



DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS  
Rabindranath Tagore School of Indian Languages  
and Cultural Studies  
ASSAM UNIVERSITY, SILCHAR  
(A CENTRAL UNIVERSITY CONSTITUTED  
UNDER ACT XIII OF 1989)  
Silchar – 788011, Assam, India.

---

### DECLARATION

I, Bijayanti Devi Haobam, bearing Registration no. Ph.D /1547/2011 dated 19/09/2011 hereby declare that the subject matter of the thesis entitled “**The Phonology and Morphology of Somdal**” is the record of the work done by me and that the contents of this thesis did not form the basis for the award of any degree to me or to anybody else to the best of my knowledge. The thesis has not been submitted in any other university/institute.

**Date:**  
**Assam University, Silchar**

**Bijayanti Devi Haobam**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I feel great pleasure in expressing my deepest sense of gratitude to my guide Assistant Professor, Dr. Paramita Purkait for her constant encouragement and meticulous guidance during the progress of the research work.

I am sincerely grateful to former Assistant Professor, Dr. Pauthang Haokip, of Department of Linguistics, Assam University who has contributed much to the background necessary for successfully realizing the work.

I am immensely thankful to Vice Chancellor of Assam University, Dean of Rabindranath Tagore School of Indian Languages and Cultural studies, in the completion of my thesis.

In addition, I express my indebtedness to Head of Department Associate Professor Dr. Kh. Dhiren Singha, Professor Dr. Ajit Kumar Baishya, Associate Professor Dr. S. Ganesh Bhaskaran and Assistant Professor Dr. D Marykim Haokip of Department of Linguistics, Assam University for their valuable guidance and suggestions.

I wish to express my profound gratitude and special thanks to Pamching Muinao and Pamthingchon (informants) for their generous efforts and co-operation to meet all the requirements during the course of my research work.

It is beyond words to express my heartfelt gratitude to my colleagues and research scholars for their moral support and encouragement. I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to other Somdal people for their contributions and help during my investigation especially to Shontim Muinao and her family of Somdal village, of Ukhrul District, Manipur.

I owe much to my loving parents and to my brothers and sister for their numerous support and encouragement during the course of my research work. Without them, my research would have been impaired.

Last but not the least, I am very grateful to my husband A. Sadananda Singh for constant source of inspiration and suggestion and help without which my work would have been very difficult.

Assam University, Silchar.

Dated:

(Bijayanti Devi Haobam)

## CONTENTS

Certificate

Declaration

Acknowledgement

Abbreviations

i

List of Tables

iv

List of Figures

iv

Maps

Plates

<b>Chapters</b>	<b>Particulars</b>	<b>Page</b>
Chapter-1	Introduction	
1.0	Somdal	1
1.1	People, Area and Land	2
1.2	Method of Data Collection	3
1.3	Scope of the Thesis	3
1.4	Contribution of the Thesis	4
1.5	Occupation	4
1.6	Social and Cultural life	4
1.7	Place of Data Collection	9
Chapter-2	Review of Literature	
2.0	Introduction	11
2.1	Previous works in Kuki-Chin Naga languages	11
Chapter-3	Phonology	
3.0	Introduction	12

3.1	Phonology of Somdal	12
3.2	Consonants	13
3.2.1.	Articulatory Description of consonants phonemes	14
3.2.2.	Consonants and their allophones	15
3.2.2.1.	Stops	15
3.2.2.1.1.	Bilabial Stops	15
3.2.2.1.2.	Alveolar Stops	18
3.2.2.1.3.	Velar Stops	21
3.2.2.2.	Nasals	23
3.2.2.3.	Laterals	26
3.2.2.4.	Trill	27
3.2.2.5.	Affricates	28
3.2.2.6.	Fricatives	28
3.2.2.7	Semi-vowel	31
3.2.3.	Consonant minimal pairs	33
3.2.4.	Distribution of consonant phonemes	37
3.2.5.	Consonant Sequence	42
3.2.5.1.	Gemination	42
3.2.5.2.	Homorganic	42
3.2.5.3.	Contiguous	44
3.2.5.4.	Heterorganic	45
3.2.6.	Consonant Cluster	46
3.2.7.	Vowels	47
3.2.7.1.	Articulatory Description of Vowels	47
3.2.7.2.	Vowel Phonemes and their Allophones	48

