

**A STUDY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF MIZO
LANGUAGE IN RELATION TO WORD FORMATION**

By
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled ‘**A Study of the Development of Mizo Language in Relation to Word Formation**’ submitted by R. Zothanliana for the award of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) in Mizo embodies the results of his investigation carried out under my supervision. To the best of my knowledge, the same has not been presented for the award of any degree elsewhere.

Therefore, I consider it worthy for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) in Mizo (Language and Literature) under Mizoram University

Aizawl
The 29th January, 2020

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DECLARATION

I, R. Zothanliana, hereby declare that the subject matter of this thesis is the record of the work done by me, that the contents of this thesis did not form basis of the award for any previous degree to me or to anybody else to the best of my knowledge, and that the thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University or Institute.

This is being submitted to Mizoram University for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Mizo.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Mizo

The Lushais or the Mizo, as they are now known, are a group of people who occupy the Lushai Hills, Southern Manipur, Chin Hills in Burma, the Chittagong Hill Tracts and some portions of Tripura and Cachar Hills in Assam. According to the Census of India 2011, Mizoram occupies an area of 21,087 sq km and has a population of 10.97 lakh. Literacy rate in Mizoram is 91.33% with a sex ratio of 976 females per 1000 males. Mizoram is a part of North East India and is linked to the Indian sub-continent through what is called as the ‘chicken neck’, the narrow corridor of Silliguri. The people living in the state of Mizoram are called Mizo and the language spoken by them as Mizo or Mizotawng (Mizo language), which is now the lingua franca of Mizoram. The people and the language were also referred to as Duhlian or Lushai which is dealt with later in the chapter.

L. Keivom says that ‘in the past, the Lushais were known variously according to the place they settle by the Colonial masters. In Manipur, Cachar Hills, Assam, Tripura and Bangladesh, they were called Kukis; in the Chin Hills of Burma, they were designated as Chins while those in the tracts between Tripura and the Chin Hills, towards the south of Manipur, the same people were known as the Lushais, and the Hills they occupied came to be known as the Lushai Hills’.

The Mizo or as Lewin says, “the ‘Dzo’ tribe inhabit the hilly country to the east of Chittagong district in lower Bengal” (1). According to Lewin, the Dzo are referred to as Kuki, which is a generic term given by the inhabitants of the plains like Bengalees and others, to all the hill-dwellers who cultivate Jum. However, to the people being referred to as, Kuki, the term Kuki is foreign. Lewin included all the hill tribes of the region who wear their hair in a knot resting on the nap of the neck under the term Dzo, and the people living further south and east of the Dzo as Poi, who wear the hair knotted upon the temple.

The term Kuki is said to have been derived from Baluchi, a language of the desert region of western Pakistan bounded by Iran, Afghanistan, and the Arabian Sea, where the word kuchi means ‘nomadic’ or ‘wandering’ (Gangte 142). In the published literature, the term Kuki first appeared in Rawlins (187) as “Cúci’s, or Mountainers of Tipra”. With the different spelling for Kukis by different writers, the name continued to be used by British administrators such as Lt.-Colonel J. Shakespear and C. A. Soppit to indicate the migrants into Manipur State, Naga Hills, and the North Cachar Hills of India. Although they admitted that the term was not recognized by the people themselves (Shakespear 2), they still used it as a cover term for all these people “who have so much in common, both in language, manners, customs, and system of internal government” (Soppit iv). According to Lorrain, “*hnahtlak*” actually translates to “descendants, the various clans of a single tribe”. Mizo is regarded as a word combining all its clans, sub-clans and

sub-sub-clans. Amongst these some do not know they are a part of Mizo, and there are others who know but would not consider themselves as one. So “Mizo hnahthlak” is the word that combines them all.

Even though the people living in Mizoram identify themselves as Mizo, there are some problems regarding the inclusion of tribes to come under the term Mizo. It has been argued whether it is more appropriate to use terms like Zo or Zomi instead of Mizo. However, Joy argues “that despite confusions over who constitute the Mizos, the Mizos rely on ‘cultural practice’ as the chief determinant of identity and as the boundary marker of identity” (11).

According to Grierson, the language spoken by the Mizo was put in Kuki-Chin group and classified it in the Burmese branch of the Tibeto-Burman family." (pp 3, 11). Mizo is a generic term used for the people living in present Mizoram. The Mizo society is said to have consisted of the Lusei, Lai, Hmar and Mara who live in Mizoram and all the other Zo tribes who are presently residing in Manipur, Assam and Tripura. Previously the Mizo were known as Kuki, Chin and Lushai by the outsiders. The Kuki, Chin and Lushai were of one homogenous race and this was recognised by J. Shakespear when he wrote, "There is no doubt that the Kukis, Chins and Lushais are all of one race". (8)

The Mizos are believed to be of Mongoloid origin and this was first described by T.H.Lewin in *Wild* (48), and this was supported by other Mizo writers like Liangkhaia in *Mizo* (1). This was believed to be true as the Mizo have all the features of Mongoloid races and the Mongolian patch: a purplish, triangular area of skin at the base of the spine of babies which disappear later as described by Hoebel (13)

Lewin, after comparing some words spoken by Dzo or Kuki and Nepalese, propounded a theory that the Dzo or Kuki people seem to sprung from the great Turanian stock of Central Asia and said is reasonable to consider the Lushai tribes, including the inhabitants of Manipoor (now Manipur) to have sprung from the same stock of the Gurkhas and other Himalayan tribe. His comparison of some of the most commonly used terms in Lushai, Burmese, Kumi, Thappa, Subah, Rao and Manipore are shown in Table No 1(Lewin 2).

Eng	Lushai	Burmese	Kumi	Thappa	Subah	Rao	Manipore
One	Pakat	Tit	Ngha	Kat	Htit	Kung	Ama
Two	Pahnit	Hnit	Hnu	Huis	Hne chi	Ni	Ani
Three	Pa-tum	Thun	Htum	Sum	Sum-tei	Sum	Ohum
Four	Pali	Li	Palu	Boli	Le-tai	Bali	Mari
Five	Pa-nga	Nga	Pau	Banga	Na-tai	Ru	Ma-nga
Hand	Kut	Lak	Ke-uk	mi-hut	Huk	La	Kut
Eye	Mit	Myetai	Me	mi-mik	Mik	Mik-shi	Mith
Sun	Ni	Ni	Kani	Na-khuu	Nam	Nepsung	Nung sha
Moon	Tla	La	Hlo	Giahut	Laba	Tlemu	Ta
Road	Lam	Lam	Lam	-	-	Lam	-
Fish	Nghah	Ngah	Ngo	-	-	Nga	-
Fire	Mei	Mi	Hmai	Me	Me	Mo	Mai
Hair	Tshum	Chynbang	Tcham	Mi-tsum	-	Tabem	Tshum

Table No. 1 – Most commonly used terms in Lushai, Burmese, Kumi, Thappa, Subah, Rao and Manipore collected by Lewin

Around 1890 – 1900, G.A. Grierson collected and studied various dialects of different tribes in and around India, among which the different dialects of the Mizo sub clan were also included. This study showed that there are similar words and terms used by these different tribes when it comes to referring parts of the body like eye, leg, hair, hand, nose and head. Common domestic and pet animals are also referred to using similar names. Even though different tribes living in

Mizoram, Manipur, Chin State, Tripura, Cachar and Chittagong Hill tract have little or no known contact with each other before the advent of the British, they still share similar terms as mentioned above which is quite remarkable.

G.A. Grierson writes,

The history of the Kuki-Chin tribes is only known from comparatively modern times. With the exception of the Meitheis, who have been settled in the Manipur valley for more than a thousand years, all the Kuki-Chin tribes appear to have lived in a nomadic state for some centuries. It would seem that they all settled in the Lushai and Chin Hills some time during the last two centuries, and this country may be considered as the place where their languages have developed their chief characteristics (2).

G.A. Grierson, in his *Linguistic Survey*, compared the first five numerals in Burmese, Tibetan and Lushei. Grierson considered Lushei as the best known Kuki-Chin language, but the reason for considering it as the best known among the Kuki-Chin group is not written by him. His comparison of the numerals from 1-5 as shown in Table No 2 (Grierson 2) however shows the similarities of the Lushei language with that of Burmese and Tibet. The spoken form of the Lushei is added which was a part of the exercises done by T.H. Lewin who wrote the spoken form of Lushei more than twenty years before the introduction of the written form by Lorrain and Savidge in 1894. Lewin's attempt has a much closer affinity with the

language as it is used today by the Mizos. In Table 2, the spoken form of the Mizo, written by Lewin is included to show the similarity or difference with the works done by Grierson in his *Surveys*.

English	Burma		Tibetan		Lushei	Spoken form (As written by Lewin)
	Written	Spoken	Written	Spoken		
One	Tach ta	Tit ta	Dchig	Chig	Khat	Pakat
Two	Nhach	Nhit	Duis	Ni	Nhieh	Pahnit
Three	Thum	Thun		Sum	Thum	Pa-tum
Four	Le	Le	Bzi	Zi	Li	Pali
Five	Nga	Nga	Loga	Nga	Nga	Pa-nga

Table No. 2 – Numerals from 1- 5 collected by Grierson with the numerals 1- 5 of the Lushei written by Lewin

The term Mizo was not used officially before 1900 which is shown by the writings on the Mizo. Sir Robert Reid, The Governor of Assam, in his book *The Lushai Hills* says that the Mizo “form a mingling of class, speaking so far as I know, dialects of the same language, who are known to us by various names – Kookis, Lushais, Pois, Shendus, Chins, etc”...(Reid 4). Alexander Mackenzie also confusedly and frequently referred to the group of people as “Kookis or Lushais”

whenever he spoke about the Lushais. The same cases apply with the other British writers as well.

The name, “Lushai” is in fact, a wrong transliteration of the word, Lusei, which originated from the term “Luce” says Lalthangliana (56). Sangkima (7) says that it was first used officially by Edgar, the then Deputy Commissioner of Cachar in 1871-72. Since then, the term was commonly in used to connote the tribes inhabiting the tract immediately to the south of Cachar in place of “Kukis”. It was changed to “Mizo” in 1954 when the Lushai Hills came to be called Mizo Hills and in 1972, Mizo Hills was again changed to Mizoram when it attained the status of a Union Territory (11).

In the census of 1901, there was no one named under the tribe Mizo, and the Mizo language as it is named now was not to be seen spoken by anyone. People living in Mizoram are taking on the names of their clans and tribes and register themselves under different names like Paite, Ralte, Lusei, etc. However, it can be seen from Table No 3, a comparison of the 1901 and 1961 census done by Liangkhaia (20), that those who call themselves as Lusei, Paite and Ralte in the 1901 census are no longer seen in the 1961 census and have all come under the term Mizo. These different clans and tribes have their own dialects, which, eventhough are very much related to each other have differences. However, the most popular language as of now is Mizo.

Tribe	1901 Census	1961 Census
Hmar	10,411	3,118
Lusei	36,332	-
Mizo	-	2,13,061
Paite	2,870	-
Pawi	15,038	4,587
Ralte	13,827	-

Table No. 3 – Comparison of 1901 and 1961 census

1.2 Mizoꠞawng: The language

The coming of the Arthington Mission to Mizoram and the first missionaries can be seen as one of the most important landmarks in the progress of the language. Even though attempts have been made to put Mizo into writing before the arrival of the Missionaries, they were done using the English alphabet and there is no formal method

Chhangte writes,

Mizo, formerly known as Lushai, is the language of the Indian state of Mizoram in North-East India. It is also spoken in adjacent states such as Manipur and Tripura, and by a smaller numbers in Burma and Bangladesh. It is a Tibeto-Burman language, in the Central subgroup of the Kukish or Kuki-Chin branch (93).

The language spoken by the Mizo is now known and accepted as Mizo or Mizoꠞawng. However, it has been referred to differently by the speaker themselves and people who write on the subject.

Grierson (127-128), following the statement taken from Mr. Davis, Gazetteer of the North Lushai Hills writes

“The term Lushei, though known to the people living in the Lushai Hills, is not, however, used in the general sense in which we are accustomed to employ it, and is really used as a name for only one of the many clans or

sects who speak what is known among the people themselves as the ‘Dulien Tong’ or ‘Dulien language’.

Pachau writes,

The language of the Mizos of the same name, formerly called Duhlian or Lushai, belongs to the Tibeto-Burman Group and is further classified as belonging to the Central-Kuki-Chin sub-group... For various reasons, the Duhlian language gained predominance in the region and is now the lingua franca of the state (now, however known as Mizo) besides being the official language alongside English (8)

Tibeto-Burman is generally regarded as a member of Sino-Tibetan family. Most of the classifications done on Tibeto-Burman are based on their genetic relationship, in which the languages so classified are claimed to have descended from a single ancestral language, Tibeto-Burman. Tibeto-Burman is one of the four language families of India. The other three are Indo-Aryan, Dravidian and Austro-Asiatic. Grierson observes that Tibeto-Burman languages stand out as a distinct family as compared with Tai and Chinese (Grierson 5).

B. Lalthangliana states that the Mizo language belongs to the Assam-Burma branch of the Tibeto-Burmese family of languages. The Mizo language formerly known as Lushei, or Lushai or Duhlian as sometimes called by the tribesmen themselves, belongs to the Kuki-Chin group of languages of the Assam

Burman section of the Tibeto-Burmans, the Kuki-Chin group is an important branch to which the Mizo belongs. Thus the Mizo language belongs to the family of languages of the Assam-Burma branch of the Tibeto-Burman group of the Tibeto-Chinese race. The mode of their language in general, follows the Object+Subject+Verb sentence structure or OSV in short and is usually monosyllabic.

Robert Shafer made an attempt to subgroup the Sino-Tibetan family based on the linguistic data collected at the University of California, Berkeley, for the project Sino - Tibetan Linguistics in the late 1930's and early 1940's. This is a significant attempt for the Mizo language. Shafer divided the Kukish group into five branches:

- (1) Southern, including Lakher, Old Kuki, Langet, and Meithei
- (2) Central, with three sub-divisions: Lushai, Kapwi, Haka/Lai. The remaining branches have only one language each:
- (3) Northern (Mikir);
- (4) Western (Luhupa), and
- (5) Eastern (N. Naga).

In this division, Mizo is included in the Central group under the name Lushai. Shaper then divided the Lushai group into Bom, Dulien, Zahao, Hmar and Pangkho. (Vanbik 7). The term Dulien or Duhlian is used synonymously by Pachuau in her book '*Being Mizo*' and it is also done by other writers like Lewin,

Shakespear, etc. It is understood that Lusei, Lushai, Duliem or Duhlian are used synonymously.

Kenneth Vanbik set up three subgroups for Kuki-Chin languages: Peripheral (Northern and Southern-Plains), Central, and Maraic. Mizo comes under the Central group and under the Mizo group comes Lushai and Hmar. The groupings can be seen from the table that follows

PROTO-KUKI-CHIN											
Peripheral				Central					Maraic		
North		South		L.Thet	Lai		Mizo		Mara	Zotung	Senthang
Thado	Sizang	Khumi	Cho-Asho		Hakha	Falam	Lushai	Hmar			

Table 4 – Branches of Proto-Kuki-Chin languages

B. Lalthangliana says that the ancestors of the Mizos were quite developed in their day-to-day living during their stay at Kawlphai. The reason could be that they were living in harmony with the Burmese. They lived in close quarters with each other and the result could be seen from numerous similar dialects such as darkhuang, darbu and darmang, and they even share same games played by children. The Meitei being a part of Tibeto Burman share some similar dialects with the Mizo and more similarities can be found between Burmese and Meitei dialect while the Burmese and Mizo dialect are closely related too

The Mizo clan, sub clan and sub-sub clan lived together at Kawlphai and were believed to be using the same dialect. This conclusion can be based on evidences seen from shared myths, fairy tales, legends and folktales, poetical words and chants (Hlado, bawhhla, etc). Even though the different groups are using different dialects which in many ways is similar to each other, it is a, undeniable prove that at one point of time in history they had indeed shared a common dialect.

Lalzama writes,

In Mizoram, there were various sub-tribes like the Lushei, the Hmar, the Ralte, the Paihte, the Pawi, the Hualngo, etc., having different dialects of their own. Of these sub-tribes the Lushei which further consisted of many other clans was in absolutely majority. Most of the chiefs belonged to this group and dominated the majority of the whole people. For this reason the Lushei dialect (also called Duhlian dialect) became the lingua franca of the land (35)

Before the British Empire came to the state, the ruling of the Sailo chieftains had been considered very effective for they brought uniformity in the administration of the state by bringing the different chiefs under their rule. The uniformity in the rule of the state in turn led to the uniformity of the dialects and even a brotherhood between the clans and sub-clans. Tribes other than Lushai like Fanai, Paihte, Pawi, etc., also have their own chiefs who ruled on their own and

use their own dialects. However, as can be seen from the writings of Lalzama mentioned earlier, the Sailo chiefs became more powerful than the other chiefs, which in turn led to the Duhlian dialect widely used by them survived as the lingua-franca in Mizoram.

With the evolution of the Sailo chiefs as the most successful rulers in the area, the other tribes, living in their village has to follow the language used by the ruler. The Duhlian dialect was used as a means of communication inside the village, used by the chiefs and elders of the village and announcements coming from the *tlangau* (village crier) were also in the language used by the chief and the village elders. Thus, it has become necessary for other dialect users to follow and use the most popular dialects which is very much similar to their own dialects. This could be seen as the reason for the progress of the Duhlian dialect in Mizoram.

B. Lalthangliana, who traces the development of Mizo as a renowned historian writes,

Kum 1927-a Pu R. Buchhawna rawt angin, 1930 aṭangin Calcutta

University chuan Mizo ṭawng hi Matric-a vernacular pakhatah a pawm a.

Kum 1962-ah Guwahati University chuan B.A. thleng a pawm bawk a. Kum

1974-a din NEHU (North Eastern Hill University) chuan P.U. (Pre-

University Course) leh B.A.-ah Modern Indian Language (MIL) subject

pakhatah a pawm nghal a, kum 1984 aṭangin Elective subject-ah, kum 1993

aṭangin 'Honour'-ah, kum 1994 aṭangin M.A. (Mizo)-ah, kum 1997 aṭang phei chuan Ph.D.-ah hial zir a lo ni ta. Manipur University pawhin B.A. thlengin an zir ve a ni. (As suggested by R. Buchhawna in 1927, Calcutta University accepted Mizo language as a vernacular for matriculation in the year 1930. Guwahati University accepted it for B.A. in the year 1962. NEHU, established in 1974 accepted it as Modern Indian Language subject for P.U. and B.A. It was accepted as elective subject in 1984, as honours subject in 1993, MA in Mizo in 1994 and to Ph.D. in 1997. Manipur University also offers it till BA. My trans.) (34).

This small information shows the development and progress of Mizo from an unwritten language, which has been handed over from generations to generations orally, to becoming a language to be studied formally at different institutions.

Laltluangliana Khiangte describes in detail, the development of Mizo by giving more accurate facts. According to him,

Calcutta University included Lushai into its Matriculation course in 1930 as 'Lushai', and Guwahati University started Lushai vernacular in 1961-62 for Intermediate Arts. With the establishment of NEHU in 1973-74, Lushai was included as one paper under Modern Indian Languages and the name Lushai was changed to Mizo by 1972. By 1983, Mizo was a full paper to be taken as one among the electives and in 1993, Mizo Honours/Major was started at Pachhunga University College. Mizo was

introduced at the Masters level under NEHU in 1997-98 session and the establishment of Mizoram University in 2001 saw the setting up of Mizo Department as one of the different departments under the newly established university. By July, 2011, the first batch of M.Phil and PhD course work students are admitted (3-4)

1.3. Mizo Alphabet

Prior to the advent of the Christian Missionaries in the Lushai Hills, the language was only in the spoken form. Oral method was used for communication and different customs, practices, stories and folktales were handed down from one generation to the next orally. According to Khiantge, the pioneer Missionaries – J.H.Lorrain and F.W. Savidge- who reached Aizawl on 11th January, 1894, developed an alphabet for the language and finished it by 1st April, 1894 and started teaching local chiefs reading and writing (104). In *Mizo Chanchin*, B. Lalthangliana, citing from the writings of Suaka, who was one of the first two students of the missionaries, presents the initial letters or alphabet developed by the pioneer missionaries. The alphabets are:

A	a	b	d	e	f
g	h	i	j	k	l
m	n	o	p	r	s
t	ṭ	u	v	z	ch

‘A’, the first letter is to be pronounced like the ‘aw’ of the present alphabet. ‘ṭ’ is to be pronounced as /ṭhrə:/ and ‘j’ as /tʃei/. (211)

Lalhruaitluanga Ralte said that the first written form of Mizo can be seen in a book written by T.H. Lewin which was published in 1869. The book is *The Hill Tracts of Chittagong and the Dwellers Therein; With Comparative Vocabulary of the Hill Dialects*. In this book, Lewin had written 186 Mizo word and made a comparison of the different dialects spoken by the different tribes. Lewin, in his other book, *A Fly*

on the Wheel, mentioned that Lorrain and Savidge used *The Hill Tracts* to learn Mizo while staying at Chittagong in January, 1892 (207).

Even though this book could be regarded as the first attempt in writing Mizo, Lewin's other book, *Progressive Colloquial Exercises in the Lushai Dialect of the Dzo or Kuki Language with Vocabularies and Popular Tales* published in 1874 which includes exercises for daily conversation, three important folktales and a large collection of English-Mizo vocabulary translation, is an attempt made on a larger scale in writing Mizo.

The Mizo alphabet comprises 25 (twenty five) letters which are English/Romanic in form. Only one letter Ṭ/ṭ (capital/small letter) is written with a subscript (.) which is a departure from the English tradition. The letters have small and capital shapes (written and printed) - following the English writing convention. Three letters, AW, CH and NG are a cluster of two letters combined together where CH is the only letter among the three which is included by the pioneer missionaries when they introduced the Mizo alphabet.

At present, the 25 letters - Capital and small - used for writing Mizo are:

A/a	Aw/aw	B/b	Ch/ch	D/d	E/e
F/f	G/g	Ng/ng	H/h	I/i	J/j
K/k	L/l	M/m	N/n	O/o	P/p
R/r	S/s	T/t	Ṭ/ṭ	U/u	V/v
Z/z					

Lorrain, and Savidge, the two pioneer missionaries, in *Dictionary of the Lushai Language*, published in 1898, describe the Lushai alphabet as follows:

The Lushai alphabet consists of the following letters

Alphabet.	Pronunciation.
A/a	like u in the English word sun.
Â/â	like a in the English word father.
Aw /aw	like aw in the English word awl
B/b	as in English.
Ch/ ch	like ch in the English word chop,
D /d	as In English.
E/e	like e in the English word tell,
Ê/ê	like the first e in the English word there.
F/f	as in English.
G/g	used as an initial letter only In foreign words, when it Is pronounced like the g In the English word gun. In Lushai words it is always preceded by n, then ng is pronounced like the ng in the English word sing. Ng is often used at the beginning of a word in Lushai.

H /h	like h In the English word home. When h is placed at the end of a syllable or word, it denotes that the preceding vowel sound must be abruptly shortened.
I /i	like i In the English word sit.
Î /î	like i in the English word police
J /j	as in English (used only in foreign words).
K/L/M/N	as in English
O/o	like in the English word pot.
Ô/ô	like in the English word dome.
P/p	as in English.
R/r	like r in the English word rock (this letter is never mute).
S/s	as in English.
T/t	pronounced with the tip of the tongue touching the teeth
Ṭ/ṭ	pronounced with the tongue against the bars of the roof of the mouth.
U/u	like u in the English word full.
Û/û	like u in the English word rule.

V/v as in English.

