ABSTRACT

THE PHONOLOGY AND SYNTAX OF MIZO LANGUAGE

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This abstract speaks about the phonology and syntax of Mizo language (which is one of the Sino-Tibetan Languages). The language spoken by the Mizo tribe was evolved through a process of fusion of dialects of the component sub-tribes as the Mizo tribe is formed out of a process of synthesis of many sub-tribes in the region over two centuries. Ethno-culturally, the Mizos are strikingly similar to the tribes of south-east Asia while politically they were the sons of India. A close affinity of the Mizos with the hill tribes of Southern China in languages, mode of living and culture etc., leads us to a belief that they came from a common places and had common ancestors. There are many possible theories suggesting the original home of the Mizos, but the common conclusion is that the Mizos had once settle in Central Asia.

The Burma Census Report of 1881 (which is regarded as the most reliable source) says that the Kukis of Manipur and the Lushais of Assam and Bengal, and the Chins of Burma originally lived in Tibet and are of the same racial stock. And from the linguistic point of view, the Mizo language belongs to the Tibeto-Burman sub-group of the Sino-Tibetan family. In so far as their language is concerned, Grierson names it Kuki-Chin and puts it into the Burmese branch of the Tibeto-Burman family.

The Mizo language is a tonal language. The variation in tone can alter the meaning of word or utterance which is the peculiarities of Mizo language. The Mizo alphabet was framed and designed by the British Missionaries J.H.Lorrain and F.W.Savidge in the year 1884. Recounting the formation of the Mizo alphabets, Rev. J.H.Lorrain said, “For this purpose we chose the simple Roman Script, with a phonetic form of spelling based on the well-known Hunterian system.”

Since our Mizo language is a tonal language, even our vowel (a, aw, e, i, o, u) have more than one sound depending upon the tone which is shown in this paper. This paper speaks about the peculiarities and complexities of Mizo phonology and syntax which is remarkably different from English and Indian languages like Hindi, Bengali, Punjabi, etc. Moreover, there are some peculiarities about Gender, Numbers, and Postposition of Mizo language which is shown in this paper.