* and *die* are just complementaries. The second sub-type is interactives which have a 'stimulus-response' type of relationship where 'the verb expressing the precondition for complementarity denotes an action which has as its goal the elicitation of the response denoted by its interactive opposite'. Under this category in the set *command: obey: disobey, obey* and *disobey* are binary responses to a given stimuli (command) which are also complementaries and *command* is interactive with both *obey* and *disobey*. The term 'satisfactive' denotes the relationship between attempting to do something and its successful performance of the act like, *compete: win: lose*. The last of the sub-type is counteractive where the first of the triplet denotes an aggressive action, the second and active action to counter it while the third is a passive submission to the action. Example is *attack: defend: submit*.

#### **4.7.2 Gradable Antonymy**

Gradable antonymy refers to those pairs of opposites where the truth of one word in the pair implies the falsity of the other but the falsity of one does not necessarily imply the truth of the other. Cruse (op cit) following Lyons would rather term it as 'antonyms' than the term 'gradable antonyms' and the term for 'antonymy' as 'oppositeness'. Under antonyms Cruse had laid down the following characteristics;

1. they are fully gradable (most are adjectives; a few are verbs)

2. members of a pair denote degrees of some variable property such as length, speed, weight, accuracy, etc.
3. when more strongly intensified, the members of a pair move, as it were, in opposite directions along the scale representing degrees of the relevant variable property. Thus, *very heavy* and *very light*, for instance, are more widely separated on the scale of weight than *fairly heavy* and *fairly light*.
4. the terms of a pair do not strictly bisect a domain: there is a range of values of the variable property, lying between those covered by the opposed terms, which cannot be properly referred to by either term. As a result, a statement containing one member of an antonym pair stands in a relation of contrariety with the parallel statement containing the other term. Thus, *It's long* and *It's short* are contrary, not contradictory, statements.

(Cruse 1986: 204)

Unlike non-gradable antonyms where there is a strict application of 'either/or relationship', in gradable antonymy the oppositeness runs along a scale of semantic dimension with intermediate terms in between the two pair. Typical example of gradable antonyms can be seen in extreme pair like hot/cold with warm, tepid and cold as intermediary. This shows that if a thing is not hot it does not necessarily imply that it is cold rather it could be warm, tepid or cool. Also a thing can be neither hot nor cold. This shows that the dimension runs along a continuous and non-gradable scale. However, it should not be confused with a one-dimensional discontinuous and non-gradable scale such as 'ranks' as denoting the military status/position (general/colonel/major...) and also a single conceptual dimension as the days of the week or month of the year which does not have extremes such as hot and cold.

Another characteristic of gradable antonymy is that they are not mutually exclusive and they are readily modified (quite happy, extremely happy, fairly happy etc.) and also they can be change to its comparative and superlative form: happier; happiest. A point to be kept in mind while dealing gradable antonymy is the property of relative concept. This is to say that a thing can be taller than some other thing yet at the same time shorter than another; a tall man will certainly be shorter than a tall tree, a big ant is smaller than a big whale or for that matter even a small whale. The next characteristic is that in some pair one term is used as more basic or common than the other. For instance, it is more natural to ask of something how long or how wide something is without making any suggestion that the object is long or wide at all. However, a Mao speaker would refer to the length or width of the object rather than give a judgment basing on some referent point. For instance,

1. kasa koe

How long equational marker

‘What is the length?’

2. kalu koe

What size EQ

‘What is the width/size?’

However, for some other pair the preference of a pair from the other is not shown: *How hot is it?* and *How cold is it?* are equally natural depending on the context. Meaning to say that during winter it would be awkward to ask *How hot is it?*

Rather one would ask *How cold is it?* and during summer (unless on rainy season) it would be natural to ask *How hot is it?*

#### 4.7.3 Reciprocal Antonymy

Reciprocal antonyms are pairs of antonym where one item in the pair presupposes the other or in other word, the existence of one word in the pair inevitably implies the existence of the other. Steven Jones (2000) illustrates reciprocity of oppositeness in the pair landlord and tenant as “X is the landlord of Y entails and is entailed by Y is the tenant of X”. Thus this type of antonymy indicates the existence of a direct correlation between two entities from alternate viewpoints. There cannot be a husband without a wife, or in other word, if ‘A is the wife of B’ then it is for certain that ‘B is the husband of A’, likewise, we cannot buy something unless something is being sold, therefore, husband/wife, buy/sell falls under this category. Few examples of reciprocal antonymy in Mao can be shown by pairs such as:

Opi ~ okhro	‘above ~ below’
Nhodzü ~ othe	‘in front of ~ behind’
Ochümai ~ ocho	‘wife ~ husband’
Kopfo ~ kapi	‘receive ~ give’
Kozho ~ kohrü	‘sell ~ buy’

# **Semantic Field**

## Chapter 5

### Semantic Field

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#### 5.1 Introduction

Studies of meanings had been carried out using different approaches to understand and establish the facts of language. From the different approaches employed by scholars in looking at the lexical item, semantic field theory is taken as a constructive means not only in studying the meaning but also in understanding the way the speaker classifies the object of the world around them as per experience and their understanding or their usefulness. Semantic fields are groups of words that are intimately linked in meaning and subsuming the related sets under a general term.

At times a group of lexical items may be closely related and belongs to a semantic field yet a common term may not be there to subsume the related class of word. For example in Mao,

Make /make/	'rear (animal)'	'rear'
Moku /moko/	'rear (plant)'	'grow'
Koki /koki/	'rear (human)'	'bring-up'

While in Mao there exist no word that acts as a super-ordinate term to subsume the different kinds of rearing, yet it makes a clear differentiation between the three of them.

The choice of particular semantic fields presented in this paper does not indicate in any way nor make any claim that the researcher had taken all the semantic fields present in the language. For the present study, only those lexical fields that are of interest from the point of view of culturally related fields where a sense of the behaviour and habits of the community is embedded in the lexicon are taken for analysis. Culturally related semantic fields in the present study include kinship, colour terms, words for cooking, body parts etc.

## **5.2 Kinship**

The study of kinship reveals the composition of a community and the role relationship between various interlocutors. Kinship is a term used by cultural anthropologist to refer to different kinds of human social relationship such as biological relationship, social behaviour between individuals and also to the terms some people use when dealing with others in social situations. Generally when one talks of kinship terms, the reference of those genealogical linking is taken in consideration with the relation an ego has with other members. The social set up that can unveil in the study of kinship terminology is best explain by Duranti when she quotes Lounsbury's description of the Seneca's kinship which goes as follows:

Lounsbury (1969: 195), for instance, showed that in Seneca, unlike English and many other languages, a crucial distinction is made in terms of patrilineal vs. matrilineal kin, with the term *ha?nih* covering one's father, father's brother, father's mother's sister's son, father's father's brother's son, etc. and the term *hakhno?seh* applying to mother's brother, mother's mother's sister's son, mother's mother's brother's son, etc. *These examples show that linguistic*

*labels can give cultural anthropologists important clues about the type of social distinctions that are relevant for a given group* (italics are mine). This is true not only of what a language has but also of what it does not have. The fact that some languages do not have a translation for the English word privacy, for instance, might indicate that the concept of privacy is not present or it is conceptualized in ways that do not allow for a single word to represent it.

Duranti, 1997: 26

In Mao society, in a nuclear family the father is not simply the marriage partner of the mother at the onset of her pregnancy but also the genitor who is responsible for the personhood of the child, and consequently has responsibilities for the child and the right over it unlike the Nayar of Southern India<sup>31</sup> where a young man who engages himself in the premenstrual ceremony becomes the ultimate father of the child even though he is not the genitor of the child. The genitor in Mao immediately assumes the parenthood of the child. This claim can be further substantiated by the fact that in Mao system a child is mercilessly killed if the father of the child cannot be traced by the mother.

Social organization in Mao entirely rests on the clan system where classifications are made not on status or position but on the closeness of genealogical descent. Thus, any name of the clan in Mao would literally mean grand-sons and daughters of a particular person after which the name of the clan has been adopted. Exception is found where the names of a clan or two have the meaning of sons and daughters of that particular ancestor.

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<sup>31</sup> Foley, 1997:133

Mao follows a patrilineal descent practising clan exogamy and tribal endogamy system of matrimonial alliances. By exogamy is referred to custom of marriages taking place outside the community, clan or tribe, while endogamy refers to the custom of marriages taking place within the community, tribe or clan. It is worth noting here that preference in seeking partner, in olden days and applicable to some extent even today, is given to person outside the village. There are also cases in olden days that girls are forced to marry someone from the warring group to act as a messenger or at times as spy.

In dealing kinship terms here, the purpose would not be to trace the genealogical lineage but just to show how the Mao community understands the relation that holds between kinsmen. Terminological and the social relationship in which kin terms are used will be analysed and discussed in the present study. It should be noted that these kinship terms are also terms for address with and addition of a prefix 'a' which is a possessive marker.

Following Burling<sup>32</sup> kin terms are abbreviated as follows: Fa=father; Mo=mother; Br=brother; Si=sister; so=son; Da=daughter; Hu=husband; Wi=wife; ♂=male speaker; ♀=female speaker. Thus, SoWi would mean son's wife, SoSoDa would indicate son's son's daughter and so forth. The symbol ♂ prefixing a kin-type indicates that the term is used by male speakers only, likewise the female symbol ♀ stands for female speakers. When neither symbol precedes the term, the usage is employed by both male and female speakers. Some of the terminologies are given below.

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<sup>32</sup> See Burling, 1970

Pino /pino/	brother (male speaker)	♂Br
Oprou /opro:/	brother (female speaker)	♀Br
Otu /otu/	sister (male speaker)	♂Si
Mito/mito/	sister (female speaker)	♀Si
Ona /ona/	son	So
Onapei /onapei/	daughter	Da
Ochou/ochou /	husband	Hu
Ochimai /ochimai/	wife	Wi
Omo /o <sup>3</sup> mo <sup>2</sup> /	sister's husband	♂SiHu
Omo /o <sup>3</sup> mo <sup>3</sup> /	son's wife	SoWi
Opfu /opfu/	father, father's brother	Fa, FaBr
Opfū /opf/	mother, mother's sister	Mo, MoSi
Ote /ote/	grandson etc.	SoSo, SoDa, DaHu, ♂SiSo, etc. <sup>33</sup>
Ote tesho /ote tesho/	great grandson etc.	SoSoSo, SoSoDa, SoDaSo, etc.
Ovo /ovo/	nephew	♀BrSo
Ochu /oc <sup>h</sup> u/	sister-in-law	♀ESiHu, ♂EBrWi, ♀HuEBr
Oni /oni/	aunty	MoBrWi, FrSi, WiMo, etc.
Ope /ope/	grand father, etc.	MoFa, FaFa, MoBr, WiFa, HuFa
Opie /opie/	grandmother	MoMo, FaMo

It may be noted as given above that terms like *pino*, ‘brother’ and *otu*, ‘sister’ are terms used specifically by the male speaker, while their female counterpart uses *oprou* ‘brother’ and *mito* ‘sister’. These terms also refer to all the cousins, be it the

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<sup>33</sup> The present of “etc.” at the end of the lists of referents for each term indicates that these terms in principle apply to an infinite list of kin relationships.

first or second or even to a distant cousin be it parallel or cross-cousin. This does not in anyway shows that people are unable to distinguish one from the other but the concept is that there is an equal treatment to all kinsmen that shares a similar relationship with the ego. Thus, in situation where there is no male issue in a family a cousin (parallel/patrilineal cousin) will take the position of a brother. He will even inherit the properties that had been passed down by her parents. This is in contrast with the American culture<sup>34</sup> where a cousin does not in any way inherit anything from a father's brother's wife as it is considered as having no genealogical link. If at all he inherits, it is due to affectionate ties and not for any kinship ties. The difference in case of Mao community is, a married woman becomes a part of the family or clan and owes every responsibility to her newly adopted clan and loses her membership to the clan she belongs to before marriage. This is best explained by the term *chü-vu* '(husband) house go/come'<sup>35</sup> meaning to marry when the reference is to a girl<sup>36</sup>.

*O<sup>3</sup>mo<sup>2</sup>* with a lower high tone in the second syllable is a term used by male speakers to refer to brother-in-laws. This term is used regardless of age difference. Whereas, the same word with mid tone in both the first and the second syllable would indicate as daughter-in-law. While for female speaker, *ochu* is used to refer to brother-in-law who is the husband of her elder sister who in return will be addressed by the name. In other words, *ochu*, may mean either an elder brothers wife (sister-in-law) if the speaker is male, or the female speaker's brother-in-law (elder brother of her husband).

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<sup>34</sup> See Nogle, 1974

<sup>35</sup> See also Giridhar, 1994

<sup>36</sup> For a man the term marriage is different 'nathu'.

*Opfü* is a term used by both the male and female speaker to refer to 'mother' and 'mother's sisters' and *opfu* to 'father' and 'father's brothers'. Similarly *oni* is a term for 'mother's brother's wife', father's sisters' and 'mother-in-law'. Here, an interesting aspect of the kinship terms is that a girl will no longer be considered a member of the family (the family she belongs to before marriage) if and when she gets married to another person. She then becomes a member of the family of that particular man to whom she is married to. *Ope* refers to 'mother's father', 'mother's brother', and 'father-in-law' likewise *opie* refers to 'mother's mother' and 'father's mother'. Terms like these that are used to refer to different relationships point out how the society is organized and how different relationships are considered in Mao society. This kind of setup reveals that language is a window through which we can see the social set up of that particular community speaking the language. It further shows how ego is connected to different kinsmen, be it affinal or non-affinal. This explains that even those relationships that are earned through marriage also acquires the same status and become a part of that family without any hindrance.

Knowledge of the kinship terms is an obligation that every member of the community should be well acquainted with. This is due to the fact that knowing the terms would indicate the knowledge he has of the genealogical linkage. In case a younger member of the community does not use proper terms of address in addressing someone related to him, then it would be certain that he would be reprimanded for his negligence and then followed by explanation of the lineage and then followed by the term that he should use. This social significance of the knowledge of kinship terms among the Mao community indicates the important domain that holds within the community.

### 5.3 Colour term

Colours have been constantly an interesting topic of research both for the anthropologist and ethno-science because the domain of colour words has cultural relativism or to use Sapir and Whorf's terminology, **Cultural Relativity** which states that differences in language reflects the different views of different groups of people. This claim can be substantiated by the fact that every language does not have all the terms that another language has and also the boundaries of separation of one hue from the contiguous one differs according to the terms that the language has as basic colour; colours that are general and salient to a particular language.

The physiology of colour perception is generally similar across language communities, but the way how colours do categorized in the language differs widely depending on perception. Ethnographers have often noted that different cultures have different numbers of colour terms, and have noted as well that roughly corresponding colour terms (e.g., 'green') seemed to apply to differing perceptual ranges. The speculation as to whether this variation in categorizing led to differences in the way people actually saw colours was formalized under the Whorfian hypothesis, and tested in several cultures. For instance, the Mao language obligates its speakers to suffix the term *madai* 'green' before the specific term to indicate different colours; thus, *rachei madai* would mean 'blue sky', *sungo madai* to mean 'green leaves/grass' and *odzü madai* to indicate 'crystal clear water'. This expansion of colour to include other related terms is also found in Chinese. In Chinese, the word *ch'ing*, would not be applied to colours for dyes and for paper and paint, the same colour has separate words. Yet *ch'ing* cattle are black, and *ch'ing* horses are grey.

There are claims that the division of colour spectrum is purely arbitrary yet Berlin and Kay (1969) have specifically shown that there is constancy in the divisions of the spectrum in different languages of the world. The division in the colour terms in different languages depends on the conception and the degree of spectrum division. The division is made on three dimensions: hue, saturation and brightness. Accordingly, a language can have the basic colour category; simple colour terms like English *red* or *yellow*, which is not complex nor terms motivated by objects, or terms restricted to certain objects or those terms which are loan recently; such as white, black, red, green, yellow, blue, brown, purple, pink, orange, and grey. Thus, a language like Papuan Danian can have from a minimum of two terms i.e., black and white, to a maximum of eleven terms for basic colours (Russian and Hungarian). Further, Berlin and Kay (op. cit.) posits the distributional restriction across different languages to encode the basic colour categories consisting of seven stages with the aforesaid eleven colours. A language encoding only black and white falls under stage I. The II stage would include red as the third term; stage III would include terms such as black, white, red and either yellow or green. If a language has five terms, stage IV, the terms will have both yellow and green. If it has six (stage V), it will include, in addition to stage IV a term for blue. A language having seven terms, stage VI, will have terms for black, white, red, yellow, green, blue and brown. If a language contains eight or more terms stage VII, then it contains in addition terms for purple, pink, orange, grey, or some combination of these.

