A STUDY ON DEMAND FOR ROMAN SCRIPT FOR KOKBOROK LANGUAGE BY THE INDIGENOUS TIPRA PEOPLE OF TRIPURA

Marconi Debbarma,

Ph.D Research Scholar, Sociology Programme D.D. Kosambi School of Social Sciences and Behavioural Studies, Goa University, Goa. ORCID 0000 0003 4090 9019

Corresponding Author Email: marconi2017@gmail.com

Abstract

This article delves into the complex issue of script selection for the Kokborok language in Tripura, where the imposition of the Bengali script against the desires of the indigenous people has ignited a profound struggle. We explore how this decision holds implications that extend far beyond language preservation, encompassing the preservation of indigenous identity, cultural rights, and resilience against cultural assimilation. It is argued that the movement advocating for the adoption of the Roman script for Kokborok exemplifies the unwavering determination of the indigenous Tipra people to safeguard their linguistic heritage. The Roman script, widely understood regionally and globally, not only transcends linguistic barriers but also fosters a sense of communal cohesion and empowerment. This movement is part of a broader narrative of resistance against the erosion of indigenous languages and cultures, resonating with similar struggles worldwide. The successful adoption of the Roman script not only validates cultural rights but also contributes to a more inclusive and compassionate world where linguistic diversity is celebrated and preserved for generations to come.

Keyword: Roman Script, Imposition, Refugee, Kokborok, Hegemony, Tipra.

Introduction

The indigenous people of Tripura speak kokborok language. Tripura is one of the north-eastern states of India; the indigenous people call themselves as Tipra. Tripura is affected by huge influx of Bengali refugee due to political instability in neighbouring country Bangladesh and erstwhile East Pakistan. There is an imposition of Bengali script for writing kokborok language in Tripura, the indigenous communities, particularly those who speak the Kokborok language, have expressed a strong desire to use Roman script for writing their language. The Kokborok language is the mother tongue of the Tipra indigenous people and holds significant cultural and historical value. The imposition of the Bengali script on the indigenous peoples of Tripura has been a contentious issue. The Bengali script is widely used in Bangladesh and West Bengal, but it is not traditionally associated with the indigenous languages of Tripura. The introduction of the Bengali script as the medium of education and administration has raised concerns about the erosion of indigenous languages and cultural identity. The indigenous peoples of Tripura have long cherished their Kokborok language as an integral part of their cultural heritage and identity. In recent years, a significant debate has arisen regarding the script to be used for writing Kokborok. While the majority Bengali population insists on the use of the Bengali script, the indigenous community expresses a strong desire to write their language in the Roman script.

Over the years, there has been a substantial migration of Bengali-speaking people from Bangladesh into Tripura. These migrants have settled in various parts of the state, leading to demographic changes and cultural shifts in Tripura.

The reasons for this influx of Bengali refugees are multifaceted and rooted in historical, political, and socio-economic factors. Factors such as population pressure, economic disparities, and political instability in Bangladesh have driven many Bengali-speaking people to seek better opportunities and livelihoods in neighbouring regions, including Tripura.

The migration of a large number of Bengali refugees has resulted in challenges and tensions within Tripura, particularly with the indigenous Tipra communities who have historically inhabited the region. The indigenous peoples of Tripura have distinct languages, cultures, and identities that are deeply rooted in their history and traditions. The sudden demographic changes and the presence of a significant Bengali-speaking population have raised concerns about the preservation of their unique heritage and the potential marginalization of indigenous communities. These issues have sparked debates and conflicts, leading to tensions between the Bengali-speaking population and the indigenous communities in Tripura. There have been demands for the recognition and preservation of indigenous languages, as well as calls for inclusive policies that protect

757

the rights and interests of all communities in the state, including the indigenous Tipra people.

Addressing these challenges requires a nuanced and comprehensive approach that considers the historical, cultural, and socio-economic aspects of the region. It is essential to promote dialogue, understanding, and respect among different communities, while also ensuring the preservation of indigenous languages and cultures. Policies that promote inclusive development provide opportunities for socio-economic empowerment, and safeguard the rights of indigenous communities can contribute to fostering harmonious coexistence and addressing the concerns raised by the influx of Bengali refugees and the imposition of the Bengali script in Tripura.

The indigenous communities, particularly those who speak the Kokborok language, have expressed a strong desire to use the Roman script for writing their language. The Kokborok language is the mother tongue of the Tipra indigenous people and holds significant cultural and historical value. The indigenous peoples of Tripura have emphasized the importance of preserving and promoting their own linguistic heritage through the use of the Roman script for Kokborok. They argue that adopting the Roman script would not only enable them to maintain their linguistic identity but also facilitate communication, education, and cultural expression within and outside their communities.

Advocates for the use of the Roman script argue that it provides a more accessible and inclusive writing system for Kokborok, especially considering its compatibility with modern technology and digital platforms. They believe that using the Roman script would enhance educational opportunities, enable wider dissemination of indigenous literature and cultural resources, and contribute to the overall empowerment of the indigenous communities in Tripura.

Recognizing and respecting the indigenous peoples' desire to use the Roman script for Kokborok is crucial in ensuring their linguistic and cultural rights. It requires creating an enabling environment where indigenous languages are valued, supported, and given equal status alongside other languages in educational institutions, official communications, and cultural programs. Implementing policies that encourage the use of the Roman script for Kokborok, while also respecting the diversity of languages in the region, can contribute to a more inclusive and harmonious society in Tripura.

According to Higher education department survey and data it shows that majority of the students studying Kokborok language in 22 government colleges prefer to use Roman script for writing Kokborok language. For 2021-2022 academic session 99.95 % of students pursuing Kokborok language in 22 government college choose Roman Script for writing their answers script and for 2019-2020 academic session 99 .09 % of the

758

students studying Kokborok language opted for answering their answers in Roman Script.
Students are given a choice to answer in both the script but majority of the students
choose Roman Script for writing Kokborok language in college of Tripura. Hence it
clearly indicates that the student's communities prefer to use Roman script for writing
Kokborok language.