3.2.7.3.	Vowel Contrast	51
3.2.7.4.	Distribution of Vowel Phonemes	52
3.2.7.5.	Sequence of Vowel Phonemes	54
3.2.8.	Diphthongs	54
3.2.9.	Syllable	55
3.2.9.1.	Types of Syllable in Somdal	57
3.2.9.1.1.	Open Syllable	58
3.2.9.1.2.	Closed Syllable	58
3.2.9.2.	Syllabification	58
3.2.9.2.1.	Monosyllabic Words	58
3.2.9.2.2.	Disyllabic Words	59
3.2.9.2.3.	Trisyllabic Words	59
3.2.9.2.4.	Tetrasyllabic Words	60
3.2.9.2.5.	Pentasyllabic Words	60
3.2.9.2.6.	Hexasyllabic Words	60
3.3.	Tone	60
3.3.1.	Tone System in Somdal	61
3.4.	Juncture	61
3.5.	Morphophonemics	62
3.5.1.	Consonant Deletion	62
3.5.2.	Morphologically Conditioned Change	62
Chapter-4	Morphology	
4.0.	Introduction	65
4.1.	Morphology	65
4.2.	Root and Affix	65

4.2.1.	Free Roots	65
4.2.1.1.	Monosyllabic Words	66
4.2.1.2.	Disyllabic Words	66
4.2.1.3.	Polysyllabic Words	67
4.2.2.	Bound Roots	67
4.2.2.1.	Nominal Bound Roots	67
4.2.2.2.	Verbal Bound Roots	72
4.2.2.2.1.	Dynamic Verbs	72
4.2.2.2.2.	Stative Verbs	72
4.3.	Affixes	73
4.3.1.	Prefixes	73
4.3.1.1.	Pronominal Prefixes	73
4.3.1.2.	Non-pronominal Prefixes	74
4.3.2.	Suffixes	77
4.3.2.1.	Nominal Suffixes	77
4.3.2.1.1.	Connectives	80
4.3.2.1.1.1.	Conjunctive Suffix	80
4.3.2.1.1.2.	Conjunctive Particles	81
4.3.2.1.1.3.	Specifier	81
4.3.2.1.1.4.	Topic Marker	82
4.3.2.2.	Verbal Suffixes	82
4.4.	Word Formation	85
4.4.1.	Derivation	86
4.4.1.1.	Affixation	87
4.4.1.2.	Compounding	87

4.4.1.2.1.	Types of Compounding	87
4.4.1.2.2.	Exocentric Compound	89
4.4.1.2.3.	Co-ordinate Compound	90
4.4.1.3.	Formation of Verbs	91
4.4.1.4.	Formation of Adverbs	91
4.4.1.5.	Formation of Adjectives	91
4.4.1.6.	Form Class Compound	91
4.4.1.7.	Equational Compound	92
4.5.	Nouns	92
4.5.1.	Common Nouns	92
4.5.2.	Proper Nouns	93
4.5.3.	Material Nouns	93
4.5.4.	Abstract Nouns	93
4.5.5.	Concrete Nouns	93
4.5.6.	Countable Nouns	93
4.5.7.	Uncountable Nouns	94
4.6.	Primary Noun Stem	94
4.6.1.	Primary Simple Noun Stem	95
4.6.2.	Primary Complex Noun Stem	96
4.6.3.	Compound Noun	100
4.6.3.1.	Noun form by means of Prefixation	102
4.6.3.1.1.	Kinship Terms	102
4.6.3.1.2.	Body Parts	103
4.6.3.1.3.	Other Nouns	104
4.6.3.2.	Noun form by means of Suffixation	105