Further research on colour has revealed that the terms black and white used by Berlin and Kay is not only black and white, rather it contains terms for dark and light shades regardless of hue in which one term covers white, red and yellow and the other

covering black, green and brown, meaning that one category consists of white plus warm and the other consists of black plus cool colours.

Following the classification of Berlin and Kay (1969), Mao basic colour terms could be said to have the following:

- |    |                            |        |
|----|----------------------------|--------|
| 1. | Kakra /kakra/              | White  |
| 2. | Katei /katei/              | Black  |
| 3. | Konho /kon <sup>h</sup> o/ | Red    |
| 4. | Madei /madei/–             | Green  |
| 5. | Kava /kava/                | Yellow |

Non-basic colours in Mao are

- |    |                     |       |
|----|---------------------|-------|
| 6. | Shingeipa /ʃiŋeipa/ | Blue  |
| 7. | Kapa /kapa/         | Brown |

Thus, Mao would fall under the stage IV (four) category having the above given basic colour terms. However, one of Berlin and Kay's characteristics of basic colour which runs thus: "Colour terms that are also the name of an object characteristically having that colour are suspect ..." (op.cit: 6) may pose a problem when dealing with Mao basic colour term. When we look at the term for blue in Mao which is 'shingeipa' and derived from '*Shinheipa*' literally means the 'blue part of the dogs eye (ball)' which can be broken up into *oshi* 'dog', *onhie* 'eye' *kappa* 'brown', we feel that the terms represents the characteristic of an object. However, when we

look closely we can say that the terms do not conjure up the image of the referent object but just indicate the colour term. This is also true for Spanish which have terms such as *café*, -‘coffee’, *naranja*, -‘orange’ and *celeste*- ‘sky’ which is considered as basic colour term in that language. This can be substantiated by the fact that the term ‘orange’ in English does not motivate its speakers to produce the image of the fruit that we eat, rather its colour when we talk of the colours terms. To give a further argument, most of the Mao speakers do not know the derivation of the term and thus to relate referent object never comes into the picture when we talk about the particular colour term ‘blue’. Also the term for ‘brown’ poses a problem. This is because the term brown in Mao does not in anyway contradictory to any of the criteria for basic colour terms posited by Berlin and Kay except that it comes after blue and thus would have easily fit into the basic colour categories in Mao. However these two terms are given as non basic colour terms because it does not follow the pattern that other colour terms derives its different hue or saturation as given below (examples 6-20). Though there are always exceptions to any theories, yet the processes that other basic colours categories follows to derive other contiguous shades are not applicable to these two colour terms as given below in examples 6-20 below. This could possibly be that the two terms might have come into the language in the later stage of development. To further substantiate the claim, the two colours do not seems to be salient to the language as there is always confusion of the two terms among the speakers in its usage. There is also a tendency to at times use the term interchangeably even in a normal speech.

Besides the basic colour categories, Mao has different ways of reading different colours of different hues, brightness and saturation (this is applicable only to

basic colour category). The highest point of reference to colours in terms of its saturation is as follows:

- |     |                     |                    |
|-----|---------------------|--------------------|
| 6.  | Kratu kralai        | ‘very very white’  |
| 7.  | Teikrö teizhü/tenei | ‘very very black’  |
| 8.  | Nhokrö nhotai       | ‘very very red’    |
| 9.  | Madaikrö madailai   | ‘very very green’  |
| 10. | Vatu valai          | ‘very very yellow’ |

The next degree of shades is simply to reduplicate the basic colour. Any basic colour that undergoes complete reduplication would indicate the intensity of hues of that particular colour but lesser than the examples 6-10. For instance,

- |     |                           |                               |
|-----|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 11. | Kra kra /kra kra/         | ‘white white = very white’    |
| 12. | Tei tei /tei tei/         | ‘black black = very black’    |
| 13. | Nho nho /nho nho/         | ‘red red = very red’          |
| 14. | Madai madai /madai madai/ | ‘green green = very green’    |
| 15. | Va va /va va/             | ‘yellow yellow = very yellow’ |

In terms of intensity of hues, the basic colours would follow the examples given in 11-15 and the lesser shades that would follow the basic colour term would be to suffix *pho pho* which could mean as ‘something similar’ or ‘not exactly’ to the basic colour term to indicate lesser degree of saturation. Following example illustrates this category.

- |                   |                                  |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| 16. Kra pho pho   | ‘white similar = not so white’   |
| 17. Tei pho pho   | ‘black similar = not so black’   |
| 18. Nho pho pho   | ‘red similar = not so red’       |
| 19. Madei pho pho | ‘green similar = not so green’   |
| 20. Va pho pho    | ‘yellow similar = not so yellow’ |

Mao also uses other terms to indicate other hues or saturation. Thus, *Krahra* ‘pale white’ and *madairoro* for green, *papu pafv* for brown which also has emotive value attached to it and would refer to those that are unusually white or green or brown and thus have a negative connotation. While, *kranishishi nhonishishi* ‘like white like red = ruddy’, *madai zv zv*, ‘green’ *mapa fv fv* ‘brown’ would be pleasant and thus have a positive implication.

From the above given processes in the formation of the colour terms, basic colour terms calls for modification when talking about its hue or brightness. Except for *papu pafv*, the sole example in this category, only the basic colour allows to talk about its different hues. It can also be seen that perception of colours can defer from language to language. These differences can solely be attributed to differences in the culture where saliency of a particular term reflects the community’s observation, perception and interpretation of the world around them.

#### **5.4 Cooking Words**

The specificity of different cooking terminologies showing varied cooking style obviously depends and depicts cultural practices of a community. For illustration of the semantic field, cooking terminology will also be discussed in the present study.

This field is chosen mainly because the terms are quite straightforward, therefore study of its cognitive meanings will result in subtle penetration into the community's ways of life. The semantic structure of cooking words reflects practices that a particular community follows and these practices reflect again the cultural behaviour of the community. For example, about ten words for cooking below are connected to water; this reflects the Mao's style of cooking which is mainly by boiling.

Following Lehrer (1974) the basic Mao words in the culinary field are given below;

Kobo /kɔbɔ/	[water], [anything except rice]
Kokho /kɔk <sup>h</sup> ɔ/	[water], [only rice]
Koro /kɔrɔ/	[direct heat]
Kopfū /kopfū/	[direct heat (in hot ash)]
Dzū /dzū/	[water (large amount)], [vigorous cooking action]
Mokou/moko:/	[water]'boil water for drinking/ warming up of something cold'
Kashe /kaʃe/	[oil or fat]
Kotta /koʈa/	[water (usually gentle cooking action)]
Kopha /kop <sup>h</sup> a/	[water (usually longer cooking action)]
Kohrou /kohrou/	[water (usually served pungent)]
Shopu /ʃop <sup>h</sup> u/	[water], [gentle cooking action],
Morou /moro:/	[water (relatively small amount)], [short cooking time]

Khe /khe/	[oil (relatively small amount)], [hot surface usually on thick slate]
Macha /mac <sup>h</sup> a/	[indirect heat on hearth]
Sa /sa/	[-water] [pan]
Hrou /hrou/	[water (large amount)] [vigorous cooking action]
Bea /be/	[water], [without any spices or event salt]
Mothu /mot <sup>h</sup> u/	[indirect heat] [bamboo container] [long duration]
Nha /nã/	[indirect heat] [covered pot] [short duration]

Mao may not have as many culinary terms as compared to other communities that lay out many items on their dinner table, since Mao people live a simple agricultural based life. Comparatively all the preparations are made without much spices added to it. While the generic term for cooking is *kobo*, the term would involve almost all types of preparation in any style except for terms given above which are associated with specific properties mentioned. Usage of spices is relatively uncommon and the most typical way of preparation is to mix all the items, boil the ingredients, and stew with or without closing the lid of the cooking pot. The lack of complexity indicates the agricultural setting where all the community members are devoted and diligent cultivators who put most of their time in fields. *Kokho* refers to the action of cooking rice which is a staple food for the Maos. The terms *koro* and *kopfö* refers to the direct heating, *koro* is usually carried out by placing the object directly on the burning charcoal, *kopfö* is similar with *koro* but in this it is on hot ash. If the item to be cook is something where you don't want to get the ash into it, green leaves are used to cover it. The action *dzö* involves vigorous heating for a long duration with large amount of water to make a hard thing soft. The term *Moko* may

not exactly fall in this classification but is included because this action is used when an already cooked food is heated up before eating, and the term also refers to non-culinary boiling of water for drinking. *Kashe* can be glossed as fry, but originally when oil was not been used, it is the fat of animals that was used. However this has been extended to all kinds of preparation that involves frying. The quantity of oil is not taken into consideration or the purpose such as deep fry, to brown the surface, etc. *Kotta* could be specific to the Mao community; it involves cooking a mixture of already cooked rice along with vegetables but usually with dried vegetables as fast food or without taking much time in the preparation. Similar to this is *kopha* where instead of cooked rice, the uncooked one is used and instead of dried vegetables, the fresh ones are used along with meat. This process takes more time and constant stirring is required as it is served thick, probably the English terminology would be porridge. Excepting for difference in the ingredients, in *kohrou* the purpose is to make soup. The usual ingredients used are dry meat or dry fish to be added with some dry vegetables all in small quantities but comparatively the amount of water is more. This is usually served pungently. *Shopfu* is a process where green vegetables are boiled gently in order to preserve its colour and shape. *Morou* involves cooking something with little water for the purpose of taking it dry and usually half cooked. *Bea* is similar to *shopfu* but while *shopfu* is used only with green vegetables, but here it could be potato or yam. The main purpose is to maintain the shape. The closest English gloss for *the* would be bake, where the rice flour is indirectly heated on plain slate surface. Oil or lard in very small quantity is used in the process so as to make the contact more slippery in order to get the baked cake out without sticking it on the slate. *Macha* is a similar process however there need not be a special pan or pot for it rather it could be on any hot surface. The food to be *macha* is thus usually heated

indirectly. This is usually to roast fish bones or warm cold bread (*lere*) also. The process of cooking, usually grain without water but heated in a pan is known as *sa*. *Hrou* involves vigorous cooking, usually a large amount in a big pot and for a long time with a large quantity of water. *Mothu* is carried out usually in bamboo container. The ingredient are closed tightly in the container and heated up slowly which may go on for a month or so. *Nha* refers to the action of warming of cold bread (*lere*) when the cooked rice is still hot and the pot is kept covered. The process can also refer to the action of *shophu* in the previous cooking term but here it is putting vegetables in curry, just before the curry is to be put down. This action is done in order to preserve the colour and shape of the vegetable.

Analysis of cooking terminologies reveals the ways of eating of a community. Eating habits again reflects the ways of life of the people.

## **5.5 Body parts**

The main purpose for the study of body parts is to describe how in Mao culture body parts are termed and categorized and see if they differ or are in consonant with the categorization of other cultural group. If body part classification were due to innate concepts or regularities such as perceptual boundaries, then we might expect that all languages will have similar inventories to refer to the body parts. But if the categorization is a matter of cultural or linguistic convention, then body part lexicons in different languages may vary differently from one another<sup>37</sup>. The present study presupposes that the same physical features of a man differ not only in terms of lexical items but in its segmentation and categorization as well. This may be due

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<sup>37</sup> See also Majid 2006

perceptual as well as linguistic and cultural convention. Inventories of body parts will first be illustrated and then the pattern of categorization will be looked into in detailed to find out how it differs from other culture.

Unlike the Indo-Aryan languages which distinguish categories into grammatically masculine and feminine gender<sup>38</sup> Mao does not have such different terms, but uses the same term to refer both the genders. Also, plurality are not mark unless the speaker wants to be specific in the usage in the form of a sentence, otherwise all the body parts terminologies are singular. Thus *pishu* 'hair on head' or *omai* 'downy hair on body' are also singular. It is worth mentioning here that the downy hair can be specified by prefixing the part of the body to the term; thus *obamai* 'hair on hand' (*oba* means hand), *kotaimai* 'moustach' (*kotai* 'lip') etc. Other parts of the body which have pairs or more does not indicate its number in its usage be it duality (Mao has word to distinguish dual) or plurality and would refer it as a single entity as in *nobi* 'ear(s)' *onhei* 'eye(s)' *bamoto* 'finger(s)' etc.

The term for body *pfüphe* and *pfüzho* can be used to refer to the whole body. *Pfüzho* and *pfüphe* (sometimes *ophe*) are also both used when referring to the death body. There could be a difference in the connotation of the two terms but it is difficult to make a clear cut division in its usage. However, the only difference that can be seen is in occasion of swearing, where people, like selling their soul to the devil, would swear with their life but the term used is *ophe tthole* 'literally meaning to put their body (life), but not \**pfüzho tthole*. This is the only instance found where the term cannot be used interchangeably.

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<sup>38</sup> See Majid, 2006

Part-whole relationship in a very strict sense does not appear to be very good way of categorizing body parts in the concept of Mao. Certainly all the term belongs to the body and also though most of the inventories can be given a taxonomic classification yet there are parts where a clear cut division cannot be set up. This led to a problematic arrangement of the parts into its hierarchical order where the concept of relations of a more general and the included terms are difficult to be established. For instance, there is confusion as to whether the neck belongs to the head or the body or whether it stands on its own. In Mao, a human body would be broadly divided into *opi* 'head', *ohrü* 'body', *oba* 'hand' and *ophi* 'leg'. Yet the inclusion of neck is hard to establish. This confusion will be better understood when we look closer into the broad divisions of body parts which are given below. The body parts inventories are divided into simplex which are monomorphemic that is not segmentable and complex which are derived stem or phrase and can be segmentable<sup>39</sup>.

### 5.5.1 Features of the head

As can be seen from the table given below, the terms given are the external parts of the body. The internal part such as brain, tongue, etc. would be included in this division yet in general the division would in the first place be given to the parts which can be seen with the naked eye. Thus, unless mentioned, a speaker would give the following if asked to describe what constitutes the head.

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<sup>39</sup> See Sergio Meira, 2006

### Mao parts of the head

Mao term	English term	Other Information
<b>Simplex</b>		
<i>pi</i>	head	
<i>pisho</i>	hair	
<i>n.sü</i>	temple	
<i>pili</i>	whorl like made by the hair	
<i>n.bi</i>	ear	
<i>c<sup>h</sup>ido</i>	occiput	
<i>pitɔ</i>	hair below temple	
<b>Complex</b>		
<i>pikai</i>	pointed bone right above the ear	horn of the head
<i>pimaprai</i>	grey hair	grey hair of the head

Table 1

Most of the terms are simplex as seen in table 1 yet we find a similar construction as seen in the complex term *pikai* and *pimaprai* where *pi* stands for head and *kai* from *okai* 'horn' and *maprai* for grey hair. Breaking up of other terms with the syllable *pi* as given in the simplex section would be a total failure as the break up would not be possible to bring out the other syllable into any meaningful units. The reason may be that in absence of any written records diachronic study is not possible and also the present generation has lost the etymology of the word if at all they are made up of two morphemes. While other terms are self explanatory, *pili* is a term

used to refer to the whorl like shape made by the hair. The same term is also used to refer to soft area just above the forehead found in a new born baby.

### 5.5.2 Features of the face

Mao has two terms *ozhu* and *opra* to refer to the oval-shaped area on the front of the head excluding the neck, the ears and the hair on the head. While the two terms are generally used while referring to the face yet it has different connotation. *Ozhu* would usually accompany the qualities of +human and *opra* to –human though both are used at time to refer to human. *Opra* has also metaphorical extension and literally would mean ‘the front or the plane area’. Thus *chipra* ‘the front part of the house’ (*ochi-house*), *ojü pra kaka* ‘the expanse/plane surface of the land’ are used while, *ozhu* cannot replace it \**chizhu* etc. Even though both the terms are used in everyday language, *ozhu* would be a more preferred term for the older speakers and *opra* is usually used by the younger generation.