List of General Degree College where Kokborok Language is Taught and Total number
of students studying Kokborok Subject and numbers of Student opting or Roman Script
and Bengali Script for the Academic Session (2019-2020) and (2021-2022) are given
below:

S.L. No	Name of College	2019-2020			2021-2022		
		Total students 2019-20	Roman Script	Bengali Script	Total Students 2021-22	Roman Script	Bengali Script
1.	M.BB College, Agartala	315	314	1	536	536	0
2	B.B Memorial College, Agartala	478	478	0	622	622	0
3	Govt. Women's College, Agartala	898	898	0	910	910	0
4	Ramthakur College, Agartala	31	31	0	146	146	0
5	Govt. Degree College, Khumulwng	840	840	0	1274	1274	0
6	Swami Vivekananda Mahavidyalaya, Mohanpur	157	157	0	303	303	0
7	Dasharath Deb Memorial College, Khowai	878	878	0	1101	1101	0
8	Govt. Degree College, Teliamura	224	224	0	464	464	0
9	Govt. Degree College, Kamalpur	272	272	0	359	359	0
10	Govt. Degree College, Gandachhara	166	166	0	286	286	0
11	Govt. Degree College, L.T. Valley	142	142	0	198	198	0
12	RamkrishnaMahavidyalaya, Kailashahar	258	258	0	196	196	0
13	Ambedkar College, Fatikroy	28	28	0	55	55	0
14	Govt.Degree College, Dharmanagar	91	91	0	167	167	0
15	Govt. Degree College, Kanchanpur	107	107	0	124	124	0
16	KabiNazrul Mahavidyalaya, Sonamura	87	87	0	167	167	0
17	Rabindranath Thakur Mahavidyalaya,Bishlalgarh	17	17	0	45	45	0
18	Netaji SubhashMahavidyalaya, Udaipur	922	922	0	911	911	0
19	AdwityaMalla Barman Smriti Mahavidyalaya, Amarpur	284	284	0	489	489	0
20	Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar College, Belonia	280	280	0	416	416	0
21	Govt. Degree College, Santibazar	52	47	05	113	109	04
22	Michael MadhusudanDatta College, Sabroom	122	122	0	265	265	0

	Total students (%)	6649 (100.00 %)	6643 (99.90 %)	06 (0.09%)	9147 (100.00 %)	9143 (99.96 %)	4 (0.04%)

Source: Directorate of Higher Education, Government of Tripura.

From the above table is crystal clear that majority of the students studying Kokborok language prefer to use to use Roman script for writing Kokborok language still government of Tripura to maintain hegemony of Bengali cultural upon the indigenous Tiprasa people there is an imposition of Bengali Script upon the indigenous Tiprasa people in Tripura. Making ambiguous for the students community by giving them bilingual script option, whereas majority of the Tiprasa want to adopt Roman Script for writing Kokborok language.

In a significant stride towards the promotion and preservation of the Kokborok language, which serves as a vital cultural link for the indigenous peoples of Tripura, Tripura University, in collaboration with the local community, has taken a momentous step by introducing a Master's degree course specifically dedicated to Kokborok language and literature. This pioneering initiative is a testament to the university's commitment to cultural diversity, linguistic heritage, and academic excellence, aiming to empower students with in-depth knowledge of Kokborok, fostering linguistic excellence, cultural preservation, and scholarly research.

In this paper, it is argued that the movement advocating for the Roman script is emblematic of the unwavering determination and resilience of the Indigenous Tipra people. The Roman script not only aligns culturally but also offers opportunities for enhanced accessibility, breaking down linguistic barriers, and empowering the younger generation with language skills that are central to their heritage. Beyond the practical implications, this movement transcends regional boundaries, resonating with the broader struggles faced by indigenous communities worldwide in preserving their languages and cultures. The imposition of the Bengali script not only threatens the linguistic fabric of Kokborok but also poses a broader sociological challenge. This struggle for script selection is intertwined with issues of identity, power dynamics, language politics, cultural preservation, inclusivity, education, and communication. The successful adoption of the Roman script will not only validate cultural rights but also contribute to a more inclusive and compassionate world where linguistic diversity is cherished and conserved for generations to come. This paper delves into the heart of this ongoing narrative of linguistic and cultural resilience.

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

Linguistic Imperialism theory offers a framework for comprehending the imposition of the Bengali script on the Kokborok language spoken by the indigenous peoples of Tripura. According to this theory, linguistic imperialism refers to the exertion of

760

dominance and the forced imposition of one language or script over others. In the context of the Kokborok language, the imposition of the Bengali script can be seen as a manifestation of linguistic imperialism, where the powerful Bengali-speaking majority imposes their language and script on the indigenous communities.

Linguistic imperialism theory recognizes that language encompasses more than just a means of communication and extends into cultural expression and identity. It acknowledges that when a dominant language or script is enforced upon a minority or indigenous language, it can marginalize and suppress the cultural practices, knowledge systems, and way of life associated with the latter. In the case of the Kokborok language, the imposition of the Bengali script can result in the erasure of unique cultural expressions and historical narratives that are intertwined with the indigenous peoples' identity and heritage. Power dynamics play a significant role in the imposition of the Bengali script. The dominant Bengali-speaking majority holds cultural, social, and political power, allowing them to impose their language and script as the standard or official form of communication. This power imbalance leads to the subordination of indigenous languages and scripts like Kokborok, reinforcing the supremacy of the Bengali language and its associated script.

The cultural domination resulting from the imposition of the Bengali script on the Kokborok language carries implications for the indigenous peoples' identity and cultural autonomy. It can contribute to the loss of linguistic and cultural diversity, as well as hinder the intergenerational transmission of indigenous knowledge and traditions. Moreover, the imposition of the Bengali script can foster a sense of cultural alienation as the indigenous peoples are compelled to adapt to a script that does not align with their own linguistic heritage.

Resistance and empowerment play vital roles in addressing linguistic imperialism. Indigenous communities and language activists often engage in endeavours to revitalize and promote their own languages and scripts, such as utilizing the Roman script for writing Kokborok. These initiatives aim to reclaim linguistic autonomy, preserve cultural heritage, and empower indigenous communities to assert their linguistic and cultural rights. Linguistic Imperialism theory provides a valuable framework for understanding the imposition of the Bengali script on the Kokborok language spoken by the indigenous peoples in Tripura. It highlights the power dynamics, cultural domination, and identity implications entwined in this process. By comprehending and challenging linguistic imperialism, there is potential to advance inclusive language policies, support indigenous language revitalization efforts, and safeguard the cultural autonomy and diversity of indigenous communities.

Objective

To explores the importance of single script in language development and delves into the challenges of utilizing two scripts for writing a language. To explores the reasons behind the indigenous people preference for writing kokborok language in Romans Script

Research Methodology.

The research methodology employed for this study was based on an ethnographic approach, utilizing qualitative research methods such as participant observation, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and engagement with NGOs, to gain an in-depth understanding of the demand for the Roman script by the Indigenous Peoples of Tripura for their Kokborok language, with the aim of exploring their linguistic preferences and cultural aspirations, and by immersing themselves in the Indigenous community, researchers observed and comprehended how Kokborok was used in various aspects of daily life, cultural events, and rituals, gaining valuable insights into the significance of Kokborok in the community's cultural practices and identity, while semi-structured interviews conducted with members of the Indigenous Tipra community, including elders, language activists, educators, and young speakers, allowed for an exploration of their perspectives on the Roman script, its cultural relevance, and the impact of the imposed Bengali script on their linguistic identity, and through organizing focus groups with community members, open dialogue and discussions on the script preferences for Kokborok were encouraged, enabling the collection of collective perspectives that offered valuable insights into the cultural importance of the Roman script and its role in preserving their heritage, while interactions with NGOs working in the region provided a broader perspective on the social and political dimensions of the demand for the Roman script, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the linguistic aspirations and challenges faced by the Indigenous community, and the data collected through participant observation, interviews, focus group discussions, and engagement with NGOs were transcribed and coded for thematic analysis, identifying and examining themes related to cultural preservation, linguistic identity, aspirations, and challenges associated with script selection, and the research findings have important implications for recognizing indigenous language rights and fostering linguistic inclusivity while preserving their rich cultural heritage and linguistic identity for the generations to come.

