

PUROIK PHONOLOGY

REMSANGPUIA

The Puroiks are a small group of people living mostly in the north-western part of Arunachal Pradesh. There is no written record of their history like most of the hill tribes of North-East India and it is very hard to ascertain their origin. Their neighbouring tribes and most researchers believe that they are the earliest inhabitants of the Arunachali hills.

This book introduces the Puroiks and presents a thorough and detailed analysis of the phonology of their language. The phonological rules and processes are presented in a very scientific manner for the first time supported by appropriate data. It paves the way for other researchers to look further into other aspects of the language including morphology and syntax which will eventually lead to a complete description of its grammar.

Puroik is among the potentially endangered languages. This book not only analyses the phonology of the language but also documents and preserves the language in a very reliable way by presenting data on the language. The findings of the research work has helped in the reduction of the language to writing and the designing of a much needed orthography for the language.

This language is very interesting from the stand point of Comparative Linguistics mainly because Puroik does not seem to fit into any language family of the region. This phonological description will help in reaching a satisfactory conclusion regarding the genetic affiliation of the Puroik language which had puzzled a number of linguists for a long time now.

PUROIK PHONOLOGY

is indeed an admirable
research work.

It exemplifies systematic
analysis and documentation
of language,
and is also a book of
deeper insight
into Puroik life
and lore.

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2008

ISBN: 81-85408-00-39

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Published by Don Bosco Centre for Indigenous Cultures (DBCIC)
Shillong 793008
India
www.dbcic.org

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Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publications Data
Linguistic, Tribal Studies, Culture, North-East India, Arunachal
Pradesh, Anthropology.

ISBN: 81-85408-00-39

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reproduced stored in system, or transmitted in any form or by
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Typeset: DBCIC

Layout and Printing

Don Bosco Press
Don Bosco Technical School
Shillong - 793 003

08-420

To

C. Lalrema and Chuanthluaii
"Nghilhlahna'n"

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research work is not my fault in its entirety. I am very much indebted to a number of people who helped in various significant ways.

Prof. Juanita War was encouraging, understanding and influential throughout the entire period of my research work. She was a valuable guide who prompted me and provided many helpful insights into the language. She exercised great patience in waiting for me even when I had to disappear from station at various times during the research period for various valid reasons. I am so blessed to have such an understanding friend and teacher.

Dr. Lalnunthangi Chhangte, Director, Living Word Communicators, Shillong contributed in countless ways and was extremely helpful all the way through. She funded part of the research work and introduced me to the Puroiks, and helped me gain entry into their great culture and language. She also provided very many helpful insights into the language and her knowledge of the languages of the region proved to be truly valuable in this research. She gave me access to her personal library and made a lot of valuable reading materials available. I simply do not have enough words to express my gratitude to her for the help she provided.

I am also very much indebted to Dr. Awadesh K. Mishra, Head of Department, Linguistics, NEHU for his generosity in providing me his manuscript on the phonology of Dimasa which helped me understand how to go about describing consonant clusters of a language. He also provided me with a new sense of purpose and encouragement when I was stuck in a problem on the research. Dr. A. Kharmalki offered valuable suggestions. I am truly thankful to her.

I also express my indebtedness to Mr. Kingkong Puroik, my main informant, help, teacher and faithful companion in the often lonely hills of Arunachal Pradesh as I went about

learning and investigating the language. Rai Soja proved to be invaluable in providing me valuable data on the language and interpreting for me as I lived and experienced life in the beautiful and often difficult hills. Takia Soja and his family, Nidak Soja, Asuk Birap and the many friendly and helpful people did me great service in ways I fail to count.

I am also very thankful to the All Puroik Welfare Association for their wonderful cooperation and for organizing a seminar on the language. The following individuals all took part in helping me learn the language: Mate Yakli, Adang Yachu, Taram Soja, Logo Yakli, Yalo Soja, Niku Puroik, Agom yachu, Tadung Yachu, Sinu Raiva, David Wasi, Tameng Saria, Rajesh Nieray, Tapung Pardung, Asam Wallong, Karcha Puroik and Laba Soja. This will be incomplete if I fail to mention my thankfulness to all the Puroiks I met during my sojourn in their hills. Grandparents, mothers, fathers, children - I am truly grateful to all of them.

I am indebted to the Directorate of Higher and Technical Education, Govt. of Mizoram for providing me the generous financial grant in a form of Research Fellowship.

I express my heartfelt gratitude to my family for their support in my research work. They encouraged, provided, prayed and pushed me to go forward in my work even when I almost gave up the work. This is my grandmother's desire - that I should get education to help people and be a blessing. She is sorely missed because she left too early in the end. My grandfather, mom, uncles and aunts made sure that I don't lack any emotional support and love. This is a tribute to all of them.

Beii, my lovely wife enabled me to wrap up the whole thesis by caring for me and by allowing the research work to steal a lot of our time together while in China. I do not have enough words to express my thankfulness to her for providing the much needed love, moral support and understanding. She made sure that I have enough to eat and drink while I lost myself in this meticulous work.

This will not be complete if I do not mention friends and well-wishers who took the pain of asking me about my progress even when they had much better things to do and say. I thank them for their love and prayer support. Heartfelt thanks are due to Him who made all these possible.

This has been a doctoral thesis submitted to the Department of Linguistics, North Eastern Hill University, Shillong in the year 2005 the result was declared in December 2007. Now, I am happy that it has come out in the form of a book, and that it is made available to researchers and students of Linguistics, and especially to the Puroiks themselves who have been eagerly waiting for such a book for some years now. I gladly acknowledge Father Joseph Puthenpurakal SDB, Don Bosco Centre for Indigenous Cultures (DBCIC) for his help and willingness in publishing the book. I also thank Mr. James V. Haokip, Research Co-ordinator at the DBCIC for his kind help.

Remsangpuia

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SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

1	first person
2	second person
3	third person
~	varies with
.	syllable boundary used to show syllable boundary in some data where deemed necessary so as to not confuse readers about the syllable break
#	number
Adj	adjective
Adv	adverb
ABL	ablative
ACC	accusative
ASP	aspect
ASSOC	associative
AUX	auxilliary
Conj	conjunction
CL	classifier
CUP	Cambridge University Press
DAT	dative
DUR	durative
DET	determiner
fn.	foot note
GEN	genitive
<i>ibid</i>	<i>ibidem</i> (in the same place)

IPA	International Phonetic Alphabet
LOC	locative
LTBA	Linguistics of Tibeto-Burman Area
Ms.	manuscript
N	noun
NEG	negation
nd.	no date
np.	no place
Num	number
<i>op. cit.</i>	<i>opera citato</i> (in the work cited)
OUP	Oxford University Press
p	page
pp	pages
PREP	preposition
PROG	progressive
Reflex	reflexive
STEDI	Sino-Tibetan Etymological Dictionary and Thesaurus
TNS	tense
WH	Wh-question
ZMYCC	Zangmianyu Yuyin He Cihui, " <i>Tibeto-Burman Phonology and Lexicon.</i> "

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INTRODUCTION

Puroik is a language spoken by the Puroiks, a small and downtrodden hill tribe in the remote corner of the Eastern Himalayas, mostly in the northern Arunachal Pradesh, India. They were formerly known as Sulungs, and their tribe name as per the census records is Sulung. However, 'Sulung' meaning 'slave' in the Nyishi language is a derogatory term given by their neighbouring tribes— the Nyishis and the Mijis. They prefer to call themselves Puroiks. They were officially recognized as Puroiks from the 26th January 1976.¹ The endo-ethnym or autonym *Puroik* is employed in this thesis to talk about the language of this significant and interesting ethnic group.

The Puroik language does not seem to have affinity to the languages spoken by their immediate neighbouring tribes like the Aka, Nyishi and Miji. It manifests a clear linguistic distinction from these languages except for the shared vocabulary which are of areal features. However, they are said to share a mutually intelligible language with the Khowas (Buguns) of the West Kameng District.²

1.1 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 1 presents an introduction of the land, the people, society, socio-political history, recent events, relationship of the Puroiks with their neighbouring tribe the Nyishis and emancipation of the Puroik slaves. It also explains the methodology of data collection, framework of the study, the scope, and review of related literature on the language and on phonology in order to introduce the main concepts in the subject.

¹ R.K Deuri. 1982. *The Sulungs*. Research Department, Government of Arunachal Pradesh. Shillong. p. 90.

² Deuri. 1982. *op. cit.*, p. 9.

Chapter 2 deals with segments in the language, namely, the consonantal and vowel phonemes in the language. These are illustrated with appropriate examples.

Chapter 3 is devoted to the study of phonotactics of the language. This includes consonant clusters, vowel sequences, syllable patterns and phonological processes which are found in the language.

Chapter 4 presents the investigation of suprasegmentals in the language and the findings.

Chapter 5 concludes the thesis and the findings of the investigation, importance of the study and suggestions for further research are presented.

1.2 THE LAND

The Puroiks live in the East Kameng, Papum Pare and Lower Subansiri Districts of Arunachal Pradesh in India. Arunachal Pradesh was formerly known as the North Eastern Frontier Agency (NEFA) which was under the direct stewardship of the Central Government of India. NEFA was renamed as Arunachal Pradesh on 20th January 1972 with a Union Territory status. The area was declared the 24th State of the Union of India on 20th February 1987. The state is situated on the north-eastern tip of India in the Trans-Himalayan region between the latitude 26° 28' N and 29° 33' N and longitude 91° 31' E and 97° 30' E. It is bounded on the north by Tibet Autonomous Region of Peoples Republic of China, Assam on the south, Nagaland on the south-east, Myanmar on the east and Bhutan on the west. The state covers an area of 83,743 square kilometres mountainous terrains with the least density of population in India which amounts to 10 persons per sq. km only. It has 13 districts, 36 sub-divisions, 149 circles, 10 towns, 56 blocks and 3,649 villages.³

³ *Arunachal at a Glance - 2000*. The Director, Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh. Itanagar. p. 1

According to the Howa (Bugun) legend, the Puroiks and the Buguns were once one and the same tribe and lived together in Sakmakhang, somewhere to the north of Chayangtajo, the Administrative Sub-division of East Kameng District. They were scattered due to the shortage of land. They have about 70 villages in East Kameng District around Seppa, the district headquarters, others in Nyishi, Aka and Miji areas.⁴ The Puroiks are scattered over the nine administrative circles of East Kameng District namely Chayangtajo, Pipu, Pakke Kessang, Lada, Bameng, Seijosa, Seppa, Sawa, Khenewa and Pipu-Dipu circles. They also live in the Koloriang, Sarli, Hurli, Nyopin and Tali circles of Lower Subansiri District and in some parts of Papum Pare and West Kameng Districts of Arunachal Pradesh. C.R. Stonor (1972) suggested that the Puroiks came to their present country from the north-eastern part of East Kameng District.⁵ The Puroiks seem to have originated from Tibet where some of them are said to be still living in the Longzhi County of south-eastern Tibet Autonomous Region. They are grouped with the Luoba nationality in China.⁶ The Puroiks were probably the first tribal group to settle in the Subansiri region of Arunachal Pradesh. Elwin (1959) is of the view that the Puroiks are the first tribal group to settle in Arunachal Pradesh and he states

Living among the Bangnis and Daflas are small groups of Sulungs, who may be the aboriginal inhabitants of the country. They are essentially hunters and food-gatherers, but they also work well in iron and brass, and in recent times have taken to a little cultivation. Many of them are little better than slaves to the Daflas.⁷

⁴ R.K. Deuri. 1982. *op cit.* p. 7.

⁵ C.R. Stonor, 1972. "The Sulung Tribe of The Assam Himalayas." *Arunachal Pradesh Bulletin*. August 1972 quoted in R.K. Deuri, 1984. *op cit.* p. 1

⁶ Jackson T.S. Sun, 1992. Review of Zangmianyu Yuyin He Cihui "Tibeto-Burman Phonology and Lexicon." *Linguistics of Tibeto-Burman Area*. Vol 15:2 — Fall 1992. p. 80.

⁷ Verrier Elwin, 1959. *A Philosophy for NEFA* [S. Roy on behalf of the North-East Frontier Agency] Shillong. p. 13

In 1944 Christoph von Furer Haimendorf was appointed as a Special Officer of Subansiri, and he was entrusted with the task of establishing friendly relations with the tribes of the Subansiri region and of collecting information on their economic and social conditions. Haimendorf and his wife toured the area during 1944-45, and he met with different tribesmen of the area including the Puroiks (Sulungs). He recorded his impression of the Puroik (Sulung) tribe thus:

The only habitation along that high route are a few settlements of Sulungs. Our acquaintance with this primitive jungle-tribe was slight. We had met only a few individuals, men of small stature and facial features rather more primitive than those of any Nishi. They lived in small groups said to be scattered over the higher hills between the upper courses of Panior, Khru, Kamla and Subansiri. Everywhere they are considered the oldest population, for there is the tradition that when the Nishis' ancestors first entered the area they found Sulungs already in possession. Unsurpassed in their skill in hunting and trapping, Sulungs spend weeks and months moving about the forest. They live largely on game and wild jungle produce, and it is believed that originally they did not cultivate. Nowadays, however, most Sulungs till small clearings, where during the summer months they grow millet and vegetables. Their only domestic animals are fowls and dogs, and so few are their material possessions that they do not attract the attention of Nishi raiders. I have heard it said that no one would think it worthwhile to capture a Sulung; for no bonds were secure enough to hold for long so agile a prisoner and no kinsman could pay even a modest ransom. It seems indeed that this hardy and elusive people lives peacefully among the warring Nishi and Miri clans, sometimes trading game and jungle produce for salt, iron or cloth, yet remaining on the whole independent and self-sufficient.⁸

⁸ Christoph von Furer Haimendorf. 1983. *Himalayan Adventure: Early Travels in North East India*. Sterling Publishers. New Delhi. pp. 154 - 155.

The main habitation of the Puroiks is bounded on the north by the McMahon line towards Tibet Autonomous Region of China, on the south by the Nyishi area, on the east by the Lower Subansiri District, and on the west by the Miji area. The Puroiks are dispersed widely over the inaccessible and rugged mountains of the Himalayan mountain region of East Kameng District. The northern high ranges remain snow covered for a most part of the year. The altitude of the area ranges from 1500 metres to 3300 metres above Sea level.