Z/z sometimes as in English, and sometimes like the 'z' in the English word pleasure. (1 – 2)

The letters of the Mizo alphabet can be represented by the corresponding phoneme with the International Phonetic Alphabet which is used for describing the mode of production and the place of articulation as follows:

Letter of the alphabet (Capital and Small)	Phoneme	
	Voiced/Short	Voiceless/Long
A/a	/a/ as in Mizo rang (quick)	/a:/ as in Mizo sang (tall)
Aw/aw	/ɔ/ as in pot/pawl (blue)	/ɔ:/ as in pawl(copulate)
B/b	/b/ as in English	
Ch/ch	/ch/ as in Mizo 'chaw' which is an affricate	When 'ch' is coupled with another h 'chh' it sounds like the /ɕ/ in Chinese 'xi'
D/d	/d/ as in English	
E/e	/e/ as in English tell	/e:/ as in Mizo kel (goat)
F/f	/f/ as in English	
G/g	/g/ used only for foreign words which is voiced velar stop	
Ng/ng	/ŋ/ as in English voiced	/ŋh/ velar nasal when /ŋ/ occurs at

		initial position
H/h	/h/ as in English. /h/ at word final is a glottal stop	
I/i	/ɪ/ as in English <i>sit</i>	/i:/ as <i>seat</i> in English.
J/j	/z/ used only for foreign words	
K/k	/k/ as in <i>cap</i>	/kh/ as in <u>K</u> ing (aspirated)
L/l	/l/ as in <i>lap</i> (voiced)	/lh/ as in Mizo <i>hlen</i> (voiceless)
M/m	/m/ as in English <i>man</i>	/mh/ as in Mizo <i>hma</i>
N/n	/n/ as in English <i>nose</i>	/nh/ as in Mizo <i>hnai</i>
O/o	/oʊ/ as in English <i>dome</i>	
P/p	/p/ as in English <i>pun</i>	/ph/ as in English <i>pin</i> (aspirated)
R/r	/r/ as in English <i>ran</i>	/hr/ as in Mizo <i>hruai</i>
S/s	/s/ as in English <i>sin</i>	
T/t	/t/ as in Hindi <i>table</i>	/th/ as an aspirated /t/ in <i>tin</i>
Ṭ/ṭ	Symbol is not formulated. /ṭh/ becomes aspirated	
U/u	/u/ as in <i>pull</i>	/u:/ as in <i>rule</i> in English
V/v	/v/ as in English	
Z/z	/z/ as in English	

Table 5 – Mizo letters of the alphabet and their corresponding phonemes

Description of the Alphabets

The Vowels:

A/a	/ʌ/ mid central unrounded short vowel
	/ɑ:/ long low back unrounded long vowel
Aw/aw	/ɒ/ low back rounded short vowel
	/ɔ:/ Open-Mid Back Rounded long vowel
E/e	/ɛ/ mid front unrounded short vowel
	/e:/ mid front unrounded long vowel
I/i	/ɪ/ high front unrounded short vowel
	/i:/ high front unrounded long vowel.
O/o	/oʊ/ mid back rounded diphthong
U/u	/ʊ/ high back rounded short vowel
	/u:/ high back rounded long vowel

The Consonants:

B/b	/b/ bilabial plosive
Ch/ch	/tʃ/ voiced alveolar fricative
	/ç/ voiceless alveolar palatal fricative
D/d	/d/ voiced alveolar stop
F/f	/f/ voiceless labiodental fricative
G/g	/g/ voiced velar stop
Ng/ng	/ŋ/ 'voiced velar nasal'
H/h	/h/ 'voiceless glottal fricative'
	/ʔ/ 'glottal stop'

J/j	/dʒ/	voiced palatal affricate
K/k	/k/	'voiceless unaspirated velar stop'
L/l	/l/	'voiced alveolar lateral liquid'
M/m	/m/	'voiced bilabial nasal'
N/n	/n/	'voiced alveolar nasal'
P/p	/p/	'voiceless unaspirated bilabial stop'
R/r	/r/	'voiced alveolar trill'
S/s	/s/	'voiceless alveolar fricative'
T/t	/t/	'voiceless dental stop'
T̥/t̥	/t̥/	'voiceless alveolar stop'
V/v	/v/	'voiced labiodental fricative'
Z/z	/z/	'voiced alveolar fricative'

It must be noted that Mizo has voiceless nasal sounds which is a special character of the Tibeto Burman language family. Mizo nasal sounds, /m/, /n/ and /ŋ/, are all voiced sounds but when coupled with /h/ become voiceless.

Examples are:

Hma	-	/mha/	-	Front, early
Hnai	-	/nhai/	-	Near
Nghak	-	/nghak/	-	to wait

Mizo has diphthong and triphthong too

Mizo diphthongs are

eu - keu, reu, etc

ia - ria, nia, hria, etc

ai - lai, mai, hnai, etc

ei - sei, lei, rei, etc

ua - lua, rua, duat, hmuar, etc

awi - mawi, sawi, kawi, etc

Triphthongs are:

iai, uai and uau - Ziai, zuai, piai, puau, biai buai, etc

1.4. Mizo: An agglutinative language

Languages that apply agglutination extensively are called agglutinative languages and Mizo could be included among the agglutinative languages. An agglutinative language is a kind of language where words with new meanings are formed by a combination of different morphemes and if these morphemes are taken in isolation, they can stand as an independent morpheme.

Dictionary of Linguistics defines agglutinative language as

A language which combines into a single word various linguistic elements, each of which has a distinct, fixed connotation and a separate existence (8)

Mizo can be included among the agglutinative languages because it follows the process of agglutination by combining different morphemes into a single word while each single morpheme retains its meaning and pronunciation. Let us take a look at the following examples:

Kekawrtlawn - Ke (Leg), kawr (shirt) tlawn (full) – Long pants

darthlalang – dar (copper), thla (image), lang (that can be seen) - mirror

There can be several examples like Inbihruksiak (hide and seek), inngaitlawm (being humble), hmaithinghawn (mask), khawngaihthlak (piteous), lekhathawn (letter), lekhachaih (kite), maimitchhing (to close the eye), etc

1.5. Limitations of the study

Mizo being a tonal language, it is sometimes difficult to find the correct and most accurate tones or pronunciation for a particular word or phrase as the language has its different varieties which are still commonly used. Even though the speakers in the state of Mizoram use a somewhat common terms and tones, there are speakers using the Hmar, Lai and Mara dialects which all are coming under the Kuki-Chin dialect of the Tibeto-Burman family. At the same time, there are speakers of Mizo living in Tripura, Manipur, Myanmar and other neighbouring areas. All these and other factors led to the differences in tones, syntax, semantics and morphology. So, for this study, Mizo, as it is used in Mizoram at present is taken.

Mizo words pointed out as reference and examples for this particular study are not marked with any diacritical markings or tone markers to indicate the vowel length. This could come as a barrier for a non-native speaker as it is difficult to grasp the actual meaning of the word as the tone and the vowel length can alter the meaning of a word. There is not a standard and accepted diacritical marking system for Mizo to be used. This is why marks are not used in this study.

With regards to the use of the language in Mizoram, there are instances of disparity in tone, syntax, semantics, etc due to regional variation, but these variations are negligible and it can be said that people understood each other when they use the language even though they belong to different speaking areas. For instance, the language used in the north has a small difference with that of the language used in the south, east or the ones used in regions outside of Mizoram

like Tripura, Manipur, Nagaland, Assam, Myanmar, etc. The major difference is in the tone and also a small difference in the meaning of words and phrases.

One of the major predicaments when it comes to studying and using the Mizo language is the absence of authority, especially, with regards to writing. The Mizo Language Committee (MLC), constituted by the Mizoram Board of School Education (MBSE) is trying to develop a standard structure of the language to be used in spoken and written form. However, the influence of the MLC is yet to reach the general population since it is still limited to educational institutions. For instance, the MLC is trying to recognize word according to its function and character. The suggestion of the MLC is being followed by most of the educational institutions but is still not being read widely enough by the public so as to have a standard language developed among the speakers.

One of the biggest dilemmas faced by a Mizo user is the identification of the character of a word. Whether a word is to be regarded as an affix or not, whether it is to be written together with what precedes or follows so as to form a compound word, or whether it is to be written separately as a single morpheme is the problem most speakers faced, especially, when it comes to writing. Students, from elementary school even up to the University level are facing this problem of joining or not joining words with other words. For example, the MLC has advocated that comparative and superlative degree suffixes, *zawk* and *ber* are not to be affixed to the root they described but to be written separately. However, to let them stand alone as a different word does not seem to make sense because they

are to be attached to the root that they altered. So, in this study, they are affixed to the stem with a hyphen and written as *lian-zawk* (bigger) and *lian-ber* (biggest)

Since the study is a qualitative study, the different characteristics of a research are absent in this particular study. This, on the other hand, makes it hard to draw a conclusion because the study does not pose a question and it does not bring up arguments or hypotheses to be proven during the course of the study. So, findings and conclusions, which are the most important segment of a research has become the smallest part in this study. However, it must be noted that each chapter has its own findings and conclusions because the different methods and processes of word formation, which is the main focus of this study, is dealt with in other chapters by giving several examples to explain and highlight the different manners in which words are formed.

Theories on language formation are read and an attempt was made to have theoretical groundings for this research. Language formation model and the three principles given by Hockett has been read and studied. Theories given by Nida, Bloomfield, Chomsky, Sapir, P.H. Mathews and other linguists have also been taken up during the study. However, this study does not aim to take up word formation process from any particular approach; thus, the theories propounded by the above mentioned names are not included in the thesis and the study is not based on any particular framework. This is one of the limitations of the study.

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Chapter 2

Review of Related Literature

2.1. Works on Mizo

There are a number of works done on Mizo by different authors. Many of the works and books that have been written on Mizo are about the culture and the society and those that have dealt with the language, are concerned mainly with grammar and correct usage. Even though the first Lower primary Examination in Mizo was held way back in June, 1903 (Lalzama 105), a formal study of the language came late.

One of the first known works on Mizo is the book written by Capt. T.H. Lewin, Superintendent of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The book *Progressive Colloquial Exercises in the Lushai Dialect on the 'Dzo' or Kuki Language*, published in 1874, can be regarded as one of the most significant attempts made to write Mizo. Lewin made an attempt to write the Mizo language using English letter and herepresented the spoken form of Mizo into a written form using the English alphabet. Since there was no written form of Mizo before 1894, it is fair to assume that Lewin wrote from what is being said to him and from the sound he heard by talking to the people. He collected stories by listening to them, and he recorded daily conversations with the Mizos which are written down in his *Exercise*. His attempt to put Mizo stories into writing and translation of popular phrases and conversations

into English is much appreciated. Through his work, it is possible to know how the language was spoken, pronounced, different words and the meaning associated with them and how it was actually used for communication even before the development of writing and his work has given the Mizo an opportunity to study the development of the Mizo language.

Lewin also wrote *Wild Races of South Eastern India* (1870) which deals with his encounters of the different tribes while he was serving in India. The growth and development of Mizo as a tribe, their settlement in the area now known as Mizoram and other adjoining places, the customs and practices, their relationship with other tribes in the nearby areas, etc were also mentioned in this book under the chapter, “The Lhoosai, or Kookies” (pp 246-280). Another book by Lewin, *A Fly on the Wheel*(1912), is also about his adventure in different parts of India, and his expedition to the Lushai Hill, 1871-1872 is recorded in the book under Chapter - XII (pp 255 – 290).

Another work by Lewin is *The Hill Tracts of Chittagong and the Dwellers Therein; With Comparative Vocabularies of the Hill Dialects* printed in Calcutta: Bengal Printing Company, Limited and published in 1869. This, according to the date of publication seems to be the first effort given towards writing the Mizo language. Lewin compared Lhoosai (Koukie) which is now known as Mizo with other languages spoken in the nearby area like Mru, Khyeng, Bunjogi, Pankho Tipperah, Mrung, Kumi and Shendu

R.G. Woodthorpe wrote *The Lushai Expedition 1871 – 1872* which was published in 1873. This is an account of his venture in the Lushai Hills (now Mizoram) as an engineer under the British Army. Woodthorpe recorded in details of his undertaking and his encounter with the different chiefs and villages that he came across during the expedition. It is a good record of the different customs and practices of the Mizo or, the Lushai, as they were known then.

Influenced by Lewin's *Exercise in the Lushai Language*, and from the foundation laid by him, Assistant Surgeon, Brojo Nath Shaha, in 1884, brought out *A Grammar of the Lushai Language*. This 93 page book contains a grammar portion with orthography, etymology and syntax dealt with. It also includes *A few Illustrations of the Zau, Lushai Popular Songs and Translations from Aesop's Fables*. The book was printed at The Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcutta. Lalzama states that the two books mentioned above, Lewin's *Exercise* and Dhaha's *Grammar* were very useful for the two Arthington missionaries, Lorrain and Savidge, for learning Mizo when they reached Mizoram in January, 1894 (50)

C.A. Soppit, Assistant Commissioner, Burma wrote *A Short Account of the Kuki-Lushai Tribes on the North East Frontier* which was printed at the Assam Secretariat Press and published in 1887. This book records the customs and history of the Kuki-Lushai tribe and it is an important study.

R.H. Sneyd Hutchinson who was a Superintendent of the South Lushai Hills, published *Vocabulary of the Lushai Language* in 1897 printed at the Bengal Secretariat Press. This can be seen as a small dictionary with 1472 Mizo words

translated into English and the numerical numbers from 1 to 100,000 being recorded. This book can be regarded as the first dictionary.

Lt. Colonel J. Shakespear wrote *The Lushei Kuki Clans* which was *Published under the orders of the Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam* with illustration and map. It was published by MacMillan and Co. Ltd, St Martin's Street, London in 1912. The book deals with folklore, religion, relationship of different clans, laws, customs, different practices and more importantly for a student of language, Chapter – VI is dedicated to language.

Alexander Mackenzie is among the earliest officers who extensively deal with tribal raids and Colonial policies upon the eastern frontier tribes including the Lushais. In his work, "History of the Relations of the Government with the Hill Tribes of the North-East Frontier of Bengal" published as early as in 1884 and later on reproduced as "The North East Frontier of India", describes the "Lushai or Kookie tribes" in a separate chapter. Briefly depicting about the tribes, he narrated a series of frontier raids in succession since 1844. He emphasised on punitive measures of the Government from Blackwood Expeditions to the Expedition of 1871-72. However, his narration lasted till 1884 and one has to depend on other authorities beyond this history since he published his work within the year. The whole work is not exclusively about the relations of the British and Lushai but also with many other tribes. Nonetheless, it gives us valuable information on the subject to a great extent.

Linguistic Survey of India by G.A. Grierson in different volumes and parts are another important work and are used as a point of reference by Mizo scholars and researchers. In Vol III, Part III, Grierson made an in-depth study of the Tibeto-Burman family. He took specimens of the Kuki-Chin and Burma Group to show the similarities of the members of the Tibeto-Burman family of languages. In Vol III, Part III, Grierson writes that “the denomination Kuki-Chin is a purely conventional one, there being no proper name comprising all these tribes” (1). He said that the terms Kuki and Chin are synonymous and are used for referring the different hill tribes of which the Lusheis or the Mizos are a part.

Grierson recorded more than 10,000 speakers of the Lushei language at the time of his survey which comes under Vol III, Part III of the different volumes that he published for different languages in India. In this particular volume, he recorded the number of speakers of different language (2). He included Lushei into the Central Chin sub group of the Kuki-Chin group which is a part of the Tibeto-Burman family. He started out by giving a brief introduction of the people and their habitat followed by the section on the phonology of the languages

J. Herbert Lorrain and Fred W. Savidge, both missionaries sent by The Arthington Aborigines Mission reached Mizoram on the 11th of January, 1894. They have made an impressive contribution by learning the local language from the writings of Lewin and Nath and by developing the Mizo alphabet using the Roman script which came out in March 1894 (Lalzama, 100). They started the first school in Mizoram and gave importance not only to mission works but also to education and

the development of the language. They translated the Bible, translated and composed songs in Mizo and developed a primer for the first Mizo school students who are mostly village chiefs. Lorrain made an important contribution by producing a comprehensive dictionary entitled *A Grammar and Dictionary of the Lushai Language (Dulien Dialect)*. The 364 page dictionary was printed at the Assam Secretariat Printing office and published in 1898 in Shillong. The book is divided into four parts, namely:

1. Part I – Grammar (Pages 1-35)
2. Part II – Useful Sentences (Pg 36-53)
3. Part III – Dictionary – Lushai – English (Pg 54-232)
4. Part IV – Dictionary – English – Lushai (Pg 233-346)

Grace R. Lewis recorded the Mission activities of the missionaries in Mizoram in the book entitled *The Lushai Hills: The Story of the Lushai Pioneer Mission* (1907). The 80 page book gives an account of the missionary works among which the shifting of the language from oral to written form with the development of the Mizo alphabet and the starting of formal school in the area is of great importance. The missionaries are real pioneers in different areas other than spreading the gospel. For the improvement in education, study materials like Mizo Zir Tirna Bu (1895) which was revised as Zirṭanbu (1896) and others were developed by the missionaries, Bible and songs were translated into Mizo which is a great contribution for the escalation of Mizo as a lingua franca in the area

Sir Robert Reid, Governor of Assam, 1937 – 1942 wrote *The Lushai Hills: Culled From History of the Frontier Areas Bordering on Assam From 1883 – 1941* and was published in 1942. This book is another account of the expeditions during 1888 – 1890. It records the administrative development in the Lushai Hills and the formation of The Lushai Hills District with The Constitution Act of 1935.

The recently (2017) published *People's Linguistic Survey of India, Vol. 20, Part 2: The Languages of Mizoram* edited by Dr. Lalnunthangi Chhangte and written by many Mizo authors records:

Another important work in the Mizo language at that time was the first Mizo newspaper called “Mizo Chanchin Laishuih” which was started in 1898. It was a handwritten newspaper covering local news and government orders.

Another newspaper, “Mizo leh Vai Chanchin Lehkhabu” was started by Col. J. Shakespear...in 1900. Surprisingly, the contributors of the first issue of the newspapers were three educated kings. This was followed by a number of newspapers and journals such as ‘Kristian Tlangau’ (1911), ‘Sipai Tlangau’ (1931), ‘Tlawmngaihna’ (1934), ‘Kohhran Beng’ (1947), ‘LSA Chanchinbu’ (1938), ‘Tun Hapta Kar Chanchin’ (1939) and many others (13)

William Bright has written on Lushai by contributing articles like “Singing in Lushai” (1955), “Alternation in Lushai” (1957) and “An English – Lushai Word List” (1964)

K. Zawla published ‘*Mizo Ṭawng Grammar*’ in 1969 which is among the earliest works dealing with Mizo language. K. Zawla describes Mizo grammar from the perspective of English grammar by highlighting the different parts of speech in

Mizo. He gives a detailed description of the different phrases used for different occasions, terms used for comparison, idioms and phrases, poetical words in Mizo, correct usages and writing, etc. *Mizo Pipute leh an Thlahte Chanchin* (1964), written by K. Zawla is done from a historical point of view describing the Mizo ancestors and the practices of the Mizo. This is another important and useful contribution made by K. Zawla in studying the language of the Mizo

V.L. Siama, a historian published '*Mizo History*' in 1963 wherein he said that '*Mizo is comprised of different tribes grouped together and so, there are different languages spoken. Among the different languages, Lusei has become the most popular and most widely used*' (189)

J.F. Laldailova compiled a dictionary which is among the most popular and widely used dictionary in Mizo. The dictionary entitled *English-Lushai Dictionary* is used by many students as their first encounter with the English language, which is regarded as the second language in Mizoram.

James Dokhuma, one of the most celebrated writers among the Mizo is another contributor in the field of language study. Apart from his many novels, his books on language and history like *Tawng Un Hrilhfhiahna* (1987), *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung* (1992) and *Mizo Tawng Kalphung* (2006) are among the most useful books in studying the Mizo language

Rev. Dr. Zairema started writing articles and essays from 1940. Being the first B.Sc and B.D among the Mizos, his writings are highly appreciated. His contribution towards the growth and development Mizo language is triggered by his involvement in translating the Bible into Mizo. He felt the need for introducing tone

markers to guide readers of the Bible in order to help them use the correct tone and pronounced the tones correctly as Mizo is a tonal language. In his *Thukhawchang Mi Pekte Hi* (2009), he included one chapter (pg 493 – 588) which deals with his writings on Mizo language.

B. Lalthangliana, a historian coming to Mizoram after a long stay in Burma has contributed a lot towards the study of Mizo with regards to the origin, history and the development of language. He has contributed to different journals on different issues and subjects, and one of his most important works on the study of language is *Zotawng Bulpui leh A Hmanna* (2002)

Laltluangliana Khiangte, a professor at Mizoram University is one of the most hard-working and important contributors towards the development of Mizo language. His immense contribution in different genre like drama, novel, poetry, language and other fields are highly appreciated. It is a complex task to get a record of all his published works because of the large number of publications under his name. However, to make things easy, he himself has published *Lehkhabu Albam* (*Album of Books*) to commemorate the 25th anniversary of his first publication in 2017. The book records his published work, edited work, review of books, articles written, study aid, booklet, translation, etc.

Lalnunthangi Chhange holds a PhD in Linguistics and specializes in Tibeto-Burman languages. Her works like “A Preliminary Grammar of Mizo” (1986), “Complementation in Mizo” (1989), “The Grammar of Simple Clauses in Mizo” (1989), “Mizo Syntax” (1993), “Why Mizo is Classified as a Tibeto-Burman

Language” (2010) are invaluable and are used as a point of reference by students and researchers for studying Mizo.

Lalrindiki T. Fanai, with her M.Litt dissertation, “Some Aspects of the Autosegmental Phonology of English and Mizo”(1989)submitted to CIEFL, Hyderabad, India and herPhD. dissertation, “Some Aspects of the Lexical Phonology of Mizo and English: An Autosegmental Approach” (1992) and other articles contributed to different journals and books, has contributed towards the study of Mizo phonology which is one of the untouched areas in the study of Mizo. She has also identified four tones and tone markers in Mizo

Zoṭawng Hman Dan Dik (2000) - Rozama Chawngthu, *Mizo Ṭawng Chikna* (2001) – Ralluail Chhangte, *Zoṭawng Formula* (2005) – Rev. Z.T Sangkhuma, *Mizo Ṭawng Chhuina* (2012) - C. Chhuanvawra, *Mizo Ṭawng Zirzauna Bu Thar* (2012) – MILLTA, *Zoṭawng Nihphung, Dinmun leh Hmathlir* (2013) – Dr. Zoramdinthara and H. Laldinmawia (Eds), *MizoṬawng: Grammar and Composition* (2016) – Lalzarzova Kiangte, *Mizo Language and Literature* (2017) – Dr. Lalzama, and others, are some of the works on the study of Mizo language

There are a number of organizations contributing towards the development of Mizo language. Some of the most prominent ones are Mizo Academy of Letters (MAL), ZOPPEN Club, Mizo Literature and Language Teacher Academy (MILLTA), Mizo Department of different colleges and Mizo Department of Mizoram University and Mizoram Board of School Education (MBSE). MBSE is an apex body of the government and has contributed towards the development of the language. Mizo Language Committee (MLC), constituted by the Board has

contributed in areas like grammar, punctuation, and different forms of writing. The MLC is beginning to have an influence on speakers of the language who are beginning to consider the Committee to have authority in matters relating to the correct usage of the Mizo language in Mizoram

2.2. Word Formation Process

Words can be formed or expanded by various morphological processes possible in a language. There are certain specific word formation processes or morphological processes which convert a morpheme into a word in a language. There are many patterns of word formation processes used to coin new words. For the purpose of this research, the morphological processes that will be considered are based mainly on Murray's list of word formation processes.

The word formation processes reflected in this particular study are the following:-

2.2.1. Affixation –

It is the process of creating new words by adding prefixes, suffixes or both prefixes and suffixes to the root of an existing word. It is one of the most important types of wordformation in all languages. Affixation can be by adding a prefix to the root (*inbual* which means to take a bath where *bual* is the root word and *in-* is the prefix) or a suffix (*bualtu*) which means the person who is giving bath to someone else), as well as adding a prefix and a suffix at the same time (*inbualna* which means a bathing place, a bathing material or the process of taking a bath).

Crystal defines affix as

the collective term for the types of formative that can be used only when added to another morpheme (the root or stem), i.e. affixes are a type of ‘bound’ morpheme. Affixes are limited in number in a language, and are generally classified into three types, depending on their position with reference to the root or stem of the word: those which are added to the beginning of a root/stem (prefixes), e.g. unhappy; those which follow (suffixes), e.g. happiness; and those which occur within a root/stem (infixes).

Less common terms include circumfix or ambifix, for a combination of prefix and suffix (as in en-light-en). The morphological process whereby grammatical or lexical information is added to a stem is known as affixation (‘prefixation’, ‘suffixation’, ‘infixation’). From an alternative point of view, affixes may be divided into inflectional and derivational types (16)

2.2.2. Compounding–

“Compound is a term used widely in descriptive linguistic studies to refer to a linguistic unit which is composed of elements that function independently in other circumstances”(Crystal 96). There is no limit to the type of combinations between or among the free morphemes. That means that any class of words can occur in the process. Compounds are also from all classes of words both major and minor. Compounds can occur either with both the words joined together or occurring apart from each other, whether hyphenated or not.

Compounds are formed by combining or joining two or more bases. In some cases, the bases are separated by a hyphen, while there are cases where the hyphen appears to have disappeared. It appears that there is no rule governing the presence or absence of hyphen in a compound word. Compounds can be of open, hyphenated and solid types and according to their function; they can also be classified as syntactical compounds and lexical compounds or endocentric compounds and exocentric compounds

2.2.3. Conversion–

Conversion occurs when a word-form that has traditionally been confined to one particular grammatical word class is used in another word class, but without any overt signals indicating the change in grammatical function. Conversion is a term used in the study of word-formation to refer to the derivational process whereby an item comes to belong to a new word-class without the addition of an affix, e.g. verbs/nouns:

smell/taste/hit/walk/bottle/ brake; adjectives/verbs: dirty/empty/lower.