RESULT AND DISCUSSANT

Kokborok Script Language Commission

To Solve the problem of Script for Kokborok language two languages commission was set up Government of Tripura. First language commission was set up in 1st June 1900 under the chairmanship of Shyama Charan Tripura. After doing survey and consulting various indigenous social organisation the First language commission recommended to

762

Use Roman Script for Kokborok. But government thus not implements the recommendation of the First Script Selection committee for the development of Kokborok. In 17th June 2004, Second Language commission was set up by the government to select the script for Kokborok language under the chairmanship of Pabitra Sarkar. After proper study and survey about Kokborok language, the Second Language commission recommended For Roman Script for writing Kokborok language. Ironically, the state government thus not takes the recommendation of the language commission set up by them. This attitude of the government toward the indigenous Tipra people far alienated the indigenous people from the majority Bengali people. As Tripura has 60 Assembly seat in Tripura assembly and out of that only 20 are reserved for the indigenous Tipra people and rest 40 Assembly seat are for the Bengali people. Hence, for selection of a script there is a need of approval from the cabinet and it needs to be passed in the Tripura Legislative Assembly. 40 MLA from the majority Bengali community are not in favour of Roman Script for Kokborok. Therefore, as a consequence of less political representation in the Tripura Legislative Assembly the indigenous Tipra people are victims of political and cultural hegemony.

Advantages Using the Roman script for the Kokborok language

Using the Roman script for the Kokborok language offers several advantages for the indigenous peoples of Tripura. These advantages include enhanced linguistic accessibility, increased educational opportunities, improved cultural preservation, and broader communication capabilities.

Linguistic Accessibility: The Roman script is widely used and recognized internationally, making it easier for speakers of other languages to understand and learn Kokborok. By adopting the Roman script, the Kokborok language becomes more accessible to a broader audience, including researchers, educators, and individuals outside the indigenous communities. This facilitates cross-cultural understanding and promotes inclusivity.

Educational Opportunities: Using the Roman script can provide indigenous children with improved educational opportunities. Many educational resources, including textbooks, materials, and online resources, are readily available in the Roman script. This facilitates the development of educational materials and curricula for teaching Kokborok in schools, allowing indigenous children to learn their mother tongue more effectively and preserve their cultural heritage.

Cultural Preservation: The Roman script can aid in the preservation and revitalization of the Kokborok language and associated cultural practices. It provides a standardized and consistent writing system that can be used for recording folklore, literature, historical accounts, and traditional knowledge. Preserving and promoting the

763

Kokborok language in its written form through the Roman script helps safeguard indigenous cultural identity, traditions, and values.

Communication and Integration: The use of the Roman script enables easier communication and integration with speakers of other languages. It facilitates intercultural dialogue, trade, and collaboration. Additionally, the Roman script aligns with modern technology, enabling the creation of digital resources, online platforms, and social media content in Kokborok. This enhances the visibility of the language and promotes its use in various domains, fostering a sense of pride and empowerment among the indigenous communities.

Language Revitalization and Community Empowerment: Adopting the Roman script for Kokborok can contribute to language revitalization efforts and empower indigenous communities. It allows for the creation of language learning materials, dictionaries, and literacy programs that support the transmission of Kokborok across generations. By revitalizing their language, indigenous communities can strengthen their cultural identity, build intergenerational bonds, and assert their linguistic rights.

Preservation of Indigenous Knowledge: The use of the Roman script facilitates the preservation and documentation of indigenous knowledge systems. It allows for the recording of traditional ecological practices, medicinal knowledge, oral histories, and cultural expressions. This written record can contribute to the overall preservation of indigenous knowledge, ensuring its transmission to future generations and promoting the sustainability of traditional practices..

Challenges of Using the Bengali script for the Kokborok language

Using the Bengali script for the Kokborok language in Tripura presents several challenges for the indigenous peoples of the region. These Challenges include cultural marginalization, language endangerment, limited access to resources, and hindrances to educational and socio-economic opportunities.

Cultural Marginalization: The imposition of the Bengali script on the Kokborok language can result in the marginalization of indigenous cultural practices and traditions. It undermines the unique cultural identity of the indigenous communities by favouring a script associated with a dominant group. This marginalization can lead to a loss of cultural diversity and a weakening of indigenous cultural heritage.

Language Endangerment: The use of the Bengali script may contribute to the endangerment of the Kokborok language. When indigenous communities are forced to adopt a script that is not their own, there is a risk of language shift and language loss. The imposition of the Bengali script can undermine the intergenerational transmission of

Kokborok, as younger generations may have difficulty learning and using the language in a script that does not align with their cultural heritage.

Limited Access to Resources: The Bengali script is not use worldwide, Bengali script is only use in West Bengal, Assam, Tripura and Bangladesh. Most of the online recourse are in Romans Script. This can create a lack of resources, such as textbooks, literature, and online materials, in the Kokborok language written in the Bengali script. Limited access to resources hinders the development and preservation of the Kokborok language, making it challenging for indigenous communities to maintain and promote their linguistic and cultural heritage.

Educational and Socio-economic Opportunities: The use of the Bengali script may pose barriers to educational and socio-economic opportunities for the indigenous peoples of Tripura. Educational institutions predominantly use the Bengali script, which can hinder effective learning and limit educational achievement for indigenous students. Additionally, in areas where knowledge of the Bengali script is a requirement for employment or business opportunities, indigenous individuals may face disadvantages and exclusion.

Loss of Linguistic Autonomy: The imposition of the Bengali script undermines the linguistic autonomy of the indigenous communities in Tripura. Indigenous peoples may feel a sense of disempowerment and loss of control over their own language and script. This loss of linguistic autonomy can have broader cultural and psychological impacts, as it erodes the sense of pride and ownership that indigenous communities have over their language and cultural heritage.

Communication Barriers: The use of the Bengali script may create communication barriers between the Kokborok-speaking indigenous communities and others who are unfamiliar with the script. It limits the ability of the indigenous peoples to communicate effectively in their own language with speakers of other languages, including tourists, researchers, and individuals from different regions.

The use of the Bengali script for the Kokborok language in Tripura presents demerits and challenges for the indigenous peoples. These include cultural marginalization, language endangerment, limited access to resources, hindered educational and socio-economic opportunities, loss of linguistic autonomy, and communication barriers. Recognizing these demerits is crucial in advocating for the preservation of linguistic diversity, supporting indigenous languages, and ensuring the cultural rights and empowerment of indigenous communities.