#### Mao parts of the face

Mao term	English term	Other Information
<b>Simplex</b>		
<i>ɔpra</i>	face	
<i>ɔ<sup>h</sup>u</i>	face	
<i>kɔtai</i>	lip	
<i>ɔme</i>	mouth	
<i>ɔnhei</i>	eye	
<i>pikro</i>	forehead	
<i>kopfu</i>	forehead	
<i>ɔngɔ</i>	nose	
<i>bɔtu</i>	cheek	

Complex		
<i>kotaimai</i>	moustache	lit. hair of lip
<i>mok<sup>h</sup>omai</i>	beard	lit. hair of chin
<i>nheimai</i>	eyelashes	lit. hair of eye
<i>nheif<sup>h</sup>o</i>	pupil	lit. seed of the eye
<i>nheipfü</i>	eyebrow	lit. eyebrow near the forehead
<i>nhoto</i>	the length of the nose	lit. handle of the nose?
<i>nhorei</i>	space between the eyes	lit. bone of the nose
<i>nhoc<sup>h</sup>ilu</i>	nostril	lit. hole of the nose

Table 2

Mao uses two terms to refer to forehead: *pikro* and *kopfu*. In the first instance the two terms appear to be a complex word, yet derivation of the term, or breaking up the term does not seem appropriate as it is difficult to establish any meaningful morpheme out of it except that *pi* could refer to head. The difference in the usage of the two terms could be that *kopfu* is more formal and uses in the cleansing ceremonies *kopfu molo kashe* (somewhat similar to the Roman Catholic's Sign of the Cross but touches only the forehead and the chest<sup>40</sup>); *pikro* on the other hand is used in everyday conversation. It can also be seen in table 1 that the complex terms are derivation or the description of the particular term as can be seen in the literal transcription. Unlike English terminology, nose in Mao can be further classified into further categories compounding the description with the additional information of nose to indicate that the term refers only to nose and not to other things that have hole or handle etc.

<sup>40</sup> In a more elaborate ceremony anointing would be done on the forehead, chest, elbow, knee and ankle.

### 5.5.3 Features of trunk of the body

*Ohrü* ‘trunk’ is the length starting from the shoulder to the waist. The usage of the term can be made clearer when a person is judge about ones trunk and the leg as in the following sentence:

*Ohrü so-a bua make-no dzü-e.*

Trunk long Conj even if leg nom. short SM

The trunk (of a person) is long but has a short leg.

The term *topha* is the breadth of the shoulder that extends between the two arms. The term is generally used when comparing whether a person has a round body or a flat body and width of shoulder/body. While the term *kozhekhebvü* ‘armpit’ appears to be a complex word yet it is difficult to assert the meaning of the term *kozhe* even though the derivation of *khe* from *okhe* ‘plate’ and *bvü* from *obvü* meaning box or container could be asserted. Similarly, *koture* has the term *re* from *ore* ‘bone’ but it is difficult to construct the meaning of the other part. Whereas *sotsü* would be the back bone and *ore* mean bone. However, these terms are given in the complex category leaving room for further research. Breast has two terms yet there is no difference in the connotation and both the terms are used in everyday usage. While there are different terms for the stomach and belly, yet for younger speakers there is a confusion when it comes to pot belly with more speakers having a tendency to go for a description like *opfu kajü* ‘big stomach’. In the complex words the literal transcriptions are given yet the interesting terms are *chikhe avü* and *sotsüte*. There is a difference between them in the sense that while *chikhe avü* is the type of hunch-back that develops along with the age as a person grows very old which may be purely due

to the hard work but *sotsüte* is referred to those hunch back that a person is born with or develop in early age due to certain illness. The difference again is that in *chikhe avü* there is a bent from the waist while *sotsüte* the protruding is at the level of the shoulder blade.

**Mao parts of the trunk of the body**

Mao term	English term	Other Information
<b>Simplex</b>		
<i>θhrü</i>	trunk	
<i>top<sup>h</sup>a</i>	breadth of the body	Lit. plane/flat
<i>kap<sup>h</sup>e</i>	shoulder	
<i>kak<sup>h</sup>e</i>	chest	
<i>θne/nine</i>	breast	
<i>θpfu</i>	stomach	
<i>ofu</i>	belly	
<i>fula</i>	navel	
<i>c<sup>h</sup>ik<sup>h</sup>e</i>	waist	
<b>Complex</b>		
<i>ninip<sup>h</sup>a</i>	nipple	lit. tip of the breast
<i>fularai</i>	umbilical cord	lit. thread of the navel
<i>sotsüre</i>	back-bone	
<i>sotsüte</i>	hunch-back	lit. protruding spine
<i>chikhe avü</i>	bent back	

<i>kɔture</i>	ribs	
<i>koz<sup>h</sup>ek<sup>h</sup>ebvü</i>	armpit	
<i>ofu azhu</i>	pot belly	lit. hanging belly

Table 3

#### 5.5.4 Features of hand

##### Mao parts of the hand

Mao term	English term	Other Information
<b>Simplex</b>		
<i>bekhe</i>	hand	
<i>oba</i>	hand	
<i>obe</i>	hand	
<i>c<sup>h</sup>ic<sup>h</sup>e</i>	elbow	
<i>bac<sup>h</sup>o</i>	wrist	
<b>Complex</b>		
<i>bamokrü</i>	thumb	lit. mother of hand
<i>bamofo</i>	finger	lit. siblings of hand
<i>bamofo nono</i>	little finger	lit. youngest sibling of hand
<i>bamotsüke</i>	nail	lit. claws of the hand
<i>bac<sup>h</sup>o re</i>	knuckle	lit. wrist bone
<i>bap<sup>h</sup>e</i>	back of the palm	lit. back of hand
<i>balou</i>	palm	lit. inside of hand
<i>beɸ<sup>h</sup>o</i>	bicep/upper arm	lit. seed of hand

Table 4

As seen in the above given table 4, three terms are given for the hand, but the general term for the hand would be *bekhe* which starts from the arms till the fingers. It should be noted that in everyday usage one is inclined to use even the other two terms interchangeably. However, the difference in connotation is that while *oba* refers to hand yet it can also refer only to the parts consisting of wrist to the fingers as can be seen in phrase like *oba hrouyio* ‘open your palm (hand)’ and *oba modoruo* ‘open your palm to catch something’; *obe* is more generally refer to the forearm of animals. Looking at both the simplex and the complex words one would be a little perplexed to see that the same syllable *ba* (and *be* in one occasion) refers to hand yet *bekhe* and *bacho* are classed under simplex while the rest that have similar combination are class under complex. This is because as in the previous examples the other parts after breaking up do not give any meaningful sense. While other terms are self explanatory, it is interesting to note that *bamotsüke* ‘nail’ is given its literally meaning as claws of hand because *motsüke* is the term used to describe the claws of animal.

#### 5.5.5 Features of leg

Mao has two terms for the leg and can generally refer both to human as well as animal. There can hardly be any difference but *make* seems to refer more for the animals yet the term is also used when referring to human as well, as in example *make kodzü* ‘short leg’. The term covers from hip including the buttock till the feet. *Ophi* at times seems to have a more specific reference to the feet alone as in *ophi mosü* ‘unintentionally hitting something and getting hurt’ and *ophi oshuno khriü* ‘feet pierce by a thorn’. However, in general usage both the terms are use synonymously.

### Mao parts of the leg

Mao term	English term	Other Information
<b>Simplex</b>		
<i>make</i>	leg	
<i>op<sup>h</sup>i</i>	leg	
<i>c<sup>h</sup>ili</i>	hip	
<i>ruk<sup>h</sup>o</i>	buttock	
<i>noko</i>	thigh	
<i>c<sup>h</sup>ik<sup>h</sup>obo</i>	knee	
<b>Complex</b>		
<i>p<sup>h</sup>itaɬ<sup>h</sup>o</i>	calf	
<i>p<sup>h</sup>inaɬ<sup>h</sup>o</i>	calf	
<i>p<sup>h</sup>inhei</i>	knuckle	lit. eye of the leg
<i>p<sup>h</sup>iz<sup>h</sup>o</i>	sole	
<i>philekotho</i>	arch of the foot	lit. the arch of the sole
<i>p<sup>h</sup>ipa</i>	instep	lit. front of the leg
<i>p<sup>h</sup>imoɬo</i>	toe	lit. sibling of leg
<i>p<sup>h</sup>imokrü</i>	big toe	lit. mother of leg
<i>p<sup>h</sup>imoɬo nono</i>	small toe	lit. youngest sibling of leg

Table 5

The calf has two terms with *phitatho* as the most common usage and meaning something like the ‘main/seed of the leg for walking’. However, in one of the field work an elderly person shares his opinion saying that it should be *phinatho* and not otherwise and the explanation is that the well developed calf indicates that the person

is in a position to bear a child. Thus *phinatho* literally meaning ‘leg main/seed of the child’ supports his claim if the indication is at all true. The other interesting feature is the knuckles having a literal meaning ‘eye of the leg’ which may be due to the protruding characteristic and also its number (two).

The other external part of the body that is not covered in the above classification is the *sorumiki* ‘tailbone/coccyx’ and the private parts. This is because there is no any general term that covers them yet they are also considered part of the external body. They lie between the *ohrü* and the *make* yet the division left these parts out of their general term.

## 5.6 Flora

The study of Flora in cognitive anthropology comes under the field of ethnobiological classification or folk taxonomy is also known as ethnobotany. The study of biological categories comprises of both plants and animals and its classifications such as trees, shrubs, herbs, grasses, fishes, birds, animals, etc. Jones (1941) defined ethnobotany as the study of the inter-relations of primitive man and plants (quoted in Trividi 2002: 1). In the study of ethnobotanical names, division is usually made between generic and specific terminology. In the generic terminology one can find single worded names such as oak, pine, alder, etc. A generic term which is also known as primary name<sup>41</sup> is considered to be ‘semantically unitary’ whereas complex primary names that consist of two or more words or constituents to describe the plants can be taken as a single entity. A specific term or secondary name would be derivation of the generic terms and which are more specific like black oak, white pines etc. Secondary names are

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<sup>41</sup> See Khasbagan and Soyolt, 2008

formed from simple primary names by simply adding a modifier which further describes the plant.

According to Stepp (2005) ethnobiology can be studied under three major domains of enquiry: economic, cognitive and ecological. By economic the author means the enquiry into how people use plants and animals in their daily life; cognitive would mean how people know and conceptualise plants and animals; finally, ecological means the interactions of man with plants and animals especially in an evolutionary and co-evolutionary framework.

According to research on the folk taxonomies and biological classification of Tzeltal community by Berlin, Breedlove and Raven (1969) the biological categories were identified according to its significance as follows:

- |          |    |  |
|----------|----|--|
| Category | 1. | Plants of low cultural significance      |
|          | 2. | Plants of moderate cultural significance |
|          | 3. | Plants of high cultural significance     |

Category 1 (one) would include those plants that are found in and around a particular area yet have little or no utility to the community surrounding it. The second category would include those plants found and used by the community for their survival, yet rather abundantly found and thus not taken for cultivation. This category according to Berlin et al includes firewood, food etc. The third category

includes those plants that are cultivated by the people of the community such as corn, pulses, rice, wheat etc.

The anthropologically-oriented ethnobotanists<sup>42</sup> concentrate on discovering the interaction between plant and human through indigenous symbols, epistemology, folklore, and ceremony. Ethnobotanical classification according to its generic or specific terminologies basing on the criteria given above shall be beyond the scope of the present study. Therefore in the present study emphasise would be given more on those facets that are related to Mao beliefs and religious ceremonies and ritualistic practices rather than just the usage of plants for food, medicine, construction materials, tools and shelter. This is because the usages of plants for food, medicine etc. can be considered as universal in every culture except may be for those people living in the Iceland and in deserts where trees are rare. However besides the universality, utilisation of the species could be different from one culture to another. In this context some of the usages featuring the cultural elements of the Mao community would be highlighted in the present study. Such criterion hopes to unveil the cognitive force that guides the community for such practices revealing their deeper mental construction. This is because even when man leads a nomadic life he takes shelter from the force of nature by sheltering himself under the caves or rock or under the big trees. Man learns that in order to escape from the force of nature, he has to turn to nature for safety. This develops in him the capacity to utilize nature to his advantage. Therefore as he started to live a settled life, he began to exploit nature for his survival. He learns to use nature for his basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing

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<sup>42</sup> See also <http://www.fortlewis.edu/anthro/ethnobotany/ethno2.htm>

and healing for different ailments. This relationship brings about a sense for man to protect and preserve nature and thus treats nature with respect.

Mao beliefs that the spirits or gods abode besides the steep and rocky places; they also resides in the bushes of irü ‘a type of cane’ *Calamus sp*<sup>43</sup>, ikhra ‘cane’ *Calamus rotang* and kakabu *Entada phaseoloides*. Also sübo kajü ‘big trees’ are also considered the abode of god. These places are usually avoided, but due to circumstances human passing through such places give signals by spelling out the word that they are around and that they mean no harm to them, so as to avoid any harm from the spirits. On the other hand measures are taken to ward off the evil spirits and also from the spell of sorcerers by carrying a piece of oravo ‘ginger’ *Zingiber officinale*, bark of posü ‘alder’ *Prunus nepalense*, bark of pocharai ‘birch’ *Betula alnoides* and also okhe hu ‘teeth of tiger’, ovu motsüke ‘claws of bear’, apheke ‘scale of tortoise’ etc. Another effective means that the Maos adopt to save himself from the spirits is to carry a small portion of herbs called kholo *Elshotzia blanda* and Shüprü prümü *Artemesia parviflora*. The stem of kholo *Elshotzia blanda* is cut into pieces in the form of beads and worn as necklace by small babies to ward off from the spell of sorcerers. This herb is also used by the Maos to perform certain religious ceremonies and rituals to free from any evil effects. These two herbs have a strong scent, the odour of which is belief to be allergic or repellent to god/spirits. A particular species of bamboo *Bambusa sp.* grown in a particular location is also used to conduct rites in Mao. The ritual known as *projü kopfü* is performed to determine the fate of the community with regard to their health, weather, natural calamities etc. The leaves of

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<sup>43</sup> Scientific names of plants were collected with the help of Mr. Athili James, Project Fellow, BSI, Shillong.

certain *Musa sp.* (wild banana) and *Ficus sp.* (Peepal and banyan) are used while offering food and drinks to appease the gods as well as during the performance of rites. With the onset of the season for the ears of the paddy to appear, and when the flowers of the different crops start blooming, a ritual is carry out using a branch of omosü *Rhus javanica* and a bunch of ora dzüthe (*Cymbopogon khasianus*) a special grass to garner good harvest. The usages of these two plants are symbolic<sup>44</sup> and represent the desire of the performer. The head of the family that is the father usually carries out the rite or at other cases any male member of the family. Carrying the bunch of the two plants he would implore god to grand him the stalk of ora dzüthe which are strong and branches in plenty and the ear of the corn should be as plenty as the fruit of omosü. These branches are then planted in the field after which the seedling of paddy is planted. The bark of chobi shu *Zizhyphus incurva* is also used in certain rituals concerning male child. The plant with its strong thorns symbolises the unwavering strength and agility of a man as he grew.

Maos also use different types of plants, shrubs and herbs for medicinal purpose to treat all their ailments like other cultures. Besides this treatment Mao also uses plants for fishing and catching of birds. The bark of zhokhai khaikhi *Schima khasiana* and Kokhra shu/bu or okho motubu *Acacia pruinenscens* are ground and mixed in the water (river or stream) to poison fish temporarily. With this mixture, the fishes stand still and float on the water which is thus collected. Likewise the use of birdlime from the fruit of a plant called chitetu *Viscum articulatum* is extensively used

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<sup>44</sup> See also Ashiho A. Mao, 1999

by the Maos to catch birds. This birdlime is placed on branches of fruit trees and water sources to glue the birds. Even eagles and kites are trapped using this method.