Some grammars distinguish between full conversion and partial conversion – the latter being cases where only some of the characteristics of the new word-class are adopted (e.g. the rich). Other terms used for this phenomenon, which is very common in English, include ‘zero derivation’ and ‘functional shift’ (114).

There are some words which can be used as nouns, verbs, adverbs or adjectives without any change in the form of the word, or without the addition of an affix or compounding. Some words change their property without any change in spelling, some words change its tone and become a different word without the addition of any other word or affix. This process of deriviation is known as conversion. In other words, it is the process of word formation by assigning the base to a different word class without changing the form of the base. For instance, *red* is used as a noun to talk about the name of a particular colour, and used as an adjective as in *red rose*, etc.

2.2.4. Cliticization –Cliticization is a morphological operation that does not create new words or new meaning, but still combine two morphemes together in one word. Crystal defines clitic as “A term used in grammar to refer to a form which resembles a word, but which cannot stand on its own as a normal utterance, being phonologically dependent upon a neighbouring word (its host) in a construction” (80). Cliticization can be understood from this definition.

2.2.5. Ideophones –

“A vivid representation of an idea in sound. A word, often onomatopoeic, which describes a predicate, qualificative or adverb in respect to manner, colour, sound, smell, action, state or intensity. The ideophone is in Bantu a special part of speech, resembling to a certain extent in function the adverb”. (Doke 118)

2.2.6. Reduplication -

A term in morphology for a process of repetition whereby the form of a prefix/suffix reflects certain phonological characteristics of the root. This process may be found in Greek, where the initial consonant of the root is reduplicated in certain grammatical contexts (perfective forms); e.g. /clupop/ λω), ‘I loose’, becomes /cleluka/ (λ'läκκ), ‘I have loosed’. In English the nearest one gets to this is in reduplicative compound words, such as helter-skelter, shilly-shally. The phonological processes involved in reduplication have been a particular focus of prosodic morphology, which distinguishes the base form (B) of the reduplication from the repeating element (the reduplicant, R), as well as prefixing and suffixing types. (Crystal 407)

There are words which have two or more elements which are either identical or only slightly different. The difference between the two element may be at the initial, middle or final. However, in the case of Mizo, it is mainly in the medial vowel as in, *rik rek, zin zen, sen sun, rem rum, fia fua, thek thuak, chem. chum, met muat, ria ruai, veng vawng, etc*

2.2.7. Borrowing

One of the Common sources of new words in English is the process simply labeled borrowing, that is, the taking over words from other languages. Borrowing is a process where words from one language are used in another with or without some phonological and autographic changes. Such borrowing occurs due to language contact over many years either through travels, trade, colonization or missionary moves. Most often the special areas of transfer are food, clothing, customs, religion and cultural items. Today, there is also transfer and borrowing in science and technology.

2.3. Tones in Mizo -

Mizo is identified and understood by linguists as a tonal language and the presence of different tones has been highlighted in different studies. Sarmah and Wiltshire identified four different tones in Mizo. They write

The Mizo tone system is described as having an inventory of four tones: High (H), Low (L), Rising (R) and Falling (F) [5-7]. These studies do provide a few rules for the interactions of tones in suffixed or compounded words; however, both these researchers stress the desirability of acoustic analyses to support their descriptions.

The tones described in previous literature are more or less consistent with slight variations. For example, Bright is of the view that Mizo has H, F, L and an allophonic mid level tone sometimes realized as a mid to low, falling tone. Weidert describes the Mizo tones as high-level, high-falling, low-rising and low-level tones. Chhangte describes the Mizo tone inventory as including H, R, F, and an unmarked tone, where the unmarked is phonetically mid or low. Fanai also describes the four tones of Mizo as H, L, R and F where the L tone can also have an allophonic variation realized as an extra low tone that she marks as L [7]. (121 - 122).

Let us look at the four tone of High, Low, Rising and Falling tone described by the study above with the following examples:

1. lei - 'slanting' - High tone
2. lei - 'a bridge' - Low tone
3. pa - 'mushroom' - Rising tone
4. pa - 'father' - Falling tone

Fanai (53) also identified four tones in Mizo and she represented the tones in Mizo as under:

1. Ri sang: H - / (High tone)

2. Ri hniam: L - ʔ (Low tone)
3. Ri lawn: LH - v (Rising tone)
4. Ri kuai: HL - ^ (Falling tone)

The examples given by Fanai to differentiate the four tones are:

(i) High tone

- a. u - ‘elder brother/sister’
- b. ang - ‘to open the mouth’
- c. ar - ‘chicken’
- d. sawn - ‘illegitimate child’
- e. dil - ‘to ask’
- f. khua - ‘one’s hometown’
- g. piang - ‘to be born’
- h. sual - ‘to rape’
- i. lai - ‘navel’
- j. khap - ‘to blink’
- k. kal - ‘to go’

(ii) Low tone

- a. e - ‘to defecate’
- b. em - ‘cane basket’
- c. mu - ‘to be lumpy’
- d. hang - ‘dark- complexioned’
- e. dar - ‘the shoulder’
- f. pua - ‘to carry on the back’
- g. lian - ‘be big’
- h. hmuar - ‘mildewed’
- i. lai - ‘to dig’
- j. khap - ‘to prohibit’
- k. dul - ‘belly’

(iii) Rising tone

- a. u - ‘to howl’

(iv) Falling tone

- a. at - ‘to cut’ (eg. grass)

b. haw - 'to go home'	b. awng - 'a hole'
c. awl - 'to be unoccupied free'	c. mu - 'seed'
d. fun - 'to wrap'	d. phung - 'a ghost'
e. hua - 'to hate'	e. kil - 'to sit around / to surround'
f. fiak - 'to be high pitched'	f. puak - 'to explode'
g. puan - 'a cloth'	g. hual - 'to be betrothed'
h. hnial - 'to argue'	h. hung - 'to fence'
i. sam - 'hair'	i. khel - 'to gnaw'
j. kal - 'kidney'	j. lut - 'to go in'
k. fei - 'a spear'	k. phiat - 'to sweep' (139)

Zairema et.al. proposed eight different tones in Mizo while translating the New Testament (The Voice of Love) into Mizo entitled *Hmangaihna Aw* (1986). However, Zairema on his own in *Thukhawchang Mi Pekte Hi* identified the following four tones in Mizo:

1. High-low or falling tone
2. High tone
3. Low tone
4. Low-high or rising tone

2.4. Word and elements of words in Mizo

In various languages, words play an important grammatical role, in that they are built out of smaller elements by certain patterns, but are put together into sentences by rather different patterns. Accordingly, it is customary to regard the grammatical system of a language as composed of two sub systems; morphology and syntax. Morphology includes the construction of words and parts of words, while syntax includes the construction of phrase. Morphology, as a sub discipline of linguistics, is concerned with the study and analysis of structure, forms, and classes of word. Bloomfield (207) mentions that ‘by the morphology of a language, we mean the construction in which bound forms appear among the constituents. By definition, the resultant forms are either bound forms or words, but never phrases’.

The identification of a word is not difficult and people in general are familiar with the concept of what a word is. However, it is difficult to define the meaning of *word* and to make others understand the correct meaning of it. A word can be defined as a single unit of language that has meaning and can be spoken or written. Let us look at the following sentence:

'He khuaah hian kan cheng' (We live in this village)

If the word order is to be arranged according to the Mizo word order, it must be translated as *'In this village we live'*

In the example sentence, *'He khuaah hian kan cheng'*, we can say that there are five words in the sentence. Let us try to understand what these five words are. These five words are the ones which are marked separately by the spaces in between them, that is the group of letters combined together in between the spaces. When we

utter this sentence, there will be pauses in between the words. So, we can say that every segment in between the pauses when it is spoken or the spaces when it is written is a word.

However, words can further be divided into smaller elements or smaller units. The words in the above sentence can also be divided into smaller units. “The part of linguistics that deals with the study of the structure of words is called morphology or morphemics”(Syamala 116). It is the study of how morphemes are put together or organized to form words.

Words are classified according to their functional possibilities with other words in the sentence. Words with paradigmatic possibilities are those that can go into a set of alternatives equally in a listed order vertically.

Let us look at the simple substitution table below:

He		some	
She	made	a lot of	noise.
It		plenty of	

In the example above, “she” can be replaced by “he”; and “it” and “some” can be substituted by “a lot of” and “plenty of”. So they are said to be in paradigmatic relations with each other. Syntagmatic possibilities are those that can go in a sequential pattern, reflecting the restriction on word order horizontally. For example: “He made some noise.” is ordered horizontally, where each word has to follow the other and can’t be “Made he some noise.” or “He some noise made.”

Variable words are words that go into grammatical paradigm with varying fixed and affixed roots. For example, “play” is a variable word with other possibilities. Such as the following: play, plays, playing, played, player. Another example would be “small” which has the following variation: small, smaller, smallest.

Invariable words, on the other hand, are words that have only one form with no possibility of inflections or derivations through affixes. Some of such words are as follows: but, as, if, that, when.

Words that are open to new additions are considered productive as they can take in an extra morpheme and expand. Major words fall into the open-class items category. They are words that contain vocabulary content and lexical import. Major words can be described via the simple or complex dichotomy. Simple words contain only one morpheme (monomorphemic), examples: blue, bird, fat, small, and short. Complex words, on the other hand, contain more than one morpheme (polymorphemic), examples: bluish, birdbath, fattening, smallest, and shorter.

Major words are usually made up of nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. On the other hand, minor words are not productive as they do not easily accept new additions. They are fixed and limited in expansion possibilities as well as mutually exclusive words because they cannot occur together.

Example:

“a car” but not “a the car”

“on the roof” but not “on above the roof”

“this chair” but not “this that chair”

Minor words are those containing the grammatical function and form the linkage between the major words. They give grammatical coherence to the sentence. Minor words are usually function words and particles that make up the parts of speech.

2.4.1. The Morpheme

Crystal defines morpheme as “The minimal distinctive unit of grammar, and the central concern of morphology” (313). The morpheme may thus be defined as the smallest meaningful unit in the structure of a language. It is a unit which cannot be further divided without altering the meaning. In other words, it can be said that the smallest part into which a word can be divided is called a morpheme. A morpheme can no longer be divided into smaller units or parts. The morpheme is the smallest meaningful unit of language and therefore the smallest unit of grammatical function. The morpheme can either stand on its own or needs to combine with at least one other morpheme to form a word. The morpheme which can stand on its own is known as a free morpheme or a root, example: dog, day, fool. The morpheme which needs to combine with another morpheme is known as a bound morpheme or an affix, examples: the -ed in **dogged** or the -ish in **foolish**.

The Mizo word 'khua' (Town/City/Village) is made up of four letters and is a morpheme. If we are to divide the word into kh- and -ua, these fragments do not make any sense nor do they have any meaning. This shows that 'khua' is a

morpheme and cannot be divided into smaller meaningful units. On the other hand, 'khuaah' is not a single morpheme. It may be divided into khua- and -ah, with each segment having a separate meaning related to the meaning of the word 'khuaah'. As mentioned above, the word 'khua' means a city/town/village. When the suffix 'ah' is added to the root 'khua', the suffix -ah changes the meaning of the word khua. Even though the suffix -ah cannot stand alone to have its own meaning, it plays an important role in changing the meaning of the noun 'khua'. So, if it is said as 'khuaah' it means 'in the city/village/town' or something pertaining to that village/town/city. However, it must be noted that 'ah', can also be used as a morpheme and not as a suffix. So, when 'ah' is used as a standalone word and not used as a suffix, it functions as a free morpheme having a meaning on its own. For example, *'I ipte ah kha a rit em?'* 'Is the bag you carry heavy?'. Here, 'ah' is used as a free morpheme. It is the subjunctive mood of the word 'ak' which means to carry.

In Mizo, there are single phonemes functioning as morphemes. For example, the phonemes 'a', 'aw', 'e', 'i', and 'u' are all morphemes. It is interesting to learn that in Mizo, only letters with vowel sounds function as morphemes and letters with consonant sounds like /k/, /m/, etc cannot function as morphemes. For example, the sentences 'I a e' (You are a fool.), 'A a e' (He/She is such a fool.), 'A a a' (of course he/she is a fool), 'A a a?' (Are you saying that he/she is a fool), 'A e a' (He is passing motion), 'A e aw/ A e e aw' (of course he/she is passing motion), 'A e e' (He/she passed motion), 'Aw, a e' (Yes, he/she is passing motion), 'A u a?' (His elder

bother/sister?), 'A u a' (He/She is treating him/her as someone older- as a mark of respect), 'A aw e' (He/She agreed.), etc. are all complete sentences and they are made up of a combination of single phoneme.

2.4.2. Classification of Morpheme –

Following the classification done by Syamala, in this study, morphemes are classified in the following ways:

- a) Lexical morphemes and grammatical morphemes – Lexical morphemes have independent meaning and they are meaningful in isolation also. They are mostly nouns, adjectives, adverbs and verbs. They are also known as content words. Examples of lexical morphemes in Mizo are, *naupang* (kid/child), *silai* (gun), *mipa* (male), etc

Grammatical morphemes are semantically insignificant even though they are grammatically significant. They are function class words and they function mainly as grammatical links. Examples of grammatical morphemes are, -in, -ah, -te, etc

Eg: '*Naupangin silaiin mi luah a kap*'. In this sentence, words like *naupang*, *silai*, *mi*, *lu*, *a*, *kap* are all lexical morphemes as they are meaningful in isolation also. However, morphemes like 'in' and 'ah' function as a grammatical link in the sentence

- b) Free morphemes and Bound morphemes – “Morphemes are commonly classified into free forms (morphemes which can occur as separate words) and bound forms (morphemes which cannot so occur – mainly affixes): thus

unselfish consists of the three morphemes un, self and ish, of which self is a free form, un- and -ish bound forms” (Crystal 313).

It can be said that free morpheme can stand on its own and can occur independently while bound morphemes cannot stand independent and are attached to other morphemes in order to make sense. When used in isolation, they do not have a meaning on their own. For example, the Mizo word ‘ṭhian’ (a friend) is a free morpheme and can stand on its own. When the plural suffix like ‘te’ and ‘ho’ is added to it, it became ‘ṭhiante’ or ‘ṭhianho’ (friends). The plural suffix ‘-te’ could not stand on its own if it is to be used as a plural suffix even though it could be used in different situations not as a plural suffix

- c) Roots and Affixes – Morphemes can be classified into roots and affixes. The root or the base is the one that constitutes the core or the nucleus of words and it also carries the meaning of the word. An affix is however a bound morpheme which is attached to another morpheme. For example, in ‘unhappiness’, happy is the root and it carries the meaning. However, the morphemes ‘un’ and ‘ness’ are affixes which does not carry the meaning of the word but function as a modifier of the root. The negative affix un- gives a negative meaning to the word happy and the nominalizer suffix –ness changes the adjective happy into happiness which is a noun. The Mizo word ‘hmelṭha’ (good looking/handsome/beautiful) is made up of the root ‘hmel

which means face/looks. The affix ‘-ṭha’ (good) adds attribute to the root ‘hmel’. So, when the suffix *ṭhais* added to root words, it changes the meaning of the root word.

d) Let us try to understand it with the help of one word ‘inngaihtuahlenna’

In – nominal prefix

Ngaihtuah – Root (think)

Len – subjunctive mood of lian (big)

Na – Nominal suffix

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Chapter - 3

Compounding, Conversion and Affixation

3.1. Compounding

This chapter shall first seek a working definition of compound and compounding and we shall then address the issue of compounding in Mizo. Discussion on compounding will be followed by the concepts of conversion and affixation, and we shall see how these notions may be applied to Mizo.

Crystal defines compound as –

A term used widely in descriptive linguistic studies to refer to a linguistic unit which is composed of elements that function independently in other circumstances. Of particular currency are the notions of compounding found in ‘compound words’ (consisting of two or more free morphemes (96).

Compounding is thus a process whereby two or more individual words are combined as one word. Compound word is a word that is formed from two or more simple or complex words (e.g. landlord, red-hot, window cleaner). It is one of the most common methods used in the formation of new words and is so productively used. Compound words consist of two free morphemes.

There are different ways of classifying compound words as shown by different studies. However, in this particular study, we will be looking at only two different ways of classification – Semantic classification of compounds and syntactic classification of compounds

3.1.1. Semantic classification of compounds in Mizo

According to the classification done by Aleendra Brahma in “Compounding in Bodo” (17), this study will classify compounds as:

- a) Endocentric
- b) Exocentric
- c) Copulative
- d) Conjunctive

3.1.1.1. Endocentric Compounds – Aronoff and Fudeman say that ‘an endocentric compound is one that has a head. The head expresses the core meaning of the compound, and it belongs to the same lexical category of the compound as a whole’. The head of the compound is that root which determines the category of, or is the main referent of, the compound. Compound words of Mizo are mostly endocentric in nature where one of the constituent elements functions as the head of that compound. Endocentric compounds denote a subtype of the type denoted by the head of the compound. For example, *spoon feed* (to feed with a spoon) or *caveman* (a man dwelling in a cave).

Endocentric compounds are the most common ones in Mizo and there are many examples to be cited. Examples of a few endocentric compounds in Mizo are:

- a) Keimi – *Kei* is a shortened form of *sakei* (tiger), *mi* is human. The word *keimi* thus means weretiger
- b) Infiammi – *infiam* means to play, *mi* means human. Infiammi thus means a player

- c) Kekawr – *ke* means leg/feet, *kawr* means shirt. *Kekawr* thus means pants/trousers and literally, a shirt for the leg
- d) Kawrlum - *Kawr* means shirt and *lum* means hot. *Kawrlum* thus means sweater
- e) Chemte – *Chem* means chopper/dao, *te* means to be small in size. So, *chemte* means a knife
- f) Chemsei – *Chem* means chopper/dao, *sei* means long. *Chemsei* thus means a sword
- g) Tuivawt – *Tui* is water, *vawt* is cold. Tuivawt means cold-water
- h) Tuilum - Hot or warm water as *lum* is used for describing hot/warm
- i) Puanropui – *puan* means the traditional cloth worn by the Mizo and *ropui* means great/majestic. Puanropui is one of the greatest among the different puan woven by the Mizo
- j) Puanchhia – puan means cloth, *chhia* means not good in quality. Puanchhia thus means rag/tattered cloth
- k) Mautuai – *Mau* means bamboo and *tuai* means young or someone/something that has not properly developed yet. *Mautuai* thus means bamboo shoot
- l) Maupa – *Mau* means bamboo and *pa* means mushroom. *Maupa* is the mushroom that grows near a bamboo

- m) tui-fim – *Tui* means water and *fim* means pure or clean. So, *tuifim* means pure water. The opposite word is *tuinu* where *nu* means dirty or polluted, something which is not pure
- n) zaikhawm – *Zai* means to sing and *khawm* means doing together or an act of being or doing something in group. So, *zaikhawm* means to sing together in a group.
- o) Unaupa and unaunu – *Unau* means siblings and *pa* here is used to stand for the male and *nu* for female. Thus, *unaupa* means brother and *unaunu* means sister. However, *unaunu* is not a standard usage because *laizawn* (sister for female) and *farnu* (sister for male) is regarded as the standard form.

3.1.1.1.1. Right-headed endocentric compounds

Nominal compounds such as noun+noun compounds may be right-headed or left-headed. In the case of right-headed compound the first root modifies the second root as shown in the examples. As seen below the resulting meaning of noun+noun compounds is always a noun.

- a) buh+tlei (rice+spoon) buhtlei ‘rice spoon’
- b) lung+in (stone+house) lungin ‘prison’
- c) tan+in (behind bars+house) tanin ‘prison’
- d) damdawi+in (medicine+house) damdawiin ‘hospital’
- e) biak+in (worship+house) biakin ‘church’
- f) vawk+in (pig+house) vawkin ‘pigsty’

- g) beng+ek (ear+wax/excreta) bengek 'earwax'
- h) vawk+ek (pig+excreta) vawkek 'waste product of pigs'
- i) mît+hmûl (eye+feather) mîthmûl 'eyelash'
- j) chawn+hmul (leg+hair) chawnhmul 'hairs on the leg'
- k) zak+hmul (underarm+hair) zakhmul 'hair on the armpit'
- l) hmui+hmul (lip+hair) hmuihmul 'moustache'
- m) beng+hmul (ear+hair) benghmul 'hair in the ear'
- n) chhuat+nawhna (floor+cleaner) chhuatnawhna 'device for cleaning the floor'
- o) beng+ek+kherna (ear+wax+cleaner) bengekkherna 'device for cleaning the ear wax'
- p) lu+mehna (hair+cutter) lumehna 'device for cutting the hair or the place where hair is cut'
- q) ha+nawhna (teeth+cleaner) hanawhna 'toothbrush'
- r) lawng+karna (boat+rower) lawngkarna 'device for rowing boat'

3.1.1.1.2. Left-headed endocentric compounds

Nominal compounds given below are left headed. In this case the second root modifies the first root. The examples from below involve noun+stative verb and noun+gender.

- a) kut+zungchal (hand+old finger) kutzungchal 'index finger'
- b) kut+zungpui (hand+big finger) kutzungpui 'thumb'

- c) kut+zungte (hand+small finger) kutzungte ‘little finger’
- d) sam+pui (hair+big/great) sampui ‘thick strands of hair’
- e) sam+sei (hair+long) samsei ‘long hair/female’
- f) lu+phut (head+) luphut ‘dandruff’
- g) lu+na (head+pain) luna ‘headache’
- h) lu+hai (head+dizzy) luhai ‘dizzy head’
- i) lu+ruh (head+bone) luruh ‘skull’
- j) lu+kawng (head+ no hair) lukawng ‘bald’
- k) tlan+bo (run+missing) tlanbo ‘run away’
- l) tlan+chhia (run+bad) tlanchhia ‘run away from something/someone’
- m) tlan+chak (run+strong) tlan-chak (fast runner)
- n) tlan+muang (run+slow) tlan-muang (slow runner)
- o) mi+nu (human+female) minu ‘woman/men’
- p) mi+pa (human+male) mipa ‘man/men’
- q) mi+hring (human+living human being) human
- r) mi+thi (human+dead) mitthi ‘dead human’
- s) mi+nung (human+alive) minung ‘living human’
- t) mi+bo (human+missing) mibo ‘missing person’
- u) mi+lian (human+big) milian ‘big human/rich person’
- v) mi+te (human+small) mite ‘small human/poor person’
- w) mi+sual (human+bad) misual (bad human)
- x) mi+fel (human+good) mifel (good human)

- y) ram+sa (forest+animal) ramsa ‘wild animal’
- z) ram+ar (forest+fowl) ramar ‘wild fowl’
- aa) fa+nu (offspring/child+female) fanu ‘female child’
- bb) fa+pa (child+male) fapa ‘male child’
- cc) fa+mo (child+bride) famo ‘daughter in law’

3.1.1.2. Exocentric Compounds –

Crystal describes it as:

...term describing a type of compound in which an entity is characterized without either of the constituents directly naming it; also called an exocentric or possessive compound (49).

In an exocentric compound, the meaning of the word does not follow from the meaning of the parts. For example, the word ‘*redneck*’ is not used for describing the colour of a person’s neck. It is rather used as a noun for describing an unsophisticated and arrogant person.

Examples of a few endocentric compounds in Mizo are:

- a) Pasal – *Pa* means father and *sal* means slave/servant. However, the word *pasal* means husband
- b) Nupui – *Nu* means mother and *pui* means a great thing. The word *nupui* however means wife
- c) Nupa – *Nu* can stand for mother and female, *pa* for father and male. The word *nupa* however means couple

- d) *pasaltha* – *Pasal* as describe above means husband and *tha* means good.
pasaltha is literally used to mean a warrior or a brave person
- e) *Hmeithai* – *Hmei* is concubine and *thai* is the poetical form for wife.
Hmeithai means a widow
- f) *Tuibur* – *tui* means water and *bur* means a container. *Tuibur* means the liquid waste of a tobacco that is collected/nicotine water
- g) *Patil* – *pa* refers to the male gender and *til* means the scrotum. *Patil* means ‘a woman who dresses and behaves like a man’ (Lorrain 159)
- h) *Pawhchhiat* – *Pawt* means to pull and *pawh* is the modified form or the subjunctive mood of the verb. *chhia* (subjunctive mood of the verb *chhiat*) means bad quality. However, *pawhchhiat* is a noun and it means ‘the last crop of weeds on a jhum’ (159)

3.1.1.3. Copulative Compounds –

Crystal defines copulative compounds as:

A...term describing a type of compound where the elements exist in a co-ordinate relationship, lacking any internal dependency; also called a copulative compound. Examples include the Franco-German pact and the London-Edinburgh express, as well as extended structures such as Polonius’s tragical-comical-historical-pastoral (Hamlet II.ii.396) (159).