Differences between using the Roman script and the Bengali script

Familiarity and Accessibility: The Roman script, also known as the Latin script, is widely recognized and familiar globally. It is used for numerous languages worldwide, making it accessible to a broader audience. Many people are already familiar with the Roman script, which can facilitate communication and understanding across different linguistic communities. The Bengali script is specific to the Bengali language and some other languages in the region. It is less widely recognized outside of the Bengali-speaking community. As a result, individuals unfamiliar with the Bengali script may find it challenging to read or understand the Kokborok language when written in Bengali script accept for Bengali speaking people.

Linguistic Representation: The Roman script offers a phonetic representation of the Kokborok language. Its alphabets correspond more directly to the sounds of the language, which can make it easier for learners to pronounce and read words accurately. The Bengali script has its own phonetic system, which thus not align perfectly with the sounds of the Kokborok language. It might require additional diacritics or modifications to accurately represent the phonetics of Kokborok. This can pose challenges for learners and can lead to inconsistencies in pronunciation and spelling.

Availability of Resources: The Roman script has extensive resources available, including textbooks, educational materials, and digital resources. Many linguistic tools, such as dictionaries and grammar guides, are readily accessible for languages written in the Roman script. These resources can support language learning, literacy, and the development of educational materials for Kokborok. While resources in the Bengali script are limited as Bengali script are use only in few state in India. Educational materials and linguistic references specifically tailored for Kokborok written in the Bengali script may be less abundant, which can pose challenges for language learners and educators.

Cultural Identity and Autonomy: Using the Roman script for Kokborok allows for a distinct written identity for the language. It emphasizes the linguistic and cultural autonomy of the indigenous peoples of Tripura, enabling them to preserve and promote their unique heritage and cultural expressions. The use of the Bengali script can potentially blur the cultural identity of the Kokborok language within the broader Bengali cultural context. It may lead to a sense of assimilation and dilution of the distinct cultural and linguistic features of Kokborok.

Interoperability and Communication: The Roman script is compatible with modern technological platforms, making it easier to communicate and disseminate information online. It allows for seamless integration with digital tools, social media, and global communication channels, facilitating broader outreach and exchange of ideas. The

Bengali script may have limitations when it comes to compatibility with digital platforms or communication channels that predominantly use the Roman script. It may require additional efforts to ensure compatibility and interoperability in the digital realm.

Important consideration in deciding a script for a language

The best script for the Kokborok language in Tripura is one that is widely accepted, embraced by the community, and contributes to the revitalization, preservation, and promotion of the language and the cultural heritage of the indigenous peoples of Tripura. Determining the most suitable script for the Kokborok language in Tripura requires a collaborative and inclusive approach. It should involve active participation and consultation with the indigenous communities themselves, as they hold the primary knowledge and understanding of their language and cultural needs. Language experts, linguists, educators, and other relevant stakeholders should also contribute their expertise to the decision-making process. During the consultation process, multiple factors need to be considered. Preserving cultural identity is crucial, as the chosen script should reflect the unique linguistic and cultural heritage of the Kokborok-speaking communities. It should capture the nuances, phonetics, and distinct features of the language, allowing for accurate representation and pronunciation.

Ease of learning and usage is another important consideration. The script should be accessible and user-friendly for both native speakers and learners of the Kokborok language. It should facilitate effective reading, writing, and comprehension, supporting language acquisition and literacy development among speakers of all ages. Ensuring accessibility to educational resources is essential for promoting the Kokborok language in schools and educational institutions. The chosen script should have readily available teaching materials, textbooks, and digital resources that align with the curriculum and meet educational standards. This availability of resources facilitates effective language instruction, supports literacy programs, and encourages the use of the Kokborok language in educational settings.

Compatibility with modern technology is a significant factor in today's digital age. The chosen script should be adaptable to digital platforms, software, and communication technologies. This enables the development of digital resources, online tools, and applications that facilitate language learning, content creation, and information sharing in the Kokborok language.

Additionally, the long-term sustainability of the chosen script should be considered. It should have the potential for growth and adaptation to changing linguistic and technological landscapes. The script should support the continued usage and development of the Kokborok language, ensuring its viability for future generations.

767

Ultimately, the success of selecting the most suitable script for the Kokborok language lies in its acceptance by the indigenous communities. Their engagement and ownership of the decision are crucial for promoting linguistic pride, cultural empowerment, and the revitalization of the Kokborok language.

Significance of Mother Tongue Education and Consequence of Imposition of the Bengali Script

Tripura faces a significant challenge of high dropout rates among indigenous students. One major factor contributing to this issue is the imposition of the Bengali script and the prevalence of Bengali medium education, which often overlooks the importance of Kokborok, the mother tongue of indigenous students.

The Significance of Mother Tongue Education:

(a). Cultural Identity and Belonging: Mother tongue education plays a crucial role in preserving cultural identity, fostering a sense of belonging, and strengthening community bonds among indigenous students. It connects them to their roots, history, and traditional knowledge systems.

(b). Cognitive and Academic Benefits: Research indicates that children learn most effectively when educated in their mother tongue during the early stages. This approach enhances cognitive development, improves academic performance, and provides a strong foundation for future learning.

The Imposition of the Bengali Script:

(a). Marginalization of Kokborok: The imposition of the Bengali script marginalizes the significance of the Kokborok language in educational contexts. Indigenous students often face difficulties adapting to a script that does not align with their cultural heritage, hindering their linguistic development and engagement in learning.

(b). Linguistic Disadvantages: The imposition of the Bengali script puts indigenous students at a linguistic disadvantage, making it challenging for them to read, write, and express themselves effectively. These disadvantages contribute to feelings of alienation and frustration, ultimately leading to disengagement and dropout from school.

The Dominance of Bengali Medium Education:

(a). Neglect of Kokborok Language: The dominance of Bengali medium education neglects the importance of Kokborok as the mother tongue of indigenous students. Instruction primarily occurs in Bengali, placing indigenous students at a disadvantage and hindering their full comprehension and engagement with the curriculum.

(b). Cultural Disconnect: Bengali medium education often fails to acknowledge and incorporate the cultural and historical perspectives of indigenous communities in Tripura. This cultural disconnect further alienates indigenous students, making it difficult for them to connect with educational content and dampening their motivation to continue their education.

Significance of Script in Language Development

Script plays a crucial role in language development, aiding in communication, cultural expression, and knowledge transmission. However, employing two scripts for a single language can introduce complexities and challenges.

The Role of Script in Language Development:

(a). Written Expression: Script provides a standardized means of written expression, facilitating communication, documentation, and the preservation of cultural heritage through written texts.

(b). Literacy and Education: Script is vital for literacy and education, enabling the creation of educational materials and resources that support reading, writing, and language learning. It serves as the foundation for literacy programs, empowering individuals to access information and participates fully in society.

(c). Language Standardization: Script assists in standardizing a language by establishing consistent spelling, grammar, and pronunciation rules. It enables the development of dictionaries, grammars, and language resources, fostering linguistic coherence and facilitating communication across different communities.