The Puroik area is largely mountainous, generally broken up by deep valleys and the many rivers and streams which flow down from the snow covered mountains. The area is covered by thick evergreen trees. Arable land is scarce and most of the families have a permanent land for growing wild sago palm trees from which they extract their staple food called *be* or *rangbang* which is a fine powdery extract from the stem of the sago tree.

The climate is a Sub-Himalayan climate with scanty sunshine and moderate rainfall. The monsoons begin from April and last to the middle of September. They usually have a very heavy rainfall. The annual average rainfall in the state is 350 cms. The climate, on the whole, is moderate and mild; however, winter can be extremely cold in the north-eastern hills where snow falls.

1.3 THE PEOPLE

The Puroiks belong to the Mongoloid racial stock. The term *mongoloid* is an anthropological term which describes a major racial classification traditionally distinguished by physical characteristics such as yellowish-brown skin pigmentation, straight black hair, dark eyes with pronounced epicanthic folds, and prominent cheekbones and includes peoples indigenous to central and eastern Asia. The *-oid* racial terms are now controversial in both technical and non-technical contexts and are likely to give offense no matter how they are used. Deuri (1977) is the first to affirm the racial affinity of the Puroiks when he mentions the following:

The Sulungs are of Mongloid stock... they are physically strong but temperamentally very quiet, truthful and hospitable....⁹

And in another book Deuri (1982) writes

Mongolian characteristics are found among the Sulungs (Puroiks). They are physically of medium statured¹⁰

The Puroiks led a very simple and quiet lifestyle. They are hospitable, unassuming and accommodating. However, they sometimes show a great reservation and shyness when they meet with guests or strangers for the first time. They seem to be timid and humble people, always considerate of other people's feelings. But once they get to know someone they show great friendliness and hospitality, and they are very affectionate and easy to mingle with. There is no guile about them and one can feel completely home and honest with them instantaneously.

The total population of the Puroiks according to the 1991 census is 5,443,¹¹ and they constitute the eleventh largest tribal group in Arunachal Pradesh. However, Bopai Puroik (1997), the then president of the All Puroik Welfare Society expressed his doubt on the authenticity of the census records. He reasons that

sometimes Puroiks are being sold by their masters to the Puroik uninhibited villages their names and titles are changed by their masters to prevent recognition of the bonded slaves.¹²

⁹ R.K. Deuri, 1977. "The Sulungs of Kameng" *Arunachal News*, Nov. 1977, pp.15-20 (passim).

¹⁰ Deuri, 1983. *op. cit.* p. 5. Emphasis added.

¹¹ *Arunachal at a Glance - 2000*. The Director, Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh. Itanagar. p. 3

¹² Bopai Puroik, 1997. "Socio-Economic Life of the Puroiks or the Sulungs of East Kameng District - Arunachal Pradesh." *Socio-Cultural Pattern of Puroik (Sulung): Souvenir*. Itanagar. p. 12.

Therefore, there is a high possibility of error in the census record. The population of the Puroiks might as well exceed 10,000 at present.¹³

1.4 THE SOCIETY

In a Puroik family the father is the head and the central figure. Descent and inheritance is patrilineal, residence is patrilocal and the family set up is patriarchal. Nuclear families are more common than joint families. However, brothers in a family often share the house with their parents, and with one another but with separate kitchens, each family having separate fields or separate occupations. The parental property is distributed equally among all the sons of the same parents. At the death of the father, the eldest son normally exercises authority in a family; however, this is not a rigid rule in the society.

The society is based on clans without any division or class. Each clan has equal status in the society. No clan group has any specific duties to perform or any rights to be the chief or the ruler of a village. In fact, the Puroik society never had a chief or headman in a village. They practice tribe endogamy and clan exogamy, that is, they marry within their own tribe and outside their own clan. However, there are some clans who cannot intermarry. For instance, marriage is prohibited between the clans Siji and Wanga, Hele and Kopik and few others due to common ancestry between them. For this reason it is not easy for an outsider to gain entry or to penetrate into the Puroik society. They form a compact social group, and share a strong bond between them. The tribe endogamy ensures the tribe solidarity. Those who marry outside the tribe or violate the socio-cultural norms are sometimes excommunicated.¹⁴ They strictly adhere to the norms of the society, however, with the

¹³ The 2001 tribe wise census figures are not published yet. This is a personal estimate after taking into account the supposedly unaccounted Puroiks in some parts of Arunachal Pradesh.

¹⁴ Deuri, 1982. *op. cit.*, p. 53

passage of time and the influence of modern society they are observed to become more lax in this regard.

While Stonor (1972) listed 19 Puroik clans, Deuri (1982) listed the following 54 clans of the tribe.

The tribe is divided into fifty four (54) clans namely Sola, Hele, Tomo, Kopik, Wengte, Seja, Waru, Waya, Seji, Yakili, Wanga, Langa, Sara, Sario, Saria, Dau, Linchu, Messor, Lebung (Labung), Riakung, Keweng, Kapeing, Somu, Khyana, Fungna, Marie, Yachu, Japa, Birek, Kadu, Bungfung, Rete, Kewe, Waching, Jha, Purdung (Pordung), Huge, Pakesa, Satuk, Piyo, Polo, Dungkho, Wagiong, Sakung, Kesam, Waying, Singcho, Sengbiyeng, Waji, Nere, Leme, Parte, Sepa and Tango.¹⁵

Polygamy, though uncommon, is practised in some places. The husband is required to obtain the permission of the first wife if he is to marry another wife. In a polygamous family, all the wives live under the same roof, sharing food from the same granary and use the same hearth.

The women can be said to have an equal status with men in the society except for certain restrictions. For instance, they are not allowed to become village headmen or priestesses though there are some exceptions. Women cannot sell or transfer any of the family property except their personal belongings since property is inherited in the male line. However, they can take part in all religious rites and in other social intercourses equally with men. They are also consulted by their husbands in matters relating to sale or transfer of properties and important family matters. They can also attend village meetings as spectators but they have no say in such meetings.

The relationship that exists between the Puroiks and the Nyishis of the East Kameng District constitutes the most significant aspect of the Puroik society. Several authors like Stonor (1972), Elwin (1957), Chowdhuri (1973), Deuri (1982),

¹⁵ Deuri. 1982. *op cit.*, p. 48. Parenthesis mine.

Grewal (1997) mentioned the fact that the Puroiks are the virtual serfs of the Nyishis of East Kameng and Lower Subansiri Districts, and the Mijis of Lada Circle in East Kameng District. As had been discussed it is often suggested that the Puroiks are the first tribal group to settle in the Subansiri region of Arunachal Pradesh and were in possession of the whole area long before the coming of the Nyishis, Apatanis, Hill Miri and other tribes. But these later migrants forced them to withdraw into a much smaller area and in course of time made them to be their serfs.

The writing of Stonor (1952) provides us a closer picture of the condition of Puroiks. He writes,

The *Sulungs* (Puroiks) live in a tiny widely separated villages or settlements, each one attached to a particular Dafla (Nyishi) village in an area about 800 sq. kms enclosed by the two rivers viz., the Bharali to the west and the Subansiri to the east. The Dafla village normally controls the affairs of the *Sulung* village.... A *Sulung* household is normally under the over- lordship of a particular individual of the *Dafla* clan involved with his first claim on certain services and the right to dispose of the household as whole or part of a trade agreement with the other members of his clan. However, the relationship between the two tribes is more of a feudal arrangement rather than slavery. Within the broad limits their customary obligations to the *Daflas*, the *Sulungs* are free to carry on with their own way of life. However, there appears to be an implicit undertaking whereby *Sulung* women are not abducted or molested in any way. Technically, the *Sulungs* are slaves to the *Daflas* in so far as a man may not change his village without permission, and may be sold or exchanged by his master. In effect, however, it is said to be unusual for a *Sulung* to be disposed of or moved entirely against his will, and the payment made is probably more in the nature of compensation for loss

of his services and perhaps loss of prestige as his overlord, rather than a purely commercial transaction.... *Daflas* first claimed over the labour of *Sulungs* under them....¹⁶

The bondage of the *Sulungs* under the *Nishi* or *Bangnis* masters is also stated by yet another source. It writes,

The *Sulungs* had a position of socio-economic dependence on the *Bangnis* who used to treat them as serfs. Their primitive racial type as distinct from other local tribes, semi-nomadic way of living, their language which is not understandable to their neighbours the *Bangnis* or *Nishis*, their exceedingly long isolation in a remote corner, their legends alluding that they are an aboriginal people in the region they live in and the tradition of common origin and migration they share with the *Buguns* (*Khowas*) suggest that the *Sulungs* were probably the earliest migrants to this region.¹⁷

There are two contradictory myths among the *Nyishis* and the *Puroiks* with regard to the reason of this serfdom.

The *Nyishis* claimed that their ancestor *Abo-tani*¹⁸ gave *mithuns*¹⁹ to them and also to the *Puroiks*. This was a generally accepted medium for the exchange of goods and services, for

¹⁶ C.R. Stonor, 1952. "The Sulung Tribe of the Assam Himalayas" *Anthropos*, Vol.47. Switzerland. pp. 947-62. Emphasis added.

¹⁷ Gazetteers of Arunachal Pradesh: East Kameng, West Kameng and Tawang Districts, Shillong, 1996, p. 65.

¹⁸ The *Nyishis* claimed *Abo-tani* as their ancestor. According to *Donyi-Polo*, a religion in Arunachal Pradesh, *Abo-tani* was a yak shepherd in Tibet who attained nirvana following sixty days of fasting along the bank of the Brahmaputra River and then urged his people to worship the sun and the moon instead of their usual gods.

¹⁹ This domesticated animal is also known as Indian bison and its scientific name is *Bos frontalis*. It stands 1.7-2.2 m tall and weighs 700-1000 kg. In the wild they live in small herds of up to 40 individuals and graze on grasses. It is commonly reared in the hilly regions of the north-east India and other countries in Southeast Asia, and is used as a mode of payment by various tribesmen of the region. It is the State animal of Arunachal Pradesh.

measuring value, or for making payments. However, the *Puroiks* killed and ate up their share of *mithuns* and had no means of paying their bride-price or other goods. They then had to borrow *mithuns* from the *Nyishis*, but none of them could repay their debts. Eventually they had to work for the *Nyishis* to repay their debts, and in the process became their serfs. Another claim of the *Nyishis* is that they are a people of higher caste and *Abo-tani* had sent the *Puroiks* as slaves for them and the *Puroiks* should obey their orders.

However, the *Puroiks* strongly deny the claims of the *Nyishis* as false and unfounded. They claim that in the remote past the *Nyishis* had no easy access to their land. Somehow the *Nyishis* gained entry into their land and befriended them. They then established trade with them by selling clothes, machetes, salt, beads and other necessities which were not available in the *Puroik* area. Also, the *Puroiks* used to borrow *mithuns* from the *Nyishis* for their bride-price. The *Nyishis* gradually brought them under their control due to their dependence on them for essential commodities and non-payment of their debts. Later on they all gradually came under the purview of the *Nyishi* supremacy by birth, heritage, capture and purchase.

According to Chowdhury (1973),²⁰ this system of serfdom may be said to be a cross between protectorate and feudal over-lordship if one employs modern political terminology. Chowdhury further commented that the *Puroiks* found it to their advantage to submit to the *Nyishis* prompted by a strong sense of self-preservation. Deuri (1982) also suggests that this seems more of a feudal arrangement rather than slavery as within the broad limit of their customary obligations.²¹

The *Puroiks* do not reside with their respective *Nyishi* masters but they reside in small groups close to the *Nyishi* villages. They are dependent on their masters socially and

²⁰ Chowdhury, J.N. 1973. *Arunachal Panorama: A Study in Profile*. Directorate of Research, Arunachal Pradesh. Reprint 1996. Itanagar. p. 130.

²¹ Deuri, 1982. *op. cit.*, p. 55.

economically. However, the Puroiks maintain their separate culture, identity and language intact and have never fully integrated with their Nyishi masters culturally. They work for their masters only when their services are required. If, however, a Puroik refused to turn up and work for his master when called for, the master may deal with him severely. He may be beaten severely, or the master may break the hearth, or take away the children to work in his house. In some cases the master may even burn down the house or may even kill him without any imposition of punishment upon himself.

The men are employed for cutting and clearing *jhums*,²² sowing and harvesting, and preparation of *rangbang* from the sago tree. They also have to fight with their masters in the inter-village raids. The women prepare yarn for their masters and collect edible roots and tubers from the jungle. They are not dependent upon their masters for food, shelter and clothing. However, the master has to pay the bride-price and the bride has to work for the master who paid the price. In the past, a Puroik could not leave his village without the permission of his Nyishi master, and he could be sold or exchanged. But even then it was an unusual for the Puroik to be sold or exchanged against his will. A number of Puroik families are still under this slavery even today despite the Arunachal Pradesh government's assistance to free them from their masters. The Puroiks are found to be submissive to the authority which may be attributed to the fact that they had been the serfs of the neighbouring tribes for centuries.

The Puroiks villages called *kobuang* are very small in size. The village usually consists of five to ten houses. Sometimes, a village may consist of only one house. Their villages are usually located near Nyishi villages which are much larger in

²² *Jhum* is a field for cultivation. A plot of land is cleared of trees and vegetation, and burned. The process is variously described as rotational bush-fallow agriculture, swidden cultivation, or slash-and-burn cultivation. In India it is predominantly practised in the hill tracts of eastern and North Eastern India. Various crops are planted of which paddy is the main.

comparison. A Puroik village is usually located on top of a high hill near springs where sago palms are abundantly available. The houses are scattered in a haphazard manner. They are rectangular in shape with raised platforms and thatch roofs. The house is usually built on a slope with one end of the verandah about 6 to 7 feet off the ground and the other end of the verandah barely above the ground. The front end of the house is reached by a wooden notched ladder. The inside of the house is very dark even during daytime due to the absence of windows. There is no word for window in their language because they never had one due to the cold weather in the hills. Each family has a granary called *cicyung* which is constructed at a little distance from the house. Rice grains, seeds and other valuable articles are stored in the granary.

The Puroik dress is not different from that of the Nyishis. A man's dress consists of a coarse loin cloth which was woven at home in the past. The loin cloth is tightly fastened at the waist with a woven cane belt. Another coarse cloth is also worn over the body from arm to knee. The men grow their hair long and tie it in a knot at the forehead. The men also wear a hat made of cane, the one which is similar to the Nyishi hat. The hat is decorated with the beak of a hornbill. The women's dresses consist of a locally woven coarse cloth. It is worn around the body and the ends are tied over the right shoulder with a bamboo pin. Nowadays, they also wear blouses and wrap-around cloths. The women also decorate their body with tattoos on the forehead, cheeks, chin and nose. However, the younger generation do not tattoo themselves anymore.