Examples of Mizo copulative compounds are shown as examples:

- a) *Nu-fa inhmangaihna* – The love between a mother and her child

- b) pa-fa inhuatna – The hatred between a father and his child
- c) thian-thian inkar – That is between friends
- d) a hmei a pa – Everyone. Literally, all female and male
- e) a pui a nawi – Everyone. Literally, all the great ones and the not so great ones
- f) a lian a te – Everyone. Literally, all the big and the small ones
- g) a thim a var – Literally, light and dark. The term is used for describing ‘the good and bad times’
- h) a sual a tha – Literally, the bad and the good. It is used to refer to ‘everyone’
- i) a kip a kawi – Means ‘All the details’ about something talked about
- j) a kawi a ngil – Means ‘In everything’. For example, to obey someone without reasoning
- k) Eng-le-khaw-le – Means ‘However’.
- l) Eng-lai-pawh-in – Means ‘All the time’
- m) Amah-erawh-chu – Means ‘However’
- n) Ni-mah-se-la – Means ‘Even though’
- o) Eng-pawh-ni-se – Means ‘Anyway’
- p) Chu-ti-chuan – Means ‘Therefore’
- q) Pheng-phe-help – Means ‘Butterfly’
- r) Ching-pi-ri-nu – Literally, it means ‘*the mother of Chingpiri*’. But it is the name of a bird

s) Thangfen-pa-bawp – Literally, it means, *‘the thigh of Thangfenpa’s father’*.

It however, is the name of a bird

3.1.1.4. Conjunctive compounds -

In Mizo, nominal compounds are formed when two nouns are conjoined by the conjunctive particle -leh

- a) in+leh+lo literally ‘house and field’ (properties)
- b) u+leh+nau literally ‘elders and younger’ (family)
- c) thian+leh+thian ‘friend and friend’
- d) kut+leh+ke literally ‘hand and foot’
- e) nu+leh+pa literally ‘mother and father’
- f) chun+leh+zua literally ‘mother and father’ (poetic)
- g) chhun+leh+zana literally ‘day and night’
- h) ram+leh+hnam literally ‘land and clan’ (nation)
- i) ui+leh+ar literally ‘dogs and fowl’ (pet animals; family)
- j) ui+leh+kel literally ‘dogs and goats’ (enemies)
- k) mu+leh+ar literally, ‘eagle and fowl’ (enemies)
- l) thing+leh+mau literally ‘trees and bamboos’ (forest)
- m) bu+leh+bal literally ‘rice and edible bulb’ (crops)
- n) ni+leh+thla literally ‘the sun and the moon’
- o) dan+leh+hrai ‘law and basket’ (the basket, which is used specifically for separating one thing from other things)
- p) thla+leh+arsi literally ‘the moon and the stars’

- q) zai+leh+lam literally ‘sing and dance’
- r) hun+leh+kum literally ‘time and year’
- s) dik+leh+diklo ‘right and wrong’
- t) thim+leh+eng literally ‘dark and light’
- u) chhak+leh+thlang ‘east and west’
- v) chhim+leh+hmar ‘south and north’ (chhak leh thlang, chhim leh hmar is used as a phrase to refer to ‘everywhere or from all places’)

3.1.2. Syntactic Classification of Mizo Compound words –

Compounds can be classified syntactically according to the classification done by

Brahma as:

a) Noun+noun compounds –

For example: kekawr (ke – leg, kawr – shirt) means trousers

kutkawr (kut – hand, kawr – shirt) means gloves

thosilen (thosi – mosquito, len – net) means mosquito-net

savun (sa – animal, vun – skin) means animal skin

bengek (beng – ear, ek – dung/excrement) means earwax

nupa (nu-feminine, pa – masculine) means couple

lukhum (lu – head, khum – to put on the head) means cap

b) Noun+verb compounds –

For example: tuikhawthla (tui–water, khawthla–falling down) waterfall

hriakthih (hriak – oil, thih – to rub it with the hand) means to annoint

Insawn (in-house, sawn-shift) means to move elsewhere. However, 'insawn' can also mean to shift from one place to another.

c) Verb+adverb –

For example: tlançhak (tlan-run, çhak-strong) means fast runner

Zaithiam (zai – sing, thiam – good) means good singer

d) Noun+adjective –

For example: rawlthar (rawl-voice, thar-new) teenagers, esp male

Chemte (chem-knife, te – small) means small knife

Chempui (chem-knife, pui-big) means dao

Lamlían (lam-road, lian-big) means a wide road

thianthà (thian – friend, tha – good) means good friend

Mifel (mi-human, fel-good) means a good person

Misual (mi-human, sual-bad) means a bad person

3.2. Conversion

Conversion occurs when a word-form that has traditionally been confined to one particular grammatical word class is used in another word class, but without any overt signals indicating the change in grammatical function. More specifically, transposing a lexeme from one word class to another without affixation has been referred to as conversion or zero derivation (Marchand 359). New words may be formed without modifying the form of the input word that serves as the base. That is, conversion is a derivational process that involves no overt affixation. Conversion is the process by which lexical items change (grammatical) category without any concomitant change in form. (Lieber 418)

3.2.1. Types of conversion – The different types of conversion classified by Quirk, et.al. (815) are:

- a) Total Conversion - Total conversion - The converted words participate in morphological processes (derivation and inflection). bottleN → bottleV
→ bottlerN, bottledV-PAST
- b) Partial Conversion - Partial conversion - The converted form does not show any derivation or inflection bestA → bestN →bestsN-PL, bestableA
- c) Approximate Conversion - Approximate conversion There is slight phonological difference between two pairs expórtV →éxportN
hou[s]eN → hou[z]eV , sing V → songN, breatheN → breathV

Examples of conversion by Quirk et al. are (815-817):

- a. Verb → Noun - desire, dismay, cover, retreat, break, turn, rise, catch, swim, look
- b. Adjective → Noun - daily, comic, valuable, constant, final (Alternative: Deletion of Nouns in Adj-N sequence.)
- c. Noun → Verb - forest, milk, tape, fish, cash, champion, experiment, mother
- d. Adjective → Verb - dry, empty, narrow, calm, humble, lower, idle

Conversion not only modifies the meaning of a word but also changes its position. It can also be said to be a type of derivation. In Mizo language, conversion has the following characteristics:

- a) It creates a new word
- b) Since it is a different word from where it was taken (base), it is important to note that it has a different meaning altogether
- c) It changes the position of the word in the parts of speech

The different ways of conversion in Mizo are in the following ways:

1. Change in tone
2. Homonym
3. It changes a non-noun to a noun
4. It changes a non-verb to a verb
5. It changes a non-adjective to an adjective

3.2.2. Conversion by change in tone:

The most common form of conversion in Mizo is approximate conversion wherein a slight phonological difference creates new words with different meaning. Since Mizo is a tonal language, tone plays an important role in bringing about a change in meaning and also according to Abubakar (9) “*tone performs morphological function in Hausa and they are (a) verbal system (b) imperative (c) plural (d) gender (e) verbal noun and (f) voice*”. A tonal language uses changes in tone or pitch of a voiced sound to differentiate words. A classic example is the consonant-vowel combination /ma/ in Mandarin Chinese. The same /ma/, depending upon the tonal pattern of vowel /a/, can mean mother (flat pattern), numb (rising), horse (falling-rising), or curse (falling) (Zeng 26).

Let us look at the following examples to see how news words are formed by the process of approximate conversion:

1. ‘Lei’ is commonly used in Mizo but it is has diverse meaning. The different meaning associated with the word are –
 - a) Lei (rising) - Tongue
 - b) Lei (high) - The earth
 - c) Lei (same as b) - Soil
 - d) Lei (same as b) - To buy something
 - e) Lei (falling) - Bridge
 - f) Lei (same as a) - Slightly tilted
 - g) Lei (same as e) - referring to the things bought

2. Ban is another example to show the different meaning associated with the change in tone.

- a) Ban (high) – in buh chu a **ban** hle mai – sticky
- b) Ban (same as a) – Thingah zawng a **ban** zai zai – a monkey **swinging**
- c) In **ban** phun chu a lian hle mai – **pillar** of a house
- d) Kan khua aṭangin in khua kan **ban** (low) ang – to reach one place from another place before nightfall
- e) I **ban** (rising) a lian hle mai – hand (part of the body)
- f) A hna aṭangin an **ban** (falling) – to be fired from work
- g) I puan chu khawiah nge i **ban**? (same as f) – To hang a cloth
- h) Kan lak zawng zawng aṭang khan heti zat chauh hi kan **ban** (same as f) – left over of things collected
- i) School **ban**-ah (same as f) kan kal ang – After the school is over

3. **Zai** can have different meaning due to difference in tone as shown in the following examples

- a) Naupang an **zai** (rising) – To sing
- b) La **zai** hraw deuh i nei em? – Strand of cloth
- c) Thing an **zai** (high) nasa mai – Cutting of trees
- d) A **zai** (same as a) a dam teh e maw – calm and peaceful
- e) Hnatlang turin karawn **zai** (falling) ang che – reminding and inviting
- f) Upaho **zai** (same as e) ngai tein aw – under the direction of the elders
- g) Thingah zawng a ban **zai zai** mai – swinging of a monkey on tree branch

There are many other words having the same written form but which are syntactically different just because of the difference in tone. Chhuanvawra in his *Mizo Ṭawng Chhuina* (152-175) collected 112 Mizo words which are different semantically just because of the tone and no difference in spelling.

3.2.3. Homonym:

Crystal defines homonymy as “A term used in semantic analysis to refer to lexical items which have the same form but differ in meaning” (231). The examples cited above show words with different tones and some are of similar tone. Words which are spelled and pronounced the same but has a different meaning are called homonyms. Mizo is rich in homonym and a few examples of homonym are shown which are also instances of conversion. The tones indicated here are done by Sarmah and Wiltshire (121) who identified four different tones in Mizo saying that “the Mizo tone system is described as having an inventory of four tones: High (H), Low (L), Rising (R) and Falling (F)”.

1) Lei (Rising Tone) –

(1) Tongue

(2) Tilted

2) Lei (Falling) –

(1) Earth

(2) Soil

(3) To buy something

3) Ni – The different meaning of ‘ni’

- (1) Sun
- (2) Aunt
- (3) Day

4) Tlai – Different meaning of ‘tlai’

- (1) To be late
- (2) Evening

5) Zai – Different meaning of ‘zai’

- (1) Sing
- (2) A small thread/strand

6) Ngai – Different meaning of ‘ngai’

- (1) To miss someone
- (2) To have sexual intercourse
- (3) Something necessary to complete an action, a thing needed for doing something

7) Hnar – Different meaning of ‘hnar’

- (1) Nose
- (2) The starting point of something – like a river, etc
- (3) The source of something. For example, *Pathian chu malsawmna tinreng hnar a ni* (God is the source of all blessings)
- (4) Snoring

8) Kam – Different meaning of ‘kam’

- (1) Shore
- (2) Mouth
- (3) Fluent in talking

9) Bun – Different meaning of ‘bun’

- (1) To wear or put on, esp shoes and bangles
- (2) To set up something like a machine, etc

10) Zawh – Different meaning of ‘zawh’

- (1) To walk upon
- (2) To ask something
- (3) To march as a crowd
- (4) Finishing a task

11) Khak – Different meaning of ‘khak’

- (1) To hit a solid object with another object
- (2) To scold someone

12) Dawr – Different meaning of ‘dawr’

- (1) Shop
- (2) To buy something from someone

Instances of conversion and the ways in which they are differing are shown with the following examples:

3.2.4 A non-noun to a noun

- a. Misual tak a ni (misual – adjective)

An veng misual a nih hi (misual – noun)

[He is a scoundrel (scoundrel-adjective)]

He is the scoundrel of his locality (scoundrel-noun)]

- b. Mawia'n a nu damlo a awmpui (awmpui – verb)

Mawii hi kan awmpui a ni (Awmpui – noun)

[Mawia is helping his sick mother (helping- verb)]

Mawii is our help (Help-noun)]

- c. Sangi'n Zoa a kalpui (Kalpui – verb)

Kalpui mai mai nih bik reng hi a ninawm (Kalpui – Noun)

[Sangi is walking with Zoa

I don't want to be just a walking partner anymore]

Here, 'kalpui' in the second sentence is used to refer to a walking partner

- d. Nu berin a fate a mutpui (Mutpui – verb)

Ani chuan mutpui atan bak a duh lo (mutpui – noun)

[The mother is sleeping with her children (sleeping-verb)]

He/She is wanted only as a sleeping partner]

Here, 'mutpui' in the second sentence is used to refer to a sleeping partner

e. I thiante saw va zaipui ve rawh (Zaipui – verb)

Zaipui satliah ni bik tawh suh (Zaipui – noun)

[Do perform with your friends (perform –verb)

Siami is the girl Rina had performed with (performed-adjective)]

f. I fate kutdawh lo turin zirtir rawh (Kutdawh – verb, to beg)

Khawlaiah kutdawh ka hmu (Kutdawh – noun, beggar)

[Teach your children not to beg

I saw a beggar on the roadside]

Enpui – Supervise/Watch over and the person supervising

Hriatpui - Witness and to witness

Riahpui – Sleep with and the person sleeping with

Khelhpui – To play with

Lenpui – To roam about with/ To accompany, etc all differ in meaning as illustrated from the above examples

3.2.5 A Non-verb to a verb

a. I thusawi chu a **fiah** hle mai (fiah – adjective)

A thusawi kha va **fiah** rawh (fiah – verb)

[The speech you delivered was very clear (clear-adjective)

Go and clarify the speech he delivered (clarify-verb)]

b. Hei hi Aizawl a nih hi (Aizawl – noun)

Aizawl ang (Aizawl – verb)

[This is Aizawl (Aizawl-noun)]

Let's Aizawl or Lets go to Aizawl]

c. He mi hi ka thian a ni (Thian – noun)

Fb lama lo thian ve ang che (Thian – verb)

[This is my friend (thian-noun)]

Remember to befriend him on facebook (befriend-verb)]

d. Lemchan hmuhdawm deuh kan en dawn (Lemchan – noun – drama)

Lemchan i thiam hle mai (Lemchan – verb – acting)

[We are going to watch a great drama (drama-noun)]

You are great at acting (acting-verb)]

e. Anni hi hel an ni (hel – noun – rebel)

Sawrkar lakah an hel (Hel – verb – act of rebelling)

[They are part of a rebel (rebel-noun)]

They rebel against the government (rebel-verb)]

f. Ani hi chu mi dawthei a ni (Dawthei – noun - liar)

A dawthei takzet (dawthei – verb - lied)

[She is a well known liar (liar-noun)]

She can really lie (lie-verb)]

g. Nun hlimawm tak a ni (Nun – noun)

Khawl saw va nun rawh (Nun – verb)

[It is a wonderful life (life-noun)]

Bring the machine to life (life-verb)]

h. Khawiah nge bel chin hi (Chhin – noun)

Bel saw va chin rawh (Chhin – verb)

[Where is the cover of this pot (cover-noun)]

Please cover the pot (cover-verb)]

i. He pangpar hi a va mawi em (mawi – adjective)

He pangpar hian in hi a mawi a ni (Mawi – verb)

[How beautiful is this flower (beautiful-adjective)]

Our home is made beautiful by this flower (beautiful-noun)]

j. An tlar saw a ngil hle mai (tlar – noun)

I thiante zingah va tlar ve rawh (tlar – verb)

[Their row is quite straight (row-noun)]

Go and join your friends' row]

k. He chini hi a thlum tha vak lo (Thlum – adjective)

Thingpui saw va thlum rawh le (Thlum – verb)

[This sugar is not that sweet (sweet-noun)]

Go and sweeten the tea (sweeten-verb)]

‘Thlum’ used in the second sentence is a verb

l. Alu kan hi a al hle mai (al – adjective)

Alu kan saw va al rawh (al – verb)

[This fried potato is quite salty (salty-adjective)

Add more salt to the fried potato]

m. Anṭam tlak kan hmeh dawn (tlak – adjective)

Anṭam a tlak a (Tlak – verb)

[We are having spinach stew for dinner (stew-adjective)

Make sure you stew the spinach for dinner (stew-verb)]

n. Artui chum ka ei chak hle mai (Chhum – adjective)

Artui va chhum rawh (Chhum – verb)

[I am craving boiled eggs (boiled –adjective)

Boil the eggs for lunch (boil-verb)]

o. Hmeichhe puanhnuai i lei duh em (Puanhnuai – noun)

A puanhnuai ta daih mai (Puanhnuai – verb)

[Do you want to buy a petticoat?

She hid it inside/under her petticoat]

p. He bawm hi a ruak a ni (Ruak – adjective)

Bawm kha ruak rawh (Ruak – verb)

[This box is empty (empty-adjective)

Kindly empty the box (empty-verb)]

q. He chem hi a hriam hle mai (Hriam – adjective)

He chem hi va hriam rawh (Hriam – verb)

[This knife is rather sharp (sharp-adjective)

Go and sharpen the knife. In the second sentence, hriam (falling tone) is used as a verb, that is to sharpen the knife]

r. Mipuite pawh an hmin tawh e (hmin – adjective)

Hmingi'n a hmin vek alawm (Hmin – verb)

[The crowd has been swayed (persuaded-adjective)

Hmingi swayed them (persuaded-verb)]

s. An hneh fai vek (Fai – adverb)

An fai hneh hle mai (Fai – verb)

[It was a swift defeat (swift-adjective)

They've taken everything. Fai used in the second sentence is in the falling tone, referring to the act of clearing everything, taking away everything, etc]

t. Anmahni an awm ngei tih a chiang e (Chiang – adjective)

A awm ngei tih i chian em? (Chian – verb)

[It clear that they were present

Did you prove that they are present?]

Chiang used in the first sentence is to refer to something that is certain, 'chian' used in the second sentence is to prove something

u. Liana hi ka nau a ni (Nau – noun)

Liana chu kan nau ve khawp mai (Nau – verb)

[Liana is younger to me

I disparaged Liana. *Nau* in the second sentence is pronounced in the falling tone, like the English ‘now’]

3.2.6 A Non Adjective to an adjective

a. Khawvel hi kan chenna a ni (Khawvel – noun)

I khawvel em mai (khawvel – adjective)

[The world is our home (world-noun)

You are worldly]

b. Rethei tak tak hlir an awmkhawm (Rethei – noun)

I rilru a rethei a ni (rethei – adjective)

[It is where the poor settle together (poor-noun)

You are poor in your thoughts (poor-adjective)]

c. Liana chu Aizawl lal a ni (lal – noun)

Liana chu a lal a na ngei mai (lal – adjective)

[Liana is the king of Aizawl (king-noun)

Liana is a king in his mind/He thinks like a king (king-adjective)]

d. Zoa chu naupang fel tak a ni (Naupang – noun)

Liana, i naupang leh tlat thin (Naupang – adjective)

[Zoa is an obedient child (child-noun)

Liana tends to act like a child]

e. Kan khaw mipa ho anrawn kal (Mipa – noun)

Mipa tlat ang che aw (Mipa – adjective)

[The men of the town gathered at the hall (men-noun)

Act like men (men-adjective)]

f. Hei hi ka pa a nih hi (Pa – noun)

Kunga chu a pa ngei mai a (Pa – adjective)

[This is my father

Kunga is manly/fatherly]

g. Kan khaw zaithiam a nih hi (Zaithiam – noun)

A zaithiam hi in hre lo emawni? (Zaithiam – adjective)

[She is the singer of our town

Don't you know that she sings quite well?]

3.3. Affixation

A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics defines affix as

The collective term for the types of formative that can be used only when added to another morpheme (the root or stem), i.e. affixes are a type of 'bound' morpheme. Affixes are limited in number in a language, and are generally classified into three types, depending on their position with reference to the root or stem of the word: those which are added to the beginning of a root/stem (prefixes), e.g. unhappy; those which follow (suffixes), e.g. happiness; and those which occur within a root/stem (infixes). Less common terms include circumfix or ambifix, for a combination of prefix and suffix (as in en-light-en). The morphological process whereby grammatical or lexical information is added to a stem is known as affixation ('prefixation', 'suffixation', 'infixation'). From an alternative point of view, affixes may be divided into inflectional and derivational types (15-16).

Affixes can be classified into two different ways: syntactically, that is according to their position in a word and semantically, that is according to their function in a phrase or sentence.

According to their position in the word, or which side of the stem they are attached to, affixes are classified into prefixes, infixes and suffixes. Prefixes are added to the beginning of the word; e.g., un- in unnoticed, a- in amoral, sub- in subway, etc. Infixes are inserted within the words, e.g. In Khasi, the word shong

means 'to sit' and shnong, which means 'a village' (lit: several people sitting in one geographical area) has the infix '-n-' and suffixes are added at the end of the word; eg, -er in climber, singer, etc.

According to the function affixes fulfill in the language, affixes are classified into derivational affixes (derivational morphemes or derivations) and inflectional affixes (inflectional morphemes or inflections). (Neves 10)

Derivation and inflection may be explained as follows:

Derivation is the process of word formation where a new word is formed by attaching a derivational affix to a stem. Derivational affixes are morphemes that create (or derive) new words, usually by either changing the meaning and/or the part of speech (i.e., the syntactic category), or both. (Xhina 274)

Inflectional affixes are those affixes which change only the form of a word and not its class or meaning. Inflectional affixes are added to a stem without changing the part of speech of the stem. A noun to which a plural affix is added still remains a noun and a verb to which a past tense affix is added still remains a verb. Inflectional affixes do not form new words, but serve to indicate grammatical relations such as number, gender, tense, etc. (275)

Crystal defines derivation and inflection as

derivation (n.) A term used in morphology to refer to one of the two main categories or processes of word-formation (derivational morphology), the other being inflection(al); also sometimes called derivatology. These terms

also apply to the two types of affix involved in word-formation. Basically, the result of a derivational process is a new word (e.g. nation ⇒ national), whereas the result of an inflectional (or non-derivational) process is a different form of the same word (e.g. nations, nationals) (138).

Affixation in Mizo is described according to the different ways in which new words are formed:

3.3.1. Formation of plurals by plural suffix

A large number of Mizo noun and pronoun form their plurals by taking inflectional suffixes. The inflectional suffixes for forming plurals are -n, -ng, -ni.

Let us look at the following examples -

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
a	an
ka	kan
i	in
he	heng
khi	khing
khu	khung
saw	sawng
kei	keini
nang	nangni
keimah	keimahni

SingularPlural

nangmah

nangmahni

amah

anmahni

Let us use the singular and plural form in sentences to show the difference in number. The English translation is given to clarify the change in number -

- a) Chaw a ei duh. (He/She wants to eat) (chaw – food, a – 3s, ei – eat, duh – want)
- Chaw an ei duh. (They want to eat.) Here, ‘an’ is 3p
- b) Hei hi ka in a ni. (This is my house.) Hei hi – This, Ka – 3s, in – house, a ni – it is
- Hei hi kan in a ni. (This is our house.) kan – 3p
- c) Chaw i duh em? (Do you want to eat food?) Chaw – food, i – 2s, duh – want, em – do you?
- Chaw in duh em? (Do you (plural) want to eat food?) in – 2p
- d) He in hi ka ta a ni. (This house is mine.) He in – This house, ka – 1s, ta – mine, a ni – it is
- Heng in hi ka ta a ni. (These houses are mine.) Heng in – These houses
- e) Khi thing khi ka phun a ni (That[at a higher level than the speaker]tree is planted by me)
- Khing thing khi ka phun an ni. (Those trees are planted by me)

- f) Khu vawk khu ka ta a ni. (That [at a lower level] pig is mine.)
- Khung vawk khu ka ta an ni. (Those [at a lower level] pigs are mine.)
- g) Saw lirthei/motor saw ka ta a ni. (That [at the same level] vehicle is mine.)
- Sawng lirthei/motor saw ka ta an ni. (Those [at the same level] vehicles are mine.)
- h) In hmuh duh chu kei hi ka ni. (I am the one you want to see.)
- In hmuh duh chu keini hi kan ni. (We are the people you want to see.)
- i) He hna hi nang lo zo teh aw. (Please finish this work.)
- He hna hi nangniin (?) lo zo teh u aw. (Please finish this work (plural).)
- j) Keimah ka ni. (It is I.)
- Keimahni kan ni. (It is we.) (written grammar ah chuan)
- k) Nangmah koh i ni. (You are called.) Nangmah – 1s (meaning you)
- Nangmahni koh in ni. (You are called. (plural)) Nangmahni – 1p
- l) Amah a kal. (He/She has gone/went.) Amah – 3s
- Anmahni an kal. (They have gone/went.) Anmahni – 3p

Formation of plural by adding the inflectional suffixes **-te** and **-ho**

In Mizo, the inflectional suffixes -te and -ho are added to a root word to make the singular form into plural. There are plural words formed by adding -teho or -hote which can be used interchangeably for some nouns as an inflectional suffix. Let us look at the following changes

- a. zirlai (student) - zirlaiho/zirlaite/zirlaihote (Students)
- b. zirtirtu (Teacher) -zirtirtute/zirtirtuho/zirtirtuhote/zirtirtuteho (Teachers)
- c. ringtu (Believer) - ringtute/ringtuho (Believers)
- d. Țhian (friend) - Țhianho/Țhiante/Țhianhote (friends)
- e. Pawl (group) – Pawlte/pawl-ho
- f. Thawhpui (colleague) – thawhpuite/thawhpuiho/thawhpuihote (colleagues)

The common noun **naupang** is used both in singular and plural form.