Drawbacks of Utilizing Two Scripts

(a). Confusion and Inconsistency: Employing two scripts for a language can lead to confusion and inconsistency in written communication, hindering effective understanding and intergroup communication. Inconsistent usage and variations in spelling, grammar, and vocabulary can arise, complicating language development.

(b). Reduced Linguistic Autonomy: The existence of two scripts can diminish linguistic autonomy, particularly for language communities forced to adopt a script that does not align with their cultural or historical identity. This may result in a sense of linguistic marginalization and disconnection from their own language.

(c). Educational Challenges: Utilizing two scripts presents educational challenges, such as creating standardized teaching materials and curricula, as well as developing assessments that accommodate both scripts. Students may struggle with learning and

769

transitioning between two writing systems, affecting their educational progress and motivation.

(d). Fragmentation of Resources: Having two scripts can fragment resources and materials. Educational materials, literature, and digital resources may need separate production for each script, resulting in duplication of efforts and limited availability of comprehensive resources. This fragmentation hampers language development and impedes access to quality learning materials.

(e). Impeded Language Preservation: Utilizing two scripts can lead to the marginalization or neglect of one script, potentially eroding linguistic and cultural heritage. Language communities may face difficulties in preserving their language, as multiple scripts may contribute to a decline in usage, reduced intergenerational transmission, and a loss of cultural identity. While script plays a crucial role in language development and communication, employing two scripts for a single language can introduce complexities and challenges. Confusion, inconsistency, reduced linguistic autonomy, educational difficulties, resource fragmentation, and hindered language preservation are among the drawbacks associated with utilizing two scripts. It is essential for language communities, educators, and policymakers to consider the implications of introducing or maintaining multiple scripts, working towards linguistic inclusivity, standardization, and preservation within the context of a single script that aligns with the cultural identity and aspirations of the language community.

Detrimental Effects of Imposing an Inappropriate Script on Language Deterioration

The consequences of selecting an incorrect or unsuitable script for a language can be harmful, affecting its growth, usage, and preservation.

Loss of Linguistic Identity:

(a). Inaccurate Representation: The imposition of an inappropriate script fails to accurately represent the sounds and unique linguistic characteristics of the language, leading to a loss of its distinctive identity and hindering effective communication.

(b). Limited Expressive Capacity: An unsuitable script may not encompass the full range of sounds and phonetic nuances in the language, restricting speakers' ability to fully express themselves and diminishing the liveliness of the language.

Decline in Literacy and Language Usage:

(a). Restricted Access to Education: The presence of an unsuitable script poses barriers to education and literacy, as appropriate materials and resources may be lacking, impeding language learning and discouraging its use within educational settings.

770

(b). Decreased Language Utilization: Without a suitable script, speakers may resort to alternative languages for written communication, leading to a decline in the language's written usage and further marginalizing its development and vibrancy.

(c). High dropout: due to the difficulty of understanding wrong script there can be huge dropout among the student community.

Disconnection from Cultural Heritage:

(a). Cultural Estrangement: The imposition of an inappropriate script can create a disconnect between the language and its cultural heritage, eroding cultural identity and leaving speakers feeling detached from their own linguistic and cultural roots.

(b). Erosion of Intergenerational Language Transmission: The imposition of an unsuitable script presents challenges for younger generations in connecting with and learning the language, hindering the transfer of the language across generations and potentially resulting in language loss and the endangerment of cultural heritage.

Loss of Language Documentation:

(a). Insufficient Preservation: An incorrect script hampers accurate language documentation and preservation, limiting the ability to capture grammar, vocabulary, and cultural practices, thereby risking the loss of invaluable linguistic and cultural knowledge.

(b). Impediments to Language Revitalization: The imposition of an inappropriate script creates obstacles to language revitalization efforts, hindering the availability of accessible resources and impeding initiatives aimed at reclaiming and promoting the language within the community and wider society.

Imposing an inappropriate script on a language can have far-reaching and detrimental consequences, leading to its deterioration over time. The loss of linguistic identity, reduced literacy and language usage, disconnection from cultural heritage, erosion of intergenerational language transmission, and challenges in language documentation and revitalization are among the negative effects. Careful consideration of the linguistic and cultural context is essential when selecting a script, ensuring accurate representation and supporting the language's development, preservation, and revitalization.

Resistance against Linguistic Assimilation with Bengali community

Language is a fundamental aspect of cultural identity, and the imposition of the Bengali script on indigenous languages in Tripura has been a source of significant conflict. For the indigenous communities, languages like Kokborok are not merely tools of

771

communication; they represent the very essence of their culture and identity. The imposition of the Bengali script poses a direct threat to the preservation of their linguistic heritage.

One powerful way in which indigenous communities are resisting linguistic assimilation is through the advocacy for the use of Roman scripts. For instance, the Tiprasa people, who speak Kokborok, are at the forefront of the movement to adopt the Roman script for their language. This linguistic movement is a resolute assertion of their cultural identity and autonomy, signifying their determination to safeguard their heritage against external pressures. Beyond language, indigenous communities in Tripura are also resisting cultural assimilation by preserving their traditional practices and rituals. These customs are deeply ingrained in their identity and are intertwined with their history and environment. By continuing to uphold these traditions, indigenous communities assert their unique cultural identity and resist the erosion of their heritage.

The resistance against linguistic assimilation in Tripura faces significant challenges. Indigenous communities often confront discrimination, economic disparities, and political marginalization. The dominant Bengali culture holds more political and economic power, making it difficult for indigenous voices to be heard and their rights to be respected.

Furthermore, the struggle against linguistic assimilation has broader regional and global implications. It reflects the larger issues faced by indigenous communities worldwide as they grapple with dominant cultures attempting to subdue their languages and traditions. This resistance serves as a reminder of the importance of preserving linguistic and cultural diversity.

The indigenous peoples of Tripura are engaged in a multifaceted resistance against linguistic assimilation through the imposition of the Bengali script for Kokborok. This resistance encompasses linguistic, cultural, and social dimensions and reflects the indigenous communities' unwavering determination to protect their heritage and assert their autonomy. Policymakers and society at large must recognize the significance of linguistic and cultural diversity and respect the rights of indigenous communities. The ongoing struggle in Tripura underscores the resilience of indigenous cultures and their steadfast commitment to preserving their unique identities in the face of assimilation pressures.

Imagined Community and their Aspiration for Roman Script

Language communities hold a profound connection to their mother tongue, forming what is often referred to as the "imagined community." This collective vision encompasses their language, culture, and aspirations. In the case of the indigenous peoples of Tripura, a conflict arises when the majority Bengali population insists on the use of Bengali script

772

against the wishes of the indigenous community, who express a preference for the Roman script.

The Significance of the Imagined Community:

(a).Cultural Identity and Ownership: The imagined community provides a strong sense of cultural identity, ownership, and authority over language. The indigenous peoples of Tripura have a deep connection to their mother tongue and a desire to preserve their cultural heritage.

(b). Linguistic Autonomy and Agency: The imagined community holds the right to make decisions regarding their language, including the choice of script. Respecting their autonomy is essential for preserving their linguistic and cultural identity.

The Indigenous Community's Preference for Roman Script:

(a). Cultural Alignment: The indigenous peoples of Tripura express a preference for the Roman script, which aligns with their cultural practices and social context. It allows for a more accurate representation of their language, enhancing their ability to connect with their heritage.

(b). Linguistic Ease and Accessibility: The Roman script offers familiarity and accessibility to the indigenous community. It facilitates ease of learning, reading, and writing, enabling effective communication and language development.

Embracing Community Empowerment:

(a). Recognition and Inclusion: It is crucial to recognize the authority and aspirations of the indigenous community in script decisions. Their input should be sought and valued, ensuring their voices are heard and their cultural heritage is respected.

(b). Collaborative Solutions: Engaging in open dialogue and collaboration between the Bengali and indigenous communities can lead to mutually agreeable solutions. A collaborative approach that considers the preferences and needs of the indigenous community promotes inclusivity, respect, and cultural harmony.

Respecting the wishes of the imagined community is vital in script selection, particularly when the indigenous peoples of Tripura express a preference for the Roman script. Acknowledging their linguistic autonomy, cultural alignment, and accessibility requirements are essential for preserving their cultural heritage and fostering inclusivity. Embracing community empowerment and collaborative solutions will pave the way for a more equitable and harmonious coexistence of scripts, enabling the indigenous community to maintain their linguistic and cultural identity within the broader linguistic landscape of Tripura.

773

The concept of the imagined community is particularly relevant to the indigenous peoples of Tripura and their desire to write in the Roman script for their Kokborok language. The imagined community refers to a collective vision and sense of belonging shared by a group of people who identify themselves as part of a larger community based on common language, culture, and history.

For the indigenous peoples of Tripura, the imagined community encompasses their cultural heritage, traditions, and the Kokborok language. They hold a deep connection to their language as a vital component of their identity and cultural preservation. The desire to write in the Roman script emerges from their recognition of the script's potential benefits, such as cultural alignment, linguistic ease, and accessibility.

Linguistic Autonomy and Ownership over their Language

By advocating for the Roman script, the indigenous community asserts their linguistic autonomy and ownership over their language, aiming to reclaim their cultural heritage and ensure its continued vitality. Through the Roman script, they seek to express themselves fully, connect with their roots, and foster intergenerational language transmission. However, the imposition of the Bengali script, preferred by the majority Bengali population, poses challenges to the aspirations of the indigenous community, leading to feelings of cultural marginalization, disconnection, and a loss of linguistic autonomy. The Bengali script may not accurately capture the unique phonetics, sounds, and linguistic nuances of the Kokborok language, hindering effective communication and inhibiting language development and preservation efforts.

Recognizing and honouring the desires of the indigenous community to write in the Roman script is crucial for fostering a more inclusive and harmonious linguistic landscape in Tripura. It demonstrates respect for their agency, linguistic autonomy, and cultural heritage, serving as a testament to the power of language in preserving cultural diversity, promoting cultural revitalization, and strengthening the collective identity of indigenous peoples. By embracing the imagined community's wishes and supporting the use of the Roman script, policymakers, educators, and language advocates can contribute to the preservation and revitalization of the Kokborok language. This inclusive approach acknowledges the importance of linguistic autonomy, cultural empowerment, and the preservation of indigenous languages within the broader linguistic fabric of Tripura.

Sociological Implication

The issue of script selection for the Kokborok language in Tripura has significant sociological implications that touch upon various aspects of society, culture, and identity. By considering these implications, we can better understand the broader social context in which the language debate unfolds.

774

Identity and Belonging: Language plays a vital role in shaping individual and group identities. For the Indigenous Tiprasa people, Kokborok is not just a means of communication but a marker of their distinct cultural identity and belongingness to a particular community. The use of the Roman script aligns with their cultural aspirations and fosters a sense of pride in their indigenous heritage, contributing to the preservation of their unique identity.

Power Dynamics and Language Politics: The imposition of the Bengali script for Kokborok reflects broader power dynamics and language politics in the region. Language choices can be a reflection of historical, political, and social relationships between different communities. The struggle for script selection represents an assertion of linguistic and cultural rights by the indigenous community against potential dominance by the majority Bengali population.

Language Endangerment and Cultural Erosion: The introduction of an unfamiliar script for Kokborok may contribute to language endangerment and cultural erosion. When a language is suppressed or marginalized, the associated culture and knowledge systems may also be at risk of fading away. The use of the Roman script can be seen as a step towards revitalizing Kokborok, thereby safeguarding the cultural heritage of the Indigenous Tiprasa people.

Inclusivity and Social Cohesion: The debate over script selection highlights the importance of inclusivity and social cohesion within society. Recognizing and respecting the linguistic aspirations of the indigenous community promotes a more inclusive and equitable society, where the rights of minority groups are valued and protected. A unified approach under the Roman script can foster social cohesion by acknowledging the linguistic diversity of Tripura and promoting intercultural understanding.

Education and Empowerment: Education is a crucial aspect of sociological development, and the choice of script for Kokborok directly impacts educational access and empowerment. Using the Roman script can simplify the learning process for the younger generation, making education more accessible and empowering them with language skills that are central to their cultural heritage.

Language Standardization and Communication: Standardizing a single script for Kokborok, preferably the Roman script is essential for effective communication within and outside the community. Standardization aids in promoting consistency in spelling, grammar, and pronunciation, enabling smoother language development and inter-community interactions. Script selection for the Kokborok language in Tripura carries profound sociological implications. It is intertwined with issues of identity, power dynamics, language politics, language endangerment, cultural preservation, inclusivity, education, and communication. By understanding and addressing these implications,

775

society can work towards supporting the linguistic aspirations of the Indigenous Tiprasa people and fostering a more inclusive, culturally rich, and cohesive social environment.

Conclusion

The enforcement of the Bengali script for writing Kokborok, contrary to the indigenous people's desires in Tripura, has sparked a significant and poignant struggle for the safeguarding of their linguistic and cultural rights. This imposition holds profound implications, extending beyond the mere preservation of Kokborok, as it pertains to the wider panorama of indigenous identity and heritage within the region. The movement advocating for the adoption of the Roman script for Kokborok exemplifies the unwavering determination and resilience of the Tipra people in their resistance against cultural assimilation. By championing the Roman script, the indigenous people are not only asserting their inherent right to self-determination but also reiterating the vital role that their linguistic heritage plays in shaping their collective identity. The struggle is deeply intertwined with sentiments of pride and belonging, for Kokborok forms an indispensable facet of their cultural roots and historical narrative. Beyond practical considerations, the resistance against the imposition of the Bengali script carries significant symbolic weight. The Roman script, being more widely understood both regionally and globally, presents a platform for enhanced accessibility. This transition transcends linguistic barriers, forging opportunities for Kokborok integration into diverse domains, encompassing education, media, and literature. As a consequence, this fosters a stronger sense of communal cohesion and empowerment, fuelling an unyielding determination to safeguard and propagate their cherished mother language. Moreover, the movement advocating for the Roman script serves as a poignant testament to the broader struggles encountered by indigenous communities worldwide. Its reverberations echo the challenges faced by countless marginalized groups as they confront dominant forces seeking to subjugate their languages and cultures. The call for linguistic and cultural autonomy resonates not only within the boundaries of Tripura but reverberates far beyond, resonating in harmony with other indigenous communities embroiled in analogous battles. In light of this movement, it becomes imperative for policymakers and governments to acknowledge the significance of linguistic diversity and respect the rights of indigenous peoples to preserve and promote their vernaculars. Crafting inclusive language policies, with the active involvement of the affected communities, is essential to ensure that their voices are heard and their choices respected. Celebrating linguistic diversity enriches societies and lays the foundation for a more equitable and all-encompassing future. The endeavour for the Roman script for Kokborok stands as an ongoing odyssey, shaped collectively by the indomitable efforts of the indigenous people of Tripura, linguistic scholars, and advocates of cultural preservation. It is a testament to the potency of language, not just as a conduit of cultural heritage but also as an instrument for igniting social transformation. The movement underscores the unyielding

776

resilience of the human spirit, as it strives to protect and nurture linguistic traditions vulnerable to the vicissitudes of time. Ultimately, the triumph of this movement shall serve as a litmus test of society's ability to recognize and cherish the multilingual and multicultural fabric that underpins our shared humanity. Upholding the cause of the indigenous people of Tripura in their pursuit of the Roman script not only validates their cultural rights but also contributes to a more all-encompassing and compassionate world, wherein linguistic diversity is venerated and conserved for generations to come.

REFERENCES

- Acharya, N. (2000). *Bhasha Shiksha Kok-borok*. Vidya Printers and Publishers. Agartala.
- Acharya, N. (2001). *An Easy Kokborok Primer*. Kokborok Shahitya Samsad. Agartala.
- Acharya, N. (2007). *Shahoj Kokborok Shiksha.* Yakhrai Publication. Agartala.
- Ahmed, D., & Umar, M. (1897). Kokboroma. Komila: Amar-Jantra.
- Ahmed, D., & Umar, M. (2007). Kokma Kalai: Kokborok Grammar. Hachukni Khawrang Publishers. Agartala.
- Auer, P. (2005). *Language or Dialect*. Cambridge University Press. London.
- Basumatary, P. C. (2005). An Introduction to the Boro Language. Mittal Publication. New Delhi.
- Benedict, P. K. (1972). *Sino-Tibetan: A Conspectus.* Cambridge University Press. New York.
- Benedict, P. K. (1976). Sino-Tibetan: Another look. *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 96(2), 167-187.
- Berg, T. (1998). *Linguistic Structure and Change: An Explanation from Language Processing.* Clarendon Press. Oxford.
- Bhattacharya, P. C. (1977). *A Descriptive Analysis of the Boro-Language.* Department of Publication. Guwahati University.
- Bloomfield, L. (1935). *Language.* Allen and Unwin. London.
- Brahma, T. (2013). Gender, Number, and Case in Uchai. *Language in India,* 13(1), 623-635.
- Brahma, T. (2011). Phonology of Uchai. *Language in India,* 11, 402-426.
- Bybee, J. (2001). Phonology and Language Use. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Cambridge.
- Cairns, C. E., & Raimy, E. (2011). *Handbook of the Syllable.* Brill. Boston.
- Car, P. (2008). *A Glossary of Phonology*. Edinburgh University Press. Edinburgh.
- Chainary, S. P. (2014). A Few Similarities found in Boro and Kokborok: The Two Languages of North-East India. *Impact*, 2(6), 25-34.
- Chakraborty, S. (2000). *Nije Nije Kokborok Shikhun.* Quick Print. Agartala.

- Chakraborty, S. K. (1981). *A Study of Tipra Language.* Tribal Research Institute. Agartala.
- Chaudhuri, S. K. (2004). *Learn Kokborok Teach Kokborok.* Jora Publication. Agartala.
- Chottopadhyay, S. (1972). *Tripurar Kokborok Bashar Likhitarupe Uttaran.* The Institute of Languages and Applied Linguistics. Calcutta.
- Chowdury, K. K. (2007*). Kokborok - A Promising Tribal Language of North-East India.* Akshar Publication. Agartala.
- Chowdury, K. K. (2008*). Kokborok Bhasha Shikshar Asar*. Jora Publications. Agartala.
- Chowdury, K. K. (2010). *Kokborok Dhanibichar.* Akshar Publication. Agartala.
- Chowdury, K. K. (2001). *Kakbarak Bhasha o Sahitya*. Akshar Publication. Agartala.
- Debbarma, A. B. (1967). *Kok-robom: English-Tripuri Dictionary*. Education Directorate, Govt. of Tripura. Agartala.
- Debbarma, B. (2002). Anglo-Kokborok-Bengali Dictionary. KOHM. Agartala.
- Debbarma, B., & Debbarma, B. (Eds.). (2002). *Proceedings of the BOROK CONFERENCE: In search of Linguistics & Cultural Identity among the Tibeto-Burman Languages in South East Asia*. Language Cell. Agartala.
- Debbarma, B., & Debbarma, B. (2010). *Kokborok Terminology*. Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council. Khumulwng.
- Debbarma, D. (1980). *Kog-borok Swrwng.* Directorate of School Education, Govt. of Tripura. Agartala.
- Debbarma, N. C. (2012). *An Introduction to Kokborok Language*. Jora Publications. Agartala.
- Debbarma, N. C. (2006). *Introduction to the Kok-borok Grammar and Translation.* Dey Kokborok Publishers. Agartala.
- Debbarma, R. K. (2002). Kokborok: Kokma Kutal. Tribal Research Institute. Agartala.
- Debbarma, R. K. (2014). *The Golden Mine of Kokborok.* Bengal Lokomoto Pvt. Ltd. Kolkata.
- Debbarma, S. (2016). The Socio-Cultural Contexts of Recent Loan Substitutions in Kokborok. *Language in India*, 16, 227-235.
- Debbarma, T. R. (1900). *Kokborokma – Grammar of Tripura Language.* Chaitanya Jantra. Comilla.
- Debnath, R. (2010*). Exploring Highlanders of Tripura and Chittagong Hill Tracts*. Akansha Publishing House. New Delhi.