4.6.3.2.1.	Gender	105
4.6.3.2.1.1.	Gender in Animate Nouns	106
4.6.3.2.1.2.	Gender in Inanimate Nouns	108
4.7.	Number	108
4.7.1.	Singular	109
4.7.2.	Dual	109
4.7.3.	Plural	110
4.7.4.	Pluralization of Kinship Terms	112
4.8.	Numerals	113
4.8.1.	Cardinals	113
4.8.2.	Ordinals	117
4.8.3.	Multiplicatives	117
4.8.4.	Aggregatives	118
4.8.5.	Approximates	118
4.8.6.	Fractional	118
4.8.7.	Indefinite	119
4.8.8.	Distributive	119
4.8.9.	Restrictive	119
4.9.	Measurement	120
4.9.1.	Space Measurement	120
4.9.2.	Salt Measurement	120
4.9.3.	Liquid Measurement.	120
4.9.4.	Grain Measurement	120
4.9.5.	Thickness Measurement	121
4.10.	Classifier in Somdal	121

4.11.	Quantifier	121
4.12.	Case	121
4.12.1.	Nominative Case	122
4.12.2.	Accusative Case	123
4.12.3.	Genetive Case	124
4.12.4.	Locative Case	126
4.12.5.	Instrumental Case	128
4.12.6.	Ablative Case	129
4.12.7.	Associative Case	130
4.12.8.	Dative Case	132
4.12.9.	Benefactive Case	133
4.13.	Adjectives	134
4.13.1.	Kinds of Adjectives	135
4.13.1.1.	Adjective of Quality	135
4.13.1.2.	Adjective of Quantity	136
4.13.1.3.	Adjective of Taste	137
4.13.1.4.	Adjective of Colour	137
4.13.1.5.	Adjective of Dimension	138
4.13.1.6.	Adjective of Demonstration	139
4.13.1.7.	Adjective of Comparision	139
4.14.	Adverb	141
4.14.1.	Suffixation of Adverbial Particles	141
4.14.2.	Reduplication of Adverb	146
4.14.3.	Kinds of Adverb	146
4.14.3.1.	Adverb of Manner	146

4.14.3.2.	Adverb of Place	147
4.14.3.3.	Adverb of Time	147
4.14.3.4.	Adverb of Order	149
4.14.3.5.	Adverb of Degree	149
4.14.3.6.	Adverb of Number	150
4.14.3.7.	Interrogative Adverb	150
4.14.3.8.	Adverb of Affirmation	151
4.15.	Pronoun	152
4.15.1	Personal Pronouns	152
4.15.2.	Possessive Pronoun	153
4.15.3.	Reflexive Pronoun	154
4.15.4.	Demonstrative Pronoun	155
4.15.5.	Indefinite Pronoun	156
4.15.6.	Interrogative Pronoun	157
4.16.	Compunds	158
4.16.1.	Compound Nouns	158
4.16.2.	Associative Compound	160
4.16.3.	Reduplication in Somdal	160
4.16.4.	Expressive	161
4.16.4.1	Complete reduplicated expressive	161
4.16.4.2.	Partial reduplicated expressive	161
4.16.5.	Onomatopoeic and Imitative	161
4.16.5.1.	Sense of hearing	162
4.16.5.2.	Sense of sight	162
4.16.5.3.	Sense of smell and taste	162

4.16.5.4.	Other senses imotional or physical	163
4.16.6.	Echo words	163
4.16.7.	Compound words	163
4.17.	Verbs	164
4.17.1.	Transitive Verb	164
4.17.2.	Intransitive Verb	165
4.17.3.	Compound Verbs	165
4.17.4.	Conjunct Verb	166
4.17.5.	Causative	167
4.17.6.	Auxiliary Verbs	167
4.17.7.	Kinds of Verbs on semantic basis	168
4.18.	Tense	169
4.18.1.	Tense Distinction	171
4.18.1.1.	Irrealis	171
4.18.1.2.	Realise	171
4.19.	Aspect	172
4.19.1.	Simple Aspect	172
4.19.2.	Progressive Aspect	172
4.19.3.	Perfect Aspect	173
4.19.4.	Irrealis or unrealized Aspect	173
4.19.5.	Habitual Aspect	173
4.20.	Mood	174
4.20.1.	Indicative	174
4.20.2.	Imperative	174
4.20.3.	WH-Question	175

4.20.4.	Yes/ No Question	175
4.20.5.	Hortative	175
4.20.6.	Entreative	176
4.20.7.	Optative	176
4.20.8.	Dubitative	177
4.20.9.	Potential/Capability	177
4.20.10.	Permission/Possibility	178
4.20.11	Probability	178
4.20.12.	Desiderative	178
4.20.13.	Obligatory/Necessitative	179
4.20.14.	Impudency	179
4.20.15.	Advisability/Suggestive	180
4.20.16.	Prohibitive	180
4.20.17.	Presumptive	180
4.20.18.	Subjunctive	181
4.20.19.	Definition and Types of Mood	182
4.20.19.1.	Subjunctive Mood	182
4.20.19.2.	Optative Mood	183
4.20.19.3.	Imperative Mood	183
Chapter-5	Findings and Conclusions	185
Appendix-I	Folk Tale and Folk Song	194
Appendix-II	Somdal word list	199
Blibliography		217

**Abbreviations**

ABL	Ablative
ACC	Accusative
ADJ	Adjective
ADV	Adverb
ASS	Associative
ASP	Aspect
AUG	Augmentative
BEN	Benefactive
CAU	Causative
COM	Command
COMP	Comparative
CONJ	Conjunctive
COP	Copula
DAT	Dative
DEM	Demonstrative
DIR	Directional
DSIR	Desiderative
DUBI	Dubitative
DL	Dual

DIM	Dimutative
E	Expressive
ENTR	Entreative
FP	Formative Prefix
GEN	Genitive
HON	Honorific
IMP	Imperative
INST	Instrumental
INTSF	Intensifier
IRL	Irrealis
IMPU	Impudency marker
LOC	Locative
NEG	Negative
NMZ	Nominalizer
NFUT	Non-future
NOM	Nominative
OPT	Optative
OBLG	Obligatory
PL	Plural
PERF	Perfective
PROG	Progressive

POT	Potential
POSB	Possibility
PERM	Permission
PRESUM	Presumptive
PROB	Probability
PROH	Prohibitive
Q.MK	Question Marker
REDU	Reduplication
REF	Reflexive
RL	Realized
REQST	Request
SP	Specifier
SUBJ	Subjunctive
SUG	Suggestive marker
TOP	Topic marker
1P	First Person
2P	Second Person
3P	Third Person



**List of Tables**

- Table No. 1. Distribution of Consonant Phonemes
- Table No. 2. Somdal Vowel Phonemes
- Table No. 3. Distribution of Vowel Phonemes
- Table No. 4. Human Being Gender Marker
- Table No. 5. Domestic Animals Gender Marker
- Table No. 6. Wild Animals Gender Marker
- Table No. 7. Domestic Animals Gender Marker
- Table No. 8. Plurals in Personal Pronouns
- Table No. 9. Various Forms of Pronouns in Somdal
- Table No. 10. Various Forms of Possessive Pronouns in Somdal
- Table No. 11. Transitive Verbs in Somdal
- Table No. 12. Intransitive Verbs in Somdal

**List of Figures**

- Figure No.1. Somdal Phonemes and its Classifications
- Figure No. 2. Consonant Phonemes of Somdal
- Figure No. 3. Word Formation and its Classification
- Figure No. 4. Classification of Gender in Somdal