The main occupations of the Puroiks are food gathering and hunting. Elwin (1959) made the following comment.

They are essentially hunters and food gatherers, but they also work well in iron and brass, and in recent times have taken to a little cultivation.²³

²³ Verrier Elwin, 1959. *A Philosophy for NEFA*. [S. Roy on behalf of the North-East Frontier Agency] Shillong. p. 13

Before the Puroiks were subjected to slavery, they were a nomadic tribe who wandered from one place to another in search of food. They collect edible roots, tubers, bamboo shoots, leaves, ferns and fungi from the jungle, and also hunt animals with spears, bows and arrows. Bamboo shoots form one of the most common items of their meal. Bamboo shoots are collected and preserved during the months of October and November. During this season all the family members who can labour go to the forest to collect bamboo shoots. First they roast the bamboo shoots, peel the barks and tear it longitudinally. They wrap the shoots with leaves and lay out on a rock. This is then covered with stones. The bamboo shoots can be preserved like this for about four months and they store it up and use it in moderation.

The staple food of the Puroiks is sago flour prepared from wild sago palm tree. This is called *be* or *rangbang*. The life of a Puroik seems to revolve around the planting, gathering and processing of the sago tree for food. *Be* is given different names depending on how it is made. It is obtained from the wild sago-palm tree locally called *bemuwang*. There are two kinds of wild sago-palm. One is called *beyik* and another *beriyong*. The flour obtained from *beyik* is yellow in colour; and the one obtained from *beriyong* is white. The sago is a kind of dwarf palm commonly found in the sub-Himalayan regions of north-east India. It is considered a famine crop by many tribal groups of the region.²⁴ When their supply of *be* is finished, the whole family will move out to the jungle in search of sago palm. Sometimes, the Puroiks have to travel two or three days away from their village to prepare the sago flour. When they reached a suitable place with a good supply of sago and water they erect a temporary hut, and started collecting and preparing the food. They may stay in one place until they prepare enough supply of the food.

²⁴ I was told that the flour of the sago is used as food during famine even in the hills of Mizoram and in other parts of north-east India. I was taken to a place where the sago flour was prepared and was shown how it was done. It takes a lot of time and energy to prepare enough supply for one whole family.

The process of *be* preparation is long and elaborate. First, the sago palm, after it had blossomed, is cut down and the bark is peeled off. The palm is beaten and cut longitudinally with a special device called *fae kuung*, which is a wooden stick with a hook on one end. Then the palm is beaten to pulp with a wooden club and cut into pieces. The pulp is then put inside a finely woven elongated cane bag called *riyeik* which acts as the filter. The bag is placed over a cane mat called *wa*. Then water is poured over the bag until flour washes out. The flour is collected on a mat and left for sedimentation. The sedimented flour is known as *be'lo*. The sago flour is usually baked into a sort of rubbery pancake before eating, or it may be fried or roasted.

At present the Puroiks can be said to be in a transitional period between food-gathering habits, and a primitive agriculture, which signals the arrival of the settled and stationary way of life. They have acquired the technique of *jhum* or shifting cultivation from their neighbours, and half of their basic food supply now comes from their *jhums*, where they grow rice, millet and maize or sago tree. The other half comes from foods collected from the jungle.

Chowdhury (1972) is of the view that the Puroiks have no religion of their own and he writes:

If the Sulungs (Puroiks) had possessed religious beliefs or rituals of their own they have lost them. At present they practically follow the same rituals and holds similar beliefs as the Daflas (Nyishis).²⁵

However, Deuri (1982) describes the religion of the Puroiks as animism.²⁶ They do not believe in any supreme being but believe in the existence of a number of unseen malevolent and benevolent spirits and deities. *Seki* and *Miyo* are regarded as supreme among the many spirits and deities. They believe that the spirits and deities live in the jungles, on the lofty hills, in

²⁵ Chowdhury, 1972. *op. cit.*, p. 133.

²⁶ Deuri, 1982. *op. cit.*, p. 78.

the caves, in the rivers, on top of big and tall trees, in and outside the house. They offer animal sacrifices to the harmful spirits but it cannot be said that they worship them. The act of sacrifice is an act of propitiation, appeasement of the spirits, rather than a form of worship.

Most of the ceremonies of the Puroiks are private ceremonies. *Waynyee* is the most important ceremony of the Puroiks on which they appease the spirits and the deities in order to ensure the welfare and prosperity of the family. The priest fixes the appropriate day for *waynyee* by examining an egg and liver of the fowl. On the fixed date, the priest and his assistant perform the rituals by the side of the hearth. The following day, an animal is sacrificed after the rituals. Another ceremony is performed when a member of a family falls ill. In such a situation, the village priest is summoned to identify the spirit responsible for the disease and to prescribe the required rituals through the practice of divination. Pigs, goats and fowls are the most popular items of sacrifice. The priesthood in the society is not hereditary. Anyone who has the required knowledge and necessary instruments can become a priest. The priest also performs funeral rites and purification when a member of the family dies. The service of the priest is also required when a suspected criminal refuses to admit to the crime and is about to go unpunished. The village priest administers a ritual of examination in the presence of the whole village to find out the real culprit. He invokes the spirits and deities to punish the suspected criminal if he had committed the crime.

1.4.1 Socio Political History

It was Elwin (1959) who made the significant remark about the people groups of Arunachal Pradesh when he writes

...the history of what is known as the North-East Frontier Agency ascends for hundreds of years into the mist of tradition and mythology.²⁷

²⁷ Elwin, 1959. *op cit.*, p. 1

This is also true of the Puroiks. There is no written record of the history of the tribe and they seemed to have lost any memory of their original home besides indicating that they had come from the north of where they live now. This seems to be somewhere in the south-eastern tip of the Tibet Autonomous Region of China where some of them are still living. They are a hidden group of people for centuries and they hardly came in contact with people from the outside world for a very long time. This may be attributed to the fact that the Puroiks were few in numbers and lived in inaccessible areas for outsiders. They were, in effect, rediscovered by Haimendorf during the military missions which visited the vast tracks of the Subansiri region during the early part of the 20th Century. Haimendorf was the first person to give accounts of the Puroiks in 1947 when he made a passing comment on the slight encounter he had with the tribe.²⁸ C.R. Stonor visited them on a number of occasions between the years 1945-1948, and gave a more detailed and closer study of the tribe. He, however, concluded that they were a dwindling race.

What makes the question of their origin very intriguing is their distinctive language and cultural traits. They had been living in close proximity to the Nyishis for centuries yet they preserved their language. However, the Puroiks and the Khowas of the West Kameng District claim a common kinship with each other, and further claimed that they had once lived together in the same territory in the north-eastern hills of East Kameng District. Their languages are also said to be mutually intelligible.²⁹

There are no community or village chiefs or headmen in the Puroik society. The most obvious reason for the absence of the rule of the chiefs or headmen in the society is that they had been subjected to the system of serfdom for centuries. All the major disputes in the Puroik society are decided by the Nyishi or Miji masters in consultation with the elders of the

²⁸ Furer Haimendorf, 1983. *op cit.*, pp. 154 - 155.

²⁹ Deuri, 1982. *op cit.*, p. 9

village. Even in a major issue like murder, they have to ask their masters to make the final judgement. They are allowed to make decision and take action only in case of minor disputes or crimes which involve only Puroiks. Most of their petty cases are settled through a casual village meeting which can be attended by all the villagers.

In 1967, the Government of India introduced the *Panchayati Raj* Regulation, the institution of a local self government, in the then NEFA. The Panchayati Raj system is a four tier scheme with the Agency Council at the apex. There are four local self government agencies under the Regulation which are the *Gram Panchayat* (the Village Council), *Anchal Samiti*, *Zilla Parishad* and Agency Council. The government discouraged the rule of the Nyishis over the Puroiks with the help of this institution. The Government started appointing village headmen from the village elders, and vested them with authority to decide some petty matters of their respective villages in accordance with their customary law and precedence. Major disputes are directly brought to the notice of the government for fair and effective judgements. One of the most significant moments for the Puroik tribe was when Mr. Daming Saria was nominated for the first time as a Member of the Legislative Assembly in 1980 as a representative of the tribe.

1.4.2 Recent Events

The Puroiks are still underdeveloped in all spheres of life. They live in small villages, which have no motorable roads and are difficult to access even by foot.

Deuri (1982) discussed the various schemes adopted by the state government to uplift the living conditions of the Puroiks in the 70s. In 1975 the Government of Arunachal Pradesh adopted the village regrouping scheme for the Puroiks in order to uplift their living condition and give them a settled life. The scheme was initiated in 1975 at Old Dache village which was renamed Sangchu. Fourty five Puroik families were regrouped in this village and were provided with various

facilities for construction of their houses— tin sheets for roofing, reclamation of land, tools for gardening and cultivation and training courses in cane and bamboo crafts at the Craft Centre in Chayangtajo.

An inter-village Lower Primary School was opened at Pordung Sulung regrouping village on 1st December 1975 with 20 students. Other inter-village schools were also opened at Sangchu exclusively for the Puroiks, and at Lasumpatte village in Seijosa Circle. These regrouping villages played a very important part in the development of the Puroiks, but all of them were not success stories. For instance, Deuri (1982)³⁰ mentioned the construction of a motorable road from Chayangtajo to Sangchu regrouping village. This road was never completed. The only link to the village is the same old porter track even when I visited in 2001. The inter-village school is still functioning in the village with one teacher and a few Puroik boys from the neighbouring villages. The only student from Sangchu village itself was a 20 year old girl who was studying in Class II. Of the initial fourty five Puroik families more than half of them had left and there are only twenty Puroik families in the village at present. The galvanized corrugated sheets for roofing given by the state government are nowhere to be found. All the houses except for the school building and one Puroik house have thatch roofs.

The Government of Arunachal Pradesh has not given up on the village regrouping scheme. A land for the Puroiks was carved out in Seppa, the headquarters of East Kameng District. They built *Arunodhaya*, a model village for the Puroik people. Mukut Mithi, the then Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, inaugurated the model village on 15th December 2000. It was developed by DRDA in association with the state's Line Departments. The government constructed thirty houses and selected Puroik families from different villages to settle in the model village. However, the Puroik families of the model village have no land for cultivation, not even for a house garden to

³⁰ Deuri, 1982. *op. cit.*, p. 92.

grow vegetables. It is difficult for unemployed Puroik families to survive in such living conditions. The government gives them financial aids and grants from time to time, but they are yet to reach a stage when they can make good use of the funds for their well being. Whatever amount of money they receive is spent on their daily bread and basic needs. After they have spent their money, the Puroiks started looking for another grant of easy money from the government and this system is gradually turning them into a group of lazy people and is destroying the society instead of developing them. It would be better to give them a source of permanent income by giving them education and training in crafts and other skills, and absorbing them into various government jobs which they can perform.

In 1997, the All Puroik Welfare Society could identify only one graduate among the Puroiks. Bopai Puroik (1997) talks about the plight of the Puroiks:

According to my knowledge there are only 6 (six) boys studying in Class X, one person in Class XII and one person i.e. myself in M.A. Previous (Education) as on 14.8.1997... The Puroiks are almost unrepresented in all the categories of Govt. services except very few in grade 'C' and 'D' posts.³¹

The Puroiks accused the Nyishi masters of preventing the children from going to schools for fear of losing them as slaves if they are educated. This is not true in all cases. The Puroiks of modern days are relatively free compared to the Puroiks of the past decades. Most of the youngsters leave their respective villages for bigger towns in search of greener pastures. It is very hard to find youths in the villages. For instance, there were only 2 young women who actually live in Sangchu village when I visited in April, 2001. All the other youths had moved away.

³¹ Bopai Puroik. 1997. "Educational Status of the Puroiks or Sulungs" in Nisso Sanjoy (ed.). *Socio-Cultrural Pattern of Puroik (Sulung): Souvenir on the Occasion of 50th Anniversary of India's Independence*. All Puroik Welfare Society. np. p. 14.

1.4.3 Emancipation of the Puroik slaves

Elwin (1947) wrote about how to abolish the system of slavery in the then hills of NEFA. He states

There are thus three things to do: the first is to affect the physical freedom of the slaves, the next to ensure that they have alternative employment or land, the third to remove the stigma resting on the slaves and admit them into full membership of a free society.³²

Elwin was appointed as a consultant to reform and improve the living conditions for the tribal groups in the hills of Arunachal Pradesh and his policy for the hill tribes has a full support from Nehru, the then Prime Minister of India and the policy came to be known as the Nehru-Elwin Policy. The policy was instrumental in gearing up the administrative machinery to work more energetically than before with the liberation of slaves in the then NEFA. However, Thakur (2003) mentioned that the problem of slave emancipation in Arunachal Pradesh could effectively begin only from 1978 and continued till 1988-89.³³ The government took various measures to liberate, rehabilitate and resettle the Puroiks. The most significant initiative on the emancipation process of the Puroiks came in a form of a directive from the Supreme Court of India. The Supreme Court has directed the government of Arunachal Pradesh to make necessary arrangements for the identification and release of bonded labour. Accordingly surveys were conducted and a shocking figure of Puroiks still working as bonded labour/slaves were identified and reported. The number so far reported is three thousand five hundred and forty two.³⁴

³² Elwin, 1957. *op cit.*, p. 232.

³³ Amrendra Kr. Thakur, 2003. "Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Puroiks in Arunachal Pradesh". *Dialogue* (A quarterly journal of Astha Bharati). October - December, 2003. Volume 5. No. 2. p. 5

³⁴ Court No. 4, Supreme Court of India, Record of Proceeding -537733;W.P.(C) No. 3922/85 with W. P. (Crl.) No. 153/82, Public Union for Civil Liberties etc. Petitioner State of Tamil Nadu and Ors. etc. The proceeding is available in the Judicial Branch, D.C. Office, Bomdila, File No. B J-1743/96-97 (under the subject *Bonded Labour*). In Thakur, 2003. *ibid*.

