

Sociolinguistic Profile and Linguistic Study of Tlosai (Mara)

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Abstract

Tlosai (Mara - Lakher) is primarily spoken in the Saiha (Siaha) district of Mizoram in India and in the Chin Hills of Myanmar. In Mizoram, there are various languages and ethnic groups but they all are termed under the generic term 'Mizo'. The Mara language is distinct in its phonological and morpho-syntactical features from its neighbouring languages. The speech community exhibits a vivid sense of customs and cultural patterns. Though they share a common thread with the 'Mizo' living standards and belief system, they also retain their uniqueness through their lifestyle and cultural endorsement. This makes the study on the Mara (Lakher) language unique and interesting. The present study attempts to explore and discuss the Tlosai speech variety of the Mara (Lakher) language and its connection with neighbouring languages such as the Lai (Pawi) language (with which it shares close proximity) and the state official language Duhlian (Lushei).

This study is based on Tlosai dialect of Mara. It is also the lingua franca of the various dialects of the Mara speakers in Siaha district.

This thesis is an attempt in understanding the underlying morpho-syntactic processes of the Tlosai speech variety and also in gauging the sociolinguistic scenario that surrounds the Mara speech community in the state of Mizoram.