- Debnath, R. (2019). Hindustani Loans in Khasi, Chakma, and Kokborok. In M. C. Behera (Ed.), *Tribal Language, Literature and Folklore: Emerging Approaches in Tribal Studies* (pp. 60-76). Rawat Publications. New Delhi.
- Debnath, R. (2014). *Kokborok Language Origin & Development.* TTAADC Khumulwng.
- Devy, G. N., & Debbarma, S. (2016). *People's Linguistic Survey of India: Languages of Tripura*. Orient Black Swan. Hyderabad.
- Dhar, P. C. (1983). *Kokborok Swrwngma.* Tribal Research Institute. Agartala.
- Duanmu, S. (2009). *Syllable Structure: The Limits of Variation*. Oxford University Press. New York.
- Dutta, S. K. (2010). *Uprooted Reangs: Strangers in their Motherland.* Akansha House. New Delhi.
- Edwards, J. (2009). *Language and Identity: An Introduction.* Cambridge University Press. United Kingdom.
- Fox, A. (1995). *Linguistic Reconstruction: An Introduction to Theory and Method.* Oxford University Press. Oxford.
- Ganchaudhuri, J. (1983). *The Riangs of Tripura.* Tribal Research Institute. Agartala.
- Haokip, T. T. (2011). *Socio-Linguistics Situation in North-East India.* Concept Publishing Company Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi.
- Hoque, F. (2014). Kokborok: A Major Tribal Language of Tripura. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 19(10), 30-35.
- Jackendoff, R. (2002*). Foundations of language: brain, meaning, grammar, evolution.* Oxford University Press. Oxford.
- Jacquesson, F. (2008). *A Kokborok Grammar.* KOHM. Agartala.
- Joseph, U. V., & Burling, R. (2006). *The Comparative Phonology of the Boro Garo Languages.* Central Institute of Indian Languages. Mysore..
- Karapurkar, P. P. (1972). Kokborok Grammar. Central Institute of Indian Languages. Mysore.
- Karapurkar, P. P. (2015). *Tripuri Phonetic Reader.* Central Institute of Indian Languages. Mysore.
- Koerber, H. N. V. (1935). *Morphology of the Tibetan Language- A contribution to Indosinology*. Suttonhouse. Los Angeles.
- Labov, W. (1978). *Sociolinguistic Patterns.* University of Pennsylvania Press. Philadelphia.
- Ladd, R. D. (1984). *Intonational phonology.* Cambridge University Press. Cambridge.
- Lannan, R. (2013). *Language, Dialect, and Power: The Effect of Language on Social Status.* Carroll College. United States.

779

- Lewin, T. H. (1906). *An Account of the Chittagong Hill Tracts*. Bengal Secretariat Press. Kolkata.
- Lewin, T. H. (1869). *The Hill Tracts of Chittagong and the Dwellers Therein.* Bengal Publishing Company. Calcutta.
- Lyell, M. (2006). *Language Contact: An Introduction.* Edinburgh University Press. Scotland.
- Lyons, J. (1968). *Introduction to Theoretical Linguistics.* Cambridge University Press. Cambridge.
- Maddieson, I. (1991). *Patterns of sounds*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge.
- MacMahon, A. (1994). *Understanding Linguistic Change.* Cambridge University Press. Cambridge.
- Matisoff, J. A. (2003). Handbook of Proto-Tibeto-Burman. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.
- Matthew, P. H. (1997). *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Linguistics.* Oxford University Press. New York.
- McCarthy, J. (2002). A Thematic Guide to Optimality Theory. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mhike, J. (2019). Optimality Theory. Routledge. New York.
- Milroy, J. (1992). *Linguistic Variation and Change.* Blackwell. Oxford.
- Molsom, C. K. (2009). *Word Stock Book of Different Languages in Tripura.* Khumulwng. Agartala.
- Newton, B. (1972). *The Generative Interpretation of Dialect. Cambridge* University Press. Cambridge.
- Pai, P. (2015). *Kokborok Grammar.* Central Institute of Indian Language. Mysore.
- Penhallurick, R. (2018). *Studying Dialect.* Pangrave. London.
- Phayre, A. (1841). *An Account of Arakan.* Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 117(33), 679-712.
- Phayre, A. (1844). On the History of Arakan. Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 13(1), 23-52.
- Reang, G. K. (2007). *Kaubru Abhidhan.* Tribal Research Institute. Agartala.
- Saha, S. B. (1988). *Kakbarak Sahayika.* Rupali Publishing. Agartala.
- Saha, S. B. (1988). *Origin and Structure of Kakborok.* Rupali Publishing. Agartala.
- Sampson, G. (2002). *Empirical Linguistics.* Continuum. London.
- Singh, K. C. (1997). *Rajmala.* Akshar Publishers. Agartala.
- Smith, N. (1973). The Acquisitions of Phonology: A case study. London: Cambridge University Press.

- Soans, S. K. (2005). *Introduction to Phonology.* Central Institute of Indian Languages. Mysore.
- Söhnchen, F. (2013). Language Contact, Dialect Levelling, and Convergence in Immigrant Multilingualism: A Case Study of Jersey Norman French. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Souris, T. (2016). The Tibeto-Burman Languages of Tripura. In P. Peterson & R. Webb (Eds.), *Language Structure, Variation and Change* Nova Science Publishers. New York .pp. 345-361.
- Stampe, D. (1973). *A Dissertation on Natural Phonology.* Garland. New York.

- Steever, S. B. (1998). *A Glossary of Sociolinguistics.* Routledge. London.
- Svantesson, J. T., Tolsma, G., & Nordhoff, S. (2015). *Kokborok: Phonology, Grammar, Texts and Vocabulary of the Bengali Dialect Spoken by the Borok of Tripura.* Brill Academic Publishers. Leiden.
- Thomason, S. G. (2001). *Language Contact: An Introduction.* Georgetown University Press. Washington.
- Thounaojam, J. (2017). *Language Contact in Arunachal Pradesh*. Concept Publishing Company Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi.
- Thounaojam, J. (2014). *Tripuri Grammar.* Central Institute of Indian Languages. Mysore.
- Trudgill, P. (2011). *Sociolinguistics: An Introduction to Language and Society.* Penguin Books. London.
- Verma, S. K. (2005). *Kokborok Phonetics.* Maulik Library. Kolkata.
- Verma, S. K. (2003). *Morphosyntax of Bodo-Garo.* Indian Council of Social Science Research. Delhi.
- Ward, I. (2020). *Language Contact and Change: Spanish in Los Angeles.* Palgrave Macmillan. London.
- Watters, D. E. (2002). Phonetics of Kokborok. Kreative Mind. Kolkata.
- Watters, D. E. (2010). *The Tibeto-Burman Languages of Nepal: A Phonological Analysis*. Brill. Leiden.
- Weinreich, U. (1953). *Languages in Contact.* Mouton Publishers. The Hague.
- Wright, S. (2014). *A Handbook of Phonetics: including a popular exposition of the principles of spelling reform.* Cambridge University Press. Cambridge.
- Yap, F. H. (2009). *Tonal Change and Neutralization.* John Benjamins Publishing. Amsterdam.
- Yeshi, K. (2017). *The Structure of Bodo: A Tibeto-Burman Language of Assam.* Indian Council of Social Science Research. Delhi.