However, the addition of affixes -te and -ho makes the noun plural in form. Let us look at the following examples:

Liana chu naupang fel tak a ni. (Liana is a good kid [boy])

‘Naupang pakhat a zai mek (One kid is singing) OR Naupang pakhat a zai thin (One kid sings).

Mipa naupang a zai (A boy is singing)

Naupang **an** zai (Children are singing.)

Mipa naupang **an** zai (Boys are singing.)

Naupang**ho** an zai (Children are singing.)

Naupang**te** an zai (Children are singing.)

The inflectional suffix -teho and -hote are also used to form plural.

Țhian (Friend) - Țhiante/Țhianho/Țhianteho/Țhianzaho (Friends)

Neitu (Owner) - Neitute/Neituho/Neituteho (Owners)

Khalhtu (Driver) - Khalhtute/Khalhtuho/Khalhtuteho

Rualbanlo (challenged) - rualbanloho/rualbanlohote

3.3.2. New words formed by adding size affixes ‘-te’ and ‘-pui’

Formation of new words by adding the suffix ‘-te’ to nouns to indicate that they are small in size. The words formed by adding the suffix are also nouns. Look at the following examples:

Hawrawp (Letter)	-	Hawrawpte (Small letter/ lowercase letter)
Kawngka (Door)	-	Kawngkate (a small door)
Kekawr (Pants)	-	Kekawrte (Underpants)
Khuang (Drum)	-	Khuangte (a small drum)
bur (Container)	-	Burte (Small container)
Vawk (Pig)	-	Vawkte (Piglet/Small pig)
Ui (Dog)	-	Uite (a small dog)
In (House)	-	Inte (a small house)

The plural suffix –te and the size suffix –te are totally different from each other and must be used carefully to express the correct meaning intended. The size suffix –te, which is used to describe things which are small in size must be pronounced with a rising tone while the plural suffix –te is pronounced with mid tone. The difference in pronunciation creates a difference in meaning.

Many nouns can be referred to as small or smaller in size when compared with other objects by adding the suffix -te. On the other hand, the suffix **-pui** is used to denote something big or large in size, things which are greater or grander than other things when compared. In some animals, the suffix –pui is used to

describe the mother. This suffix is pronounced in the rising tone and must be differentiated from the other suffix –pui which is described later.

Look at the examples:

In (House) - **Inpui** (The main house/the house where the parents are living/the house inherited from the parents)

Khum (bed) – **khumpui** (a bigger bed or the bed of the head of the family)

Hrei (axe) – **hreipui** (a bigger axe)

Chem. (knife) – **chempui** (big knife or dao)

Sam (hair) – **sampui** (a strand of hair that is thicker than other hairs.)

Pa (father) – **Papuia** (elder brother of the father)

Arpui, **vawkpui**, **bawngpui**, **kelpui**, **saipui**, **Hlapui**, **lungpui**, **luipui**, **keipui**, **inkhawmpui**, **bepui**, **ṭampui** (great famine), **ṭampui** (a vegetable), **mupui** (big bullet), **mupui** (great eagle), **sapui** (big animal, usually a tiger), **indopui**, **mipui**(Crowd), etc. are new words formed from existing words by adding the suffix –pui and they all follow the examples given above.

3.3.3. The suffix ‘-pui’ used differently and not as a size suffix

The suffix -pui, which is pronounced in the low tone is used to denote things or titles shared by someone with others. This suffix is used commonly to refer to groups of individuals sharing a common title, and the like.

Sipai (Soldier) - **sipaipui** (fellow soldiers)

Zirlai (student) - **zirlaipui** (fellow students)

Zirtirtu (Teacher)	-	zirtirtupui (colleague)
Mistiri (carpenter)	-	mistiri-pui
Nurse	-	Nurse-pui (other nurses like him/her)
Doctor	-	doctor-pui (Fellow doctors)
Ukil	-	ukil-pui
Hausa (rich)	-	hausakpui (others who are also rich like him/her)
Rethei (poor)	-	retheihpui (poor like him/her)

Nulat**pui**, mipat**pui**, hmeichhiat**pui**, tlangval**pui**, upat**pui**, naupan**pui**, Mizop**pui**, chip**pui**, an**pui**, hmingthat**pui**, hmingchhiat**pui**, hmelchhiat**pui**, hmelthat**pui**, zaithiampui, thiampui, thiamloh**pui**, etc

The suffix -pui, which is pronounced in the mid tone is however used to denote things which is done in a group or together. This suffix is used commonly to refer to partner or partners sharing or doing the same action and it is also in describing the action of the pair or group.

Ei (to eat)	-	eipui (noun) – eipui (verb)
Ṭap (to cry)	-	Ṭahpui (used as noun) - Ṭahpui (verb)
Kal (walk)	-	kalpui (walking partner) - kalpui (walk with someone)

Lala hi ka kalpuiber a ni (Lala is my main walking partner)

Lala'n min kalpui dawn (Lala will go/walk with me)

Lala'n Kunga a kalpui (Lala is walking/walks with Kunga)

mut**pui**, zaip**pui**, hriat**pui**, an**pui**, duhpui, enpui, duhloh**pui**, etc.

However, there are words like hriatpui, hmuhpui, hriatthiampui, etc. wherein the suffix –pui is used only as a verb. If they are to be used as a noun, another noun suffix –tu has to be added. For example:

hria (know) – hriatpui (verb) (having a shared knowledge of something)– hriatpuitu (noun) ‘witness’

hmu (to see) – hmuhpui (verb) – hmuhpuitu (noun)

3.3.4. The repetitive suffix ‘-nawn’, ‘-leh’, ‘-ṭha’ and the adjectival suffix ‘-ṭha’

The suffixes –nawn, -ṭha and –leh are used as suffixes denoting a repetition of action. The suffix -ṭha, however must be used carefully because it can be used both to describe a repetition of action and something of a good quality. For example, the suffix -ṭha could be added to the verb zai (sing) to describe something entirely different - Zai-ṭha/zai-nawn (to sing again) and zai-ṭha (to sing well)

Tlan (run) - tlan-nawn (to run again), tlan-leh, tlan-ṭha (could mean to run again and can also be used to describe the act of running as a good run).

Kal (go/walk) – kalnawn and kalṭha (to repeat the action) – kalṭha (used as an adverb to describe the action)

Ti (act of doing something) – tinawn and tiṭha (repetition of the action)

– tiṭha (adverb used to describe how well the act has been done. It is also used as word to express appreciation of an action)

Kalnawn, ennawn, kapnawn, satnawn, sanawn, etc

3.3.5. The suffix -chhin is used to denote a trial action, or actions which are performed not as the final action but as a trial or a test.

Khalh (to drive) - khalh-chhin (to test drive)

ti-chhin, sa-chhin, kap-chhin, en-chhin, vaw-chhin, kalh-chhin, hru-chhin, ziak-chhin, etc

3.3.6. Formation of verbs by adding the suffix -sak, to verbs. The verbs thus formed implicate that the action is done for the benefit of someone else. Look at the following examples:

Ak (Carry in a bag) - Ahsak (To carry for someone)

Kap (To shoot) - Kahsak

Rap (To step on) - Rahsak

Bia (To talk with/to) - Biaksak (To talk to/with for someone)

Keng (To hold) - Kensak (To hold for someone)

Paih (to throw away) - Paihsak (throwing away things belonging to others)

Hawng (To open) - Hawnsak

Hmu (To see) - Hmuhsak

Hmang (to use) - Hmansak (to use something belonging to someone)

Chhar (To pick up), Zai (Sing/To operate), Vawm/Paih (To throw), Fak (To praise), Chhu (To hit/to type), Fiah (To prove), Kalh (To lock), Siam (To repair), en(to look/watch), chhiar (to read/count), perh (to shoot a sling/to strum a guitar), kheh (to open a cover), beng (to slap/to play a drum with the palm), sa (to sing/to build), hneh (defeat) etc are also following the above examples of changing from one word to a different word with the addition of the verb suffix –sak to the root word

3.3.7. Degree suffixes ‘-zawk’ and ‘-ber’

Comparative and superlative adjectives could be formed by the addition of the suffixes –zawk and –ber respectively to describe the comparative and superlative degrees. Let us look at the following examples:

Lian(big)	-	Lian zawk (Bigger)	-	Lian ber (Biggest)
Te (Small)	-	Te zawk (Smaller)	-	Te ber (Smallest)
Ring (Loud)	-	Ring zawk (Louder)	-	Ring ber (Loudest)
Chak (Powerful)	-	Chak zawk (More)	-	Chak ber (Most)
Ṭha (Good)	-	Ṭha zawk (Better)	-	Ṭha ber (Best)
Mawi (Beautiful)	-	Mawi zawk (More)	-	Mawi ber (Most)
Rit (heavy)	-	rit-zawk (heavier)	-	rit-ber (heaviest)
Zang (light)	-	zang-zawk	-	zang-ber
Vawt (cold)	-	vawt-zawk	-	vawt-ber
Lum (hot)	-	lum-zawk	-	lum-ber

Sang (Tall)	-	Sang-zawk	-	Sang-ber
Sei (long)	-	sei-zawk	-	sei-ber
Tawi (short)	-	tawi-zawk	-	tawi-ber
Chhia (Not good)	-	Chhe-zawk	-	chhe-ber
Tam (Plenty)	-	Tam-zawk	-	Tam-ber
Tlem (Less)	-	Tlem-zawk	-	Tlem-ber
Hria (Know)	-	Hre- zawk	-	Hre-ber

3.3.8. Derivational affixes in Mizo

The addition of derivational affixes to form new words follow a particular pattern in Mizo. Let us look at some examples of derivational patterns and their affixation processes in Mizo:

3.3.8.1. Nominalization – ‘In linguistics, nominalization or nominalisation is the use of a word which is not a noun (eg., a verb, an adjective or an adverb) as a noun or as the head of a noun phrase, with or without morphological transformation. The term refers, for instance, to the process of producing a noun from another part of speech which is not a noun, by adding a derivational affix. (Crystal 328)

- a. adjective-to-noun: The suffix –na in Mizo is a nominalizer, when added to an adjectives it change the word into a noun. The change in word class can be seen from the following examples:

thim→thimna (dark – darkness)

Sang →sanna (tall – tallness)

Lawm→lawmna (Happy – happiness)

Pawm→pawmna (Accept – acceptance)

Thinrim→thinrimna (angry – anger)

Dum →dumna (dark/black – darkness)

Thianghlim→thianghlimna (pure – purity)

Mawi→mawina (beautiful – beauty)

Hria→hriatna (know – knowledge)

Hlu→hlutna (valuable – value)

Hmuhna, khuhna, hawna, hriatna, simna, piantharna, chhandamna, sualna, thihna, nunna, damna, pianna, naupanna, puitlinna, mipatna, hmeichhiatna, duhawmna, thiamna, tlemna, etc. are all following the example given above. They are adjective, changed to noun with the addition of the nominalizer suffix -na

- b. verb-to-noun (abstract): Verbs are changed into nouns with the addition of the suffix -na. This is a very common form of derivation in Mizo. Let us look at the examples:

chhanchhuak (save)→chhanchhuahna (act of saving)

Hmuchhuak (discover) →hmuhchhuahna (act of discovering and inventing something)

Hrechhuak (recollect) – hriatchhuahna (act of recollecting)

Semchhuak (distribute) →semchhuahna (the act of distributing something to others)

Tlanchhuak (to break away) →tlanchhuahna (the act of breaking or running away)

Hrechhuak (to recollect) →hriatchhuahna

Enchhuak (to check out on something by looking at it)→enchhuahna (the act of doing it)

Pechhuak (to give out or to distribute)→pekchhuahna (the act of distributing things)

Hruaichhuak (to lead out/take them out) →Hruaichhuahna (the act of leading or taking others out)

Luangchhuak (flowing out) →Luanchhuahna (the act of flowing out from something that acts as a container)

Dingchhuak (standing out/being successful)→dinchhuahna (the act of being successful or standing out)

Bunchhuak (pour) →bunchhuahna

Bunchhuak (put on, esp shoes, socks and bangles) → bunchhuahna (The act of putting on something)

Kapchhuak (to shoot out) →kahchhuahna (the act of shooting something out)

c. verb-to-noun (concrete): -tu. This suffix, when added to a transitive verb change the verb into noun

Eg: ziak (write)→ziaktu (writer)
 Hmu (see) →hmutu (someone who see)
 Chhiar (read) →chhiartu (reader)
 Kap (shoot) →kaptu (shooter)
 Khalh (drive) →khalhtu (driver)
 En (look) → entu (onlooker)
 Nei (own) → neitu (owner)
 Hria (know) → hretu (someone who knows/witness)
 Chei (decorate) → cheitu (decorator)
 Lei (buy) → leitu (Buyer)
 Let (translate) → lettu (Translator), etc

3.3.8.2. adjective-to-verb: The prefix ti- is added to adjectives and the words are changed to verbs. It is used to describe the act of causing something to change its character. Let us look at the following examples:

 hlu (Valuable) → tihlu (to make it valuable or more valuable)
 Tlem (less) → titem (to lessen)
 Dum (black/dark) → tidum (to darken)
 Thianghlim (pure) → tithianghlim (to make it pure)
 Mawi (beautiful) → timawi (beautify)
 Tam (plenty) → titam (make it more)
 Rimtui nice scent) → tirimtui

Tui (delicious) → titui (to make it delicious)

Tui lo (not delicious) → titui lo (to make it not delicious)

Thiang (clear) → tithiang (make it clear)

Thiang lo (unclear) → tithiang lo (make it unclear)

Var (white) → tivar (to whiten)

Eng (light) → tieng (to light up)

Chiang → tichiang

Chiang lo → tichiang lo

Sang → tisang

Chhing → tichhing, thim → tithim, Chiang → tichiang, kim → tikim,

fuh → tiful, tam → titam, hmingṭha → tihmingṭha, bal → tibal, fai → tifai, nuam → tinuam, thawveng → tithawveng, harh → tiharh, etc, all follow the above rule and example given, that is, change of adjective into verb with the addition of the prefix **ti-**

3.3.8.3. adjective-to-adjective: -tak/duk/dal are mostly used to describe variant shades of the same colour. These suffixes are used to describe the darkness or the lightness of the same colour. These suffixes are mostly used to describe colour but -tak and -dal are sometimes used for describing the thickness and thinness of liquid substances.

sen (red) → senduk (dark red)/sendal (light red)/sentak (maroon)

Pawl (blue) → pawltak (dark blue)/pawlduk (navy blue)/pawldal (light blue)

hring (green) → hringtak/hringduk/hringdal

dum (black) however does not have –duk as its suffix which is used to describe a darker shade of the same colour.

Dal (a liquid food item, lentil soup/gravy) – dal-tak (thick one or thick lentil soup) – dal-dal (thin one or thin lentil soup)

Rawng (color) – rawng-tak (thick or dark color) – rawng dal (thin or light color)

Zu (alcohol) – he zu hi a tak hle (This is a strong alcohol.) – he zu hi a dal hle (this alcohol is not strong) – zu-tak/ zu-dal

3.3.8.4. noun-to-verb: ti- is added to nouns to form verbs. Many Mizo words, used as adjectives can also function as nouns. The addition of the prefix ti- changes the words from noun to verb

3.3.8.5. verb-to-adjective: The suffix -tlak is used to describe someone, something or some action which is worthy of being seen, appreciated, given, etc. (to convey its worth or worthiness)

Pe (to give) → Pek-tlak (worthy of being given something)

en (see/look) → en-tlak (that is worthy of being seen)

Hria (know) → hriat-tlak (that is worthy of being known)

Zir (to learn/study) → zir-tlak

Ngaihthla (to listen) → ngaihthlak-tlak

Phuar (to put in chain/bond) → phuar-tlak (someone who deserved to be put in chain/a bad person)

Chhuah (to release/publish) → chhuah-tlak

Chei (to beautify) → chei-tlak

Chhim (to attend) → chhim-tlak

Sa (to sing/build) → saktlak

Fak (to praise) → fak-tlak (someone or something who or which is worthy of being praised)

Chhan (to save) → chhan-tlak and Chhang (to respond) → chhan-tlak

3.3.8.6. The suffix –theih is added to verb to change it into adjective. This is shown in the following examples:

Ei (eat) – Ei-theih (that can be eaten)

Su (Wash) – suk-theih (that can be washed/washable)

Hmu (see) – hmuh-theih (that can be seen)

Hria (Know/hear) – hriattheih (That can be known or heard)

Khalh (Drive) – khalh-theih (That can be driven)

Fak (Praise) – Fak-theih (That can be praised)

Zai (Cut/Operate) - zai-theih (That can be cut/operated)

Words like, en, khawih, zir, sa, lawm, pawl, duh, ngaina, pawm, awi, etc all follow the rule of changing verb into adjective with the addition of the prefix –theih to the root word

3.3.9. Affixes of attitude

There are several affixes of this type, such as: duh, chak, ngei, hua, awm. It is usually added to nouns, adjectives of denomination.

Hmu (see) → hmu-duh (to want to see/desired to see)

Nei (own/have) → Nei-duh (to want to have/own it)

Kal (go) → Kal-chak (to want to go)

Hria (know/hear) → Hre-chak (to want to know/listen/hear)

Duh (want) → Duh-awm (lovely)

Ngei (detest) → Ngei-awm (detestable)

3.3.9.1 Reservative and deprivative affixes

These suffixes describe actions being reversed or of antonymic character. Suffixes like –let, -khalh and –san are used in such manner. Let us look at the following examples:

Pe (give) → pe-let (to give back/to return)

Hmu (see) → hmu-let (To regain/retrieve/get back)

En (look) → en-let (literally, to look back/to recollect/to review)

La (to take) → la-let (to take it back)

Beng (slap) → beng-let (to slap back)

Vua (to hit with a stick) → vaw-let (to hit in return)

Chhiar (to count) → chhiar let (to count in reverse)

Hlum (to wind, esp a thread) → hlum-let (to rewind)

Chhui-let, hrilh-let, pet-let, chhuih-let, keng-let, hnek-let, ti-let, vawm-let, etc can also be used like the above examples.

Kal (to go) → kal-khalh (to go before someone)

Pet (to kick) → pet-khalh (to kick before someone)

Ei-khalh, in-khalh, sak-khalh, hmuh-khalh, hriat-khalh, hma-khalh, pass-khalh, en-khalh, vawm-khalh, etc

Kal (to go) → Kal-san (to leave)

Nei (to have) → Neih-san (to have/marry someone else)

En (to look/care) → En-san (to stop caring for someone)

Ei (to eat) → Ei-san (not waiting for someone to eat/to eat before them)

Mu (to sleep) → Mut-san (not waiting for someone to sleep and sleep without waiting for them)

Biru (to hide) → Bihruk-san (to hide from someone)

3.3.10. Negative Affixes

Negative affixes are -sual, -chhia, and -lo. These prefixes are added to various types of words and expressions, mainly nouns and verbs to form the negative of the root word. The change can be seen from the following examples:

Sa (wild animals) - → sa-sual (wild animals that hunt and kill human beings)

Mi (human being) → misual (bad person)

Naupang (child) → naupang-sual (bad child)

Ṭhian (Friend) → Ṭhian-sual (Bad friend)

Kawng (road) → kawngchhia (bad or poorly maintained road)

Hmel (face/looks) → hmelchhia (ugly)

Rim (Odour) → Rimchhia (Bad smell/odour)

Ngai (to miss/longed for) → ngai-lo (not to miss)

Mawi (beautiful) → mawi-lo (not beautiful)

Fel (good) → Fel-lo (not good/bad)

Awm (Present/be) → Awm-lo (not present)

The suffix -sual is used to denote the negative or something which is not good or approved by others and to denote someone committing an error intentionally or unintentionally

Ti (act of doing something) – ti-**sual** (to sin/to be wrong)

Sa (to sing/to build) – sa-sual (to make a mistake in the act of singing or building)

Hria (to know) – hre-sual (to have a wrong information)

Kal (to walk/go) – kal-sual (an act of going/straying away from the main crowd/group, especially because of difference in religious belief. It can be used both as a noun and a verb)

En (to look/observe) – En-sual (looking at things other than the one prefer

Ei (to eat) - Ei-**sual** (allergy of things eaten)

Hmu (To see) - hmu-**sual**, (seeing things differently, literally

3.3.11. Locative prefixes

Affixes like -chung, -hnuai, -thlang, -chhak, -sir, -hnung, -hma, are locative prefixes in Mizo. Locative prefixes determine the place, or relative place, or (relative) direction, of action or objects.

In is a popular word in Mizo which means ‘house’. The addition of different locative prefixes highlights the use of these prefixes.

In-chung (the top or roof of the house. It could also mean someone, family or others living above us in the same building)

In-hnuai means the place or things which are below or under the house.

In-thlang - At a lower level than the house

In-chhak - At a level higher than the house

In-sir - The side of the house

In-hnung - Behind the house

In-hma - In front of the house

3.3.12. Affixes of Time and Order

An existing word is changed into word that talks about time by the addition of the suffix

The suffixes hmasa, laihawl, hnukung, hma, lai, hnung, etc. are affixes of time and order

Thleng (to reach) → thleng-hmasa (the first to reach)

Hun (time) → hun-hmasa (first part of a speculated time)

Hun (time) → hun-laihawl (middle period of a speculated time)

Hun (time) → hun-hnuhnung (last period of a speculated time)

Mi (human/someone) → Mi-lai (Middle one among siblings)

Tlar (queue) → Tlar-hma (front part of the queue)

Tlar (queue) → Tlar-lai (middle part of the queue)

Tlar (queue) → Tlar-hnung (back part of the queue)

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Chapter – 4

Ideophones, Borrowing, Slang and Cliticization

4.1. Ideophones

Crystal defines ideophones as “a term used in linguistics and phonetics for any vivid representation of an idea in sound, such as occurs through onomatopoeia”. (189). In a narrower but more helpful view, ideophones are expressives, characterising sounds, sensations, textures and feelings, usually, but not always, through morphological patterning¹. In many languages, ideophones have distinctive phonotactics. Ideophones do always have highly specific applications to the sensory world and describe visual, aural and emotional experiences in ways hardly paralleled elsewhere in the lexicon. They have a tendency to fill an adverb-like slot. One more term used in this respect is Mimesis. As stated by Shinji Ghaeyri Ido in “Turkish Mimetic Word-Formation” it is a term “used for mimetic words that comprise not only sound imitating words (or phonomimes), but also psychomimes and phenomimes which imitate psychological state and manner, respectively” (67).

Blench defines ideophones

“as expressives, characterising sounds, sensations, textures and feelings, usually, but not always, through morphological patterning.” He further states that “In many languages, ideophones have distinctive phonotactics, but they always have highly specific applications to the sensory world and describe

visual, aural and emotional experiences in ways hardly paralleled elsewhere in the lexicon.” (1)

Saussure said that language may have some pre-linguistic and pre-cultural relationship to sound, but that by the time we call the sound "Language", that relationship is so arbitrary that iconicity is no longer important or motivating. “The word arbitrary also calls for comment. The term should not imply that the choice of the signifier is left entirely to the speaker (we shall see below that the individual does not have the power to change a sign in any way once it has become established in the linguistic community); I mean that it is unmotivated, i.e. arbitrary in that it actually has no natural connection with the signified”(Saussure 69).

Deborah L. Cole said that ideophones can draw on elements from onomatopoeic, synesthetic, and conventional sound symbolism. If an ideophone is onomatopoeic, it represents environmental sounds in an imitative way. (Animal sounds like "oink" and "meow" are examples of onomatopoeia in English.) If an ideophone is synesthetic, it will be an acoustic symbolization of non-acoustic phenomena. For example, vowels are lengthened while pronouncing to stress the importance given by the speaker or the appearance of the things described. If an ideophone can be described as conventional sound symbolism, there will be an analogical relationship between language specific phoneme clusters and meaning. (An example of this is the use of the cluster 'sl' in English to represent things that are wet or do not have much friction as in `slippery', 'slick', 'slide' and `slimy') or the

use of ‘gl’ to represent things that are shiny as in ‘glitter’, ‘glisten’, ‘glow’, ‘gleam’, ‘glimmer’, etc

Mizo has a large register of words which are termed as sound symbolic or mimetic which are called ideophones in linguistics. These words are not just imitating the sound as being onomatopoeic, but they involve a much wider range of meaning and description. In fact, many ideophones in Mizo are used for things that do not make a sound or noise but suggest action, state of being and psychological state and manner.

Based on the study of Hinton, et. al. (1-6), the different types of sounds produced by human beings voluntarily and even involuntarily can be represented as shown in table 6

Involuntary Sounds	Corporeal Sound Symbolism	Onomatopoeia	Synesthesia	Conventional Sound Symbolism	Developed language
Sneezing, hiccupping	Purposefully clearing one’s throat	Swish Bang Smack	Low voice and vowel lengthening to represent large objects	‘gl’ in glitter, glisten, glow, glimmer	Most words in language. Eg. Dog, sit

Table 6 – Examples of types of sounds

There can be different ways of classifying ideophones. For this study, the sound symbolic words in Mizo will be classified under the following categories as classified by M. Shibatani (154):

- a) Animate phonomime
- b) Inanimate phonomime
- c) Phenomime
- d) Psychomime

4.1.1. Animate Phonomime – Animate phonomimes mimic the voice of things, the voice of people and animals. There are many animate phonomime in Mizo which will be explained by giving examples and showing how they are used.

The sounds made by animals and humans and the names given to animals according to the sounds they made –

- a) Miau – It mimics the sound made by cats and the term ‘miau miau’ is often used by children to refer to the animal making that sound, which is the cat. The term ‘*ngiau*’ is also used for mimicking the sound made by cats
- b) Bauh – It mimics the sound made by dogs and the term ‘bauh bauh’ is used by children to refer to dogs
- c) Ti-ti-ik-ik – It mimics the sound made by roosters and it is also used to refer to the animal making that sound.

- d) Kak – The name given to the sound made by ducks
- e) Chiap – It mimics the sound made by chicken and the term ‘chiap chiap’ is used by children to refer to chicken
- f) T̄uk – It refers to the sound made by a hen with chicken, the sound of a hen calling the chicken
- g) Nguk/Ngek – It mimics the sound made by pigs
- h) Bu – It mimics the sound made by cows and buffaloes and ‘bu bu’ is sometimes used to refer to the animal
- i) Be – It mimics the sound made by goats and lambs and ‘be be’ is used to refer to lambs
- j) Dawk-daw-lak – The sound made by a hen while laying eggs
- k) Huk – The crying sound of a deer
- l) Ungau – The cry of a wild cat
- m) Uṭawk – A toad (Lorrain 220). Onomatopoeic of the sound made by some species of toads
- n) Chingpirinu – The name of a large owl (75). The name mimics the sound made by the bird
- o) Thangfenpabawp – The name mimics the sound made by the bird
- p) Tuitu - The name mimics the sound made by the bird
- q) Tuklo – Species of a woodpecker (216). The name mimics the sound made by the bird

- r) Vaiva – The hill mainah (221). The name mimics the sound made by the bird
- s) Kangkang - The name mimics the sound made by the bird
- t) Awke/Chawke – The name given to the gecko, mimicking the sound made by the animal
- u) Choak – The name given to the crow, mimicking the sound made by the bird
- v) Hauhuk – The name given to ‘a black ape, a species of gibbon’ (93), mimicking the sound made by the animal
- w) Huk/Hahum – The roaring sound made by tigers/lions
- x) Rum – The gnarling sound made by animals when they are angry or in pain. The sound made by human beings when in pain
- y) Faifuk/Saisik – Whistling
- z) Su – The hissing sound made by snakes
- aa) U – The crying sound made by dogs, foxes and jackals. It can be used as ‘*Sihal/Ui an u chiam mai*’ (The dogs are crying out loud)
- bb) Vi – The flying sound made by mosquitoes
- cc) Chik/Ngik – The sound made by rodents and such similar sounding sounds made by other animals and insects.
- dd) Hnit/Sut – The sound made while blowing out air through the nostrils
- ee) Khuh – Coughing

- ff) Hahchhiau – Sneezing
- gg) Thui – To spit. To spit at someone abusively
- hh) Luak – Vomiting. The name is associated with the sound made while vomiting.
- ii) Uak – The sound made while vomiting

4.1.2. Inanimate Phonomime – Inanimate phonomimes mimic the sound of inanimate things, the sounds made by anything that is not alive

The names given to instruments from the sound they made and the sounds made by machines, objects and instruments are:

- a) T̄ingtang (N) – The guitar. A good example of mimetic word formation, where the name is given according to the sound made by the instrument
- b) Tawtawrawt (N) – The trumpet. Another good example of mimetic word formation
- c) Dup – This is used to refer to the thudding sound made by instruments like guns, drums, bass guitars, etc. It refers to a deep and low sound.

Eg – Silai a puak/ri dup mai

Khuang an vaw ri dup/ dup dup mai

T̄ingtang a perh ri dup/dup dup mai

- d) Dur – Describing a large sound, especially sounds made by bombs and thunder. The sound being lengthened a bit
- e) Dum – Loud and deep sound made by big guns, big drums and elongated
- f) Ṭhak – Sounds like the clapping of the palm, an open sound made by two objects hitting at each other
- g) Ṭhek – A smaller sound as compared to ṭhak and the instruments or materials making that sound will also be smaller than that of ṭhak
- h) Ṭhuai
- i) Ṭhiai
- j) Pup – Deep sound that seems to come out from something hollow
- k) Pawp -
- l) Pap –
- m) Phawrh -
- n) Thlawp –
- o) Thlup -
- p) Thlap -
- q) Thlep
- r) Thlurh –
- s) Tuarh -
- t) Khup -

- u) Khap -
- v) Khep -
- w) Kauh -
- x) Keuh -
- y) Rup
- z) Rap
- aa) Rep
- bb) Tlung
- cc) Tlang
- dd) Tleng
- ee) Chawrh
- ff) Charh
- gg) Cherh
- hh) Hrawk
- ii) Buai –
- jj) Nuai -

These are all ideophones and they represent the type of sounds produced and the manner in which it is produced. It is however difficult to give explanation in detail or give a description of every sounds. It must be noted that the mimetic words given to represent sounds made by different objects and instruments under different conditions are named according to the sound they produced and also according to

the instruments used for producing the sound. A native speaker will understand how the different sounds will be produced.

4.1.3. Phenomime – Phenomimes mimic or imitated the state of things, how they look, smells, develop, act and behave how things are done and how actions develop. Mizo is rich in phenomime and examples could be cited in different ways. Some instances of phenomimes in Mizo are:

1) Describing action (animate)

- a) Nui (Smile/Laugh) – *sen sen, ver ver, chen chen* are used in a positive manner, describing the pleasant way in which someone smiles. *Kur kur, Ker ker, sun sun, seng sung, chun chun, chur chur, ver vur, vur vur, uar uar, huah huah, hui* are used in a manner which is not pleasant, which could sometimes be rude or sometimes could show the unpolished manner of the person who is smiling or laughing. *Hawk hawk, huah huah* could be used to describe the intensity of smiling or laughing.
- b) Kal (Walk) – *vah vah, vawh vawh, fua fua, ziai ziai, zut zut, zet zet, chhut chhut, chhet chhet, boh boh, tlawih tlawih, thuak thuak, thauh thauh, thap thap, thep thep, thup thup, thang thang, hawh hawh, dan dan, den den, dun dun, dul dul, hul hul, dum dum*, etc describe the manner in which a person is walking, whether the person is walking gracefully, hurriedly, the quantity of

- those who are walking as a group and the manner in which they are walking, it could also be used to describe the stature of the person who is walking
- c) Zai (Sing) – *vang vang, vawng vawng, veng veng, hlarh hlarh, hlerh hlerh, hlurh hlurh, tleng tleng, tlung tlung, tang tang, awr awr, dem dem, dap dap,* etc. are used to describe the manner of singing, the mood and tone in which the singer is singing, the passion of the singer, the psychological state of the singer, etc
- d) Tlan (Run) – *fuafua, nal nal, zuk zuk, zawk zawk, dul dul, dam dam, dum dum, hum hum, hul hul,* are used to describe how fast the runner is, the manner of running, the quantity of runners, etc
- e) Zuang (Jump/Hop)-*zek zek, zak zak, zuk zuk, thoh thoh, thauh thauh, theuh theuh,* etc describe the physical appearance of the jumper and the manner in which the jumper is jumping. It can be used for describing human beings and animals
- f) Lam (Dance) – *darh darh, dah dah, derh derh, dawrh dawrh, durh durh, hluau hluau, mup mup,* describe the nature and manner of dancing employed by the dancer, the physical stature of the dancer, the skill of the dancer and the quantity of dancers are represented by the different terms used. Mup mup is used to refer to dancing in group only
- g) Thu (sit) - *thap, thep, thup, thuap, cham put, dul, nghuk, nghia* describe the manner in which a person or group sit

- h) Ngawi (be quiet) - *ṭhap, ṭhep, ṭhup, ṭhuap, ṭhiap, dak, duk, dek, hmak, hmun, hman, hmawn*, describe the condition and the manner of the person or the group becoming quiet. They also describe the state of mind and the psychological state of the person or group
- i) Ṭe (Scream) – *rawng rawng, ruai ruai, tuarh tuarh, ruah ruah, duar duar, duai duai, teng tung, ṭhawt*, describe the manner, loudness and the seriousness of the person who is screaming
- j) Thinphu (heartbeat) – *dup dup, dap dap, dep dep, zawih zawih* describe the manner in which the heart beats and the physical and psychological condition of the person whose heart is beating
- k) Vawih (Farting) – *pang, pawng, pung, peng, put, pet, pit, pherh pherh, phurh phurh, pawp pawp, ṭawt, ṭet, ṭut, thlurh thlurh, thlerh thlerh, thawp sat*, describe the manner in which someone farts. The loudness, the duration and the sound made by the action are described by the different ideophones associated with farting.

2) Describing action (inanimate)

- a) Thli thaw(the blowing of the wind) –*veng veng, vuk vuk, heuh heuh, hem hem, hum hum* describe the manner in which the wind is blowing, how strong and powerful it is.
- b) Tui luang (The flowing of water in stream, ocean, etc) – *del del, dem dem, dul dul, dum dum, heuh heuh, hiau hiau, hum hum, huau huau, ker ker, hum hum, delh delh*, etc are words describing the manner in which the water is flowing and the sound made by the water.
- c) Ruah sur(Rain falling)– *buan buan, seng seng, hmi, phingphisiau*, express the intensity and quantity of rainfall. For instance, *ruah sur buan buan* is a heavy downpour while *ruah sur seng seng* is a little shower
- d) Thingkung/Thingzar (Branches of a tree) – *kur siau siau, kur suau suau* convey the manner in which the branches of the tree is moving
- e) Motor tlan (The moving and running of vehicles on the street–*boh boh, hum hum, del del, zar zar, zuai zuai, dul dul*, illustrate the manner in which the vehicles are moving and the quantity of vehicles moving in group. It could be used to express the condition of the road on which the vehicle is running

- 3) Describing appearance (animate). These words are used to describe the appearance, the physical stature and posture of the person being referred to
- a) Sang(tall) – ek uak, iak uak, zit zet, zet zut, zir zer, zer zuar, thlirh thlerh, thlerh thlawrh,
 - b) Tawi (Short) – tip tep, tep tup, tim tem, terh tawrh, terh turh,
 - c) Cher(thin in nature)– din den, din dan, dik dek, thik thiak, thiak thuak, gin gen, gen gawn,
 - d) Thau (fat) – king keng, keng kung, mit met, met mut, mut mut, eng ung, pem pum, ping peng, peng pung
 - e) Ngo (fair skin) – pik piak, pek puak, phik phek, phek phuk, dip dep, dep dup, vir ver, ver vur
 - f) Hang (dark skin) – chel chul, thil thel, thel thul, thik thek, ril rel, nil nel, nel nul, mawk, beh
 - g) Thu (dark skin) – thik thek, thil thel
 - h) Chhe (imperative mood of *chhia* which means not good) –seng sung, bir ber, ber bur, bet but, bem bum, boh boh, ziar zuar, zir zer, zer zur, din den, den dun, beuh boh, chhet chhut, chip chep, chet chut, iak uak, ver vur, ting teng, teng tung,
 - i) Ria (Thin) – Thik thiak, thel thawl, thiu thiau, thil thel
 - j) Mum (Fat) – mit met, met mut, pil pel, pel pul,
 - k) Chum (Fat) – bit bet, bet but, mit met, met mut,

- l) Mam –pir per, per pur, thin then, then thun, zir zer, zer zur, zin zen, zen zun,
 - m) Pial – pil pel, pel pul, thin then, then thun
 - n) Bawl - ɬik ɬek, ɬek ɬuk, hriap hruap, hrep hrup
 - o) Thap – hrep hrup, hriap hruap
 - p) Nalh – thlih thlerh, thlerh thlawrh, thlap thlap, thlip thlep, thlep thlawp, zeih
zawih, zaih zaih,
 - q) Thur – bim bem, bem bum, chher chhur
- 4) Describing appearance (inanimate)
- a) Tle(Glitter) – sat sat, sar sar, sit set, siu siau, vir ver, ver vur, vit vet, vat vat,
ver ver, var var, hlih hlerh, hlerh hlurh, hliu hliau, vat, sar,
 - b) Sen(Red) – vit vet, vet vut, vet vet, vel vul, veng vung, thir ther, ther thur,
thik thek, thek thuk, hlih hler, hler hlur, hlar hlar
 - c) Eng (yellow) – pip pep, pep pup, piap puap,
 - d) Hring (green) – dip dep, dep dup, nghilh nghelh, nghelh nghulh,
 - e) Var (White) – vir ver, ver vur, per pur, pip pep, pep pup,
 - f) Dal (Pale) – dip dep, dek duk, ri riai,
 - g) Dum (Black) – thil thel, thel thul
 - h) Paw – thik thek, thek thuk, thel thual, theng thung, ri riai, rei ruai, chik chek,
chek chuk
 - i) Buang (Brownish) – thik thek, thek thuk, thing theng, theng thung

- j) Rang/Tial (multi colored) – rii ria, rei ruai, rik rek, rek ruk, biai buai
 - k) Zum(Pointed) – vit vet, vet vut, vir ver, vat vat, pit pat, pet put
 - l) Huh (wet) – pir per, per pur, zaih zuih, hlim hliam, hlem hluam, chip chep, chep chup, chiap chuap,
 - m) Hul (dry) – phik phek, phek phuk, hil hel, hel hul, hik hek, hek huk,
 - n) Ro (dry) – ri re, re ru, rim rem, rem rum, rip rep, rep rup, bim bem, bem bum, thip thep, thep thup, thep thuap
 - o) Nal (Slippery) – zik zek, zek zuk, zil zel, zel zul, pit piat, pet puat,
 - p) Thap, mam, bawl, pial are also used to refer to the appearance or state of inanimate objects
 - q) Eng (Light) – phit phet, phet phut, pep pup, uarh, pup, ve ve, ri re,
 - r) Thim (Dark) – rik rek, rek ruk,
 - s) Bial (Circle/round) – pip pep, pep pup, pim pem, pem pum, kirh kerh, kerh kurh, keng kung
 - t) Sawl (Oval) – peu puau, pet put, zit zet, zet zut
- 5) Describing condition or state of being –
- a) Lek lek – Lu thle lek lek (to swing the head)
 - b) Che che – Nung che che (barely alive)
 - c) Tawk tawk – Kal tawk tawk (walking with much difficulty)
 - d) Tek tek – hram tek tek (animals, especially young ones crying softly)

- e) De de –kal de de (walking softly)
- f) Ve ve – Eng ve ve (dimly lit light)
- g) Riai riai – Ral riai riai (slowly decomposing)
- h) Chiai chiai -
- i) Dawn dawn – thleng dawn dawn (nearly reaching) zo dawn dawn (nearly getting over)
- j) Thuak thuak – en thuak thuak (observe or look casually)
- k) Larh larh – keng larh larh (holding something with pride or trying to show it to others)
- l) Vauh vauh – en vauh vauh (to look or observe with interest/ attention)
- m) Dauh dauh - en dauh dauh (to look or observe with interest/ attention)
- n) Dek dek – en dek dek (look/observe cautiously)

4.1.4. Psychomime – Psychomime mimics or imitates emotions or the way someone feel. Let us look at instances of psychomime in Mizo with the following examples:

- a) Tum bur, tum bar and tum ber² – *Tum* is to show a sad face. The words bur, bar and ber are psychomimes describing the nature in which the person shows his sad face and is also used for describing the appearance of the person who is showing a sad face. '*A tum bur mai*' is normally used for describing a big person, '*a tum bar mai*' is used for describing an average sized person, '*a tum ber mai*' is used to describe a person small in size. On the other hand, '*a tum*

bur mai’ is also used to describe the intensity of showing a sad face and it is used to describe a most serious sad face. ‘*A tum bar mai*’ is describing a lesser intensity of sad face as compared to ‘*tum bur*’. ‘*A tum ber mai*’ is used to describe the least intensity of showing a sad face. The ideophones *bur*, *bar* and *ber* are also used with *Ngui*, which is another term for being sad and showing a sad face.

Ideophones *bur*, *bar*, *bam*, *bemand* *ber*, etc are used in other situations also. In Mizo, *mu* is a verb which means sleep. If we say ‘*a mu bur mai*’, it means the person sleeping is big, and it can also mean that he is not in a happy state. ‘*A mu bam/bem mai*’ means the person sleeping is not that big and it is also used for referring sympathizingly about someone who is sleeping because s/he is not well.

- b) *Chapo ber ber*, *chapo bar bar*, *chapo bur bur*, *chapo ber bur* – *Chapo* means proud and the ideophones used for describing the person who is proud. They are used for describing the size of the person being referred to and the way in which the person is showing how proud he/she is
- c) *Mit terh* is to have a sore and watery eye. If it is used as ‘*A mit a terh zek mai*’ it means we are referring to someone small in size but if is used as ‘*A mit a terh zuk mai*’, we are talking about someone who is large in size and that the sore eye is in a bad condition

- d) *Inngaitlawm dik dek, inngaitlawm dek duk* –*Inngaitlawm* means being humble or modest. *Dik dek* and *dek duk* are used to describe the state of the person who is humble.
- e) *Nui seng, nui sung, nui sen sen, nui huau huau, nui chen chen, nui chun chun, nui vur vur, nui ver ver, etc* –*Nui* means smile. *Nui seng, nui ver ver* and *nui sen sen* are used in a positive nature describing the person who is smiling as lovely and sweet. *Nui sung, nui sun sun* and *nui huau huau, nui vur vur, nui chun chun, etc* are used for describing someone in a comical manner, not a very polished manner of laughing, and a rude way of laughing.
- f) *Hlim ver ver, hlim vur vur, etc* –*Hlim* is the state of being happy. *Ver ver* and *vur vur* add attributes to describe how happy the person is, her/his appearance and how s/he exposes her/his happiness

4.1.5. Reduplication – Reduplication in language is a morphological type that – through doubling a word, element, root, or stem – enhances, emphasizes, amplifies, enlarges, diminishes, adds number or changes verb tense – to bring about significant meaning changes or shades of meaning. (Kauffman 1). Spencer & Zwicky (130) say that ‘Reduplication is a morphological phenomenon in which the base, root, stem of a lexeme or a part of it is repeated completely or with a slight change’.

4.1.5.1 Complete or Full reduplication - This type of recurrence occurs when morphemes or larger linguistic units are repeated totally both in form and meaning (Ghomeshi et al.; Nadarajan 41- 42). This is the most common form of reduplication in Mizo. Let us look at the following instances of complete reduplication –

Sawi pui sawi pui, an ennawn ennawn, sawi nawn/that sawi nawn/that, hrilh nawn hrilh nawn, chhiar that chhiar that, pek tlak pek tlak, tih sak tih sak, kal chhoh kal chhoh, tlan chak tlan chak, tlan muan tlan muan, ensan ensan, hriat pui hriat pui, ka hrilh ka hrilh , an enpui an enpui , an sakpui an sakpui, naupang te te, naupang zawng zawng, ngar ngar, ngur ngur, char char, chur chur, cher cher, chuar chuar, chet chet, che che, mep mep, mup mup, map map, buk buk, boh boh, bawrh bawrh, buan buan, mai mai, vak vak, veng veng, vung vung, vang vang, mawi loh loh nen, i hriat hriat, i duh duh, chin chin, chen chen, mawi loh loh nen, etc. These are just a small portion of complete reduplication in Mizo taken as example.

4.1.5.2. Partial reduplication - A part of word is repeated to come up with a variety of forms. Since there is no clear-cut between morphological and phonetic boundary in partial reduplication, we mention its types concerning sound change (Spencer and Zwicky 132; Nadarajan 42).

Let us look at the following instances of partial reduplication –

I ngaihdan dan a ni mai, I thatchhiat chhiat nen, I lainat nat an him ang, a hmeltha tha in duh, a hmelchhia chhia, a hmaibawl bawl, a riltam tam, a mipa pa in dawih, a

hmeichhia chhia in fel, a zaithiam thiam an tel lo, a upa pa an chhuak hmasa, a naupang pang an awm rei, a hrechiang chiang ang ngawi, a dawihzep zep an tlanhhia, a huaisen sen an dingchang dawn, a thiam hmasa sa in haw ang, a thiam hnuhnung hnung, a ropui pui, a zahpuiawm awm, a pangchang chang, a thiam-lo lo, a neinung nung, a fengchhing chhing, a hausa sa, a rethei thei, a inren ren, a thinrim rim, chet chut, khawi office fis nge eng department ment nge, a Pastor tor hian an duh lo, a Officer cer an kal, a mistiri ri an ze, a khuangpu pu an zai thei, a hruaitu tu an hah, a neilo lo an awl, a thiamthei thei vannei, a mikhual khual an huangtau, a en nasa sa an ni, a hriatpui pui hian an dawng ang, tu tihdan dan emaw, etc. These are just a few examples of the many instances of partial reduplication in Mizo.

English words like department, office, Pastor, Officer, etc are clipped and repeated in a short form which are good instances of partial reduplication in Mizo. Partial reduplication, in most of the cases mentioned above, is used to emphasize the noun and the addition in number, that is from singular to plural

4.1.5.3. Vowel alternation in reduplication

Let us look at instances of vowel alteration (ablaut) in Mizo:

- i. The vowel *i* altered to *e*. Let us look at the examples -
 - a) *Zum vit vet* – Pointed tip of an instrument
 - b) *Bial pip pep* – Description of a rounded figure – somewhat small

- c) *Hang thil thel* – Having a dark skin color
- d) *Ria thil thel* – Having a thin and frail body
- e) *Chum mite met* – Fat and round figure

ii. The vowel *e* altered to *u*. Let us look at the examples -

- a) *Meng ker kur* – To open the eye in an unpleasant manner
- b) *Tle ver vur* – Shiny
- c) *Thur bem bum* – Uncombed and unkempt hair
- d) *Bial pep pup* - Description of a rounded figure – somewhat big
- e) *Lum pep pup* – Lukewarm, neither too hot nor too cold

iii. The vowel *e* altered to *ua*. Let us look at the examples –

- a) *Chhe zer zuar* – Repulsively long and lanky
- b) *Duham hem huam* – Grossly greedy
- c) *Muang cher chuar* – Intolerably slow
- d) *Sawl peu puau* – Awfully oval in shape.
- e) *Da lep luap* – Lacking good taste

iv. The vowel cluster *ia* altered to *ua*. Let us look at the examples –

- a) *Ngo piak puak* – Having a fair skin, but the expression used here is not heartening
- b) *Nasa siau suau* – Great in number, especially an action of a group
- c) *Cher thiak thuak* – Thin, tall, awful and lanky

- d) *Kiar hiar huar* – Big and rounded. Used to refer to the potbelly of a person
 - e) *Nal piat puat* - Slippery
- v. The vowel cluster *ei* altered to *awi*. Let us look at the examples –
- a) *Chhe thei thawi* – Odiously thin
 - b) *Vawt reih rawih* – Cool and refreshing, especially air and liquid substance
 - c) *Hriam hreih hrawih* – Very sharp. Referring to knives and other objects used for cutting things
 - d) *Chhe beih bawih* – Vile behavior, especially in the choice of words.
 - e) *Tak ngeih ngawih* – Thick liquid/color
- vi. The vowel cluster *eu* altered to *o*. Let us look at the examples –
- a) *Chhe beuh boh* – Not good in appearance and movements, especially walking
 - b) *A kal theuh thoh chu* – To walk in an unpleasant manner
 - c) *En duh deuh doh* – To look at something or someone, giving full attention and being amazed by the thing or the person
 - d) *Hawi nasa veuh voh*–Looking around

4.1.5.4.Reduplication in Baby-Talk – As infants begin to develop speech, reduplication is an important feature of their phonologies. Words that the baby can understand but not quite articulate completely are easier to shorten into doubled syllables such as water which becomes wawa, church becomes zai-zai (zai – to sing, so, church becomes a place where people sing), vehicle becomes drun-drun, imitating the sound made by the vehicle and so forth. As infants discover the ability to speak, they typically develop words such as mama, dada, papa, boo-boo, poo-poo, bye-bye bah-bah, u-u, na-na, kal-kal and a whole array of words for grandparents (e.g., pi-pi, pu-pu), many of which are reinforced by parents or caregivers. Children universally develop the art of reduplication (but not to the same extent) and use it until an age that they are able to pronounce words fully. The disappearance of reduplication happens at different ages and depends upon reinforcement by adults in the child’s life. Some of the most common reduplication in baby talk are:

- | | | | |
|-------|------------|---|---|
| i. | Pi-pi | - | Grandmother |
| ii. | Pu-pu | - | Grandfather |
| iii. | Ma-ma/A-nu | - | Mother |
| iv. | Pa-pa/A-pa | - | Father |
| v. | U-u | - | Elder siblings |
| vi. | Na-nau | - | Younger siblings |
| vii. | Drun-drun | - | Vehicle (Imitating the sound) |
| viii. | Pit-pit | - | Vehicle (Imitating the sound of the horn) |

ix.	Zai-zai	-	Church
x.	Bah-bah	-	Scolding someone/Expressing anger
xi.	Mu-mu	-	To sleep
xii.	In-in	-	To drink
xiii.	Fai-fai	-	To be clean/clean oneself/take a bath
xiv.	Ṭhu-ṭhu	-	To sit
xv.	Bup-bup	-	To be in pain as a result of hitting something or getting hit by something
xvi.	Ei-ei	-	To eat
xvii.	Ding ding or ding le le	-	To stand or be able to stand
xviii.	Put-put	-	To fart
xix.	E-e	-	To pass motion
xx.	Dam-dam	-	To feel better
xxi.	Na-na	-	To be in pain
xxii.	Sawt-sawt	-	Injection (Taking medicine)
xxiii.	Va-va	-	Bird
xxiv.	Bauh-bauh	-	Dog
xxv.	Miau-miau	-	Cat
xxvi.	Bu-bu	-	Cow

4.1.5.5. Repetitive Noun – Reduplication wherein the noun is repeated fully or partially. Examples of repetitive noun reduplication are given:

tu in in nge kan tlawh ang, tu ram ram hi nge, tu hmel hmel nge lang, eng ram ram nge tel dawn, i naute zingah tu tu nge rawn kal dawn, in zin hunah khawi khawi nge tlawh in tum, a mipa pa in dawih, a hmeichhia chhia in fel, a zaithiam thiam an tel lo, a thiam hmasa sa in haw ang, ka hriat-loh loh an ni, ka rin rinin an hmu, etc

4.2. Other Word Formation Processes

4.2.1. Borrowing –

Crystal defines borrowing as

A term used in comparative and historical linguistics to refer to a linguistic form taken over by one language or dialect from another; such borrowings are usually known as ‘loan words’ (e.g. restaurant, bonhomie, chagrin, which have come into English from French), and several types have been recognized. Less commonly, sounds and grammatical structures may be borrowed, e.g. the pronunciation of the above loan words with a French or quasi-French accent, or the influence of English grammar often found in European languages, e.g. using an English plural -s for a noun, as in drinks, ski-lifts, goals, girls (58).

Borrowing is another form of word formation which is frequent in Mizo too. Chhuanvawra lists more than 200 words in Mizo borrowed from Hindi, around 10

each from Arabian, Persian and Sanskrit, and a large amount of words from English. Chhuanvawra makes classification like the term borrowed from the Bible and other holy books, words in which both the foreign and local versions are used, slight modification in spelling from the borrowed words, and those that are used directly as it is in the language from which it is borrowed. For those that are used as it is, he classified them into (a) things inside the house (b) Terms used in education and learning (c) Words associated with vehicles (d) Sports and different sport disciplines (e) Health and related issues (f) Church and Ministry (g) Others

Directly borrowed words from English and other languages can be classified as follows:

1) Names of fruits and vegetables: For example, apple, grape, tomato, pear, carrot, bean, hmarcha, etc

2) Names of objects and instruments: For example, pen, pencil, scale/ruler, sofa, side-table, plier, wrench, plug, bowl, measuring tape, fridge, TV, Computer, slipper, bucket, fan, blanket, cushion, x-ray, cement, iron-rod, switch, plug, fan, wire, gas, pendrive, disc, film, cylinder, mobile phone, etc.

3) Names of places: For example, sitting room, college, restaurant, hotel, office, police station. Classroom, school, bazaar, etc

4) Names of professions and designations: For example, lecturer, police, nurse, doctor, technician, pastor, driver, peon, clerk, assistant, chairman, secretary, director, president, headmaster, member, etc

5) Names of musical and other sound instruments: For example, guitar, keyboard, violin, drum-set, mic/sound cables, mic (for microphone),

6) Names of clothes: For example, jeans, t-shirt, jacket, coat, pull-over, pyjama, muffler, mawza, kurta/kurti, gamchha, etc

7) Medical Profession and associated terms: For example, IV, ICU, ECG, MRI, TB, HIV, AIDS, blood-bank, calcium, vitamin, iron, clinic, vein, ward, hepatitis, allergy, diaper, refer, chemo, specialist, dialysis, etc

8) Church and associated terms: For example, Baptist, Pentecostal, Salvation Army, Seventh Day Adventist, Roman Catholic, Jehova Jire, Presbyterian, Pastor, Brother, Sister, Sacrament, Wine, Moderator, Chairman, Secretary, fellowship, congregation, Committee, etc

9) Sports and terms associated with it – For example, Ball, referee, umpire, field, boxing gloves, ball-boot, bat, racket, shuttle-cock, pass, spin, boxing, net, service, set, game, out, basketball, penalty, yellow-card, red-card, manager, coach, captain, trophy, tournament, offside, league, academy, jersey, etc

10) Flowers and terms associated with it – For example, Rose, Lily, Violet, greenhouse, pot, flower-show, etc

11) Food items – For example, Paneer, alu, dal, feren anṭam, masala, badam, salad, curry, pickle, tel, apple, etc

12) Terms associated with School subjects – For example, Literature, Science, Mathematics, laboratory, atom, mercury, poem, poetry, test-tube, triangle, square, root, LCM, HCF, précis, essay, notice, etc

13) Modern gadgets and related terms – For example, laptop, computer, CD, pendrive, hot-spot, signal, whatsapp, facebook, Bluetooth, etc

14) Others – There are a large number of other words borrowed from English. A few examples of such words are,

Adviser	Alto	Address	Affidavit
Biscuit	Badge	bike	book-room
Cartoon	carol	cashier	cheque
District	diet	data	date
Editor	exam	enter	evangelist
Formal	fine	file	form (for uniform)
Guitar	gang	gas	gig

Hello	Hall	Hell	Helicopter
Inches	idol	icon	`improvise
Jacket	jail	junior	join/joint
Kung-fu	key	Kilometer	Kindergarten
Leader	light	loan	legal
Member	middle	mint	message
Nimbu	Naik	net	naia
Order	Olympic	on	overdose, etc

There are other words which are borrowed and then nativized in phonology.

For example:

Doctor - Daktawr,	Kettle - Ketli	Office - Awfis
School - Sikul	Rucksack - Rawksai	Cartridge - Kartut
Lantern - Laltin	Trough - Ṭawp	Baptise – Baptis
Cross – Kraws	Paradise – Paradis	Psalm – Sam
Baramda – Veranda	chauka – choka	chuna – chinai
Kapja – Kawpza	qamees – Kamis	sahib – sap
Sarkar – sawrkar	wakil – ukil	ṭokri - ṭukri

Satan – Satin (cloth)	rumal – rawmawl	rangrut -rawngrut
Pisha – Pisa	haraf – hawrawp	dahi – doi
Stove – Thuk	Step/Stairs – Kailawn	Ambassador – Palai
Bhujia – Buzia	Bora – buara/saiip	relgari – rel
Sentry – santiri	Holland - Awlan	paisa – pawisa
Nahi – nai	Yes – yesi	Bhaia – Vaia
Wine – uain	reserve – rizap	Sepoy - sipai

Company (East India Company) - Kumpinu , etc (Chhuanvawra 189-197)

There is also a process of hybridization in compound formation where at least one component of the compound word is from English. Examples:

Tyre – Motor ke	Cushion – Seat dup
Bulb – Electric Balf	Electric Pole – Electric ban/Thirhrui ban
Water pipe - Tui pipe	Electric wire - Electric hrui
Flower pot - Pangpar pot	Gas stove - Gas thuk
Note book - Note bu	Jean Pants – Jean kekawr
To score – Point-hmu	motor-steering – motor-khalthna
To blow the horn - Horn-pe	To curl the hair - sam-curl

To cut the hair – Sam-cut-tir	Put on eye lenses – Lens-vuah
To give/add color – Color-pe	To carry a bag – Bag-ak
Use a phone – Phone-hmang	To make a frame (photo) – Frame-tir
Playing games – Game-khel	Play with toy – Toy-khalh
Hit the brake – Brake-rap	Drive a car/bike – Bike/Motor khalh

In these examples, an English and a Mizo word are put together to construct a hybrid compound.

With the passage of time, English became the second language for the Mizos and a large section of the population is often found using the lexical items of English instead of the original first language. Examples are:

Toys – Inkhualtelemnna	Bedroom – Pindan	Motor – Lirthei
Lipstick - Hnawih sen	phone – biakhlatna	Closet/almira - Chhuar
Scale - Rin ngil	Guitar - Tingtang	Towel - Hruk puan
Mattress - Awng phah	Bag - Ipte	Step - Kailawn
Bicycle - Thirsakawr	English - saptawng	Coat – Kawrchung
Pen – Kawlawm	plate – chawthleng	plan – ruahmanna
Necktie – nghawngawrh	electric – kawlphehta	pot – pangpar khawina

Hanger – kawr khaina	Randa – Thing nawrna	Aara – Thing zaina
Bible – Pathian lehkhabu	Cycle – Thirsakawr	Kamis – Kawr
Necktie – Nghawngawrh	Drill – Thingverhna	Chair - Thutthleng

It was the missionaries from Wales, who gave us our alphabets, start formal education for us and introduce the skill of reading and writing to us. So, many English words came into Mizo as loan words. With the development in science and technology, more and more English words and new terms associated with IT are coming into the Mizo language as loan words. What all this tells us is that science and technology are leading human society forwards, and that the world is making progress in this way. Language (vocabulary in this connection) is in constant change so that it keeps pace with the development of human society. So in the long run, there will be more and more loans and derivations in the two languages.

4.2.2. Slang - Spolsky (35) characterized slang as a peculiar type used in “intimate” conversations for a group. Slang is a kind of jargon characterized by refusal to the formal rules, the comparative freshness and ephemerality general and used to claim solidarity. Slang is associated to communication between peers and communication that be used by gangsters. In accordance with Coleman (2), slang is usually used to describe the level of language that is more informal than the standard, less domestic than colloquial and less formal than jargon. Slang is one of the higher variation of the language used in the community. A. Chaer and L. Agustina (67) define slang as social variation that is privileged and confidential. The use of slang usually formed in abbreviating or removal of one or more letters in a word, or even a change in sound and meaning. Some of the most popular and commonly used slang in Mizo are:

- a) BC – Used to refer to something that is old and passé. The meaning taken from the abbreviation BC (Before Christ) which refers to something that is of the past. Eg. *I inchei BC lutuk* (Your dress is very BC)
- b) Cial – Clipped form of the word ‘special’ in English. In Mizo, it is used to refer to something, someone or some action that is special and extraordinary. For example, *A kawr chu a ‘cial hle mai* (Her/His dress is so ‘cial)*I zai cial top* (You sang so well)
- c) Coach – This is used to talk about someone flirting, caring or mentoring someone of the opposite sex in matters relating to having a girl/boyfriend. It could also mean taking care of and training someone in the art of love. For example, *An in coach leh tawh* (They are coaching each other again/They are together again)
- d) Confi – Another clipped form of the English word confident. It is used to refer to someone having confidence. *A confi hle* (S/he is very confident)
- e) Contri/Con – Clipped from ‘contribute’. It is used to when sharing and contributing is needed to pay or do something. For example, *Taxi man chu contri/con mai i la* (Lets share the taxi fare or Lets contribute for the taxi fare)
- f) Cool - Used in the English equivalent of describing a person, a thing, an event or other things as likeable, acceptable, presentable, fitting, appropriate, popular, one that does not present a problem, etc. For example, *Liana hi a*

- cool e* (Liana is so cool), *A inchei cool e* (His dress is cool), *A zai cool top* (He is a good singer/sang cool)
- g) Cow – Shortened form of ‘cowboy’. It is used to refer to someone who is wild and brave like the cowboys of the wild west. For example, *A inchei cow hle mai* (He dress like a cowboy)
- h) Den – Clipped and modified form of ‘danger/dangerous’. For example, *Kan zirtirtu chu a den hle* (Our teacher is very dangerous)
- i) Expi – Clipped form of ‘experienced person’. It is used to refer to someone having good experience in matters relating to a particular field. It can have negative and positive insinuation. Eg., *Hmangaihna lamah hi chuan expi tak a ni* (S/he has great experience in matters relating to love)
- j) High – High here is from the English meaning of “High horse”. It is used on a person who is arrogant with a superior attitude just because of no reason at all. Basically, it is a person with assumed high status who throws his/her weight around in front of others. *A inla high em mai* (S/he is behaving like a high-horse)
- k) Hit – To take drug and other abusive substances in order to get high
- l) Over – To refer to someone as extreme or exaggerating actions, behavior, thoughts, etc. It could be used to have both negative and positive implications. For example, ‘I over em mai’ (You are so extreme)

- m) Profe—Clipped form of ‘professional’. It is used to refer to person with high and sophisticated skill and ability. It is also used to refer to behavior, characteristics and performances which are very professional-like
- n) Quit—It might have been taken from ‘to quit’. It means doing/having/taking everything without leaving anything. For example, *A ei quit vek* (S/he ate everything), *La quit mai rawh* (Take everything), *An ti quit vek tawh* (All of them have done it)
- o) Raw - It usually means something macho or hardcore, something unpolished and unsophisticated. For example, *A raw-in an zai tawp, a na ngawt ang* (They operated her/him without anaesthesia)
- p) Shake - In Mizo, the verb *Thing* means “to shake”, literally. However, the verb *thing* is also used to refer to someone buying second-hand clothes. So, the English translation of the other verb is used here. For example, *Second-hand kawr shake ang* (Lets buy second-hand clothes), *Ka shake a nih hi* (It is a ‘shake’)
- q) Si – It is a clipped form of ‘senior’ but the sound of the first syllable /sɪ/ is taken here. This slang is used by the youth to describe somebody older than them, and is usually considered derogatory, because it is used mainly to describe a woman, and describing somebody old in this case is more about becoming senile, useless and loss of beauty rather than maturity

- r) Spin – To hit or be hit, especially on the head with the palm, being beaten up or to beat up somebody. For example, *Ka spin hrep a* (I beat him up), *Min spin a* (They've beaten me up)
- s) Spoon – Having sexual intercourse. A term used by the male partner to refer to the female partner
- t) Star - In the Mizo context, it takes the form of a verb, and it means “to be a fan of somebody” or “to have a crush on someone”
- u) Tri – Clipped form of ‘Tribal’, referring someone and something as unrefined and without class.
- v) UT – An acronym for Union Territory. Mizoram was a Union Territory before becoming a State. So, this term is used to refer to things and people that are old and outdated
- w) Korean – To refer to fashion, looks, style, talk and other behavior as pertaining to Korean as an indication of adoration of the Korean and the culture and tradition associated with it. For example, *A sam hi a Korean e* (His hair is Korean-like)
- x) Pherh – Homosexual or showing attraction and affection towards the same sex, especially, male.
- y) Spot – A rendezvous or a meeting place, a place to gather with friends, usually away from home and the crowded city. For example, *Sunday tlai chu spot-ah aw* (Lets go to our spot this Sunday evening)

z) Tikte – Locally made drinks packed in thermoplastic or polythene. One *tikte* will have 3-4 packets of drinks, depending on the size of the plastic and on the rise and fall in price of the drinks.

4.2.3. Cliticization – Crystal defines clitic as “A term used in grammar to refer to a form which resembles a word, but which cannot stand on its own as a normal utterance, being phonologically dependent upon a neighbouring word (its host) in a construction” (80). Cliticization is thus a morphological operation that does not create new words, but still combine two morphemes together in one word.

4.2.3.1. Omission of letters – Let us look at instances where letters are omitted to form new words and sometimes, an entirely new words are formed without any sign of omission. However, it can be seen that these words are a product of omission of letters in the root word or by combining words

- a) Lo'ng – This is a combination of lo+ang where the letter 'a' is omitted and replaced with an apostrophe and written as a single word *lo'ng*. However, it has been written by many in the full form as '*lovang*' or in the shortened form as '*lawng*'. The intrusion of 'v' between the vowels 'o' and 'a' is a topic of much debate and will not be dealt with here. However, to write lo+ang as '*lawng*' in the Mizo Bible and other formal writings is unacceptable because the creation of a new word '*lawng*' is not at all analogous to the combination of '*lo*' and '*ang*'. The shortened form '*lo'ng*' and '*lawng*' has the same pronunciation and this could be the only reason for using it. Otherwise, there is no justification for writing *lo+ang* as *lawng*
- b) R'u – Rawh+u, a positive request, a prayer or an order, when used in written and verbal form is shortened as 'r'u' using apostrophe. However, it is also written as 'ru' without using the omission mark which could be mistaken as 'ru' (steal). The word r'u asks others 'to do/act'. For example, *Kal r'u* (Go or you go), *En r'u* (Have a look at it, take a look, observe), *Zai r'u* (Sing, you must sing), *Hlau r'u* (Be afraid)

- c) S'u – Suh+u is also another form of request, order or prayer but in a negative way, requesting others 'not to do/act'. This, when written without apostrophe 'su' could be mistaken as 'washing' and 'hitting somebody, especially with a vehicle'. For example *Kal s'u* (Do not go or you must not go), *En s'u* (Do not have a look at it, do not take a look, do not observe), *Zai s'u* (Do not sing, you must not sing), *Hlau s'u* (Do not be afraid)
- d) A'n – 'A+han', 'a+rawn', are written as 'a'n'. However, like the previous case, 'a'n' is also written as 'an' without the apostrophe. However, since there is omission of letter or letters in this case too, it must properly be written as 'a'n'. For example, *Lala chuan a han en a*, can be written as *Lala chuan a'n en a* or, *Lala'n a'n en a*
- e) Ka'n –Ka+han and Ka+rawn are to be written as 'Ka'n' but it usually is written as 'Kan', thereby not highlighting the omission of letter or letters with the use of apostrophe and could also be mistaken with the first person plural pronoun. For example, *I duh angin ka han ti ang e* can be written as, *I duh angin ka'n ti ang e* (I will do as you wish)
- f) Ama'n - Amah+in, amah+chuan, amah+hian, amah+saw'n. This is also written as 'aman' not showing the presence of apostrophe to let others know that there is an omission of letter or letters. For example, *Amah chuan a hria maw* can be written as *Ama'n a hria maw*

- g) Ani'n – Ani+in, ani+chuan, ani+hian, ani+saw'n. Ani'n is used for Third person, singular, possessive case
- h) Anni'n –Anni+in, anni+chuan, anni+hian anni+saw'n. Anni'n is used for Third person, plural, possessive case as 'an' is the plural form of 'a'
- i) Keini'n–Keini+in, Keini+chuan, keini+hian. Keini'n is used for First person, plural, possessive case
- j) Paw'n – Pawh+in, pawh+chuan, pawh+hian. Paw'n is usually written as *pawn* which can also be mistaken as the Mizo word *pawn* which is used as a noun to describe what is outside of a house
- k) Saw'n – saw+chuan. This is also written as *sawn* which in Mizo could be used in different ways. So, it must be written as *saw'n* so that it will not be mistaken with *sawn*.
- l) Se'ng – Se+lang
- m) He'ng – he+ti+ang
- n) Saw'ng – Saw+ti+ang
- o) Tute'n –Tute+in, tute+hian, tute+chuan, tute+saw'n
- p) Chia –Modified form of che+a
- q) Chuti'n – Clipped form of 'chutichuan'chuti+ang+in and also chuti+in. For example:

Chutichuan a ti maw – Chuti'n a ti maw

Chuti angin an sawi ka ring lo – Chuti'n an sawi ka ring lo

Chuti in min fak ti – Chuti'n min fak tir

4.2.3.2. Omission of space in conversation -

- a) Tia – This is written as ‘ti a’ but when used in conversation, the two words are clubbed together and is pronounced as ‘tia’. For example, “*I pa in a ti a*” (Your father said so) when used in conversation will be said as “*I pa'n a tia*” which still have the same meaning
- b) Sia – This follows the explanation given above and the written form “si a” is verbalized as ‘sia’
- c) Nia – This also follows the same explanation of the written form “ni a” verbalized as ‘nia’.

1 Mark Dingemanse, who has probably collected more information on this topic than anyone else, defines ideophones as ‘marked words that vividly evoke sensory events’ (cf. <http://ideophone.org/working-definition>)

2 As explained by Ralluiai Chhangte in *Mizo Ṭawng Chikna* (222-223)

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Chapter – 5

Conclusion and Discussion

The aim of this thesis is to find out more about the nature of word formation processes in Mizo by analyzing the different processes through which new words are formed in other languages and by applying these different manners of word formation into the word formation of Mizo. Mizo word formation was approached by investigating eight aspects of word formation processes which are some of the most common methods of forming new words in other languages and this is the reason for using them to find out how new words are formed in Mizo. Even though there are different word formation processes, all of them could not be discussed in this study.

The researcher, without a linguistics background, does not have the capacity or the capability to attempt an in-depth study of the language from a linguistics approach. As far as possible, linguistics terms and approaches are avoided in the study due to the limitation of the researcher's expertise in the discipline of linguistics. So, this research is neither an exhaustive survey of the literature of the Mizo language nor a comprehensive description of the morphology of the language. It however, is an attempt to describe the different means of word formation and to answer some of the questions arising from the study of Mizo with regard to its morphology. It is fair to say that there is a great scope for further study in Mizo language and literature, and due to this, scholars are encouraged to make a careful critical study of this particular research and take, the shortcomings thereof, as a challenge for a more thorough and detailed

study in the future. Researchers who are trained in the area of linguistics can have a comprehensive study of Mizo in future and take it to a much higher level. It is believed that this study will describe the morphological processes employed in the Mizo language by analyzing the different Mizo words by means of the different process of word formation used for describing other languages. This could be used as a gap-filler in studying Mizo language with regards to its morphology.

Chapter 1 is an introduction to the thesis. It introduces the people Mizo and the language spoken by them, Mizo ṭawng, which is the main subject taken up for study in this thesis. The first part of this chapter deals with the development and growth of Mizo used as a term for referring to the people and also the language. It describes the area in which Mizo is spoken at present, and the distribution of speakers of the language in different parts of India and Myanmar. The chapter explains the reason for inclusion of Mizo into the Tibeto Burman language family and its relation with other languages of the same family which are at present used in the neighbouring areas surrounding Mizoram. The progress of Mizo from an oral language to a language having its written form using the alphabets developed by the missionaries was described and the contribution of the pioneer missionaries and other government officials was also mentioned. The chapter also includes the problems faced during the study.

The second chapter highlights the works on Mizo, especially with those works dealing with Mizo ṭawng. This chapter describes the different word formation processes in English. After describing about the word formation processes, the chapter explains the presence of tones in Mizo language and the important role that tones play

in understanding and studying the language. It also explains the concept of word, how a word is described and understood in linguistics and the different terms that are used in the study of word and word formation. The chapter also provides a detailed explanation of the different processes through which a word and its smaller segments are illustrated and studied.

The main study of word formation in Mizo is taken up in Chapters 3 and 4. Chapter 3, which deals with Compounding, Conversion and Affixation shows that a greater part of Mizo words are formed through these three processes. It can be seen from the discussions and examples in the chapter that Mizo word formation can be discussed by using some of the most common methods of word formation in other languages. When dealing with compounding, the criteria for classification of compounds were described. This was followed by clarification regarding borderline cases of compounding and all the compound types that were not taken into account were emphasized. Afterwards, all the categories and compounding patterns found in Mizo were presented. The most productive and frequent patterns received the biggest attention while the more marginal cases were commented only briefly.

Word formation through conversion follows compounding and was discussed in the same chapter. In this section, the different types of conversion are discussed and the most important part in this subdivision is the discussion on Mizo tones and how the presence of tones in the language has given special characteristics to the language. Homonyms in Mizo are explained by giving examples and the different usages in the language.

Affixation, which is another popular means of word formation in Mizo is also discussed in this chapter. Mizo has a large number of prefix and suffix which is why affixation has become one important process of forming new words in Mizo. The different affixes are explicated by showing how they are used to form and create new words from existing words and the various characteristics of affixes are also explained by giving illustrations.

Chapter 4 talks about Ideophones, Borrowing, Slang and Cliticization as other processes of word formation in Mizo. Mizo is very rich in ideophones and instances of reduplication, which correspond to the description of word as ideophones are also discussed in this chapter. The chapter also deals with word formation through borrowing of words which are also termed as loan words and the popularity of slang among the youngsters which is also a result of borrowing words from other languages are seen in the chapter.

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DETAILS OF PhD DEGREE PROGRAMME

Name	:	R. Zothanliana
Degree	:	Doctor of Philosophy
Department	:	Mizo
University	:	Mizoram University
Title of Thesis	:	<i>A Study of the Development of Mizo Language in Relation to Word Formation</i>
Date of Admission	:	05.08.2013
Approval of Proposal		
1. Board of Studies	:	22.04.2014
2. School Board	:	09.05.2014
Registration No. & Date	:	MZU/PhD/678 of 09.05.2014
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Date of Final Submission	:	29.1.2020

Language is one important integral part of human life. Language, especially, the mother tongue, is acquired even without the learner being aware of the complexity of its nature or the structure. Language is a complex human specific means for communication. A human being is capable of producing and creating new sentences and words and even coin new words. Language is not genetically transmitted and a new born child has to learn to speak and use the language. Children acquire the language or languages spoken in the community in which they grow up. The existence of words is usually taken for granted by the speakers of a language. To speak and understand a language means - among many other things - knowing the words of that language. The average speaker knows thousands of words, and new words enter our minds and our language on a daily basis. Since language users are mostly unconscious of the learning process or the difficulty in learning the structures, they are unaware of the complexity in language development, how it is structured how complicated it is, how difficult it is to learn for non native speakers while native speakers acquire it without even knowing that they are learning a language, and how it is being used

Speech and writing are the two productive modes of communication through a language and they have their own unique characteristics. Speech comes first and writing follows subsequently. While learning a language also, we can speak long before we can start writing. For communication, the medium of speech is used more frequently than writing. When we talk, we are making use of the sounds in the language and when we write, we use the graphic characters like the letters of the alphabet. In the present study, we are going to

take up word, which is an important element of a language and how new words are formed both in speaking and writing.

Prior to the advent of the Christian Missionaries in the Lushai Hills, the language was only in the spoken form. Oral method was used for communication and different customs, practices, stories and folktales were handed down from one generation to the next orally. However, even before the alphabets were developed, Lewin, Saha, Soppit, Browne, Chamber, Reid and others attempted to write Mizo by representing the sound into symbols using letters of the English alphabet. According to Kiangte, the pioneer Missionaries – J.H.Lorrain and F.W. Savidge- who reached Aizawl on 11th January, 1894, developed an alphabet for Mizo and finished it by 1st April, 1894 and started teaching local chiefs reading and writing (104). In *Mizo Chanchin*, B. Lalthangliana, citing from the writings of Suaka, who was one of the first two students of the missionaries, presents the initial letters of the alphabet developed by the pioneer missionaries. The letters of the alphabet are:

A	a	b	d	e	f
g	h	i	j	k	l
m	n	o	p	r	s
t	ṭ	u	v	z	ch

‘A’, the first letter is to be pronounced like ‘aw’ of the present alphabet. ‘ṭ’ is to be pronounced as /ṭhrə:/ and ‘j’ as /tʃei/. (211)

At present, the 25 letters used for writing in Mizo are:

a	aw	b	ch	d	e	f	g	ng
h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p
r	s	t	ṭ	u	v	z		

Lorrain, and Savidge, the two pioneer missionaries, in *Dictionary of the Lushai Language*, published in 1898, describe the Lushai alphabet as follows:

The Lushai alphabet consists of the following letters

Alphabet.	Pronunciation.
A/a	like u in the English word sun.
Â/â	like a in the English word father.
Aw /aw	like aw in the English word awl
B/b	as in English.
Ch/ ch	like ch in the English word chop,
D /d	as In English.
E/e	like e in the English word tell,
Ê/ê	like the first e in the English word there.
F/f	as in English.
G/g	used as an initial letter only In foreign words, when it Is pronounced like the g In the English word gun. In Lushai words it is always preceded by n, then ng is pronounced like the ng in the English word sing. Ng is often used at the beginning of a word in Lushai.
H /h	like h In the English word home. When h is placed at the end of a syllable or word, it denotes that the preceding vowel sound must be abruptly shortened.
I/ i	like i In the English word sit.
Î/ î	like i in the English word police
J/ j	as in English (used only in foreign words).
K/L/M/N	as in English

O/o	like in the English word pot.
Ô/ô	like in the English word dome.
P/p	as in English.
R/r	like r in the English word rock (this letter is never mute).
S/s	as in English.
T/t	pronounced with the tip of the tongue touching the teeth
Ṭ/ṭ	pronounced with the tongue against the bars of the roof of the mouth.
U/u	like u in the English word full.
Û/û	like u in the English word rule.
V/v	as in English.
Z/z	sometimes as in English, and sometimes like the 'z' in the English word pleasure. (1 – 2)

The letters of the Mizo alphabet and their corresponding phoneme can be represented with the International Phonetic Alphabet which is used for describing the mode of production and the place of articulation as follows:

Letter of the alphabet (Capital and Small)	Phoneme	
	Voiced/Short	Voiceless/Long
A/a	/a/ as in Mizo rang (quick)	/a:/ as in Mizo sang (tall)
Aw/aw	/ɔ/ as in pot	/ɔ:/ as in awl
B/b	/b/ as in English	
Ch/ch	/ch/ as in Mizo 'chaw' which is alveolar fricative	When 'ch' is coupled with another h 'chh' it sounds like the /ɕ/ in Chinese 'xi'
D/d	/d/ as in English	

E/e	/e/ as in English tell	/e:/ as in Mizo kel (goat)
F/f	/f/ as in English	
G/g	/g/ used only for foreign words which is voiced velar stop	
Ng/ng	/ŋ/ as in English voiced	/ŋh/ velar nasal voiceless
H/h	/h/ as in English. /h/ at word final is a glottal stop	
I/i	/ɪ/ as in English <i>sit</i>	/i:/ as <i>seat</i> in English.
J/j	/z/ used only for foreign words	
K/k	/k/ as in <i>cap</i>	/kh/ as in <i>King</i> (aspirated)
L/l	/l/ as in <i>lap</i> (voiced)	/lh/ as in Mizo <i>hlen</i> (voiceless)
M/m	/m/ as in English man	/mh/ as in Mizo <i>hma</i>
N/n	/n/ as in English nose	/nh/ as in Mizo <i>hnai</i>
O/o	/oʊ/ as in English dome	
P/p	/p/ as in English pun	/ph/ as in English pin (aspirated)
R/r	/r/ as in English ran	/hr/ as in Mizo <i>hruai</i>
S/s	/s/ as in English sin	
T/t	/t/ as in Hindi table	/th/ as an aspirated /t/ in <i>tin</i>
Ṭ/ṭ	Symbol is not formulated. /ṭh/ becomes aspirated	
U/u	/u/ as in <i>pull</i>	/u:/ as in <i>rule</i> in English
V/v	/v/ as in English	
Z/z	/z/ as in English	

The thesis is divided into 5 chapters. Chapter 1 gives a historical perspective to the study of Mizo and highlights the development of Mizo by describing what can be said as the first Mizo word with the earliest written form of Mizo language by T.H. Lewin in a book published in 1869 and to a much larger scale in another book published in 1874. This chapter is an introduction to the growth and development of Mizo as a language and how the term Mizo came to be used to describe the language and the people using the language. The different terms used to illustrate the Mizo under different circumstances and by different writers are looked into in this chapter. Published works of Christian missionaries, government officials posted in Mizoram - referred to as Lushai Hills ever since it came under the British rule till it became a Union Territory under India - are studied in this chapter. Different names given to the Mizo tribe like Kuki, Chin, Poi, Lushai, Lusei, Hmar, Mizau, Zo, Zau, Zomi, Khumi, etc are also brought up.

Recent studies done by researchers and scholars on Mizo are also accentuated in the chapter to draw conclusion with regards to the development of Mizo. Contemporary writers, who are endowed with better opportunities, resources and prospects, are coming up with new publications studying Mizo from different viewpoints.

This chapter deals with a short description of the Mizo alphabet. The pronunciation of the alphabet done by Lorrain is highlighted and the present 25 letters are shown with their equivalent phonemic representation. The phonemes used for representing the Mizo letter in the study are alphabets of the International Phonetic Alphabet.

The chapter also highlights the limitations and the problems encountered during the course of the study

Chapter 2 highlights the study done by different writers on Mizo language. The chapter also describes the different word formation processes and the classification of word into different units to give a detailed depiction of word and its characteristics. This chapter helps us understand words, the different elements of words and how they are to be studied to know the processes of word formation

This chapter introduces the different tones identified in Mizo. A look into the different tones is necessary because Mizo is termed as a tonal language and tone plays an important role in the formation of new words.

Sarmah and Wiltshire identified four different tones in Mizo. They write:

The Mizo tone system is described as having an inventory of four tones:
High (H), Low (L), Rising (R) and Falling (F) [5-7].

Let us look at the four tone of High, Low, Rising and Falling tone described by the study above with the following examples:

1. lei - 'slanting' - High tone
2. lei - 'a bridge' - Low tone
3. pa - 'mushroom' - Rising tone
4. pa - 'father' - Falling tone

Fanai (53) also identified four tones in Mizo, gave numerous examples to explain the tones and she represented them as under:

1. Ri sang: H - / (High tone)

2. Ri hniam: L - ʔ (Low tone)
3. Ri lawn: LH - v (Rising tone)
4. Ri kuai: HL - ^ (Falling tone)

Chapter 3 examines three processes of word formation in Mizo. The chapter explains the three word formation processes – compounding, conversion and affixation – and shows how new words are formed in Mizo by these three methods. The manners in which new words are formed through the different methods are shown by giving examples. Chapter 3, which deals with Compounding, Conversion and Affixation shows that a greater part of Mizo words are formed through these three processes.

When dealing with compounding, the criteria for classification of compounds are described. This was followed by clarification regarding exceptional cases of compounding and all the compound types that are not taken into account are emphasized. Afterwards, all the categories and compounding patterns found in Mizo are presented. The most productive pattern received the biggest attention while the more marginal cases are commented only briefly.

The classification of compounds is done semantically and syntactically. Semantically, compounds are classified as:

- a) Endocentric – Examples given are *Keimi*, *kekawr*, *kawrlum*, etc. It is further classified into Right headed endocentric and Left headed endocentric compounds.
- b) Exocentric – Examples given are *Pasal*, *nupui*, *nupa*, etc.

- c) Copulative - Examples given are *a hmei a pa*, *a kawi a ngil*, *nu-fa inhmangaihna*, etc
- d) Conjunctive - Examples given are *in+leh+lo*, *kut+leh+ke*, etc.

Syntactically, compounds are classified in the study as:

- a) Noun+noun compounds – Examples given are *kekawr*, *kutkawr*, etc.
- b) Noun+verb compounds – Examples given are *tlangkang*, *tuikhawthla*, etc.
- c) Verb+adverb – Examples given are *tlanchak*, *zaithiam*, *nuimawi*, *zuang-sang*, etc.
- d) Noun+adjective – Examples given are *rawlthar*, *chemte*, *hmeichhia*, *mipa*, etc

Word formation through conversion follows compounding and is discussed in the same chapter. In this section, the different types of conversion are discussed and the most important part in this subdivision is the discussion on Mizo tones and how the presence of tones in the language has given special characteristics to the language. Homonyms in Mizo are explained by giving examples and the different usages in the language. The different ways of conversion in Mizo taken up in the study are:

1. Change in tone
2. Homonym
3. It changes a non-noun to a noun
4. It changes a non-verb to a verb
5. It changes a non-adjective to an adjective

Let us look at one example to see how news words are formed by the process of approximate conversion:

1. 'Lei' is commonly used in Mizo but it has diverse meaning. The different meaning associated with the word are –

- a) Lei - Tongue
- b) Lei - The earth
- c) Lei - Soil
- d) Lei - To buy something
- e) Lei - Bridge
- f) Lei - Slightly tilted
- g) Lei - referring to the things bought

The diverse meaning of the word 'lei' is due to the change in tone

Homonym - Crystal defines homonymy as "A term used in semantic analysis to refer to lexical items which have the same form but differ in meaning" (231). The examples cited above show words with different tones and some are of similar tone. Words which are spelled and pronounced the same but has a different meaning are called homonyms. Mizo is rich in homonym and two examples of homonym are shown which are also instances of conversion:

1) Ngai –

- (1) To miss someone
- (2) To have sexual intercourse
- (3) Something necessary to complete an action, a thing needed for doing something

2) Hnar –

- (1) Nose
- (2) The starting point of something – like a river, etc
- (3) The source of something. For example, *Pathian chu malsawmna tinreng hnar a ni* (God is the source of all blessings)
- (4) Snoring

Affixation, which is another popular means of word formation in Mizo is also discussed in this chapter. Mizo has a large number of prefix and suffix which is why affixation has become one important process of forming new words in Mizo. The different affixes are explicated by showing how they are used to form and create new words from existing words and the various characteristics of affixes are also explained by giving

illustrations. However, it must be understood that Mizo does not have an infix. Affixation is studied under the following classifications:

- Formation of plurals by plural suffix
- New words formed by adding size affixes ‘-te’ and ‘-pui’
- The suffix ‘-pui’ used differently and not as a size suffix
- The repetitive suffix and the adjectival suffix
- The suffix –chhin
- Formation of verbs by adding the suffix -sak, to verbs
- Degree suffixes ‘-zawk’ and ‘-ber’
- Derivational affixes in Mizo
- Nominalization
- Adjective-to-verb
- Adjective-to-adjective
- Noun-to-verb
- Verb-to-adjective
- The suffix –theih
- Affixes of attitude
- Reservative and deprivative affixes
- Negative Affixes
- Locative Prefixes

- Affixes of Time and Order

Chapter 4 highlights four methods of word formation not dealt with in the previous chapter. Like the previous chapter, it explains the different processes first and by giving numerous examples, the different word formation processes are explained. Chapter 4 talks about Ideophones, Borrowing, Slang and Cliticization as other processes of word formation in Mizo. Mizo is very rich in ideophones and instances of reduplication, which correspond to the description of word as ideophones are also discussed in this chapter. The chapter also deals with word formation through borrowing of words which are also termed as loan words and the popularity of slang among the youngsters which is also a result of borrowing words from other languages are seen in the chapter.

There can be different ways of classifying ideophones. For this study, the sound symbolic words in Mizo are classified under the following categories as classified by M. Shibatani (154):

- a) Animate phonomime
- b) Inanimate phonomime
- c) Phenomime
- d) Psychomime

Animate Phonomime – Animate phonomimes mimic the voice of things, the voice of people and animals. There are many animate phonomime in Mizo which will be explained by giving examples and showing how they are used.

The sounds made by animals and humans and the names given to animals according to the sounds they made –

- a) Miau – It mimics the sound made by cats and the term ‘miau miau’ is often used by children to refer to the animal making that sound, which is the cat.

The term ‘ngiau’ is also used for mimicking the sound made by cats

Inanimate Phonomime – Inanimate phonomimes mimic the sound of inanimate things, the sounds made by anything that is not alive

The names given to instruments from the sound they made and the sounds made by machines, objects and instruments are:

- a) T̄ingtang (N) – The guitar. A good example of mimetic word formation, where the name is given according to the sound made by the instrument
- b) Tawtawrawt (N) – The trumpet. Another good example of mimetic word formation

Phenomime – Phenomimes mimic or imitated the state of things, how they look, smells, develop, act and behave how things are done and how actions develop. Mizo is rich in phenomime and examples could be cited in different ways. Some instances of phenomimes in Mizo are:

- 1) Describing action (animate)

a) Nui (Smile/Laugh) – *sen sen, ver ver, chen chen* are used in a positive manner, describing the pleasant way in which someone smiles. *Kur kur, Ker ker, sun sun, seng sung, chun chun, chur chur, ver vur, vur vur, uar uar, huah huah, huiHawk hawk, huah huah* could be used to describe the intensity of smiling or laughing.

2) Describing action (inanimate)

a) Thli thaw (the blowing of the wind) – *veng veng, vuk vuk, heuh heuh, hem hem, hum hum* describe the manner in which the wind is blowing, how strong and powerful it is.

3) Describing appearance (animate). These words are used to describe the appearance, the physical stature and posture of the person being referred to

a) Sang (tall) – *ek uak, iak uak, zit zet, zet zut, zir zer, zer zuar, thlirh thlerh, thlerh thlawrh,*

4) Describing appearance (inanimate)

a) Tle (Glitter) – *sat sat, sar sar, sit set, siu siau, vir ver, ver vur, vit vet, vat vat, ver ver, var var, hlih hlerh, hlerh hlurh, hliu hliau, vat, sar,*

5) Describing condition or state of being –

a) Lek lek –

b) Che che –

Psychomime – Pyschomime mimics or imitates emotions or the way someone feel. Let us look at instances of psychomime in Mizo with the following examples:

- Tum bur, tum bar and tum ber² – *Tum* is to show a sad face. The words bur, bar and ber are psychomimes describing the nature in which the person shows his sad face and is also used for describing the appearance of the person who is showing a sad face.

Reduplication – Reduplication in language is a morphological type that – through doubling a word, element, root, or stem – enhances, emphasizes, amplifies, enlarges, diminishes, adds number or changes verb tense – to bring about significant meaning changes or shades of meaning. (Kauffman 1). Reduplication is studied under the following classifications:

- a) Complete or Full reduplication - This type of recurrence occurs when morphemes or larger linguistic units are repeated totally both in form and meaning (Ghomeshi et al.; Nadarajan 41- 42). This is the most common form of reduplication in Mizo.

Let us look at the following instances of complete reduplication –

Sawi pui sawi pui, an ennawn ennawn, sawi nawn/that sawi nawn/that, hrilh nawn hrilh nawn, chhiar that chhiar that, pek tlak pek tlak, tih sak tih sak, kal chhoh kal chhoh, tlan chak tlan chak,

- b) Partial reduplication - A part of word is repeated to come up with a variety of forms. Since there is no clear-cut between morphological and phonetic boundary in partial reduplication, we mention its types concerning sound change (Spencer and Zwicky 132; Nadarajan 42).

Let us look at instances of partial reduplication –

I ngaih dan dan a ni mai, I thatchhiat chhiat nen, I lainat nat an him ang, a hmelṭha ṭha in duh,

c) Vowel alternation in reduplication

Let us look at instances of vowel alternation (ablaut) in Mizo:

- i. The vowel *i* altered to *e*. Let us look at the examples -
 - a) *Zum vit vet* – Pointed tip of an instrument
 - b) *Bial pip pep* – Description of a rounded figure – somewhat small
- ii. The vowel *e* altered to *u*. Let us look at the examples -
 - a) *Meng ker kur* – To open the eye in an unpleasant manner
 - b) *Tle ver vur* – Shiny
- iii. The vowel *e* altered to *ua*. Let us look at the examples –
 - a) *Chhe zer zuar* – Repulsively long and lanky
 - b) *Duham hem huam* – Grossly greedy
- iv. The vowel cluster *ia* altered to *ua*. Let us look at the examples –
 - a) *Ngo piak puak* – Having a fair skin, but the expression used here is not heartening
 - b) *Nal piat puat* – Slippery
- v. The vowel cluster *ei* altered to *awi*. Let us look at the examples –
 - a) *Chhe ṭhei ṭhawi* – Odiously thin

- b) *Vawt reih rawih* – Cool and refreshing, especially air and liquid substance
- c) *Hriam hreih hrawih* – Very sharp. Referring to knives and other objects used for cutting things
- d) *Chhe beih bawih* – Vile behavior, especially in the choice of words.
- e) *Tak ngeih ngawih* – Thick liquid/color

vi. The vowel cluster *eu* altered to *o*. Let us look at the examples –

- a) *Chhe beuh boh* – Not good in appearance and movements, especially walking
- b) *A kal theuh thoh chu* – To walk in an unpleasant manner
- c) *En duh deuh doh* – To look at something or someone, giving full attention and being amazed by the thing or the person
- d) Reduplication in Baby-Talk – As infants begin to develop speech, reduplication is an important feature of their phonologies. Words that the baby can understand but not quite articulate completely are easier to shorten into doubled syllables such as water which becomes wawa, church becomes zai-zai. As infants discover the ability to speak, they typically develop words such as mama, dada, papa, boo-boo, poo-poo, bye-bye bah-bah, u-u, na-na, kal-kal and a whole array of words for grandparents (e.g., pi-pi, pu-pu), many of which are reinforced by parents or caregivers.

- e) Repetitive Noun – Reduplication wherein the noun is repeated fully or partially. Examples of repetitive noun reduplication are given:

tu in in nge kan tlawh ang, tu ram ram hi nge, tu hmel hmel nge lang, eng ram ram nge tel dawn

Slang - Spolsky (35) characterized slang as a peculiar type used in “intimate” conversations for a group. Slang is a kind of jargon characterized by refusal to the formal rules, the comparative freshness and ephemerality general and used to claim solidarity. Slang is associated to communication between peers and communication that be used by gangsters. In accordance with Coleman (2), slang is usually used to describe the level of language that is more informal than the standard, less domestic than colloquial and less formal than jargon. Slang is one of the higher variation of the language used in the community. A. Chaer and L. Agustina (67) define slang as social variation that is privileged and confidential. The use of slang usually formed in abbreviating or removal of one or more letters in a word, or even a change in sound and meaning. Slang is widely used in Mizo, especially among the youth with a slight modification of borrowed words. Examples of slang are:

- a) BC – Used to refer to something that is old and passé. The meaning taken from the abbreviation BC (Before Christ) which refers to something that is of the past. Eg. *I inchei BC lutuk* (Your dress is very BC)

- b) Cial – Clipped form of the word ‘special’ in English. In Mizo, it is used to refer to something, someone or some action that is special and extraordinary. For example, *A kawr chu a ‘cial hle mai* (Her/His dress is so ‘cial) *I zai cial top* (You sang so well)
- c) Confi – Another clipped form of the English word confident. It is used to refer to someone having confidence. *A confi hle* (S/he is very confident)

Cliticization – Crystal defines clitic as “A term used in grammar to refer to a form which resembles a word, but which cannot stand on its own as a normal utterance, being phonologically dependent upon a neighbouring word (its host) in a construction” (80). Cliticization is thus a morphological operation that does not create new words, but still combine two morphemes together in one word. Cliticization is described by giving the following examples:

1. Omission of letters – Let us look at instances where letters are omitted to form new words and sometimes, an entirely new words are formed without any sign of omission. However, it can be seen that these words are a product of omission of letters in the root word or by combining words
 - a) Lo’ng, s’u
 - b) R’u – Rawh+u, a positive request, a prayer or an order, when used in written and verbal form is shortened as ‘r’u’ using apostrophe. However, it is also written as ‘ru’ without using the omission mark which could be mistaken as ‘ru’ (steal). The word r’u asks others ‘to do/act’. For example, *Kal r’u* (Go or you go), *En r’u*

(Have a look at it, take a look, observe), *Zai r'u* (Sing, you must sing), *Hlau r'u*

(Be afraid)

2. Omission of space in conversation -

- a) Tia – This is written as ‘ti a’ but when used in conversation, the two words are clubbed together and is pronounced as ‘tia’. For example, “*I pa in a ti a*” (Your father said so) when used in conversation will be said as “*I pa'n a tia*” which still have the same meaning
- b) Sia – This follows the explanation given above and the written form “si a” is verbalized as ‘sia’
- c) Nia – This also follows the same explanation of the written form “ni a” verbalized as ‘nia’.

Chapter 5, the concluding chapter summarizes the findings of the study and it draws a conclusion on the need and importance of the study. It highlights the delimitation of the study on the part of the researcher and in the method employed for the study. However, since the study is not posing arguments and hypotheses to be proven, there are little conclusion to come up with. In chapters 3 and 4, the different word formation processes are shown giving different examples, these chapters can be taken as the conclusion for the study as the aim of this study is to find out and explain the different word formation processes in Mizo.

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