In 1991 the Planning Commission stopped the allotment of fund for the scheme of resettlement/re-grouping of Puroiks because it felt funds should not be spent on land when ample land exists with the government or the tribes. Moreover, people are not to be un-settled from their habitats and surroundings but development facilities should be provided in their villages or in a village central to a group of villages. As a policy, the development department should pay special attention to less developed areas and tribes so that planned development is brought about. As per records, resettlement/re-grouping of 924 Puroik families of East Kameng and Lower Subansiri district has been completed till the end of 1988-89.³⁵

The system of slavery exists even today but is often cloaked in secrecy. There are reports of Puroik slaves being sold by their masters. Adang Yachu (1997) reports that in the years between 1991 to 1997 more than 600 Puroiks were sold as slaves.³⁶ In 2001, there was a report of the selling of a Puroik boy from Koloriang to a Nyishi of Chayangtajo. The boy was released at the order of the Circle Officer of Chayangtajo.³⁷

In recent years the Puroiks have attempted to organize themselves into a united body under the banner of the All

³⁵ Letter from the Director, Relief and Rehabilitation, Government of Arunachal Pradesh, to the Chief Secretary, Government of Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar. Quoted by Anand Kr. Thakur, 2003 *op cit.* under fn. 19.

³⁶ Adang Yachu, 1997. "Problems of Slavery System in East Kameng District." Nisso Sanjoy (ed.). *Socio-Cultural Pattern of Puroik (Sulung): Souvenir on the Occasion of 50th Anniversary of India's Independence*. All Puroik Welfare Society. np. p. 16.

³⁷ Letter from the Office of the Sub-Divisional Officer, Chayangtajo, East Kameng District, Government of Arunachal Pradesh. Ref. No. CTJ/JUD-10/99-2000 Date C/Tajo, the 9th Oct/01. Two Puroik men, Sape Tafa and Sape Taku has stolen a six year old Puroik boy from his parents, and sold to one Bagang Gungnia of Jayang Bagang, Head Gaon Bora, Chayangtajo Circle. I met the father of the boy, Waru Tabom on 11th October 2001 at Sangchu, and he was trying to get the boy back from Bagang Gungnia. He showed me the order of the Circle Officer. See Appendix C and D.

Puroik Welfare Society. This society tries to help free those who are still under slavery and to bring the plight of the Puroik society to the notice of the government for necessary actions. The society also acts as a pressure group to derive benefits of government schemes and projects. It also organizes seminars and awareness campaigns for the development of its own people.

The Puroik society has a long way to go to catch up with the fast changing scenes of modern world and civilization. They will need every available help in all areas of life.

1.5 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1.5.1 Review of related literature on the language

When Grierson and Konow presented the monumental *Linguistic Survey of India (LSI)* in a series of eleven volumes divided in nineteen parts between 1903 to 1928 they included a number of otherwise unknown *tribal languages* in the British India. Three volumes of LSI (*Vol. III, Parts 1, 2, 3*) were devoted to Tibeto-Burman languages. While some word lists and texts of some languages from the north-eastern part of India were included, the survey failed to list Puroik among the Tibeto-Burman languages.

None of the subsequent researchers in their works and attempts on classification of Tibeto-Burman languages take into account the presence of Puroik at all. Shafer and Benedict embarked on a project to collect all the available material on TB languages in order to systematically classify the TB language family. However, Shafer (1966/67) failed to include Puroik in his great work *Introduction to Sino-Tibetan* and Benedict (1972) also did not mention the language when a revised and heavily annotated version of the influential *Sino-Tibetan: a Conspectus* written in the early 1940s was finally published in 1972 with Matisoff as contributing editor.

Most of these earlier Tibeto-Burman scholars used to work on data of uneven quality from various sources. Some of these

had been collected by colonial administrators or missionaries and there were a number of phonetic inconsistencies since all of the data collectors were not necessarily linguists or philologists. Some produced valuable and reliable grammar and dictionaries. Lorrain's (1907) *A Dictionary of the Abor-Miri Language* and *Dictionary of the Lushai Language* in 1940 were monumental works unparalleled in field linguistics even today.

Hale (1982) came up with a detailed review of works done on Tibeto-Burman at that time. He even made an attempt to harmonise the major classifications that had been done and also supplied alternative names for the given languages. This makes it easier for researchers to identify which language is being discussed because various researchers often employ various designations for a given language which easily confuse a reader. However, he came short of proposing an all comprehensive classification for the TB family.

Matisoff (1978) proposed a heuristic model for TB family which is a modification of Benedict (1972) and further modified it (1991) into the following classification:

SINO-TIBETAN

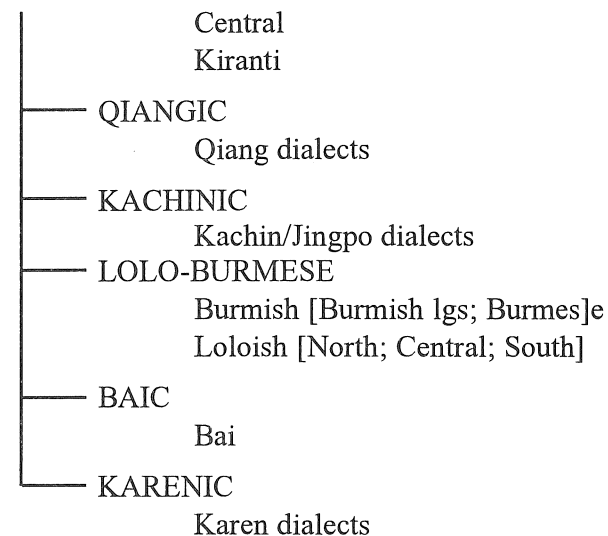
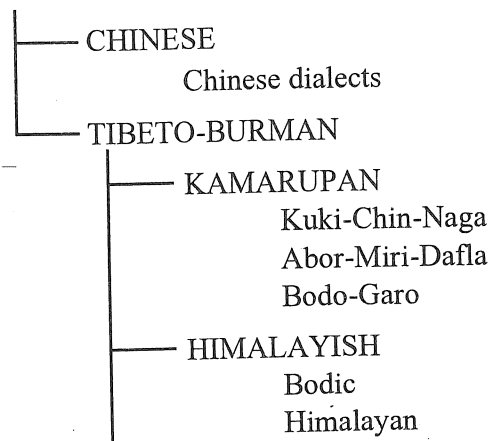


Figure 1.1 Sino-Tibetan, after Matisoff's 1991 revision of Benedict 1972

In his classification Matisoff simply lumped together Benedict's Kuki-Chin-Naga, Abor-Miri-Dafla, and Bodo-Garo subgroups spoken in NE India and adjacent regions of Myanmar under the purely geographical rubric of *Kamarupan*. DeLancey (1987) admits the absence of a reliable classification for the Tibeto-Burman languages when he says

Comparative Tibeto-Burman is a relatively unexplored field and there is not yet a complete and reliable schema for the genetic relationships among the various sub-branches of the family.³⁸

DeLancey (1987) presented his own classification of Tibeto-Burman languages which he claims incorporates several hypotheses being considered in published and unpublished work by a number of scholars at that time. The following tree diagrams are after him:

³⁸ Scott DeLancey, 1987. Sino-Tibetan Languages. Bernard Comrie, ed., *The World's Major Languages*. New York. Oxford University Press. p. 799.

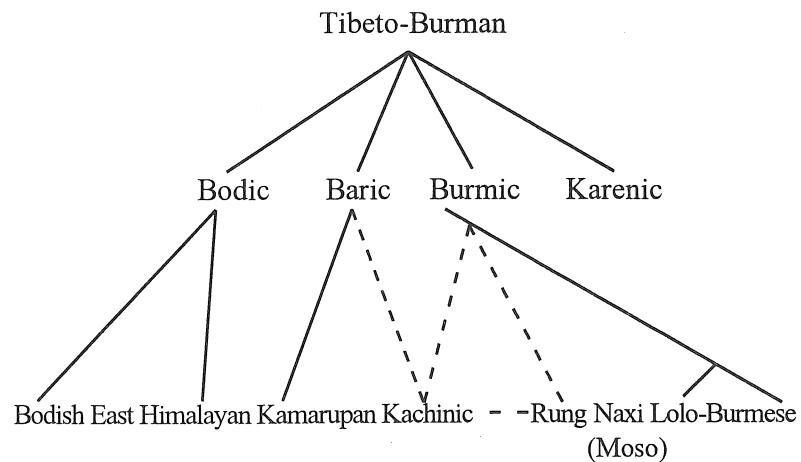


Figure 1.2 Higher-order Groupings within Tibeto-Burman, after DeLancey 1987

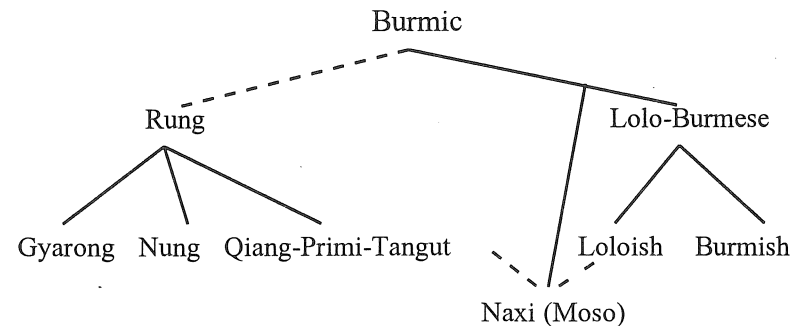
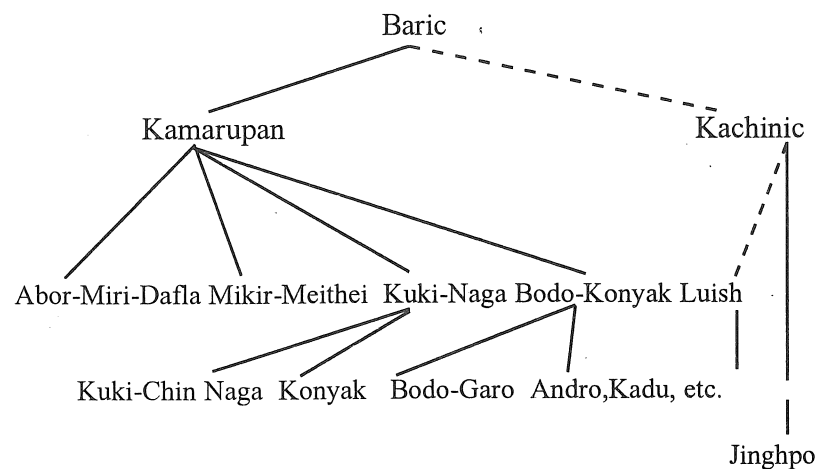
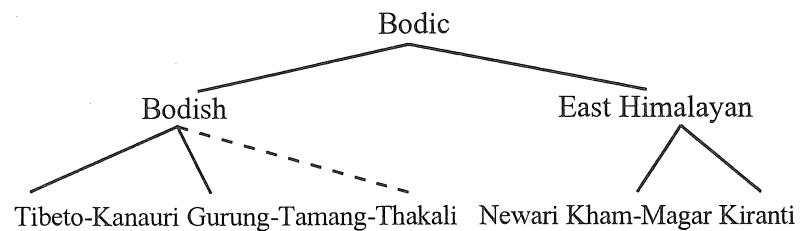


Figure 1.3 Middle-level Relationships within Tibeto-Burman, after DeLancey, 1987

(Note: Dotted lines represent uncertain or controversial relationships)

Burling (2003) is very critical of the use of terms like 'Kamarupan' and 'Baric' which he considers inappropriate and misleading. He states so in the following:

This term was first employed by Matisoff simply as a convenient geographical catch all in which to toss the languages of northeast India when their genetic sub-grouping was unclear. Even the generally authoritative International Encyclopedia of Linguistics lists all the Tibeto-Burman languages of the region as 'Baric', a term never before used so widely (DeLancey 1991). There is not a shred of evidence for any special genetic relatedness of all the Northeastern Indian Tibeto-Burman languages, and ample evidence against such a grouping. It would be best to abandon 'Kamarupan' even if the only alternative is to say 'the Tibeto-Burman languages spoken in Northeastern India'.³⁹

Burling however, did not suggest any new grouping for the Tibeto-Burman languages spoken in Arunachal and other parts of the northeast India region. He simply followed the tentative

³⁹ Robbins Burling. 2003. The Tibeto-Burman languages of Northeastern India. In Graham Thurgood & Randy J. LaPolla, eds. *The Sino-Tibetan languages*. London & New York: Routledge. p. 172

groups suggested by other linguists and laid out what still needs to be learnt. In his listing of the languages of Arunachal Pradesh he listed Puroik (Sulung) with Sherdukpen, Bugun/Khoa, and Lishpa under the Northern Area. This tentative affiliation was first suggested by Sun (1993). Burling (2003) states

Sun (1993a: 12 fn. 18) suggests that Sherdukpen (2) and Bugun (8), both of which are found just to east of Tsangla, together with a little known language called 'Lishpa', might form a group of their own. To these he more tentatively adds Sulung (4), which is spoken well to the north, along the Tibetan border. In Arunachal, the Sulung people, who call themselves 'Puroit', are regarded as the original inhabitants. They have been severely oppressed by others who are supposed to have migrated in from somewhere else.

Relatively recent vocabularies of Sherdukpen (Dondrup 1988, Bugun (Dondrup 1990), and Sulung (Tayeng 1990); Anonymous 1991) allow a more systematic comparison among these three languages than would have been possible earlier and there can now be little doubt that they belong together. Their vocabulary is remarkably divergent from other Tibeto-Burman languages, however, and a few of us have even wondered whether Sulung belongs to Tibeto-Burman at all. However, each of the three languages have a number of apparent Tibeto-Burman cognates so, if the three do form a group, their Tibeto-Burman affiliation seems secure.⁴⁰

Matisoff (1996) provides an exhaustive list of names of Tibeto-Burman languages and dialects in his invaluable compendium *Languages and Dialects of Tibeto-Burman*. Bradley (1997) has an extensive and up-to-date survey of Tibeto-Burman languages. He organizes his survey by geographical areas, supplemented by what is known about the genetic sub-grouping. He provides a great supplement to Matisoff's work. However, Bradley failed to include Puroik in his classification. Below is his classification of Tibeto-Burman:

⁴⁰ Burling. 2003. *op. cit.*, p. 180.

TIBETO-BURMAN

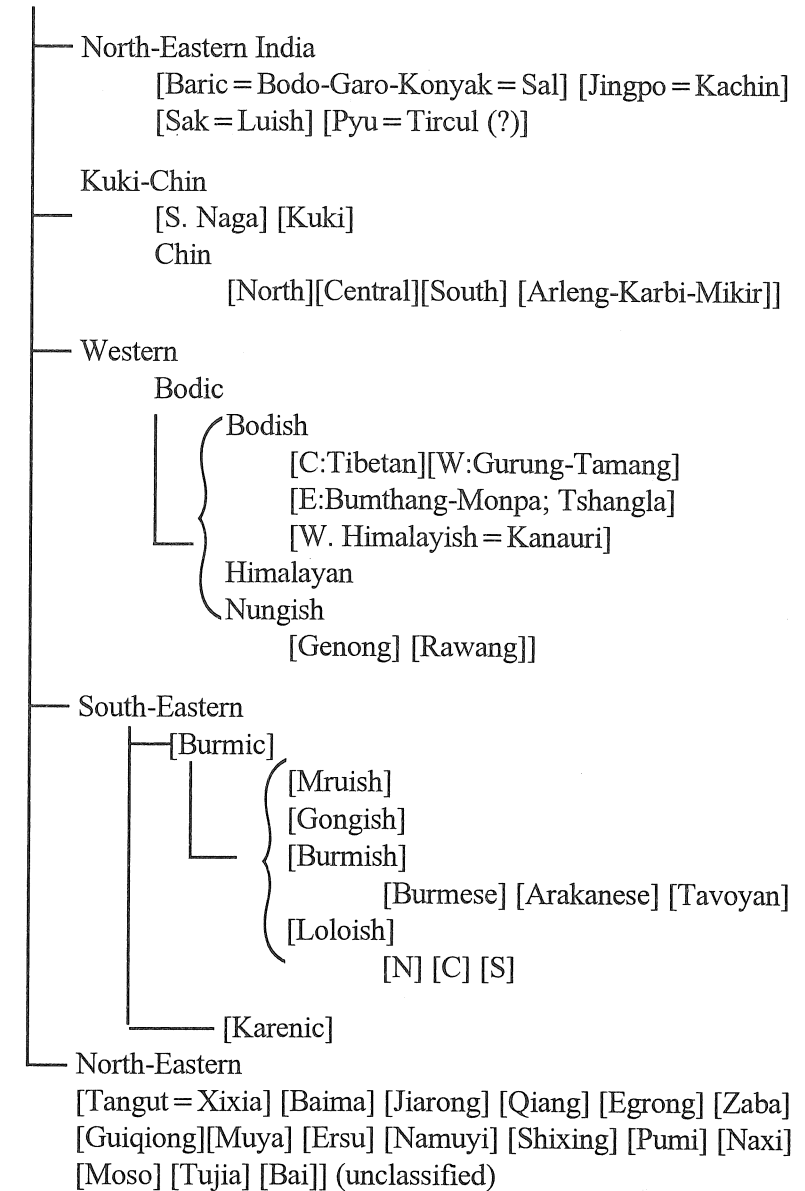


Figure 1.4 Classification of Tibeto-Burman Languages after Bradley 1997

Deuri (1982) was the first one to come up with a blurry phonological data of Puroik when he presented a glossary of cultural terms. However, his data and interpretation do not agree with mine. His data cannot be considered as a reliable source for phonological analysis since he used Roman script for the transcription, and the phonological value of the data is hard to ascertain. In talking about the language, he merely points out that

The language (Puroik) is quite different from those of the neighbouring tribes it has apparently some similarity with the Khowas of West Kameng District.⁴¹

In 1990, Tayeng came up with *The Sulung Language Guide*, a practical language manual published by the Directorate of Research of the Arunachal Pradesh government. The book established Puroik as a distinct language, and is helpful for outsiders to acquire the language. It provided a glimpse of how the language might look like for the first time. It also has a scanty sketch of the phonology of the Puroik language. However, the phonological value of the data is hard to ascertain since IPA symbols were not employed in transcription of the phonological data.

Matisoff *et al*⁴² (1996) reported the availability of phonetically accurate Puroik data which was presented and analysed by Sun Hongkai *et al* (1991) in the book *Zangmianyu Yuyin He Cihui* (ZMYCC), *Tibeto-Burman Phonology and Lexicon*. In his review of the book, Jackson Sun (1992) mentioned that only 2000 copies of the book were in print and there is no prospect of reprinting the book⁴³. The book

⁴¹ Deuri. 1982. *op. cit.*, p. 9. Emphasis added.

⁴² James A. Matisoff, Stephen P. Baron and John B. Lowe, 1996. *Languages of Tibeto-Burman. Sino-Tibetan Etymological Dictionary and Thesaurus*. STEDT Monograph Series No. 2. Center for Southeast Asia Studies. University of California, Berkeley. p. 94.

⁴³ Jackson T.S. Sun, 1992. Review of Zangmianyu Yuyin He Cihui "Tibeto-Burman Phonology and Lexicon." *Linguistics of Tibeto-Burman Area*. Vol. 15:2 — Fall 1992. pp. 84. See fn. 28.

therefore is not accessible to me. In another article Sun Hongkai (1999) mentioned that no less than two thousand vocabulary items of Sulong (Puroik) were presented in the book.⁴⁴ However, the examples cited by Sun (1992) in his review do not agree with the data which are collected and analysed in this thesis. For instance, the tribe name is transcribed in ZMYCC as [poh⁵³yut³³] but mine is [puroik].⁴⁵

Tayeng (1991) did not at all mention, or attempt the classification of the language. Grewal (1997) made an attempt to describe and classify the language under the Bodic Group of Tibeto-Burman language, but his description is inadequate and minimal. He based his analysis on a secondary data provided by Tayeng and the phonetical accuracy is doubtful. The Puroik language is treated as an unclassified language by the Central Institute of Indian Languages even today. The genetic affiliation of Puroik to any language group is yet to be ascertained. There is a lot of work to be done until its affiliation can be ascertained.

1.5.2 Review of Literature on Phonology

Phonology is the study of sounds and sound patterns of a language, that is, phonology studies the structure and function of speech sounds in languages. Phonology involves studying a language to determine its distinctive sounds and to establish a set of rules that describe the set of changes that take place in these sounds when they occur in different relationships with other sounds. The goal of phonology, therefore, is to study the properties of the sound systems which speakers must learn to internalize in order to use their language for the purpose of communication. Some speech sound can be used to distinguish words of different meanings in a language whereas other sounds cannot. Thus, Trubetzkoy (1939), one of the founders of Prague School of Linguistics, wrote

⁴⁴ Sun Hongkai, 1999. On The Tibeto-Burman Languages of The Eastern Himalayan Area In China. *Linguistics of Tibeto-Burman Area*. Vol. 22.2 — Fall 1999. p. 64.

⁴⁵ Jackson T.S. Sun, 1992. *ibid.*

It is the task of Phonology to study which differences in sound are related to differences in meaning in a given language, in which way the discriminative elements are related to each other, and the rules according to which they may be combined into words and structures.⁴⁶

According to the traditional phonological theories, the minimal unit in the sound system of a language is the phoneme. The foundation for the study of phonology is usually the concept of phoneme, which is defined as the minimal meaningful unit of sound but which is a meaning distinctive sound. Yule (1985) stressed the importance of phoneme when he wrote,

An essential property of a phoneme is that it functions contrastively. This contrastive function is the basic operational test for determining the phonemes which exist in language.⁴⁷

Phonological analysis relies on the principle that certain sounds cause changes in meaning of a word or phrase, whereas other sounds do not. These distinctive sound units which are capable of distinguishing words of different meanings are called phonemes. There are sounds in languages which do not change the meaning when we make substitution. These phonetic variants of a phoneme are known as allophones or contextual variants. Sound differences that separate allophones in a language may separate phonemes in another language and vice versa. Allophones are redundant in nature and they are predictable from a given environment.

The study of the discrete segments known as phonemes is called Segmental Phonology, whereas the study of features extending over one or more segments such as intonation, tone, accent and length is called Suprasegmental Phonology.

⁴⁶ N. Trubetzkoy. 1939/69. *Principles of Phonology*. Originally published in German (*Grundzüge der Phonologie*) as *Travaux du Cercle Linguistique de Prague 7*. Translated by Christiane A. M. Baltaxe. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. p. 10.

⁴⁷ George Yule, 1985. *The Study of Language*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge. p. 45

The goal of all phonological theories is to reveal how speech sounds structure and function in the languages of the world. Nicholas Trubetzkoy's posthumously published work, the *Principles of Phonology* (1939), is usually taken as a starting point in the history of phonology as a linguistic discipline. In this book Trubetzkoy attempted a comprehensive taxonomy of the phonetic properties of the distinctive contrasts employed by the languages. He classified distinctive oppositions on the basis of (1) their relationship to the entire system of oppositions, (2) the relationship between opposition members, and (3) the extent of their distinctive force. The distinctions he made are – bilateral, multilateral, proportional, and isolated oppositions. The importance of Trubetzkoy's work is that he attempted to give a *phonological* analysis of phonetic contrasts.⁴⁸

Jakobson (1949) hypothesized that the presence of certain phonetic oppositions precludes the presence of other oppositions. Jakobson entertained the possibility that these set of phonological features may not be the same as the set of phonetic features. Jakobson, Fant and Halle's (1952) system proposes to account for all of the possible phonological contrasts of languages by means of thirteen features which represent innovations in three areas. The features capture phonological contrasts rather than describe phonetic segments, the features are all binary in nature, and the features are defined primarily in acoustic terms.

Distinctive feature theory has been primarily used by generative approaches to linguistics, where the aim is to provide an account of phonology that can be integrated within a theory of grammar. Generative phonology is a theory of the sound structure of a language. The theoretical framework underlying generative phonology owes its development primarily to Noam Chomsky and Morris Halle (1968). The basic tenets of the theory they proposed are set against the background of earlier phonologists like Sapir (1925), Trubetzkoy (1939), Pike (1947),

⁴⁸ Larry M. Hyman, 1975. *Phonology: Theory and Analysis*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston. New York. p. 29

Firth (1948), Martinet (1949), Jakobson (1949) and Hockett (1955).

The theory of generative phonology and its application to English are set forth in their monumental work *The Sound Pattern of English* which is one of the most comprehensive treatments of phonological distinctive features accomplished to date. Chomsky and Halle explicitly distinguish two functions of their features. First, the distinctive features are designed to capture the phonological contrasts of languages much like Jakobson's features. However, they went a step further by designing their features to describe the phonetic content of segments derived by the phonological rules, as well as underlying segments. *The Sound Pattern of English* had a great influence on phonological theory with its downplaying of the syllable and the focus on segments.

Autosegmental phonology was introduced in 1976 by John Goldsmith. In autosegmental phonology phonological phenomena are treated as parallel sequences of features which reside on multiple tiers instead of the conventional way of treating them as one linear sequence phonemes.

A new phonological theory called Optimality Theory was developed by Prince and Smolensky in 1993. The theory tries to work out an overall architecture for phonology which explains how languages choose a pronunciation of a word that best satisfies a list of constraints which is ordered by importance. In other words, a higher ranked constraint will cause the violation of a lower ranked constraint in a language. This theory is hailed by some linguists as the most important development in generative grammar of the 1990s. However, it is as yet too general to provide a substantive theory of grammar.

1.6 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As had been mentioned in 1.5.1 a thorough, reliable and accessible phonological analysis of the Puroik language is sadly lacking even more than twenty years after Deuri (1983) first

presented a few hard to evaluate data on the language. There has been much speculation and concern over the genetic affiliation of Puroik because of the absence of a scholarly research on the language and whatever work that had been done on its classification were mostly based on questionable phonological data or data which were not available even to interested researchers who work on the language. The present situation on the language urgently calls for a reliable and accessible phonological analysis of the language.

1.7 METHODOLOGY

The qualitative research methodology is employed in this research because of the following reasons:

- There is not enough written or printed material available on the Puroik language to describe its phonology.
- There is a need to present a detailed view of the phonology of the language because a distant panoramic view is not enough to present a descriptive analysis of the phonology of the language.
- There is a need to study the Puroik language in its natural setting because if participants or informants are removed from their natural setting, it could lead to contrived findings that are often out of context.
- The people were receptive to this kind of research.
- Qualitative linguistic research involves the use of qualitative data, such as interviews, documents, and participant observation data to understand and explain a linguistic problem which is phonology in this case.

1.7.1 Methods of Data Collection

Personal interviews and observation were the methods of data collection employed in this research. The use of questionnaires was out of consideration because most of the people in the community are illiterate.

1.7.1.1 Interviews

The data for this thesis is collected from two informants during the period 2000-2001. One of them was a 27 year old man from the village of Lasumpatte in Seijosa Circle in the southern part of East Kameng District. He was educated up to Class VIII. Another informant was a 24 year old man from Sangchu village in Chayangtajo Circle in the north-eastern hill of the East Kameng District. He was doing his matriculation at that time and was conversant in Hindi and could understand English.

Words were initially elicited from the informants using the rather controversial Swadesh List after Morris Swadesh not so much for obtaining cognates but to obtain basic vocabulary of the language.⁴⁹ As the research progressed, other words, phrases and sentences were elicited with the help of interviews. The interviews were recorded with tape recorder and video camera. The collected data was again rechecked with another informant. Special care is taken to capture the phonologically correct data of the language.

Both quantitative and qualitative interview methods were employed on separate occasions. Quantitative data was obtained with the help of the same list of words. Sometimes probing was used to clarify or to get additional information on the words or expressions. There was a good rapport between me and the informants and I was happy for the trust they put on me. Sometimes the interviews were informal and conversational which made them spontaneous and loosely structured. However, they were often structured and formal, and standard open-ended questions were asked at times to get qualitative data.

⁴⁹ Swadesh list is a rather controversial list of common words which are essential to most languages compiled by Morris Swadesh in 1950. It is used to determine the closeness of any pair of languages but mainstream historical linguistics is usually very sceptical about claims of relatedness based on Swadesh lists exclusively. See Morris Swadesh, 1950. Salish internal relationships. *International Journal of American Linguistics*. 16, 157-167.

1.7.1.2 Observation

During the course of the research I could become a participant observer, and got myself immersed in the day-to-day lives of the people and could conduct one-on-one interviews with members of the community. I was able to focus on the meanings of language by observing the interactions of members of the Puroik community. The people were very appreciative of an outsider learning their language and culture and always very helpful. Information gathered from the observation was analysed and checked with the informants.

1.8 FRAMEWORK

This research work is done under the Descriptive Linguistics framework as it is concerned basically with the description of the phonology of the Puroik language.

Descriptive linguistics comprises two main activities, namely, the collection of primary data and analysis of these data. While Himmelmann (1998) argues for the separation of descriptive and documentary linguistics the two fields can hardly be separated because of the fact that the activities of collection of primary data and descriptive analysis of these data overlap especially where a previously unrecorded language like Puroik is the object of study. In this paper the term descriptive is used to refer to the whole enterprise of collection of primary data and analysis of these data.

Descriptive linguistics is opposed to the tradition of prescriptive grammars and dictionaries which tend to prescribe rules for a given language. The term was first coined in America to refer to the work of Bloomfield and his followers but it was later extended to cover any non-historical and non-prescriptive work outside the generative grammar. It refers to structuralist paradigm as opposed to the historical or comparative linguistics. It is used interchangeably with the European

structural or synchronic language study.⁵⁰ It is considered to be synchronic, impartial or objective and informal statement of linguistic facts. It was only in the sixties, during the rise of generative grammar, that *descriptive* was used in contrast to generative, explanatory, or formal, the characterizing attributes of the Chomskyan enterprise.

1.9 DELIMITATION

The scope of this thesis is to describe the phonology of the Puroik language and as such it will not touch upon other aspects of the language.

The study was done in two Puroik villages namely Sangchu and Lasumpatte. Of these Sangchu lies under the circle of Chayangtajo in the north-eastern part of East Kameng District. I visited the village for a number of times during the research work and lived with the people for a period of four months during 2000-2001. The village was small and very quiet. It is located near the border of Tibet and it was extremely cold in winter but for the warmth and hospitality of the people. I also visited two other Puroik villages namely Tamak Sulung and Saria Sario which lie about 15 kilometers and 30 kilometers respectively away from Sangchu. We had to travel through a dense forest on foot for about a day in the mosquito, flea and leech infested area. People were very poor in that part of the world and even a cup of sweetened red tea was a luxury. And to talk of luxury even a stick of candle was one. I also lived with the re-settled Puroiks in the Arunodhaya model village in Seppa for some months during 2000-2001. I had a good enough time to observe the Puroiks as a participant in their day to day lives. Also, it helped me in learning to speak their language as well.

⁵⁰ Leonard Bloomfield, 1933. *Language*, London: Allen & Unwin. p.16-20. The term descriptive is actually an Americanism, used interchangeably with structural or synchronic in the European tradition. See Dell Hymes & John Fought, 1981, *American Structuralism*, The Hague: Mouton. p. 9.

Another village was Lasumpatte in Seijosa circle of East Kameng District. It lies at the foothills of Arunachal Pradesh at the Assam border. This was where one of my informants lived. I stayed in this village for two weeks and enjoyed the Puroik hospitality as I went about recording and studying their language in 2001.

Phonemic symbols from the International Phonetic Alphabets (revised to 1993, corrected 1996) are used for data transcription in the thesis.

Chapter 2

SEGMENTS

2.1 CONSONANTS

There are two types of segmental phonemes in every language. One of these types is called consonants. In the production of a consonant sound the air that passes out from the larynx is obstructed somewhere in the oral or nasal cavity thus causing audible turbulence at one or more points along the vocal tracts.

In this thesis minimal pairs are shown to illustrate the contrast between segments in most cases. However, when there are no minimal pairs near minimal pairs are used to show the contrasts. The consonants of Puroiks are discussed with illustrations in the following.

2.2 DESCRIPTION AND EXAMPLES

2.2.1 Stops

The voiced stops /b/, /d/ and /g/ are contrastive in the word initial and word medial positions.

Word initial

- (1) [batʃaiʔ] 'mosquito'
- (2) [dana] 'woman'
- (3) [gait] 'hand'

Word medial

- (4) [abaid] 'first'
- (5) [adua] 'friend'
- (6) [aguiʔ] 'uncle'

The dental voiced stop /d/ and the velar voiced stop /g/ are contrastive in the word final position as well.

Word final

- (7) [abaid] 'first'
- (8) [uəg] 'three'

The voiced and voiceless bilabial stops /b/, /p/ and /p^h/ are contrastive in word initial and word medial positions. The voiced bilabial stop cannot occur in the word final position.

Word initial

- (9) [ba] 'axe'
- (10) [pa] 'bundle'
- (11) [bɔ] 'basket'
- (13) [pɔ] 'before'
- (14) [bəuɾuei] 'carry'
- (15) [pəu] 'make'
- (16) [bua] 'big'
- (17) [pua] 'father'

Word medial

- (18) [abua] 'son-in-law'
- (19) [apua] 'father'
- (20) [abruɪ] 'patridge'
- (21) [apɾɔ] 'dish'
- (22) [kebria] 'stone'
- (23) [kapei] 'knee'
- (24) [mabək] 'dream'
- (25) [mapai] 'sugarcane'

The voiced and voiceless dental stops /t/ and /d/ are contrastive in both word initial and word medial positions. Thus we have the following:

Word initial:

- (26) [daŋ] 'also'
- (27) [taŋ] 'give'
- (28) [dua] 'early'
- (29) [tua] 'bite'
- (30) [duŋsiŋ] 'granary'
- (31) [tuŋ] 'sit'

Word medial

- (32) [adua] 'friend'
- (33) [atua] 'sharp-edged'
- (34) [gadam] 'hook'
- (35) [gamtəŋ] 'angel'
- (36) [kaduaŋ] 'ceiling'
- (37) [katuaŋ] 'teeth'

- (38) [kaduiʔ] 'upper lip' (39) [katuiʔ] 'bridge'
 (40) [mada] 'vegetable' (41) [mataʔ] 'basket rope'

The voiceless stop series /p/, /t/, and /k/ are also contrastive in the word initial, word medial and word final positions. Consider the following examples:

/p/ and /k/

Word initial:

- (42) [patʃiak] 'half' (43) [katʃik] 'backbone'
 (44) [pait] 'back' (45) [kait] 'to do'
 (46) [pɔ] 'before' (47) [kɔ] 'ascend'
 (48) [pua] 'father' (49) [kua] 'water'
 (50) [pɔkra] 'fern' (51) [kɔk] 'head'

Word medial:

- (52) [apɔ:k] 'nose' (53) [akɔk] 'head'
 (54) [tʃiŋpua] 'to stand' (55) [tʃiŋkak] 'bird trap'
 (56) [kapak] 'banana' (57) [kakɔkriaŋ] 'raven'
 (58) [laipɔ] 'hoof' (59) [laikaba] 'shin'
 (60) [mapai] 'sugarcane' (61) [maka] 'ladder'

Word final

- (62) [tʃjap] 'cry' (63) [liek] 'lost'
 (64) [hjǎp] 'to tie' (65) [rək] 'shelf'
 (66) [maiʃap] 'fan' (67) [asik] 'alive'
 (68) [dʒa:p] 'book' (69) [atɔk] 'lord'
 (70) [migap] 'careful' (71) [asak] 'sister-in-law'

/p^h/ vs /p/

Aspiration for /p/ is contrastive in the word initial and word medial positions. Consider the following pairs:

- (72) [aŋp^hrio] 'rain' (73) [aŋprɔ] 'moon'
 (74) [p^hrɔ] 'rain' (75) [prɔ] 'firewood basket'

/t/ and /k/

Word initial:

- (76) [ta] 'from' (77) [ka] 'for'
 (78) [tak] 'bangle' (79) [kək] 'eye'
 (80) [taŋ] 'give' (81) [kaŋ] 'umbrella'
 (82) [tuŋ] 'to sit' (83) [kuŋ] 'with'
 (84) [tua] 'bite' (85) [kua] 'water'

Word medial:

- (86) [ataʔ] 'flat' (87) [aka] 'elder brother'
 (88) [atɔk] 'lord' (89) [akɔk] 'head'
 (90) [dʒetak] 'enough' (91) [dʒepaŋ] 'they'

/p/ vs /t/

Word initial:

- (92) [paŋ] 'judge' (93) [taŋ] 'give'
 (94) [pa] 'bundle' (95) [ta] 'from'
 (96) [pakna] 'sweep' (97) [tak] 'bangle'
 (98) [pua] 'father' (99) [tua] 'bite'

Word medial:

- (100) [apua] 'father' (101) [atua] 'sharp'
 (102) [apak] 'love' (103) [ataʔ] 'flat'
 (104) [apɔ:k] 'nose' (105) [atɔk] 'lord'
 (106) [tʃap^hrio] 'corn' (107) [tʃiŋtri] 'wheel'
 (108) [dʒepaŋ] 'they' (109) [dʒetak] 'enough'

However in word final position the voiceless dental stop /t/ alternates with the voiceless velar stop /k/. Now consider the following:

/t/ and /k/:

(110)	[ait]	~	[aik]	'cloth'
(111)	[dait]	~	[daik]	'meet'
(112)	[gait]	~	[gaik]	'hand'
(113)	[azait]	~	[azaik]	'bone'
(114)	[padzait]	~	[padzaik]	'star'
(115)	[puru ^o it]	~	[puru ^o ik]	'puroik'
(116)	[kasit]	~	[kasik]	'little'
(117)	[atʃit]	~	[atʃik]	'night'
(118)	[əitrue]	~	[əikrue]	'carry'

Also, the voiceless dental stop /t/ alternates with glottal stop /ʔ/ in the word final position.

/t/ and /ʔ/:

(119)	[kait]	~	[kaiʔ]	'work'
(120)	[itʃait]	~	[itʃaiʔ]	'hungry'
(121)	[arait]	~	[araiʔ]	'sister'
(122)	[atʃuit]	~	[atʃuiʔ]	'maternal aunt'
(123)	[raŋluit]	~	[raŋluiʔ]	'pretend'
(124)	[loit]	~	[loiʔ]	'talk'

In the above examples, the glottal stop /ʔ/ seems to be influenced by the front vowel /i/, causing it to vary with the front consonant, the voiceless dental stop /t/. However, the same cannot be said for the variation between the velar voiceless stop /k/ and the glottal stop /ʔ/. Now, consider the following examples:

/k/ and /ʔ/:

(125)	[tuŋriak]	~	[tuŋriaʔ]	'wait'
(126)	[katuik]	~	[katuiʔ]	'bridge'
(127)	[kazik]	~	[kaziʔ]	'cap'
(128)	[puak]	~	[puaʔ]	'crow'
(129)	[mitak]	~	[mitaʔ]	'arrow'

Aspiration for the voiceless velar stop /k/ is not contrastive in Puroik. Thus we have

(130)	[tʃu:ŋk ^h rie]	~	[tʃu:ŋkrie]	'mosquito'
(131)	[kaik ^h riet]	~	[kaikriet]	'wrong'
(132)	[kek ^h reit]	~	[kekriet]	'saliva'

2.2.2 Affricates

The IPA chart does not contain letters for affricates so the diagraphs /dʒ/ and /tʃ/ are employed to transcribe the voiced and voiceless palatal affricates respectively in Puroik. These two sounds are contrastive in the word initial and word medial positions. However, they do not occur word finally. Thus we have the following:

Word initial

(133)	[tʃuk]	'house'	(134)	[dʒuit]	'descend'
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Word medial

(135)	[kaŋtʃaŋ]	'tobacco pipe'	(136)	[kadʒok]	'trap'
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Aspiration of the voiceless alveo-palatal affricate /tʃ/ is not contrastive. It is in free variation with the non-aspirated [tʃ].

(137)	[amatʃuiʔ]	~	[atʃuit]	'maternal aunt'
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2.2.3 Fricatives

The voiced and voiceless labio-dental fricatives /f/ and /v/ are contrastive word initially and word medially. They are never occur word finally.

Word initial

(138) [fe] 'run' (139) [via] 'lick'

Word medial

(140) [afa:k] 'angry' (141) [avuk] 'tomb'

The voiced and voiceless alveolar fricatives /z/ and /s/ are contrastive in word initial and word medial position. But they do not occur word finally. Consider the following:

Word initial

(142) [sak] 'mouth' (143) [zak] 'quiver'

Word medial

(144) [masuait] 'worship' (145) [mazuait] 'lazy'

(146) [asa asa] 'different' (147) [azai] 'hot'

However, the voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ occurs in a syllable final position word medially in a few words as shown below.

(148) [asraŋ] 'holy' (149) [basraŋ] 'unholy'

The voiceless glottal fricative /h/ does not occur in the word final position but it occurs word initially and word medially as can be seen in the following:

Word initial

(150) [hagait] 'star' (151) [hakupu] 'cock'

Word medial

(152) [ahuk] 'belt' (153) [ahiek] 'rotten'

2.2.4 Nasals

Puroik has three nasal stops /m/, /n/ and /ŋ/ which are contrastive word initial, word medial and word final positions. Consider the following:

Word initial

(154) [miŋdak] 'buffalo' (155) [naŋken] 'hold'
(156) [ŋiaŋta] 'from' (157) [mua] 'enemy'
(158) [nua] 'demand' (159) [ŋueiŋtak] 'earth'

Word medial

(160) [amui] 'girl' (161) [anui] 'near'
(162) [aŋua] 'ugly'

Word final

(163) [mara:m] 'hell' (164) [lainien] 'joy'
(165) [baluŋ] 'garden' (166) [amam] 'fat'
(167) [noŋun] 'story' (168) [tʃuaŋ] 'above'

2.2.5 Trill and Approximants

The alveolar lateral approximant /l/ and the alveolar trill /r/ are contrastive word initially and word medially. However, the alveolar lateral approximant does not occur word finally, whereas the alveolar flap occurs word finally in a few words. Consider the following pairs:

Word initial

(169) [lae] 'play' (170) [rae] 'jhum'
(171) [la.] 'leg' (172) [rai] 'rope'
(173) [lak] 'enter' (174) [rak] 'shelf above
the hearth'

Word medial

(175) [ala] 'chaff' (176) [arang] 'pain'
(177) [alai] 'leg' (178) [arait] 'sister'
(179) [baerak] 'ashes' (180) [balak] 'flute'

The voiced alveolar lateral approximant /l/ is contrastive with the voiceless alveolar lateral fricative /ɬ/ both word initially

and word medially. Thus we have the following contrastive pairs:

Word initial

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|-------------------|-----------|
| (181) [laŋ] | 'hundredth' | (182) [faŋ] | 'outside' |
| (183) [lui] | 'civet' | (184) [ʔuibuk] | 'stomach' |
| (185) [luk] | 'heart' | (186) [ʔuikadzik] | 'waist' |
| (187) [liek] | 'lose' | (188) [ʔiok] | 'fall' |
| (189) [lje] | 'seven' | (190) [ʔeɔŋ] | 'stool' |

Word medial

- | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------|----------------|-------------------|
| (191) [mala] | 'large owl' | (192) [maʔa] | 'demon' |
| (193) [ralluŋ] | 'nation' | (194) [reiʔaŋ] | 'paddy field' |
| (195) [aluiʔ maŋ] | 'enemy' | (196) [aʔui] | 'small intestine' |
| (197) [palaiʔ] | 'hornbill' | (198) [aʔiŋ] | 'marrow' |

The voiceless alveolar lateral fricative has a much less frequency of occurrence than the voiced alveolar lateral approximant. Both of them do not occur in the word final position.

The voiced alveolar trill /r/ and the voiced alveolar approximant /l/ are contrastive in the word initial and the word medial positions. Thus we have the following:

Word initial:

- | | | | |
|--------------|----------|--------------|-----------------------|
| (199) [rɔ] | 'very' | (200) [rɔ] | 'banyan tree' |
| (201) [re] | 'shoot' | (202) [re:] | 'feather of an arrow' |
| (203) [riaŋ] | 'inside' | (204) [riaŋ] | 'rub' |

Word medial:

- | | | | |
|-----------------|----------|----------------|-----------------|
| (205) [pare] | 'louse' | (206) [pareʔ] | 'priest' |
| (207) [arait] | 'sister' | (208) [areiʔ] | 'strong' |
| (209) [rɔŋriak] | 'listen' | (210) [bariek] | 'lose (a game)' |

The voiced alveolar approximant /l/ does not occur in the word final position, and the occurrence of the alveolar trill /r/ in the word final position is noted in only very few words most of which are borrowed words. Only two examples are noted:

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| (211) [jasar luitsar] | 'punishment' |
| (212) [latʔar haʔkbo] | 'November' (archaic) |

The bilabial glide /w/ occurs only in the word initial and the word medial positions.

Word initial:

- | | | | |
|----------------|--------|--------------|-------|
| (213) [wetapa] | 'self' | (214) [waiʔ] | 'dry' |
| (215) [wrai] | 'four' | | |

Word medial:

- | | | | |
|----------------|------------|---------------|------------------|
| (216) [dowa] | 'to smoke' | (217) [aweit] | 'paternal uncle' |
| (218) [rwaina] | 'to flow' | | |

The palatal glide /j/ occurs in the word initial, word medial and word final positions. Consider the following examples:

Word initial:

- | | | | |
|----------------|----------|---------------|--------|
| (219) [ja] | 'teach' | (220) [jo] | 'dog' |
| (221) [jaŋdak] | 'chilli' | (222) [jarap] | 'rise' |

Word medial:

- | | | | |
|---------------|----------|--------------|------------|
| (223) [ajaʔ] | 'ascend' | (224) [aju] | 'good' |
| (225) [bajam] | 'tomato' | (226) [kaja] | 'squirrel' |
| (227) [kwaje] | 'stick' | | |

Word final:

- | | | | |
|----------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------|
| (228) [ʔʃuej] | 'wild banana leaf' | (229) [dʒandʒuej] | 'squirrel' |
| (230) [puzuej] | 'road, way' | | |

From the above description and examples it can be concluded that there are twenty four consonantal phonemes in

the Puroik language. The consonantal segments are presented in the following table:

	Labial	Dental	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive	p p ^h b	t d			k g	ʔ
Nasal	m		n		ŋ	
Trill			r			
Affricate				tʃ dʒ		
Fricative	f v		s z			h
Lateral Fricative			ɬ			
Approximant	w		ɹ	j		
Lateral Approximant			l			

Table 2.1 Puroik Consonants

2.3 VOWELS

Vowels are usually defined as sounds in spoken language that are characterized by open configurations of the vocal tract, in contrast to consonants which are characterized by a constriction or closure at one or more points along the vocal tract.

The International Phonetic Alphabet identifies seven different vowel heights, although no known language distinguishes all seven. Puroik vowels are described with illustrations in the following.

2.3.1 Description and Examples

/i/

The vowel /i/ is high, front, unrounded and tense. It occurs in all syllable types in all word positions.

Word initial:

(231) [i:da] 'death' (232) [itʃaiʔ] 'hungry'

Word medial:

(233) [miŋdak] 'buffalo' (234) [ariʔ] 'stomach'

Word final:

(235) [rəi] 'marriage' (236) [tʃi] 'eat'

/u/

The high, back unrounded vowel /u/ is tense and it occurs in mostly in open syllable types, but in rare cases it also occurs in closed syllable types. Consider the following examples:

Word initial:

(237) [uəg] 'three'

Word medial:

(238) [pəubə] 'God' (239) [ruug] 'six'

Word final: u

(240) [kətəu] 'cloud' (241) [seppəu] 'raft'

/u/

The vowel /u/ is high, round, tense and is produced fairly back. It can occur in all syllable types, as in:

Word initial:

(242) [u:] 'to go' (243) [uruei] 'come'

Word medial:

(244) [huilə] 'fall' (245) [luk] 'heart'

Word final:

(246) [pu:] 'beer' (247) [taku] 'chest'

/ə/

The mid central vowel /ə/ is a reduced vowel and it can occur in all syllable types. Consider the following examples:

Word initial

(248) [əkək] 'eye'

Word medial

(249) [tuæg] 'three' (250) [rəi] 'marriage'

It rarely occurs word finally but for some exceptions like [mələŋə] which, however, is a pronunciation variant of [mələŋ] meaning 'us'.

/e/

The vowel /e/ has two allophones [e] and [ɛ]. The vowel is contrastive with the high front unrounded tense vowel [i] in all word positions.

[ɛ]: It is realized as a close-mid front unrounded lax vowel [ɛ] when it is preceded by the low front unrounded vowel /a/ or a high back unrounded vowel /u/. Consider the following examples:

Word initial

(251) [ɛik] 'bring'

Word medial

(252) [puzuej] 'road' (253) [rɛbre] 'roof'

Word final:

(254) [raɛ] 'jhum' (255) [laɛ] 'play'

[e]: It is realized as an open-mid front unrounded tense vowel [e] elsewhere.

Word initial:

(256) [eklik] 'slip'

(257) [eke] 'to walk around carrying something'

Word medial:

(258) [adʒjet] 'below' (259) [pjɛt] 'fly'

Word final:

(260) [fɛ] 'run' (261) [tʃɛ] 'knife'

/ɔ/

The vowel /ɔ/ has two allophones namely [ɔ] and [o].

[o]: It is realized as the mid, back, rounded tense rounded vowel when it is preceded by the front high unrounded tense vowel /i/, or when followed by the back high tense vowels /u/. It does not occur word initially but medially and finally.

Word medial:

(262) [arɔŋ] 'white' (263) [roufriɑŋ] 'set free'

Word final:

(264) [vio] 'axe' (265) [bikkliɔ] 'bul bul'

[ɔ]: is low, back, rounded and lax, and occurs in all word positions. Consider the following examples:

Word initial:

(266) [ɔ:] 'cave'

Word medial:

(267) [dʒɔkrɔ] 'stretcher' (268) [rɔk] 'ask'

Word final:

(269) [huilɔ] 'fall' (270) [gɔ] 'I'

/a/

The vowel /a/ is low, central and tense. It is produced with the lips in a neutral position. It occurs in all syllable types in all word positions. It is contrastive with the mid central vowel /ə/.

Word initial:

(271) [aɛ] 'he' (272) [ala] 'chaff'

Word medial:

(273) [alak] 'leaf' (274) [amaŋ] 'rice'

Word final:

(275) [aka] 'elder brother'

(276) [adua] 'friend'

2.3.2 Contrastive pairs for the vowels

Minimal pairs are shown below to illustrate the contrasts between vowels wherever possible but near minimal pairs are also employed to illustrate the contrast between vowels.

/i/ vs. /ɯ/

(277) [rəi] 'marriage' (278) [rəɯ] 'frog'

(279) [paɪta] 'found' (280) [pəɯbɔ] 'god'

(281) [kikam] 'eagle' (282) [kɯ] 'question marker'

/i/ vs. /u/

(283) [i] 'to die' (284) [u:] 'to go'

/ɯ/ vs. /u/

(285) [dʒɯ] 'girlfriend' (286) [dʒu] 'tubers'

/e/ vs. /i/

(261) [tʃe] 'knife' (287) [tʃi] 'eat'

/ə/ vs. /a/

(289) [əkək] 'eye' (290) [əka] 'uncle'

/ə/ vs. /u/

(291) [mabək] 'dream' (292) [mabuk] 'gun'

From the above discussion it may be concluded that Puroik has seven contrastive vowels which are as presented below:

	Front	Central	Back	
	unrounded	unrounded	unrounded	rounded
High	i		ɯ	u
mid	e	ə		
low		a		ɔ

Table 2.2 Contrastive Vowels of Puroik

PHONOTACTICS

3.1 PHONOTACTICS

Phonotactics is a term used in phonology to refer to the specific arrangements of sounds or phonemes which occur in a language. Two or more languages with similar, even identical phoneme inventories may have very different rules governing the distribution of phonemes in morphemes, words, syllables. The sequences of phonemes can be described in the way they form clusters with other phonemes. According to Lass (1984) phonotactics deals with the description of clusters, sequences, distributional restrictions and admissible syllable types. In other words, phonotactics deal with restrictions in a language on the permissible combinations of phonemes and define permissible syllable structure, consonant clusters and vowel sequences.

3.2 CONSONANT CLUSTERS

A consonant cluster is a group of consonants that occur together in a word without the intervention of any vowel. Some linguists treat consonant clusters as consonant sequences, that is simply as consonantal phonemes occurring next to each other, not withstanding the syllable boundaries which clearly separates them. This was the case of how Sreedhar (1980) analysed the consonant cluster of Sema language. Also, this was followed in Grewal's (1997) description of some Puroik clusters. To them consonant clusters are more useful as a definition when they may occur across syllable boundaries.

Some linguists argue that consonant clusters should be restricted to consonants that occur next to one another in the same syllable without the intervention of any vowel or syllable boundary. Hyman (1975) points out the following,

The basic assumption in phonological approaches to the syllable is that there is an intimate relationship between word structure and syllable structure. Thus, ideally, the same sequential constraints which operate at the beginning of a word should be operative at the beginning of a syllable, even if this syllable is word-internal. Similarly, the same sequential constraints which operate at the end of a word should be operative at the end of a syllable.¹

In the light of this discussion, we will treat the consonant clusters in Puroik as those consonant sequences, which may be a sequence of two or more phonemes of the same class, occurring together without the intervention of any other phoneme of different class or any syllable boundary.

3.2.1 Initial Clusters

Puroik has a number of consonant clusters. There can be a cluster of two consonants at the syllable initial position. The possible initial consonant clusters are presented in the following table:

First members	Second members of the cluster					
	n	r	ɾ	l	w	j
p	-	*	-	*	-	*
p ^h		*				
b	-	*	*	*	-	
t		*				
k	-	*	*	*	*	-
g	-	*	-	-	-	-
f	-	*	-	-	-	-
v	-	*	-	-	-	-
s	-	-	-	-	*	-

¹Larry M. Hyman, 1975. *op. cit.*, p. 189

m	-	*	-	-	-	*
n	-	-	-	-	-	*
l	-	-	-	-	-	*
r	-	-	-	-	*	-
w	-	*	-	-	-	-

Table 3.1 Initial two consonant clusters

From the above table it can be observed that there are thirteen consonants which can take the first position in syllable initial consonant clusters. These consonants are /p/, /b/, /t/, /k/, /g/, /f/, /v/, /s/, /m/, /n/, /l/, /r/ and /w/. There are six consonants which can act as the second member in syllable initial consonant clusters. These are /n/, /r/, /x/, /l/, /w/ and /j/. The initial consonant clusters are illustrated below:

Stop and Liquid

Consonant Clusters	Examples	Glosses
/pr-/	(293) [pre]	'louse'
/pl-/	(294) [plian]	'parrot'
/p ^h r-/	(295) [p ^h ro]	'rain'
/bl-/	(296) [bla]	'later'
/br-/	(297) [brek]	'comb'
/bɪ-/	(298) [bɪok]	'beat'
/tr-/	(299) [truk]	'pumpkin'
/kl-/	(300) [kliŋ]	'rainbow'
/kr-/	(301) [kri]	'sun'
/kɪ-/	(302) [kɪai]	'counting'
/gr-/	(303) [gram puan]	'fence'

Stop and Approximant

/pj-/	(304) [pja]	'next'
/kw-/	(305) [kwaje]	'stick'

Fricative and Liquid

/fr-/	(306) [frangna]	'to write'
/vr-/	(307) [vrio]	'heal'

Fricative and Approximant

/sw-/	(308) [swe]	'urinate'
-------	-------------	-----------

Nasal and Liquid

/mr-/	(309) [mrik]	'rat'
-------	--------------	-------

Nasal and Approximant

/mj-/	(400) [mjomi]	'fishtail'
/nj-/	(401) [nje]	'breast'

Liquid and Approximant

/lj-/	(402) [lje]	'seven'
/rw-/	(403) [rwaina]	'to flow'

Approximant and Liquid

/wr-/	(404) [wrai]	'four'
-------	--------------	--------

3.2.2 Medial Consonant Clusters

There can be upto two consonants in Puroik medial clusters in the same syllable. The first members in the clusters could be /p/, /p^h/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, /g/, /tʃ/, /f/, /v/ and /n/. The second position in the medial clusters can be occupied by seven consonants namely /n/ /m/ /r/ /x/ /l/ /w/ and /j/. The following table shows the possible clusters and is followed by appropriate examples.

First members	Second members of the cluster					
	n	r	ɾ	l	w	j
p	-	*	-	*	-	*
p ^h		*				
b	-	*	*	*	-	
t		*				
d						*
k	*	*	*	*	-	-
g	-	*	-	-	*	-
tʃ	-	-	-	-	-	*
dʒ	-	-	-	-	-	*
f	-	*	-	-	-	-
v	-	*	-	-	-	-
n	-	-	-	-	-	*
r	-	-	-	-	-	*

Table 3.2 Medial two consonant clusters

Stop and Liquid

/-pr-/	(405) [hinprɔ]	'courage'
/-pɾ-/	(406) [apɾiɔŋ]	'long'
/-p ^h r-/	(407) [aŋp ^h rɔ]	'rain'
/-br-/	(408) [mobruŋ]	'cucumber'
/-bɾ-/	(409) [dabɾen]	'eat voraciously'
/-bl-/	(410) [bliŋbliɔŋ]	'lightning'
/-tr-/	(411) [tʃiŋtri]	'wheel'
/-kr-/	(412) [hukkriaʔ]	'belt'

/-kɾ-/	(413) [naŋkɾeŋ]	'catch'
/-kl-/	(414) [naŋklik]	'slip out of grasp'

/-gr-/	(415) [agriem]	'thin'
--------	----------------	--------

Stop and Approximant

/-dj-/	(416) [adjeit]	'below'
--------	----------------	---------

/-gj-/	(417) [agja]	'high'
--------	--------------	--------

Stop and Nasal

/-kn-/	(418) [gait knieŋ]	'elbow'
--------	--------------------	---------

Affricate and Approximant

/-tʃj-/	(419) [tʃatʃjuŋ]	'shadow'
---------	------------------	----------

/-dʒ-/	(420) [adzjeit] ~ [adjeit]	'below'
--------	----------------------------	---------

Fricative and Liquid

/-fr-/	(421) [roufriɔŋ]	'free'
--------	------------------	--------

/-vr-/	(422) [avreu]	'dew'
--------	---------------	-------

Nasal and Approximant

/-nj-/	(423) [anjeŋ]	'good'
--------	---------------	--------

Liquid and Approximant

/-rj-/	(424) [kɔrjo]	'spade'
--------	---------------	---------

3.2.3 Final Consonant Clusters

There are two types of consonant clusters in the syllable final position which are presented in the table below:

First member	Second member	
	k	ʔ
ʔ	*	-
r	-	*

Table 3.3 Final clusters

The first members in a syllable final consonant cluster can be the glottal stop /ʔ/ and the alveolar trill /r/. The second or final member can either be the voiceless velar stop /k/ or the glottal stop /ʔ/.

Glottal stop + Velar stop

/-ʔk / (425) [maroʔk] 'nest'

Liquid + Glottal Stop

/-rʔ/ (426) [agarʔ] 'stiff muscle'

3.3 VOWEL SEQUENCES

The vowel sequences may be diphthongs which are single vowel sounds that begin in one vocalic position and end in another vocalic or glide position, and triphthongs.

3.3.1 Diphthongs

There are altogether seventeen diphthongs in the language. These are presented in the table below:

First Member	Second member							
	i	u	u	e	ε	ə	a	o
i	-	-	*	*	-	*	-	*
u	-	-	-	-	-	*	-	-
u	*	*	-	-	*	-	*	-
e	*	-	*	-	-	-	-	-
ə	-	*	*	-	-	-	-	-
a	*	-	-	-	*	-	-	-
o	*	-	*	-	-	-	-	-

Table 3.4 Diphthongs

3.3.2 Description and examples

/iu/ A tense high front unrounded vowel with an accompanying high back offglide. The following examples are noted:

(427) [biuŋ] 'suck'

(428) [riuri] 'today'

(429) [ariuk] 'red'

(430) [piuŋri] 'flute'

/ie/ A tense high front unrounded vowel followed by a tense mid front unrounded vowel. Examples are:

(431) [atjie] 'far'

(432) [arieŋ] 'bamboo tube'

(433) [akrie] 'branch'

(434) [klie] 'cheek'

/io/ A tense high front vowel followed by a lax mid back rounded vowel. Examples are:

(435) [arioŋ] 'white'

(436) [bioŋria] 'jhum hut'

(437) [hio] 'next'

(438) [vio] 'axe'

(439) [iok] 'fall'

/ia/ A tense high front unrounded vowel followed by a tense low central vowel. Examples are:

(440) [abria] 'ladder'

(441) [atfia] 'bitter'

(442) [briabo] 'mad'

(443) [tʃaʔklian] 'cross'

/uə/ A tense high back unrounded vowel followed by a central reduced vowel. Examples are very rare:

(444) [uəg] 'three'

/ui/ A tense high back rounded vowel with an accompanying high front offglide. Examples are:

(445) [amui] 'woman'

(446) [huilo] 'fall'

(447) [agui] 'uncle'

(448) [kui?] 'ear'

/uu/ A tense high back rounded vowel followed by a tense high back unrounded vowel. Examples are rare:

(449) [duuk] 'return'

/ue/ A tense high back rounded vowel with an accompanying mid front unrounded vowel. Examples are:

(450) [aruε] 'tongue'

(451) [ruε] 'laugh'

(452) [sabue] 'rat'

(453) [hue] 'blood'

/ua/ A tense high back rounded vowel followed by a low central vowel. Examples are:

(454) [apua] 'father'

(455) [tua] 'bite'

(456) [bua] 'big'

(457) [adua] 'friend'

/ei/ A tense mid front unrounded vowel accompanied by a high front offglide. The following examples are noted:

(458) [adyeit] 'below'

(459) [kaiyein] 'together'

(460) [pjeit] 'fly'

(461) [etfei] 'now'

/eu/ A tense mid front vowel with a high back rounded offglide. Examples are:

(462) [akeu] 'father-in-law'

(463) [avreu] 'dew'

/əu/ A central reduced vowel accompanied by the high back unrounded offglide. Examples are:

(464) [pəubə] 'creator'

(465) [pəu] 'make'

(466) [seppəu] 'raft'

(467) [dəu] 'year'

(468) [rəuŋ] 'frog'

/əu/ A central reduced vowel with a high back rounded offglide. Examples are:

(469) [aləu] 'mountain'

(470) [padəu] 'bird'

(471) [tʃe dau] 'small machete'

/ai/ A low central unrounded vowel with an accompanying high front offglide. Examples are:

(472) [abaid] 'first'

(473) [gait] 'hand'

(474) [amain] 'lake'

(475) [alai] 'leg'

(476) [ai.ui?] 'wing'

/æ/ A tense low central vowel followed by an open-mid front unrounded lax vowel which is in complementary

distribution with the close-mid front unrounded tense vowel /e/. Examples are:

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| (477) [raɛ] | 'jhum' |
| (478) [daebuk] | 'loamy soil' |
| (479) [zaɛ] | 'cooking pot' |
| (480) [haɛ] | 'for' |
| (481) [taɛ] | 'there' |

/ou/ A mid back rounded vowel followed by the high back rounded offglide. Examples are:

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| (482) [adou] | 'child' |
| (483) [azou] | 'husband' |
| (484) [madou] | 'pig' |
| (485) [rouhian] | 'forgive' |
| (486) [malou] | 'reflection' |

/oi/ A mid tense back rounded vowel accompanied by a high front unrounded offglide. Examples are:

- | | |
|-----------------|------------|
| (487) [koi?kɔ:] | 'entrance' |
| (488) [loi?] | 'speak' |
| (489) [loit] | 'boil' |
| (490) [poitduŋ] | 'turn' |
| (491) [krikoi?] | 'sunset' |

3.3.3 Triphthongs

Triphthongs also occur in Puroik which may be defined as a monosyllabic vowel combination usually involving a quick, but smooth movement from one vowel position to another that passes over a third one. In a $V_1V_2V_3$ combination, V_1 is always occupied by the high back rounded vowel /u/. V_2 is usually occupied by the mid low central unrounded vowel /a/, and in one or two cases

it may be the mid front unrounded tense vowel /e/. This two vowel sequence ends in V_3 which is the offglide, the high front unrounded tense vowel /i/. The following examples are noted.

- | | | |
|---------|-------------------|---------------------|
| /-uai-/ | (492) [atʃuait] | 'break into halves' |
| | (493) [duaik klu] | 'return' |
| | (494) [adzemuai] | 'mother-in-law' |
| | (495) [akarmuai?] | 'fishing hook' |
| | (496) [maluain] | 'ornament' |
| /-uei-/ | (497) [akruei] | 'phaesant' |

3.4 SYLLABLE PATTERNS

Most phonologists attempt to deal with the syllable as a phonological unit, even though some have questioned this. As had been discussed in 3.2, the phonological approaches to the syllable basically assume that there is an intimate relationship between word structure and syllable structure. The conditions on the type and number of permissible consonants at the word initial positions are actually conditions on syllable onsets; in other words, they apply both at the beginning of the word and to any syllable within the word as well. It is the contention of many phonologists and phoneticians like Hyman (1976) and Ladefoged (1975) that the rules governing the word structure also govern the syllable structure. This is followed in the description of the Puroik syllable.

A syllable may be defined as a unit of spoken language which consists of a single unbroken sound which has three phonetic parts: the onset, which is a consonant, the peak or the nucleus, which is a vowel and the coda, which is a consonant. A syllable that ends in a vowel is called an open syllable and a closed syllable ends in a consonant.

Puroik allows a maximum of four syllables in a word. However, tetrasyllabic words are of very low frequency in occurrence.

3.4.1 Monosyllabic Words

Most of the monosyllabic words in Puroik have CV patterns whereas the VC patterns are of very low in frequency of occurrence. Here C stands for a consonant and V for a vowel respectively. Puroik also has codaless syllable of the form V and VV. The syllable canon in the language is (C)(C)V(C). In a CVC pattern, the onset of a syllable can be filled by a maximum of two consonants and they could be any of the consonants other than the glottal stop /ʔ/. The peak position in the syllable can be occupied by any vowel. The coda may contain two consonants at the maximum.

Open Syllables

V	(498) [i:]	'die'
	(499) [u:]	'go'
	(500) [ɔ:]	'cave'
VV	(501) [ai]	'elder sister'
	(502) [ua]	'then'
CV	(503) [ba]	'axe'
	(504) [tʃi]	'eat'
CVV	(505) [kua]	'water'
	(506) [mua]	'enemy'
CCV	(507) [kri]	'sun'
	(508) [bla]	'later'
CCVV	(509) [tʃjei]	'leaf'
Closed Syllables:		
CVC	(510) [cuk]	'house'
	(511) [tʃɔ:k]	'tired'
CVVC	(512) [duait]	'open'
CCVC	(513) [mrik]	'rat'

	(514) [truk]	'pumpkin'
VC	(515) [am]	'yes'
	(516) [uw]	'five'
VVC	(517) [aik]	'kill'
	(518) [ait]	'red'

3.4.2 Disyllabic Words

Among the disyllables the most common type is the VCV pattern. Puroik follows the Maximal Onset Principle which states that within a word any series of consonants between vowels is divided so that the syllable on the right ends up with the maximal allowable number that satisfies the conditions on the syllable onsets. The VCV pattern is invariably split up as V and CV, not as VC and V.

Second syllable is open:

VCV	(519) [aba]	'plateau'
	(520) [atʃɔ]	'strength'
VVV	(521) [a.ua]	'itch'
VCVV	(522) [abua]	'son-in-law'
VCCV	(523) [ambɔ]	'moon'
VCCVV	(524) [abrui]	'partridge'
VCCVVV	(525) [ak.ruei]	'pheasant'
VVCCVVV	(526) [eik.ruei]	'carry'
CVCCC	(527) [haʔk.bɔ]	'month'
	(528) [tʃaʔkna]	'to cry'
CCVVCCVV	(529) [brionɾia]	'jhum/field hut'
Second syllable is closed:		
VVC	(530) [a:.ɔk]	'hole'
VVVVC	(531) [ai.uiʔ]	'wing'

VCVC	(532) [ahuk]	'belt'
VCVVC	(533) [aduak]	'slow'
VCVVVC	(534) [atʃuait]	'break into halves'
VCCVVC	(535) [agriam]	'thin'
VCVCC	(536) [agarʔ]	'tired'
CVCCVC	(537) [gungak]	'plate'
CVCVVVC	(538) [mabuait]	'flower'
CVVCCVCC	(539) [luittam]	'scold'

3.4.3 Trisyllabic Words

Third syllable open:

VCVCV	(540) [anime]	'tail'
VCVCVV	(541) [asarai]	'thin'
VCVCVVV	(542) [adzemuai]	'mother-in-law'
VCVVCV	(543) [asaidw]	'rainy season'
VCVVCVV	(544) [abiarai]	'midnight'
VCCVCCV	(545) [irjiaŋbo]	'saviour'
VCVVCCVV	(546) [aweikbua]	'lion'
VVCCVCVV	(547) [aitsulua]	'pink'
CVCVCV	(548) [kajodo]	'puppy'
CVCVCVV	(549) [dzakalui]	'snail'
CVCVCCV	(550) [kasitdo]	'very little'
CVCVCCVVV	(551) [kokakruiei]	'carry on head'
CVCCVCCV	(552) [paŋhaŋbo]	'judge'
CVVCVCV	(553) [laikaba]	'shin'
CVVCCVVCV	(554) [luitdaire]	'reconcile'
CVVCCVVVCV	(555) [luitnuaruai]	'word'

The third syllable is closed:

VCVCVVC	(556) [abanain]	'platform'
VCVCCVVVC	(557) [akarmuaiʔ]	'fishing hook'
VCVVCVVC	(558) [abualain]	'authority'
VCVVCCVVC	(559) [aŋuaʔniaʔ]	'pretty'
VCCVVCVVC	(560) [agrieniaŋ]	'beautiful'
CVCVCVC	(561) [katʃehak]	'behind'
CVCVCVVC	(562) [bamidait]	'forget'
CVCVVVCVVC	(563) [kaduimuiʔ]	'beard'
CVCVCCVC	(564) [patuŋruŋ]	'half pants'
CVCVCCVVC	(565) [lakapreiʔ]	'knee'
CVCVCCVVC	(566) [kazikziak]	'top knot'
CVCVVVCV	(567) [kalaihək]	'left hand'
CVCCVVCCVC	(568) [madzjeittak]	'earth'
CVVCVCVVC	(569) [riaralain]	'overpower'

3.4.4 Tetrasyllabic Words

VCVCVCV	(570) [asirido]	'thin'
VCVCVCVV	(571) [asukasai]	'summer and winter season'
CVCCVCVCVV	(572) [tʃaŋkitamei]	'whirlwind'
CVCCVCCCVVCCVV	(573) [riŋtuŋkriɛŋnua]	'wooden seat'
CVVCVCVVCCV	(574) [siegesiakla]	'punishment'
CVVCCVCVVCCV	(575) [liuŋmatʃiakdo]	'lizard'
CVCVCCVCCVVC	(576) [patