

## Chapter 2

### Review of literature

G.A Grierson (1903) in his *Linguistics survey of India* term Zeme (refers to as Empeo or Kachcha Naga). He looks upon Empeo as a connecting link between the three groups of Tibeto-Burman languages, Naga, Kuki, and Bodo. He also points out that in Zeme there is frequent occurrence of nasal η, no articles, indicating gender only in case of living beings etc.

G.A Grierson (1903) described the grammatical sketch of Kwoireng or Lyang in his *Linguistic Survey of India, Vol. III, Pt. II*. However the vocabularies provided by Grierson in his survey report shows that the vocabularies are that of Liangmai. Furthermore, Grierson points out that the language in question appears to be an intermediate one between the Naga-Bodo and the Naga-Kuki Group. The pronoun agrees best with the Naga-Kuki Group.

G.A Grierson (1903) in his *Linguistic Survey of India, Vol. III, Pt.II* called Rongmei as Kabui or Kapwi which belongs to the Naga group, and like Kachcha Naga (Zeme) is a transition language between Angami and the languages of the Bodo group. He also mentioned that the letters r and l are interchangeable. Thus, La or Ra, ‘God’; lan or ran, ‘wealth’. He also explained that when the termination commences with one of these letters, it always become l after a consonant, but r after a vowel. Thus, pahut-lana, ‘having run’; bai-rana; ‘having beaten’: lan ‘wealth’ ka-ran; his wealth.

Geoffrey Edward Morrison (1967) in his thesis *The Classification of the Naga Languages of North-East India* gave the Zeme syllable. The initials includes k, g, η, ηk, ηη, c, nc, t, d, n, nt, nd, nn, p, b, m, mp, mb, mm, r, l, w, nr, s, z, h, ns, nz, zero. Vowels includes i, e, a, ua, u. Diphthongs includes ai, au, oi, eu, ui. Final consonants include zero, k, n, η, t, n, p, m.

Geoffrey Edward Morrison (1967) in his thesis 'The Classification of the Naga Languages of North-East India' points out that Liangmai language is closely related to Zeme and Nruanghmei (Rongmei) and the other languages of Barak Valley. He gave the following Liangmai syllable. The initials includes k, kh, g, ŋ, ŋk, ŋkh, ŋg, ŋŋ, c, j, nc, nj, t, th, d, n, nt, nth, nd, nn, p, ph, b, m, mp, mph, mb, mm, y, r, l, w, nr, ʃ, s, z, h, ns, zero. Vowels includes I, e, a, o, u, ia, ua. Diphthongs include ai, ui, iu, ou. Finals are zero, ?, k, ŋ, ŋ?, t, n, n?, p, m, m?, zero.

Morrison (1967) called Rongmei as Nruanghmei, the alternative name of Rongmei. He pointed out that the language is closely related to Zeme. According to him 'songbu' and 'Puiron' are the two dialects of Nruanghmei. The syllables of Rongmei are: Initials = k, kh, g, ŋk, ŋkh, ŋg, ŋŋ, c, j, ñc, ñj, t, th, d, n, nt, nth, nd, nn, p, ph, b, m, mp, mph, mb, mm,r, l, nr, nl, s, h, ns, zero. Vowels are I, a, ua, ə, u. diphthongs are ai, ao, au, ei, ou, ui.

Shreedhar (1979) wrote *Phonemes of Rongmei*, in Indian Linguistics. He described the phonemes and their allophonic variations of Rongmei Naga spoken in Manipur/Nagaland. According to him Rongmei Naga has 28 phonemes including six vowels, twenty consonants and two tones.

Debojit Deb in his unpublished M.Phil dissertation entitled 'The Phonology of Rongmei Spoken in Barak Valley' describes the phonological structure of Rongmei from phonemes to syllabic structure.

There is a Zeme dictionary entitled 'Teluichu Dictionary' (Anglo-Zeme) compiled and edited by N. H. Pouheu and Hiaduing Newme which is published by the Zeme Literature Committee, N.C Hills District, Assam in 2008. Here the English words are translated into Zeme. Some of the entries are given below:

Abandon (V) - throw away - phutkaibe, saugaibe

Abase (V) – degrade-tewnagaibe, tewnakewbe

About (prep) – concerning - petaige, pehiage, pelange etc.

Another worth mentioning book is a Liangmai dictionary under the name 'The Faringki Liyangmai Naga Campicamrakeng 2000 Millennial Dictionary, which is compiled by Niumai Lungkingbou. It is a bilingual dictionary in which English words are translated into Liangmai. Some of the entries are given below:

Aback *adv.* z. msaihziu, msaihqinbu maisai.  
abandon *v.l.* soudiakbu,thuandiakbu, tintameebu.

abbey *n. w.* caratu mcahbuki,siga puipiw loongluziu cra tu taaziu bamsunei.

abbreviate *v. l.* cladkeng theingbutu kaam mdunbu.

Adore *v. l.* koongbu, msinbu, I adore a baby, ngeana tu e msin siakye, etc.

There is another Liangmai dictionary under the name 'The English-Liangmai Sentence Dictionary' written by Dee Abonmai. Here English words are translated into Liangmai, and he explained the meaning by giving a sentence as an example which is again translated into Liangmai. Some entries are given below:

a/an (prep. & adj.) *khat* This is a dog. Haisi tathi khad le. A dog is an animal.  
Tathi hai si chakhou khad le.

Abandon (v) mathakbo, mathaknibo. Why did you abandon your studies?  
Deguleng nangniu ariak kati mathak nijiu lo?

Able (adj) ngambo. John was able to climb up a tree. John niu singbang kiu ngamme. Etc.

Few dictionaries are also written in Rongmei. The first dictionary is entitled 'English-Ruangmei Dictionary' written by Rev. Gaikhuanlung

Gangmei. Here English words are translated into Rongmei. Some entries are given below:

a (ei) akhat; gannv akhat.

abacus (aebakas) noun kasing chak khang ntuhthw ntanh riang khou.

babble (baebl) verb 1. mei mpeyna lat sa chinh chin bammei. 2. sa changh sa bam ki kabah thay mak twmei lat.

babe (beb) noun ngna; ngasatna.

vulgar (valgar) adj 1. chakhwang maekmei. 2. nkhu nroucmei tuang.

win (win) verb 1. akhyammei khou ngammei. 2. laatowmei: mphangmei.

Another dictionary of Rongmei entitled 'Ruangmei-English Dictionary' is written by Rev. G. Gangmei. Here Rongmei words are translated into English. Some entries are given below:

abah /gt/ noun 1.(a black bird) 2. (mango): abahthai (mango fruit); abah bang (mango tree)

abung /ht/ noun (pet name for boy)

achaw /lt/ noun (a species of rodent; big field rat)

achin /lvt/ noun (mist; fog) etc.