The outermost layers of the stem are peeled off from the plant of okhraibu 'red sorrel' (*Hibiscus subdariffa*) and Shingubu *Girardinia diversifolia* are seasoned into fibre. These fibres are then spun into threads which are later woven into clothes such as shawl and sarong.

The above study of flora and its utility reveals the cultural life of the people, yet the interrelationship between man and nature is also shown. A clearer picture of this interrelationship can be demonstrated from a folk tale (see Appendix-I) which shows how man derives information from the cycle of nature. According to this folk tale, which is also sung in the form of a song goes that with the onset of the flowering season of pfuvasü 'cherry' *Prunus cerasoides* which start blooming this indicates a season to sow seeds of cash crops. The flowering of mikriashi 'peach' *Prunus persica* and livo *Bauhania variegata* brings forth the seed sowing of the main crop such as paddy and millets. The flowering of hraikama *Globba bulbifera* indicates the setting of the month of khranakhro (March-April) which is a time to sow seeds for transplantation. The coming of migratory birds such as shithudu, chorpehu and kotu 'cuckoo' indicates the month of pfuzü (May-June) which is a time for an intensive preparation for making beds for plant transplantation.

Such practices as pointed above reveal the keen observation of nature related to their daily activities and their relationship with nature.

**Metaphors and its  
Relations to Idioms and  
Similes in Mao**

## Chapter 6

### Metaphors and its Relations to Idioms and Similes in Mao

*“...all thought is metaphoric, and all thought is consequently expressed by means of linguistic metaphors; that is, all language is metaphoric”.*

I.A. Richard

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#### 6.1 Introduction

In the study of language and meaning, scholars from various backgrounds such as anthropology, philosophy, sociology, literature etc. resort to the study of metaphor following different approaches to link up the relation between the two. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) elaborate the influence of metaphor in perception, conceptualization and action of an individual and the cultural group which triggers in the explanation of abstract ideas which cannot be easily understood in ordinary language. Therefore, the interwoven link between language and culture has been reaffirmed with the concept of metaphor. Metaphor shows the formation of conceptions based on shared experiences that are considered eminent in a particular community is the outcome of environment. These values and assumptions resulting out of the mutual understanding form a common knowledge which is appreciated only by that particular culture but remains alien to other community. Knowledge is individual based, yet, people sharing a similar world view can only value unshared experiences developing a similar way of categorization of meaning through metaphorical imagination. Steen and Gibbs also share this view when they state that one need not ‘undergo the same set of cultural experiences motivating the bulk of conventional conceptual metaphors for these

metaphors to be a significant part of people's personal conceptual and linguistic repertoires. Adults may have simply learned how to use particular words in a conventionally metaphorical fashion on suitable occasions...children may acquire conceptual metaphors wholesale from their learning language without having to re-experience all the cultural and embodied events that originally give rise to these conceptual metaphors, events that also help keep these alive in human conceptual systems'(1999: 4).

Steen following Lakoff defines metaphor as a 'set of correspondences between two conceptual domains, with linguistic metaphor deriving from conceptual structures. The presence of two domains is intended to capture the fact that we are dealing with nonliteral similarities between entities and relations at some level of the analysis, which rules out other types of mappings like metonymies' (1999: 60). Lakoff and Johnson further elaborates that these concepts structure what we perceive, and then relate it to the world around us which is realized as been express in the form of 'poetic imagination and rhetorical flourish' (1980: 3). This shows that metaphor is the use of information of a well known domain as linguistic expression nonliterally in a discourse to assert and refer to another domain which is comparatively less known. This type of metaphorical extension consists of mapping features from a **source** domain to a **target** domain, where the source domains are typically well-known everyday experiences or things and the target domains are typically more abstract, more removed from the everyday physical world of experience<sup>45</sup>. The source domain, according to I. A. Richards (1936), known as **vehicle** is the subject from where the attributes are borrowed while the **tenor** is the subject to which attributes are ascribed.

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<sup>45</sup> See Foley, 1997

Tenor is the main subject, while the vehicle is that to which the tenor is compared. Knowles and Moon (2006) in addition to tenor and vehicle, has **ground** as one of its properties where tenor is the meaning, vehicle is the language and the ground as the similarities or connections between them.

While questioning about whether metaphor is linguistic or conceptual or both, Gibbs<sup>46</sup> is of the opinion that metaphor is not merely a figure of speech, but is a specific mental mapping that influences a good deal of how people think, reason, and imagine in everyday life. Many concepts, especially abstract ones, are structured and mentally represented in terms of metaphor. This claim is empirically supported by different research looking at systematic patterns of conventional expressions, novel usages, and historical shifts in word meanings, as well as work looking at the importance of metaphor in grammatical forms. Therefore, metaphor is both linguistic as well as conceptual.

Lakoff and Johnson speak of metaphorical understanding as a way of interpreting abstract and loosely structured experiences by conceptualizing them in terms of other, more concrete and clearly formulated types of experience. They described metaphor as:

...metaphor pervades our normal conceptual system. Because so many of the concepts that are important to us are either abstract or not clearly delineated in our experience (the emotions, ideas, time etc.), we need to get a grasp on them by means of other concepts that we understand in clearer terms (spatial

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<sup>46</sup> See Gibbs, 1999

orientation, objects etc.). This need leads to metaphorical definition in our conceptual system. (1980:115)

Others have described metaphorical understanding as a process of common sense reasoning<sup>47</sup>. They even suggest that simile, analogy and metaphor are all based on the same type of cognitive process used to interpret new situations in terms of other previously encountered and understood situations. This model of metaphor may be extended to the process of understanding simile and idioms as well.

Lackoff and Johnson claim that most of human's normal conceptual system is metaphorically structured. Metaphors are conceptual in nature. They are principal vehicles for understanding. They also claim that metaphor is a concept with which we live by everyday. However, in the present study not all aspects of everyday metaphorical concepts will be dealt but focus will be given to those metaphorical concepts blended in specific cultural entities. This specificity will again be specific to the Mao community.

Due to absence of written documents the development of metaphorical extension as similar to other language formation is very difficult to say and also it is difficult to state here whether there is any influence from other cultural group due to contact. The present study will focus on the role of metaphor in transforming perception and understanding of the Mao community into culturally constructed concepts. Those aspects that are centrally important in this culture will also be considered in the present study.

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<sup>47</sup> See Carbonell and Minton

Metaphors involve transferring of concepts from a source domain, which are basic human experiences, into new domain. Metaphorical extensions are organized conceptually depending on the perception and understanding of the community; in other words, how conceptions are seen by one community as related may not be at all related to another cultural group. However, the important issue that will be look into in the present study is whether other languages do indeed incorporate such ideas. Metaphors as stated earlier directly compare seemingly unrelated subjects and transfer concepts into new domain. This transferring of ideas can also be found in the case of idioms, similes and metonymy. Special consideration will be given to the study of metaphors, idioms and similes and the formation of conceptualisation and mapping of dissimilar entities accordingly to the world view of the Mao community. Hopefully the present study will illustrate the deeper mental construction/conceptual exploration of the community, the underlying sensibility and rationality that guides them through in the formation of their social ethos and its reflection in their conducts and beliefs.

## **6.2 Types of metaphor**

M. Black (1977)<sup>48</sup> has identified two characteristic features constitutive of metaphors: ‘emphasis’ and ‘resonance’. Emphasis describes the degree of non-substitutive i.e. the degree to which a metaphor can be paraphrased or substituted for by a literal expression without losing the particular insight it is conveying. Resonance, on the other hand denotes the extent of possible background implications borne by metaphor; the more interpretations a metaphor allows for, the more we can call it resonant.

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<sup>48</sup> See also Mareike Buss and Jörg J.

Depending on this two characteristic feature, metaphor in Mao can be studied under the following types:

### 6.2.1 Dead or Frozen Metaphors

Metaphors with only little emphasis and resonance are called ‘lexicalised’, ‘dead’ or ‘frozen’ metaphors. When conventional metaphors are no longer recognised by the speakers as metaphorical in its colloquial usage then it becomes a dead or frozen metaphor. This may be due to the loss of its metaphorical property for its everyday usage and thus the meaning becomes more literal rather than metaphorical; they ceased to be aware that the words which form them are not to be understood literally. In other occasions, a particular metaphorical reference may become out of use. However, due to lack of written literature (Mao has only oral literature) determining dead or frozen metaphor has also become difficult at the present time. It should be noted here that the present study is based on synchronic analysis. Also archaic words have become out of use due to the loss of meanings. Study on this category, therefore, will be based on the usages that are found in the folk stories and songs, the meanings and usages of which are restricted only to a handful of elders of the community. Metaphorical usages of this category are mostly connected with myth and legendary stories that are found in Mao. For instance,

1. *Otou*

Cow

Literal meaning : cow

Metaphorical meaning : human

2. *Ohu*

Chicken

Literal meaning : chicken

Metaphorical meaning : human

The two examples (example 1 &2) are associated with god/spirit. It is a Mao belief that gods devour humans and thus according to the gods, men are considered their domesticated animals. The story goes that when gods refer to humans, they perceive them as animals for their consumption like the human does for cattle and fowls. Accordingly, a bull or cock will be referred to a man; a cow or hen to a woman and calf and chick to a child by the gods/spirits. This shows that the Maos conceive that everything exists with a system which is similar to the system that prevails among human. The only thing that differs is the realm and the reference.

3. *Ovupro mozü kayi*

Vegetable straight good

Literal meaning : straight and good looking vegetables

Metaphorical reference : healthy animal

4. *Ivau*

A kind of wild vegetable

Literal meaning : a kind of vegetable

Metaphorical reference : deer

Example 3 and 4 relates to tiger (considered according to mythology the elder brother of man). *Ivau* '*Polygonum molle*' a type of wild vegetable which is a little sour in its taste, is compared to 'deer' whose meat is also considered a little sour. The concept here also takes into account the comparison between the everyday menu of

man and tiger. For man vegetables are every-meal menu, so too wild animals are every-meal menu for the tiger. This concept lead to linking the vegetable that man eats to the meat that tiger consumes.

5. *Nishuni*

A type of soil where termites lives

Literal meaning : a type of soil

Metaphorical reference : cooked rice

6. *Vodzü*

Rain water that flows on the ground

Literal meaning : rain water that flows on the ground

Metaphorical reference : rice beer

7. *Zhekotsü*

Mole

Literal meaning : mole

Metaphorical reference : wild boar

8. *Shikrü*

Lizard

Literal meaning : lizard

Metaphorical reference : stag

9. *Süra*

Rotten wood

Literal meaning : rotten meaning

Metaphorical reference : meat

The examples 5-9 given above are found in stories concerning death. In the Mao traditional belief there is life after death, and dead people also behave in the

same manner as the living: they eat, hunt, sleep, work etc. The differences are only that they do not use the same materials as the living even though the things that are found in the land of the dead are those that are naturally found in the land of the living.

<b>Metaphorical/Archaic</b>	<b>Literal meaning</b>	<b>Colloquial</b>	<b>English</b>
10. Ojü mala	froth of land	Kahe	cloud
11. Ojü mei	body hair of land	Opro	grass
12. Ojü re	bone of land	Otu	rock
13. Ojü korai	intestine of land	Korü	river

The comparison found in examples 10-13 are self explanatory yet these are considered as metaphorical because of the domain of comparison, and also the personification of the land as having hair, bone, intestine etc. This is at the same time archaic because such usages are no longer found in modern colloquial usages.

The given examples are considered dead or frozen as such usages are no longer used and can be found only in the narration of related stories which are also accessible only from some of the few elders of the community, who either sang those related folk songs or narrated stories. Such metaphors have restricted usage. Secondly, in such usage that appears in songs or stories, the metaphors give a poetic and archaic flavour, which is absent in colloquial Mao.

Dead metaphors are not perceived as metaphors any longer, they do not create any similarity or insight into the world. They nonetheless allow for ‘resuscitation’ when used in novel or unusual contexts.

### 6.2.2 Conventional or Weak metaphors

Conventional metaphors are those metaphorical usages which are found again and again to refer to a particular thing (Knowles and Moon, 2006: 6). Because of constant usages of such metaphors in everyday conversation, people tend to take this as normal vocabularies with no metaphorical meaning attached to it. Therefore, these kinds of metaphor become institutionalized as part of the language. Examples of this type are as follows:

<b>Metaphor</b>	<b>Literal meaning</b>	<b>English equivalent</b>
14. Ojüso	meat of land	soil
15. Jührü	life land/soil	soil that retain moist/fertile
16. Jünho	nose of land	crest of a hill/mountain
17. Jüpra	face of land	land surface of same feature
18. Jüphe	back of land	plain surface land/earth
19. Jüphi	leg of land	soil/earth
20. Jüpfula	navel of land	mound with no immediate raised land around it
21. Remo	puddenda of river	gorge
22. Ozhe	blood	brine water
23. Korai koso	long intestine	stubborn
24. Korai kashi	bad intestine	obstinate

25. Chūto komo	eatable not	unacceptable
26. Tsūkani	mind/idea rich	obedient

The above given examples (14-21) are self explanatory and its usages are found in everyday colloquial usage. They are metaphorical because comparisons are made between two different domains. The domain as we have seen is based on the physical appearance compared between a land mass with that of a human structure (e.g. 14-21); taste in example 22 where both blood and the brine water share the saltiness; anatomical implication in 23 and 24 where a longer or bad intestine would imply an unusual disturbance within one's body which can be reflected on his behavioural attitude. Psychological inferences of the concept of good and bad can be seen in 25 and 26 where in *chūto komo*, the comparison is made between the conceptualisation of normal food habit to normal conversation and in example 26, the psyche of person in his judgement towards what is good and what is bad. A person rich in one's mental construction and having a capability to differentiate between the good and the bad, the things which are appreciate or detest by others and basing on his understanding if the person tries to follow what is good then the result is that he becomes an obedient child. These are classed under the conventional or weak metaphor due to the fact that they are already institutionalised as part of the language and such usages are found in colloquial usages without intending to be metaphorical.

'Conventional' or 'Weak' metaphors show an average emphasis and resonance or only a high degree of one of the two features. It is largely accepted that conventional metaphors have a considerable heuristic and hence cognitive potentiality. But instead of contending that they create absolutely novel similarities, it

would be more precise to say that they work on already existing similarities within the common knowledge of a given culture. It is important to underline that these similarities have to be thought of not as ontologically given but as culturally produced similarities, which are only predicable of two implicative systems within the categorical framework of a given culture.

### **6.2.3 Live or Strong Metaphors**

The type of metaphors which are characterized by high emphasis and high resonance are called live or strong metaphors. They represent things in a novel light and thus express something that cannot be shown in any other way, at the same time they open up a wide range of possible interpretations and hence stimulate the recipients' mind. Because of their higher cognitive and heuristic potential they are constitutive elements of both literary and scientific discourse.

Live or strong metaphors are also known as creative or novel metaphor according to Knowles and Moon. This type of metaphors according to them are 'those which a writer/speaker constructs to express a particular idea or feeling in a particular context, and which a reader/hearer needs to deconstruct or *unpack* in order to understand what is meant'(2006: 5).

Both creating and interpreting live metaphors requires, in contrast, a much higher intellectual and imaginative effort, for they produce strikingly novel, yet unheard of similarities. M. Black has formulated the – what he calls – “strong creativity thesis” as follows:



28. *Maikolehi sore shilaittho kapi*

Omai kolehi sore shilai ttho kapi

People in between bones throw put give

English equivalent : adding fuel to the fire

Metaphorical meaning : instigate

Usage: The metaphorical implication refers to a situation of commotion or conflict where the third person instigates or provokes one of the parties, which results in flaring up of the situation into an unwanted state of affairs.

29. *Oshino alea morü koto*

Oshi no alea morü koto

Dog NOM own vomit to eat

Literal meaning : dog eating one's own vomit/barf

Metaphorical meaning : one who is forced to accept his own misdeeds.

Usage: This is used to refer to a person who pronounced or throws a challenge to one who is superior or greater ignoring the consequences and by virtue of his own deeds leads him in a state of despair leaving oneself at the mercy of others at the end.

30. *Chüra zho koho*

chüra zho koho

A drying basket hang above the hearth progress not have

Literal meaning : a drying basket that does not make any progress/advancement

Metaphorical meaning : a lazy person

Usage: this refers to person who is slothful and always wants an easy life.

31. *Orachükhu kohro ni.*

Ora            chükhu kohro ni

God           door to open on

Literal meaning: on the day god open the door

Metaphorical meaning: everyday

Usage: this is refers to a thing that happen everyday. It may have both negative as well as positive connotation. For instance it can refer to a person who has a bad habit of drinking everyday.

32. *Ottho dethopie*

ottho de    ttho pie

Seed   sow put give

Literal meaning: to sow a seed

Metaphorical meaning: instigate

Usage: this usage has a negative connotation to refer to someone who instigates others to do certain things.

The above given examples are live or strong from the point that these metaphors are used by speakers in their everyday conversation. The object of comparison as can be seen are the things that are found in this particular culture.

### 6.3 Conceptual Metaphor

Conceptual metaphors according to Knowles and Moon (2006) are unique to a particular culture i.e., cultural specific or shared with other cultures having a similarity in their conceptualisation. Universality here would take into consideration human experiences and conceptualisations of phenomenon such as life, emotions, causation, etc. Therefore, the present study will attempt to examine whether metaphors tend to be cultural specific<sup>49</sup>, or universal<sup>50</sup>, or both. Cross linguistic examination of metaphors in German, French and English; French, Italian and Spanish etc. by Knowles and Moon indicate that cross-cultural conceptualisation of human experiences can also be similar to a certain degree. This suggests that, to some extent at least, metaphorical mapping may indeed be universal. However, the languages considered here are related through language family as they all belong to European languages. Probing further, it is shown that there are differences in the conceptualisations with regard to different language families such as Japanese and Hopi. The process of conceptualisation therefore differs and metaphorical mapping can as well be language specific. Thus, metaphors are both cultural specific and to certain degree universal. To justify this seemingly contradictory claim, a cross-cultural study by Knowles and Moon can further be examined with a comparative study between different language families. English 'anger' metaphors include expressions such as *see red*, *explode with anger*, and *a fiery temper*. French have a direct parallel *voir, exploser de rage* for the first two and German *rot sehen* and *explodieren*. Mao seems to have a similar conceptualisation of anger as in *nhokrü pratie* (becoming very red: the term is polysemous with blushing) which is similar to

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<sup>49</sup> Knowles and Moon

<sup>50</sup> Lackoff and Johnson

English *see red*, with differences only in the verbs *becoming* in Mao and *see* in English. While *onhei leno ozhe pepira koru sotie* meaning ‘as though blood would explode from the eye’ could be the English equivalent of *explode with anger*. In Mao, however it is blood that explodes, not anger, and the explosion is in the eye. Japanese also conceptualised anger in terms of heat. This shows that conceptualisation can at times be universal across cultures and across languages. Similar types of conceptualisation of anger in terms of heat, redness and explosion can be seen in other languages such as Chothe<sup>51</sup> and Manipuri (Meitei)<sup>52</sup> as well. For example:

Table 1

<b>Chothe</b>	<b>Literal Translation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Lung shapa	Hotness of heart	Anger
Athi kaishou	Blood going up	Getting angry

Table 2

<b>Manipuri</b>	<b>Literal Translation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Shouba	-	Angry
I kai	Blood raise	Angry
Kok shai	Head hot	Tense

<sup>51</sup> Chothe data are from Y. Charles Cheithou

<sup>52</sup> Manipuri data are from Dr. C. Betholia

Table 3

<b>Mao</b>	<b>Literal Translation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Ozhe koso	Blood hot	Hot temper
Ora korono pili tsütie	Anger has hit the whorl of the head	Very angry
Ozhe so phuphu	Blood boiling hot	Short temper

From the above given tables (1-3), it can be seen that different cultural groups conceptualise metaphor as ‘Anger is heated fluid in a container’. Yet this conceptualisation of anger as fluid is metaphorically analysed in terms of its entities, qualities and functions. Thus, contentment of anger is taken as a source domain to map different but interesting target domains. The mapping of this idea is based on the real world knowledge that the source domain entails. Therefore, similar to fluid which rises with the intensity of heat, so, does anger. As the heat continues to raise it produces steam and creates more pressure to the container which when more heat is given, finally explodes. This source of heat is metaphorically mapped to the target domain of anger. Thus, with increase in pressure, anger also raises resulting first in fuming and fussing, till it finally explodes like the container.

The above examples show how in different cultures anger is conceptualised as a relationship between heat and blood. Thus ‘... cultural model for *anger* shows how metaphor structures not only how individuals within a language community might conceptualize of their various anger experiences, but also how metaphor shapes the

cultural knowledge that individuals share, to some degree or another, in a particular cultural community' (Gibbs 1999:153).

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) identify three categories under conceptual metaphors are identified. They are structural, orientational, and ontological metaphor. They are discussed below:

### **6.3.1 Structural Metaphor**

Structural metaphors are 'cases where one concept is metaphorically structured in terms of another' (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980:14). They allow the speaker to elaborate a concept in a more elaborate and more appropriate means for highlighting aspects that are considered as easily discernable. Thus a more highly structured and clearly delineated concept<sup>53</sup> is mapped to structure a concept which is more or less remote. Lakoff and Johnson use RATIONAL ARGUMENT IS WAR to structure the concept of argument and war. The concept of argument is systematically correlated with a more day to day experience of war or physical conflict which is more readily understood. Fighting is something that is experienced even in the animal world. However Lakoff and Johnson is of the view that humans adopt a more rational way of getting things done; instead of the physical conflict we adopt the conflict of words. Like in war an argument consists of 'intimidation, threat, invoking authority, insult, belittling, challenging authority, evading issues, bargaining, flattering,' (op.cit: 62). This kind of physical action also has a similar set up in the argument. Therefore, the source domain supplies frameworks for target domains: these determine the ways in which we think and talk about the entities and activities to which the target domains

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<sup>53</sup> See Lakoff and Johnson, 1980

refer, and even the ways in which we behave or carry out activities, as in the case of argument<sup>54</sup>. A similar set up can be seen in Mao for the metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR. Different physical or mental action that is carried out in war is utilised in an argument as well. Therefore, in sentence like *iye vadzü nhie* meaning someone referred to is not fit for challenge; also *i chakra moe* meaning not my equal would be taken as an intimidation as well as showing superiority or issuing authority. This is structural metaphor from the point that in a fair fight it is with the equal one challenge and not with someone who is considered weaker than him/her. Likewise *koshou* ‘shoot’; *rü* ‘counter-attack’; *arai* ‘dodge’ are few examples engaged when talking about argument as well.

### 6.3.2 Orientational metaphor

Lakoff and Johnson discuss orientational metaphor ‘organizes a whole system of concepts with respect to one another’ (1980: 14). In such metaphors the concepts are based on spatial orientation such as up-down, in-out, front-back, on-off, deep-shallow and central-peripheral. Further it is discussed that such spatial orientations are not ‘arbitrary’ but based on ‘our physical and cultural experience’. Though the polar oppositions are physical in nature yet the conception may vary from culture to culture.

Table 4

Mao	Literal translation	English gloss
Lishi loe	Sick enter/going in	Fallen sick
Zhü prae	Good coming out	Recovering

<sup>54</sup> See also Knowles and Moon, 2006

Nhokrei prae	Reddish coming out	Becoming healthier
Teikrü loe/Azüteikrü loe	Blackish entering/going in	Becoming weaker
Chovo prae	Happy coming out	Becoming rich
Mazhe loe	Sad enter/going in	Getting poorer
Hrü mazü prae	Living good out	Getting more populous/high of fertility rate
The ho loe	Death no more in	Thinning of population due to death
Chünhei kapra	Sun coming out	Sunrise
Chünhei kolo	Sun going in	Sunset

From the table 4 it can be seen that Mao employs spatial orientation to refer to different states of mind. The orientations are indicated by the use of motion verbs<sup>55</sup>, the direction of which is mentally mapped to the physical motion. The physical motion of *chünhü kolo*, meaning ‘to go inside the house’ and *vaku kapra*, meaning ‘to go outside’ is mapped metaphorically to other domains. Additional concept employed here is the concept of container. The human body therefore is considered as a container so too, a house. States of mind, nature, conditions of any sort are all bounded by certain limitation. The movement from this container to another state is thus indicated by the orientation of spatial bearing which is metaphorically balanced to similar yet implicit domain. Therefore, wealth, health, life and even nature are considered from spatial orientation. Thus sickness, sadness, weakness, less etc. on the

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<sup>55</sup> See Kapfo, 2003

one hand is considered as diminishing or recoiling back to one's shell of isolation and insignificance. On the other hand, recovering from sickness, becoming happy, getting healthier, etc are considered as increase or coming out of the shell to a glorious, more exuberant and a debouch from the darkness of insignificance to an open ground of luxury.

Using terminologies from Lakoff and Johnson we can say that *happy* is 'up' while *sad* is 'down', *health* and *life* are 'up' and *sickness* and *death* are 'down', *more* is 'up' and *less* is 'down'. Here, the implication of concept of the Maos can be understood more by looking closer into some of the obvious examples. A glow of complexion can have a reddish skin texture-showing healthiness. A direct sense relationship can in one way be established between the two i.e. a reddish skin and healthiness. However, the relationship shown here is not to bring out the connection between the sign and the signified rather to show how the source is metaphorically used to refer to the target. It should be noted here that reddishness of skin can be also results from rashes, blushes etc. which are totally unrelated to healthiness. More interestingly, the treatment of this relationship metaphorically is the impression of container where *healthiness* is up or 'out' and *un-healthiness* is down or 'in'. Likewise, getting more *populous* is a good sign and is 'up' or 'out' whereas *death* is bad or 'in'. These two examples show how metaphors are conceptualised in a cultural group. Conceptualisation of ideas largely rests on the importance given to certain things. As health and population form a vital part of an individual, extension of usage in metaphor are found in this aspect. This does not of course claim that they are the most important things in Mao community or that everything found in metaphors are the most important aspects in their everyday life. The extensions of metaphorical

container are also found in the natural phenomenon such as the rising and setting of the celestial bodies such sun, moon and stars. *Rising sun* is ‘out’, because it firstly increases and seems to have come out of its own house; while the *setting sun* is going ‘in’ back to the container when it diminishes. Rising also has another metaphorical implication of growth and improvement specially referred to something positive, whereas setting is negative, an end of something good.

### 6.3.3 Ontological Metaphor

When matters of experiences of physical objects are taken further to some other domain and mapped, such kinds of extension are known as ontological metaphors. The domains could be ways of viewing events, activities, emotions, ideas etc., as entities and substances. In other words it allows us to conceptualize and talk about abstract things and experiences as having definite physical properties<sup>56</sup>. Some examples of ontological metaphor can be seen in the table below:

Table 5

<b>Mao</b>	<b>Literal translation</b>	<b>English gloss</b>
Mazhe kochuno theloa	Dying out of exhaustion	Extreme exhaustion
Mozü kochuno theloa	Dying out of hunger	Extremely hungry/famished
Metha-a	Dying of laughing	Laugh one’s head off
To kanino theloa	Dying of wanting to eat	Wanting/desire to eat very much

<sup>56</sup> See also Knowles and Moon

Chürü chüni kadae	Rain and sunshine fight	When there is both rain and sunshine
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These expressions given in table 5 are usually uttered when people are at the highest degree of whatever it is they are referring, and therefore the question arises whether the Mao people consider death as one of the extremity or things that wind up everything. Life's journey ends with death and therefore the reference could be that the particular things could be of the highest degree and there could not be anything further than that. This concept could motivate the speakers to map the source domain onto their conceptualization of different target domains. However, philosophical and theological interpretation of life after death is deliberately avoided because an in-depth study would not be necessary in this context. The beauty of these types of metaphorical mapping is that mental, physical experiences are personified and given the status as any sentient being with life which ends with death. Also, meteorological verbs<sup>57</sup> such as *chürü chüni kadae*, are also animated.

#### 6.4 Metaphor and Idioms

Idioms according to Knowles and Moon (2006) are conventionalised phrases where the meaning of the whole phrase is different from the meaning which might be produced by interpreting the individual words in the phrase. Willey (1939: 221) quoting Funk and Wagnalls (not dated) define idioms or idiomatic phrase as 'a phrase the meaning of which cannot be deduced from its component parts'. Further, quoting Hauch (not dated), idioms or idiomatic phrase is defined 'as a combination of words

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<sup>57</sup> Personal communication with Dr. Thangei Chhangte.

that upon analysis for vocabulary and syntactical characteristics conveys either no intelligible meaning at all or one differing from the conventionally accepted sense. The fact that this conventionally accepted sense may be syntactically explained on the basis of etymological and historical origins does not make the expression in question any the less an idiom as far as elementary instruction in the language is concerned' (op.cit.: 222). It is thus seen from the above definitions, emphasis is made on the remoteness of relationship between the literal meaning of the constituent words and the signification it implies. In other words, the composite meaning of the sequence of words in idioms cannot be deduced from the knowledge of the meaning of the individual items. Therefore, idioms are nothing but a group of words whose meanings cannot be not derived from the constituent words in isolation but impart a distinct interpretation whose meanings are at the same time conventionalized. Idioms are thus conventionalized and their meanings or usages are not entirely predictable from the constituent words.

It is a well known fact that idioms are semantically compositional, and that the very phenomenon of idiomaticity is fundamentally semantic in nature as opposed to literatures on syntax of idioms which are based on the misconception that there is no such semantic compositionality which exists in idioms.

Idioms are considered metaphorical due to their property of mapping metaphorically the source domain to the target domain which can be totally dissimilar from each other. Though very often an idiom has no metaphorical implication, being simply a phrase adopted by language as a single word, yet at times it can be metaphorical as well. It is built from metaphor though the metaphorical derivation

expressed in idioms may have lost its relevance due to its popularity/constant usage. It can also be derived from proverbial expressions even though they are used mostly in an informal situation.

The present investigation into idioms would only consider those that have metaphorical extensions. It is claimed in literature that idioms are inseparable from the language of its origin; this is due to the fact that language is not made up of words structured in a particular way but are intricately interwoven with one's cultural beliefs. Some of the idioms of major and prestigious world languages may become so popular that they are adapted to another language but it should be noted that this happens only if the receiving language already has the pattern similar to the incoming idioms. However, the present study will not take into consideration such idioms that could have possibly come into the present language but will only look into those that have a more cultural view within the idioms.

### 33. *Opino ophi kro kotu*

Opi no ophi kro kotu  
head NOM leg come down up to

Literal meaning : from head to foot

Reference : whole meaning

English equivalent : from head to foot/toe

Usage: This idiom is used to refer to a situation when the speaker had elaborated on every possible aspect of something he is talking about.

34. *Opha obi sü komo*

opha obi sü komo

tip base know neg.

Literal meaning : not knowing which is the tip or the base

Metaphorical meaning : can't differentiate between head or tail.

Usage: This is rather abusive and usually refers to a younger who show one's ignorance on an apparent matter. At other occasions, it can refer to those who go on talking out of the context especially in a meeting or in some serious discussions.

35. *Opino pfokro ojü sho*

opi no pfo kro ojü sho

head NOM to carry come down earth hit/plant

Literal meaning : planting/hitting the ground with the head

Metaphorical meaning : doing something without knowing the pros and cons

Usage: This refers to one who does not use his reason to live a good life, for instance living a life of laziness, immorality etc. without actually bothering the consequences of his action.

36. *Onho pfü kola*

ongo pfü kola

nose to carry to raise

Literal meaning : raising/lifting one's nose

Metaphorical meaning : taking pride of/ egoistic attitude

Usage: An egoistic nature is not a quality that is socially approved. Honesty and humbleness are qualities that draw respect in this community. Posture of walking with a raised chest attracts abomination. It is considered as ill-conceived pride.

37. *Opi kotu*

opi kotu

head hard/strong

Literal meaning : hard head

Metaphorical meaning : daring/stubborn

Usage: This idiom has both positive and negative connotation. Positively, it refers to person who dares when every other retreats, either in action or in words. Negatively and most often usage refers to person who does things without considering the possible outcome out of one's action. When referred to children it means a total stubbornness.

38. *Orahu hrü kohrü*

orahu hrü kohrü

Pigeon life to live

Literal meaning : to pursue the life of a pigeon

Metaphorical meaning : always looking for comfort/easy life

Usage: A person who always look out for luxurious life at the expense of someone else. This refers to person who is slothful. It is believed that a pigeon stays in houses only when they are being provided proper food; they don't know the owner but consider themselves as a subject to those who provides them food.

39. *Maishi koso*

mai shi koso

other's dog to do

Literal meaning : to be someone's dog

Metaphorical meaning : follower of others/imitator

Usage: A feather flood along with the wind. A dog always follows his master. A person without principles is easily led astray. This also refers to persons who mimicked the action of others but the implication has a negative connotation.

40. *Sikrü pfüna*

osi krü pfüna

dog mother mother and puppy

Literal meaning : the bitch and its puppy

Metaphorical meaning : taking side/ blind support (negative connotation)

Usage: When a person supports another blindly, reference is made to puppies who bark along with their mother not knowing the cause. The usage is more of an advice or a chiding to someone to be more rational.

41. *Nibijü*

nibi jü

ear big

Literal meaning : big ear

Metaphorical meaning : turn a deaf ear to somebody or something/stubbornness

Usage: This idiom is mostly used by the elders to chide the younger people for their repeated misdeeds or stubbornness without paying heed to what they are asked to do or not to do. Sometime when anyone could not understand the saying/command and reciprocate the action accordingly he is scolded and referred to as disobedience. Very rarely the idiom *nabijü* referred to a person who has a poor hearing even though the idioms have the same connotation.

42. *Nhei jü*

onhei jü

eye big

Literal meaning : big eye(s)

Reference : completely unmindful of the happenings/surroundings

Usage: This is used to berate someone of his carelessness. When a person stumbles on everything that comes on his way and still goes about mindlessly, he is lambasted for his action.

43. *Chida chiphi*

chida

chiphi

divorcees (women) who returns back to the village

villagers

Literal meaning : divorcees and the villagers

Reference : the whole villagers

Usage: This idiom is used in times of community related works that requires the involvement of every member. The reference is made to all who dwells in that particular village including children who are capable of holding a dao or spade.

Background: A woman married to a person of another village loses her citizenship in the original village and becomes a citizen of the husband's village. Even when divorced and returned to the original village, she is no longer a citizen of her village.

44. Krüjü

krü	jü
mother	big

Literal meaning : big mother

Reference : clumsy person

Usage: A person especially associated with one's physical feature such as stoutness results in clumsiness. A stout lady worn out by age has been compared to persons who are inactive and clumsy.

45. Onhojü

ongho	jü
leave	big

Literal meaning : big leave

Reference : clumsy person

Usage: A big leave does not flicker however strong the wind may be. It sways slowly and clumsily. This is used when being scolded by an elder person.

46. Nhojü

nho	jü
body	big

Literal meaning : big body

Reference : dull person

Usage: A person who could not do or say anything even after a series of guidance or teachings is referred as *nhojü* (big body). Such type of person is chided for poor mental ability.

#### 47. Kasi koso

Kasi koso

Cool hot

Literal meaning : coolness and hotness

Reference : hardships and difficulties

Usage: This idiom is used to refer to a situation of pain and suffering in life where one can hardly endure the hardships and difficulties that he faces in his life. The Maos are well aware of hardships and difficulties which every one has to come across in life; this critical situation of life is compared to the extreme coolness and hotness. Young people are always advised by the elders as *zhülo koru duno kasi koso hre moli süe* which means one ought to endure hardship and difficulty with patience and perseverance to be successful.

The study here exhibits what types of idioms are present in Mao and how they are used. A deeper probing into these will reveal what is the concept of good life in this community. Virtue and vice becomes a subject which is imparted through the use of idioms. A clear distinction can be framed from the above example, where ignorance, laziness, immorality, egoistic, excessiveness, clumsiness are all considered

as vice. On the other hand, morality, humbleness, honesty, industriousness, etc. are all considered virtuous.

## 6.5 Simile

Philosophically, similes are those figures of speech that are literally possible or true even though the implication may not be appropriate or very clear. Sometimes the comparison can be between very different yet explicit domains, as in English examples like *as clear as crystal*, *as white as snow* etc. Similes are popular poetic devices characterised or signalled by words such as *like*, *as*, *compare*, *resemble*, and so on, in English. On the other hand, metaphors are literally impossible or untrue and on the surface may look paradoxical and false. However, both metaphors and similes are used in language for comparison. Both employ comparative implication between the topic and the vehicle; in other words the vehicle 'is like' the topic.

The difference between a simile and a metaphor, in simple words, is that in similes the comparison is explicitly stated, usually by a word such as 'like' or 'as', while in a metaphors the comparison is just implied. The present study will not look into literal similes which are a mere comparison as in 'a wolf is like a dog' but would consider the figurative similes which behave like metaphors.

A metaphor or a simile when translated into another language or received by people whose cultural background is different from the cultural background of the original formation of concept, then the receptor culture need some background facts of that community. Therefore, some of the facts of origin of similes are given below with the story behind it. Some loss of meaning is perhaps inevitable because of the

difference of cultural background. But much care is taken to ensure that the message is communicated accurately and meaningfully, and in a way which enables the receiver to identify the appropriate point of similarity.

One of the popular poetic device exploited by the Maos is the simile which is qualified by the addition of *so/wa-se/ bvüa* 'like/similar/as' to a word, phrase, or clause. Though the comparison involved may not be overtly imaginative or insightful, yet the beauty lies in the mapping of explicitly dissimilar domains together. In some of the cases the mapping of the overtly remote realm are brought together through artistic creation of linking stories to bring in a more systematic and concise manner. This indicated the heightened awareness of the community to the original subject, the thing, person, or event. The domain of comparison reflects a measure of sensitivity and sensibility relative to the natural and animal world, as well as to man and his handiwork: a depiction of the Mao outlook of culture and character.

48. *Okheno süduno kasa koso so*

okhe no süduno kasa koso so

Tiger NOM. tomorrow friend to do like

Literal meaning : tiger making friendship with tomorrow.

Metaphorical meaning : Do not keep on postponing things.

English equivalent : Procrastination is the thief of time (Chinese Proverb)

Reference: This simile refers to a person who keeps on postponing important things and leaves them undone. The person who keeps on planning but never put into practical reality is made fun of by the other members of the community and

insulted as '*nelihi okhe no süduno kasa koso sotie*' which means you are like the tiger making friendship with tomorrow.

The story behind the above simile is given below;

One day a Tiger (okhe) went into the forest in search of prey. On the way he came across pits (khrubvü) and snares set up by man to trap animals. He thought about it for a moment and in order to remind himself he kept on saying "khru-khru bvü-bvü, khru-khru bvü-bvü ..." as he roam about the forest looking for prey. As he couldn't get any prey, he thought of attacking even cattle. Lost in his thought he forgot about the pits and snares and suddenly stumbled into one of the pit. Though the pit was within his reach he decided to lay into the man to attack from the pit. The man did not turn up that day but the tiger thought that he would come to inspect the pit the next day. As days goes by waiting for the man, the strength drained, yet the man never came. It was too late to realise that he was left with no strength even for his escape. The tiger finally died.

49. *Makhreno china rümazhü so*

makhre no china rü mazhü so

dove NOM genna observe be good like

Literal meaning : Like dove observing the genna in a very strict way

Metaphorical meaning : Hard work always pays

Reference: A Mao who follows the traditional religion called *Chüna* (branded as animism by the socio-anthropologists) has to observe and perform various religious rites and ceremonies. Persons who keep and observe the rites and ceremonies are believed to be blessed by Oramei (God) who reward them with wealth and good offspring. Therefore, every member of the community takes a

serious note of the rules while performing rites and ceremonies; a strong warning of violation is given by the elders.

The story behind the above simile:

There once lived a dove who is a strict observer of gennas<sup>58</sup>. She keeps the gennas from the minutest detail to the most complicated ones with strict discipline. Seeing the sincerity and her truthfulness, god blessed her in a very special way. The reward of her sincerity is the assurance of god to protect her eggs from any condition. Thus, it is believed that in spite of its poor form of dove's nest, the eggs never dropped.

#### 50. *Zhengo pela bvütie*

zhengo	pela	bvütie
Wild cat	sending message	like

Literal meaning : Like the wild cat passing message

Metaphorical meaning : Giving or passing a false message

Reference: This phrase is referred to a person who hears one thing and conveys the other message i.e. irrelevant message either because of his carelessness, absent mindedness or his bad motive.

The story behind the above simile:

One oral myth in Mao narrates that god, tiger and man were brothers. When they separated, god resided the lofty rocky places, the tiger dominated the forest and man becomes the master of hills and plains. Even after they separated, they maintained a close relationship with each other. On one occasion, man made special dishes with a priced cock; cooked dish for himself and a special raw meat for his brother-the tiger

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<sup>58</sup> Genna is the religious observations.

and went to meet him. They met at a place and had the food together. Before taking leave, the tiger said *ovupro mozü kayi chocho deipile* literally meaning ‘a bunch of straight and good vegetables will be pluck and be kept for him’, referring to some healthy animal. This, the tiger thought would be a show of repaying for the kindness shown to him. As they moved some distance away from each other, the man started to think about what the tiger has said and fear that if the tiger was referring to the real vegetables it would be of no use to him. So he called out to his brother and told him that he should instead give him a killed of animal. The tiger pretended not to hear the message as he knows that it was not what he meant and went further saying *hia, hia* ‘pardon, pardon’. The wild cat (zhengo), fearing that he would one day fall a victim if the tiger were to give the killed animal, reinterpreted that message saying that the tiger should leave his faeces for the man on the ridge. To justify his statement, the wild cat (zhengo) defecated on the ridge. Thus, till today one can see the faeces of the wild cat on the ridge of the hills.

51. *Chamailo tu kokhusoa fū tetie*

Chamailo    tu kokhu so    a                    fū    tetie

Name of a person cow herd like connective tipsy            pst.part.

Literal meaning                    : like when herding Chamailo’s cow, I am tipsy

Metaphorical meaning            : not paying what is due

Reference: This is used to refer to a situation of one’s life where one suffers for not being paid sufficiently for the work he has done. The Maos being a community loving people never wish to see the misery of a person due to ill treatment by anyone and thus people in such kind of situation they say *chameilo tu kokhuso*. Here the phrase carries two dimensional meanings; an expression

sharing the pathetic condition of the victim and on the other side the person who ill treats others are condemned as unaffectionate.

The story behind the above simile:

There once lived a rich man who has a big herd of cows. He employed a cowherd to look after his cows. It is customary in the Mao society that the cowboy had to be treated with rice beer and food after herding the herd to the cowshed which is usually kept near the owner's house. However, this miserly rich man Chamailo would give to his cowboy the worst of rice beer and that too in very little quantity, and at the same time would tell him to get tipsy with it.

52. *Makhreno alia ara mohokou so*

Makrai no alia    ara    mohokou    so

Dove nom one's own voice    to lose    like

Literal meaning            : like dove losing his singing voice/song

Metaphorical meaning    : Following the right advice can bring you success in life.

Reference: This simile is used as a guiding principle given to the children to obey the parents and elders in the community. They always teach their children and younger people about the necessity of obedience and its beneficial effect and also the bad consequences of being disobedient. The worst condition that can happen to a man is implicitly given in this connection where the dove loses both the mother and legitimate right to receive a melodious voice.

The story behind the above simile:

Once there lived a dove and his/her mother. The mother dove was sick. The baby dove instead of taking care of her and in spite of her request to stay back flew away to a hay-stack in the field to look for his own food. Towards the evening when he flew back to his nest, he found out that his mother has passed away. Then the whole world shattered before him. As he has not learnt how to sing, he mourned for his mother recollecting that he was not able to carry out even a simple wish of his mother in her death bed. All he could do was cry. He cried and cried. He cried for his mother, he cried for his own future. He cried because he has not learnt how to sing yet. He has never learnt to sing and thus, his crying has become his song, while the beautiful song of the dove was learnt by another bird (Chovū) whose song is considered as very pleasant. Thus another comparison goes to refer to a person with beautiful voice as the voice of that particular bird: *chovū ara koa se* meaning it is like the voice of that particular bird.

53. *Kohrūno ala-a kre manikochu so*

kohrūno ala-a kre manikochu so

bulbul one's own nest to show like

Literal meaning : Like bulbul showing its own nest

Metaphorical meaning : Revealing one's own secret by lack of common sense/  
showing off of own possessions.

Reference: This simile is used to mortify a person who traps himself into problems by unnecessarily revealing his own secrets; either lacking of common sense or through showing off. It is believed that the bulbul would perch on tree top and twitters around the place where she builds her nest. This act reveals her nest, and thus people could find the nest easily.

54. *Kholono otto kakra kokhu so*

kholo no otto kakra kokhu so,

Crow nom child white waiting like

Literal meaning : Like a crow waiting for a white sibling

Metaphorical meaning : Awaiting something which will never happen

English equivalent : building a castle in the air.

Reference: This simile refers to a person who always fancies something beautiful to come in life, but this actually will never happen. They do not have a clear understanding between things which are practical and which are fanciful and pure imagination.

The story behind the above simile:

The story goes that every time a crow laid eggs, she would look at the white eggs and think that since the eggs are white; her children would also be white/fair.

55. *Korikokano zhokheipa amozhu so*

korikoka no zhokhie pa amozhu so

A particular type of bird NOM Schima flower to look like

Literal meaning : Like a korikoka looking/staring at the flower of

*Schima khasiana*

Metaphorical meaning : Yearning for have something great to happen

Reference: This is used to refer to a person who expects something great out of the blue but ends up returning home empty handed.

The story behind the above simile:

This particular bird (korikoka) would look at the flower of *Schima khasiana* (which when fully bloomed would cover the whole tree) when blooming and think that this time he would be able to enjoy its fruit in plenty. However, when it bears fruit, the fruit turns out to be woody and nothing can be eaten.

56. *Odzükhru lehi obopizhi kotho so*

odzü khru lehi obo pizhü kotho so  
water under pp faeces fart to put like

Literal meaning : Like farting under water

Metaphorical meaning : Trying to convince people of something unacceptable

Factual : A fart under water will just bubble up but will never smell.

Reference: This refers to a senseless speech/talk of a person which he delivers to convince people of something unacceptable to others. But more often than not it implies a talk which does not have much substance. His speech is like a fart under the water which can never be held in the water nor give any smell.

57. *Ovodo konho so*

ovo do kongho so  
Crab field to go like

Literal meaning : Like going to the field of a crab

Metaphorical meaning : ungrateful person

Reference: This refers to persons who totally lack appreciation of those who had help him.

58. *Kohrūno mi chase koru so*

kohrū no mi chashe koru so

bulbul NOM tail to touch like

Literal meaning : like a bulbul who at least touches with his tail

Metaphorical meaning : a person who gets a part of share for little involvement

Reference: This simile has two connotations. Positive connotation refers to a person who could be around in time of sharing something but does not get the full share like others yet is given a little of it out of sympathy. The negative connotation - when a person is being victimized not actually because of his false but due to his presence or because of his slight involvement in the argument or dispute.

59. *Oshuno kami kongu amani so*

oshu no kami kongu amani so

deer NOM canine teeth shake show like

Literal meaning : like deer showing his shaky canine teeth

Metaphorical meaning : Showing one's own weakness to others.

Reference: It is believed as the story goes that even the tiger fears the canine teeth of the deer. But this fear is warded off when the deer shakes his canine in front of the tiger. Thus, a deer becomes an easy prey for the tiger. Likewise, if a person who out of simplicity shows one's weakness, and thus becomes a victim is compared to a deer's imbecility.

60. *Ovo no thoprü le lotu-a obo phoamoho so*

ovo no thoprü le lotu-a obo pho amoho so  
pig NOM garden pp enter way fine NEG like

Literal translation : like a pig which enters a garden and can't find its way back

Metaphorical meaning : one who entangles himself in his own words.

61. *Ohuno aliaye pisüno tekro bukolo so*

ohu no aleaye pisüno te kro bukolo so  
Hen NOM himself basket kick down cover to like

Literal translation : like a hen which tries to perch on the basket and accidentally covers it with it.

Metaphorical meaning : a person who contradicts himself especially in court, and thus loses all his valid points

Reference: Examples 60 and 61 are used in similar situations when a person gets himself entangled out of his own volition or because of the words that he had spoken. It refers to cases where his opinion leads to his downfall, preventing further moves. In 60 a hen or cock which covers itself up accidentally while trying to get something. Such cases are believed to be bad for further rearing and thus eaten.

Simile as a figure of speech is found commonly used among the Maos. Almost every experience of the past that has spread across a group or within the community can be used for comparison. When it spreads further, it becomes coded in the language. Thus, similes are considered poetic devices used creatively to achieve just the effect intended. The implication of such usage is to bring forth moralistic

education through to the community and social harmony. Virtues are again depicted, exalting qualities such as kindness, sincerity, obedience, truthfulness, principality. Comparisons for such lessons are brought through the use of animals, birds, and even human experiences. Such kinds of comparison also reflect the complacent agrarian community's love, dependence and understanding in relation to the nature. A passionate interest in nature is the source of inspiration for bringing in different aspects of nature and its related fields are brought in for comparison. The closely knitted relationship between man, nature and animal are clearly depicted through the usages of the similes mentioned. The magnitude with which the Maos brought in the concept of nature, animal, plant is nothing but the capability of the community's power of judgement and observation showing their keenest interest in it.

## **6.6 Metonymy**

Metonymy is the relationship that holds between a part-and-a-whole and between associations. In metonymy, a word for a part of something is used to refer to the whole, or in other words the whole is referred to in terms of something associated with it. This is to say that a well-understood and easy-to-perceive aspect of something is taken and used that aspect to stand either for the thing as a whole or for some other aspect or part of it.

While in metaphor the reference is made between two completely unrelated entities, in metonymy the reference is made to refer to a domain that is closely related. Thus, metonymy works by the association between two concepts, whereas metaphor works by the similarity between them. In metonymy qualities are not transferred from

the source to the target domain as in metaphor, rather the relationship of association/contiguity is only shown. Metonymy is an integral part of the entity that is used to refer to. Thus, there is a close association between the source and the target domain. However, it is to be noted here that many writers do not differentiate between metonymy and metaphor. This is because in both these figures of speech the references of sense are not direct association between the source domain and the target domain but built on formation of conception between the two.

Table 6

<b>Word</b>	<b>Literal Meaning</b>	<b>Metonymic Use</b>
Chüinghü tofu	Indoor hearth	(One) family
Opi	Head	Individual
Pfona	Person	Community/village
Ahru	Sweat	Hard work
Omü kopro/omü sakashi	Mouth plenty/mouth naughty	Talkative
Opfu kajü	Stomach big	Glutton
Nheidzü krole	Tears will fall	Face difficulty
Opi kopru ohu kacha	Breaking head and teeth	Life and death
Opi sole	Will get headache	Difficulties
Pikhrei koho	No brain	Stupid
Ongho amonu	Soft nose	Meekness
Sükhe kopfomai	person who use wooden plate	The Nagas
Chido	Occiput	The person
Piphe	Head and back	The person

Table 6 illustrates the use of metonymy in Mao. Hearth in Mao is usually built not only to cook food but also a place where one finds warmth. Hearth is built in such a position where the whole member of the family can sit around it to warm themselves and also the only place where the family gathers together. In other words, hearth brings the family together and also gives warmth to its members. Therefore, the reference is extended metonymically to refer to a family. *Opi* 'head' refers to the whole individual as in the phrase *omai kali pino* 'from each individual'. Likewise other metonymic usages are self explanatory yet the phrase 'opi kopru ohu kacha' would be interesting to look into. While the meaning is 'life and death', the reference would usually imply death or serious consequences out of it. This is metonymic in the sense that death can be preceded by broken head and teeth. And such an occasion arises when there is a fight. Usage of such a phrase would be to warn someone not to talk about something as that would create a violent impression to the referee which would seek for revenge. *Onho amonu* on the other hand could have been metaphorically taken from the source domain of system of piercing buffalo's nose so as to drive the buffalo for work in the field. Logical conclusion would also draw to the fact that if the nose of the buffalo is soft, the pain would be more when pulled. When lead, the buffalo thus would not struggle but follow the directions. This is metaphorical extended to humans as well. This is metonymic in a sense that when part of a human is judged as soft, the individual as such is considered meek and thus could be led easily by anyone like a buffalo. *Chido* and *piphe* as in sentence like *chido/piphe – a mozhuni motie* literally meaning cannot even see the occipital or the head and back would usually refer to the individual talked about who is out of sight by running away or not seen for a long period of time.

Sometimes, metaphor and metonymy can both be at work in the same figure of speech, or one could interpret a phrase metaphorically or metonymically. For example,

*Lepfü koso*

Literal meaning : to do the internals

Metonomical meaning : sharing the internals refers to the whole process

Metaphorical meaning : reaching the final agreement.

In this figure of speech interpretation can be both metaphorical as well as metonymic. To understand this figure of speech better, it would be more interesting to look into the origin of the phrase in the first place. In the customary law of the Mao, two parties perform such an agreement as a final understanding. The agreement is more like a compromise. Such types of agreement are usually conducted without formal announcement, i.e., they normally conducted secretly between the two parties. Therefore they seem to have a negative connotation as well. The compromise would be signified by a meal after the agreement which is specifically cooked with the internals such as intestine, liver, heart spleen etc. of any animals and not any other part of the animal. The derivation of the term could be from *lepfüso* 'internal meat' - referring both to the internals of the animal and the real intension of the two parties. This compromising act then ends with *zhüsetea shisetea ti chuado* meaning 'whether it is good or bad that's the end'.

The given figure of speech is metaphorical in that it symbolically represents the sharing of one's inner feeling with the other party. This is in consonant with the

saying *ole tthopfü hrapra mani kochu* ‘taking out your whole internals and showing it’. It can be on the other hand metonymic as a part of the compromising act is taken to refer to the whole procedure.

The beauty of metonymic usage is the formation of association between the part and the whole. This association can differ from one cultural group to the other indicating the differences in the conceptualisation of the cultural practices in relating themselves to the world around them.

## **6.7 Conclusion**

Metaphor is usually claimed to be a poetic device to embellish a rhetorical structure. It is considered as an extraordinary rather than ordinary language. But Lakoff and Johnson (1980) clearly stated through out their book that metaphors are rather ordinary and a concept we live by everyday. Metaphors are more of a device to get the communicator’s intended meaning across in a rather comparative mode. The essence of metaphor is, understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another. This is necessitated by the fact that thoughts transcend language and since not every conscious thought can be put into words-numerous emotive and imaginative experiences possessing a non-linguistic character are expressed through art, dance, painting etc-equating an experience, though remote, brings out a more picturesque and expressive way of conveying the same message.

If a sentence which consists of metaphor is translated into any other language word for word and still retains the same meaning then the two languages share the same metaphorical senses. Therefore, a sentence is metaphorical due to its meaning

and not due to its orthography, its phonetic pattern, or its grammatical form showing that metaphor belongs to the realm of semantics and not syntax or to any physical inquiry about language (Black 1976: 28). Metaphor is an essential element in our categorisation of the world and our thinking processes. Similes involve the identification of resemblance and metaphor involves transferring of properties from one concept to the other. Comparison is made to different domains such as animals, person etc. to refer to the present situation. This is usually done so as to bring more appropriate references and in order to make the person learn in a better way. In other words one does not have to experience the same situation all over again but to learn from the experience of those people who has already done it. Metaphor and simile are thus truly the reflected images of the conception, the world view, the mental image, creative inspiration and absolute representation of the communities' perceptive capabilities.

Metaphorical extension results when someone sees a resemblance between one situation and another and this resemblance is generalised among the speakers of the language<sup>59</sup>.

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<sup>59</sup> See Greenberg 1967

# **Conclusion**

## Chapter 7

### Conclusion

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Investigation has been carried out to find the extent of cultural element that is embedded in language with particular emphasis on Mao language and its culture. Before concluding the study it would be interesting to look into the issues that are raised in the foregone chapters and see the findings and unresolved issues if any. The study begins with a brief introduction on the socio-historical account of the Maos keeping in mind those aspects which needs to understand first in order to comprehend the succeeding chapters in a better way. Since not much work has been carried out on Mao, land and people is first introduced where earlier references in literatures are also mentioned so that interested people will find a means to start with their study. The theory of origin shows the sense of ‘cause and effect’ of the people. The theory is well framed and shows a very advanced conceptualisation of ideas which is in consonant with the latest theory of origin, which like the theory of Mao (Naga) have its origin in water<sup>60</sup>. The socio-cultural historical construction of the Maos includes the preference of settlement of the people on higher altitude for the strategic reasons as they follow head-hunting culture. Head is taken not for the pleasure but for depiction of strength and courage. It has become necessity for a male member of the community, for only after taking a head can he perform certain rites and ritual which he needs to perform in his life. A successful head hunter gets due recognition form the community but the highest status a man can achieve in his life-time is to perform Zhoso Mozü ‘feast of merit’. The feast involves a series of rituals along with offering a lavish feast for the

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<sup>60</sup> This insight is from Dr. Xavier P. Mao in one of my personal communications with him.

whole community to enjoy his wealth, which may last for days together. Due to constant threat the settlement are well protected by bamboo spikes and pits and snares around the village and the entrance is also through only one or two gates for the whole village. This threat from the enemies calls for the community to work together for security. Working together develops a strong sense of community life which extends not only in defence of the community but also in their agricultural life as well. The cultural knowledge and the sense of community life, the virtues are imparted to the young ones by the parents and most importantly in the institution known as the dormitory system. Though formal education and books are things that are unheard of by the people in the past, folk tales and folk songs that have been passed down generation after generation through oral tradition, are employed by these unsophisticated indigenous groups to make the best use of it in order to lead a virtuous life.

Out of the constant threat of war and the agricultural practices which require a lot of labour (Maos are very diligent workers) they find a way to entertain themselves through feasts. Festivals are a time of relaxation and a time for enjoyment yet more importantly they are occasions set aside for thanksgiving and for supplication to *Oramai* 'God'. This is because God the creator of heaven and earth is also the provider, the sustainer and the protector. To appease him, a set of gennas are set aside which every member of the community should strictly follow so as not to call upon himself the wrath of God.

Apart from the cultural life of the people, language classification showing language family affiliation is also introduced following different classifications. In

order to have a closer look into Mao language, a classification of the varieties/dialects of Mao is attempted here based on pronunciation, which although needs further improvement and research to bring a noteworthy classification taking into consideration other aspects of variation.

The literature review in the second chapter in the thesis provides an overview of different theories which serve as the theoretical frameworks for the analysis in the succeeding chapters. This being an interdisciplinary field of study, literature from linguistics as well as from anthropology has been reviewed. Also a section has been given to books on Mao that deal with both language and cultural aspect of the people.

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The main analysis and discussion of the thesis starts with the third chapter which looks into the *grammatical categories*. However, emphasis is not on describing the grammatical categories present in the language but analyses are made on the basis of cultural implications of the *grammatical categories* such as noun and verb. Under noun; personal names and place names are studied. It is found that in every culture there is a guiding principle in the naming system which differs from other cultural groups. For instance, in proper name the Mandes (Garos) looks for uniqueness of sounds without attaching importance to its meanings while for the Nagas names are all meaningful and depicts the situation in which the child is born. Therefore, an in-depth study of the naming system reveals how vocabulary of personal and place names can be directly linked up with the cultural belief of the community. Starting with the first ceremony soon after the birth of a child, details had been discussed till the naming ceremony. Then system of naming in the culture and analysis of the personal names are studied taking into consideration every possible name in Mao. It is

observed that nine categories of naming of a child are found in Mao community such as Material expectation e.g. *Chakho* and *Tokho*. Looking at the derivation of the names it can be break up into *cha*, *to* and *kho*. *Cha* is shortened form of *ocha* ‘wealth in the form of crops’, *to* from *oto* ‘food’ and *kho* from *kokho* ‘to ask’. Name of a child indicating ill fate of the family are Manga-a from *amangai* ‘to regret’ and *Modoa* derived from *Modo* ‘lament’. These names tell the sad stories of either of the departed parents at the time of birth. Names that indicate the seasons such as agricultural activities, feast or important events are Kapesa ‘transplantation’, Ozha ‘feast of merit’. These names show that agriculture and feast of merit are important from the view of the Maos. Parents’ wishes and desires are found in names such as Athiphro Athini which shows the craving desire of the child while names such as Matia ‘seed’, Pfokehü ‘large family’ is an imploration from god to grant the child the strength to fulfil what their names stand for. Some names can also be an indication of the sex of the immediate elder. Such names have immediacy (*Adani*, *Adaphro* etc.) and continuity (*Ashihrü*, *Ashuni*) as their root word. Physical feature of a child is another motivation for a name. The features are based on one’s size – *Katia* and *Kateni* from the root word *kattie* ‘small’ and *Kajüni*, *Kajökho* from *kajö* ‘big’, and frail, small and sickly to give a name *Chokhoni*. Some of the names are adoption of the names of their forefathers. Though these names are no longer semantically transparent yet they are given in their remembrance and in some occasions to let the child achieved what they have once achieved. The last of the category is to give names relating with modesty or some ordinary meaning so that the child should be more or less sluggish in his behaviour e.g. *Komou*, *Komuni* etc. This is because a naughty child is an extra burden for this agrarian community. A detailed discussion on the significance and the circumstances leading to naming a place with meaning analysis has also been carried

out. A place name can be based on a particular historical importance such as indication of war, peace treaty etc. or can associate with a person or just a description of feature (including topographical) of the land. Names of historical importance can be found in **Makhrai** which is taken by the majority of the Nagas (especially the Tenmy group) as the place of their departure. Breaking up the word, it is believed to be made up of *makhrai* 'purity', *ora* 'god' and *obu* 'place'. This is a place where a group of people unadulterated from a particular lineage came and settled. Likewise, **sozhe korö** is given to a particular river/stream in commemoration of a war between Mao and Maram (another tribe neighbouring Mao). *Sozhe* 'flesh and blood' and *korö* 'river', is so given to that particular river because during that war many people were killed, and also the river where the battle took place was flowing with blood. Analyses on these two sub-topics brought out interesting facts about the language and also about the community which takes the study far beyond the every day ways of life of the community showing both the historical, etymological and also the changes in their beliefs that are slowly but surely creeping into the community unconsciously with the coming of both Christianity and globalization. The guiding principles in the naming system reveal the community's insight into the relation of man with nature and god (spirit). A very interesting fact in the naming of personal names in Mao which is hardly found in other cultures (especially the western culture) is to name a child Vobo 'pig's dung' etc. and also wishing the child would be dumb and indecisive. Also name indicating the different seasons is also a peculiar feature of the Maos. It is found that every name in this culture has a story or a reason behind it. It may be agricultural related, parents' wishes, important events, physical and topographical features etc.

Likewise in verbs, lexical items that have different constructions and which can be attributed both to the culture and the topographical feature of the place are analyzed taking into consideration the classification of other major languages. Under verbs, emphasis is laid on the lexical groups that express different yet related actions which are specific and peculiarly but systematically set up in the language. This portion takes into account different verbs for different types of washing, digging, cutting etc. and an attempt has been made to show why this type of vocabulary construction is absent in languages like English, Hindi etc. but present in Mao. Washing terminologies differentiate the parts been washed like *pili* (head), *mophrö* (face), *chitie* (hand) etc. The reasons for having such terms could be due to scarcity of water (settlements are on high altitudes), agricultural activities (which requires lot of hard work) and weather (generally the higher the altitude the colder it is). Terms for digging differentiate the degree of depth (*kovou*-slight digging, *kashe*-deeper etc.), breaking depends on the size, shape and the material e.g. *aprou* to an object which is hard and rather round, *adu* to an object which is soft yet long. Carrying terms depends on the ways in which a thing is carried. For instance, *kopfö* is to carry on the back with the support of a strap/sling or something, *kappa* is to carry a child with the help of a cloth at the back and other similar actions. The development of these terms can be said to have arisen due to their agricultural life which requires them to carry out different activities in different ways. A comparative study with a cultural group (Chothe) that shares almost the same topographical and similar beliefs reveals that similar constructions are found which can be attributed to the environmental factor. Meteorological verb is another interesting topic to look into. Unlike the above discussed topics, in this the motivating factor is ascribed to the beliefs of the community. His reasoning for the meteorological motion came from the long

observation and methods of trial and error process of experimenting blended with his beliefs. The explanation for the cause of earthquake (moluchü kosü/chüjü pro) is the conjugal embrace between the sky and the earth. Rainbow (shibo vobo) is considered to be bad and cursed upon. Yet this different account shows their belief.

In chapter four, lexical items and their relationship in meaning are dealt. The meaning of lexical items, taking word as a basic unit having both form and meaning, a list of which constitutes the lexicon of a language and the relations that holds between them is the focus of investigation. The etymology of the lexical items unveils the rooted motivation that brought the vocabulary into the existing language. For example the vegetable *kofüpro* 'Allium chinensis' is derived from *koprüpro*. The name of this vegetable is given because it serves as a medicine for the disease *koprü* 'chicken pox' and *pro* means 'medicine'. In the study of the relationship of semantic inclusion, hyponymy and meronymy are taken up for study. It is found that the hierarchical ordering of semantic inclusion and exclusion depends entirely on the conceptualisation which differs from culture to culture. For instance, the hierarchical order of vegetables and animals into its hypernym and hyponym shows the division into wild and grown/domesticated which is not the case in the western culture. Also in the classification of animal the distinction is made basing on the size, utility and closeness of the animal to man.

The sense relations that deal with a single phonological form having multiple meanings are treated under homonymy and polysemy. In homonymy, the factors taken into consideration are the differences in meanings, pronunciation and the

spelling. While dealing with the pronunciation it is found that there is a difference because Mao is a tonal language and also when it comes to spelling system Mao closely follows the phonetic pattern. Therefore it hardly occurs that a different spelling would be pronounced in a similar or same spelling would be pronounced differently (except for difference in the tone). When it comes to tonality Mao word *ozhe*, *omo*, and *odo* would give five or more meanings depends on its tone. It is worth mentioning here that Mao has five-tone system. Polysemous lexemes uncovers more of the inter-relationship between language and culture as one goes into the depth of finding the etymology of the word to find the difference of meaning having the same pronunciation. The Mao word *opro* would mean (a) grass or herbs and (b) medicine. Also *okhro* would mean (a) moon (b) month and (c) tax. The study of semantic relation of these words reveals the interrelationship between the polysemous words. Grass or herbs are used in olden days as medicine to treat any type of diseases. Also month of the year are calculated basing on the phases of moon so to taxes are collected on monthly basis. The sameness and the oppositeness of meanings of the lexical items are addressed under synonym and antonym respectively. Under synonymy the most interesting fact about the language uncovered is Mao having synonymous words which fall under the category of total synonymy. Total synonymy is a very rare occurrence in languages and the synonymous words discussed in literatures pertains to partial synonymy. Also the total synonymy found in the language falls under the category of borrowed words which exist along with the native terms, some of which are coined leading to the existence of both the borrowed word and also the native word. Example of this is *alu* and *ohro* for the term potato. However, further investigation needs to be done in this section. In the study of partial synonymy, the dialectal synonymy shows that in this closely knitted group of people,

the variation and the difference of lexical items bring out the synonymous feature within the language. A general classification of antonymy following Jones is discussed.

It is to be noted here that examining sense relations such as hyponymy and meronymy brings out an interesting concept of how classifications into taxonomy are structured as per the conception and perception and also the importance the object holds in a particular community. The dichotomy of sameness and oppositeness also differs from culture to culture. The study of etymology and the developmental processes of lexical items unveil the deeper mental conception of the people.

A group of lexical items that are intimately linked semantically, and subsuming the related sets under a general term, are studied under the topic called semantic field which is taken up in the fifth chapter of the thesis. Therefore, those lexical fields that are of interest from the point of view of culturally related fields where a sense of the behaviour and habits of the community is embedded in the lexicon are taken for analysis. This includes kinship, colour term, cooking words, body parts and flora. Different kinds of human social relationships and organizations are a subject that is dealt under kinship, with deeper insights into the Mao community to bring out whether the Mao community follows parallel ideas with the universals of kinship, or differs from them, and if so in what ways. It further investigates the extent of continuity and the discontinuity of the lineage and the categorization of different levels of relationships. The recognition, acceptance and usage of common terms like *pino* 'brother' and *otu* 'sister' (male speaker) to refer to all the cousins and also *opfū* 'mother' to extend its reference to mother's sister reveal the ties among the kin.

Basing on Sapir and Whorf's cultural relativity hypothesis, which states that differences in language reflects the different views of different people, colour terms are studied following Berlin and Kay to find out whether the physiology of colour perception of Mao is similar with languages from other communities, and also how colours are categorized in this community. It is found that Mao basic colour terms fall under the stage IV (four) category. Besides the basic colour categories, the different ways of reading different colours of different hues, brightness and saturation in the Mao context is also taken up. However, the status of blue and grey needs further research because these two terms seem to contrast with the criteria of basic colour category given by Berlin and Kay. The study of cooking words reflects not only the practices of a particular community but also shows their ways of life. For a community that lives along the sea-shore, fish would be one of their delicacies and they will have names for all the fishes that are available around that place. Thus investigation into the eating practices would uncover the background of a particular community. The agricultural setting of the Maos can be understood when one looks into the basic words in the culinary field. The separate term for cooking of rice 'kokho' indicates that rice is a staple food. Also terms for preparation of rice-beer 'zhechu' points out that it can be considered as the staple drink. Terms like *kobo*, *kotta*, *morou*, etc. all involves water and the system shows that Mao's preparation are mostly simple boil. Segmentation and categorisation of body parts and the arrangement of the parts into its hierarchical structure and the usages of the terms takes the study into understanding the mind behind such classification. In investigating different features of the body and its constituent parts and comparison with parts of the body of animals shows the relation and the differences that human has with animals. The study of flora shows the inter-relationship between man and

nature. It brings out how the Mao people exploit nature for its own utility and for survival. The knowledge of the abode of gods/spirits like bushes of irü 'a type of cane' *Calamus sp.*, kakabu *Entada phaseoloides* etc. and the knowledge of means to ward off the evil spirits and also from the spell of sorcerers by carrying a piece of oravo 'ginger' *Zingiber officinale*, bark of posü 'alder' *Prunus nepalense*, bark of pocharai 'birch' *Betula alnoides* etc. and the usages of different types of plants for different purpose show the analytical prowess of the people. The periodic biological phenomenon is related to the activities of agriculture. The flowering season of pfuvasü 'cherry' *Prunus crepidiodes* indicates a season to sowing seeds of cash crops. The flowering of mikriashi 'peach' *Prunus persica* and livo *Bauhania variegata* brings forth the seed sowing of the main crop such as paddy and millets. The flowering of hraikama *Globba bulbifera* indicates the setting of the month of khranakhro (March-April) which is a time to sow seeds for transplantation. The coming of migratory birds such as shithudu, chorpehu and kotu 'cuckoo' indicates the month of pfuzü (May-June) which is a time for an intensive preparation for making beds for plant transplantation. The phenology of plants is clearly understood by the people and thus relates to their activities shows a high sense of deductive power of the people.

Perception, conceptualisation and interpretation of ideas of a cultural group are clearly manifested in the mapping of different domains in metaphor. Metaphor being a concept we lived by everyday and being a concept based on shared experiences, investigation into its implication and usages divulge the intricate link between language and the culture of a particular community. The metaphorical

mapping of otou ‘cow’, ivau ‘*Polygonum molle*’ a wild vegetable and zhekotsü ‘mole’ are considered dead metaphor because they are found only in the narration of stories. They are metaphorical because they refer to man (cow), deer (*Polygonum molle*) and wild boar (mole) respectively by the gods, tiger and the dead. This shows the conceptualisation of different realms as having a system that is similar to man. Also the metaphors jünho ‘nose of land’ to refer to crest of hill; ozhe ‘blood’ to refer to brine water; tsükani ‘rich idea’ to refer to obedience etc. are conventionalised and no longer recognised as metaphorical. It is interesting to see the mapping of land with that of physical feature of man and the taste of water with the taste of blood or the psychological attribution of being obedience. Different aspects, be it materialistic, animals, psychological or even actions are employed by the Maos to map different domains in live or strong metaphors. Conceptualisation of metaphor in Mao shows the characteristics of both universality and at the same time specific to the culture. Universal features can be seen in the similar construction of conceptualising anger. In Mao *nhokrü pratie* ‘becoming very red’ and *onhei leno ozhe pepra koru sotie* ‘as though blood would explode from the eye’ has a similar conception with the English *see red* and *explode with anger*. However, the specificity of concept is that in English it is *see* while in Mao it is *becoming*; and in Mao it is the blood that explode and the explosion takes place in the eye. Structuring of the concepts ARGUMENT IS WAR can be seen in usages like *iye vadzü nhie* ‘not fit for challenge’; *i chakhra moe* ‘not my equal’ to issue intimidation, superiority or authority in argument. Likewise *koshou* ‘shoot’; *rü* ‘counter-attack’; *arai* ‘dodge’ are some of the terms of war used during argument. The concept of spatial orientation using motion verb *chühü kolo* ‘to go inside the house’ and *vaku kapra* ‘to go outside’ is mapped metaphorically to refer to different states of mind. Thus health - *lishi loe* ‘sick entering’ to refer to fallen sick;

wealth - *chovo prae* 'happy coming out' to refer to becoming rich; nature - *chünhei kolo* 'sun going in' referring to sunset are compared to the movement from one container to another. A change of state is compared to a change of location and entering the container is going to the state of unhappiness and coming out of the container indicates the improvement or increase with more prosperous state. The investigation into the ontological metaphors reveals the mental set up of the people. The examples *mazhe kochuno theloa* 'dying out of exhaustion' to refer to a situation of extreme exhaustion, *metha-a* 'dying of laughing' to refer to the act of laughing one's heart out shows how death is considered in this community. Everything that has a beginning and an end is class under a similar category. Like life that ends with death, actions of man are compared to life that ends with death. Death been the end of life any other action is equalised with death when it reaches its extremity.

Idioms are also used metaphorically to give the intended meaning to the listener by bringing in aspects that can be easily understood or in a very polite way. The study of idioms reveals what are considered as good and what are considered vices in the community. Through the use of idioms such as *shikrü pfüna* 'bitch and its puppies' and *kasi koso* 'coolness and hotness' the intended meaning of the speaker is revealed. The lesson that is uttered here is to bring home to the listener that one should know what one wants to do and not follow someone blindly like the puppies that bark without knowing when its mother barks. Likewise one should endure hardship and difficulties to achieve anything.

The Maos creatively brings in dissimilar domains together to impart morale views of life. These domains could be from nature, animal kingdoms, experiences,

events or even creative stories or folk tales to map the present action of a man. For instance the linking story of *makhreno alia ara mohokou so* 'like dove losing his singing' brought about the importance of obedience and listening to advices in the course of one's life. Also *Chamailo tu kokhusoa fū tetie* 'like when herding Chamailo's cow, I am tipsy' brings forth the lesson to give anything what is due to them either by way of appreciation or in any other form. Imparting of moralistic education through the usages of similes also reveals peoples' understanding of nature. The passion towards nature makes a Mao understand its ways and thus it becomes the source of his creativity. Through these usages another important lesson imparted is the importance of conservation of nature.

The metonymical mapping is used metaphorically to refer to the whole and investigation into its criteria reveals the concept of significance the part holds within the community. The reference of *chūnhū tofu* 'indoor hearth' to refer to the whole family brings out the social set up of the community. The hearth in this culture is placed in the centre of the house where most of the indoor are carried out. It is a place where member of the family gathers and a family will have only one hearth. Therefore the metonymical extension is meaningful in this culture.

Language is not only a vehicle of communication but also a carrier of culture. The issue of inter-relationship between language and culture is a field of study that attracts the attention of different disciplines. Though approaches may be differ, the study shows that cultural knowledge is embedded in words, stories, artifacts, etc. When a deeper investigation is carried out, it is found that the study also reveals the cognitive aspects of the cultural group i.e., their world views. The interpretation given

about the cause and effect of their belief system shows this. Culture is thus seen as transmitted through linguistic forms. When a child learns how to use language, he also starts understanding the cultural practices and beliefs which motivates his outlook of the world - perception, understanding and interpretation of ideas.

To what extent can culture influence language? This is seen in the Eskimos terms for snow. Do Eskimos need different terms to describe different types of snow if 'snow' holds no significance in that culture? Or for that matter, Mao does not have different terms like Andamanese languages and Nicobarese to describe different stages of coconut or for that matter even the term coconut itself. Rather there are different terms for ploughing, washing, breaking, and carrying in Mao. This only shows the correspondence between cultural norms and linguistic patterns or language and the culture of the society that uses it. Language of a particular community is so structured to fix the environment into its vocabulary. This particular aspect where a cultural setting of a particular community is embedded into its language and the conditions that lead to semantic variation in comparison with other cultures are worked upon exhaustively. Field studies serve as the basic tool to bring out the true picture of the ethno-semantic variations.

The outcome of the present study hopes to throw light particularly on the ethnosemantic aspect of the language as a whole since the area have not been ventured by many. The study would not only help linguists but also anthropologies, cultural studies and also in dictionary making as the study also takes into account the analysis from the etymological point of view. This study will be an eye opener to the ethnosemantic study as work on this area is particularly very limited therefore it will

serve as both theoretical as well as field based approaches. Another important point of the study is that by putting down the culture in its written form, whatever aspects it may be, will help ensure the sustenance and survival of a rich culture. However, the present work does not claim to be a complete analysis and hence further research is called for.

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### **The story of Ridzū Thodu-u and Cholūdania<sup>1</sup>**

In times of old, our forefathers in quest of warfare travelled far towards the village named Shizecholū in the east. During this period of head-hunting the warriors adorned themselves with badge of honour of war when they make a kill and a head taken, and were known as the great, the all-knowing and the incomparable. They hosted the warrior's feast of honour and thus influence and commanded the village folks. Thus wanting to be honoured the Memai (Mao) warriors waged war for long period and thus forgot their agricultural ways and trends and this led to seven long years of famine in the land of the Memai.

Forgetting the knowledge of agriculture leading to the famine made the Chief of Makhrai village worried and disturbed, he tried to find a way out of this awkward situation but ideas eluded him. During this trying period an orphan said to the Chief, 'to re-learn the agricultural ways and practices and to send the great, the all-knowing warriors who are heading eastward with words that upon reaching Shizecholū to ask the folks there about their agrarian ways and practices and that there is possibility that they would be instructed by those folks.' The Chief did so as told by the orphan. Upon reaching the village Shizecholū the Memai warriors asked the folks. Yet the people of Shizecholū refused to divulge anything about their agrarian ways and practices as their neighbouring allies were greatly harmed and subjugated by the Memai warriors. Anguish and frustration crept into the minds of the Memai warriors, at not been able to garner the requisite information about agrarian ways and practices. A baby-sitter boy (Obulana) took pity on the warriors and wanted to give them information concerning agrarian ways and practices. To the warriors' good fortune, as they approached to the side of the baby-sitter boy in the field, the boy mildly shaking (sway) the baby on his back sung out, *'Mikri pa ti pa-a teli mate teji ttholo'* (when the mikri flower bloom, sow the biggest(main) seedlings). Thus like singing and like talking the boy divulged the agrarian ways and practices in his speech to the Memai warriors. Thus having heard the boy, the Memai warriors returned and reported the speech of the boy to the Chief of Makhrai. This is how the Memai relearned the art of agrarian practice.

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<sup>1</sup> Ridzū Thodu-u and Cholūdania are name of person. The story is from H. Pfukrelo Krichena, 2001.

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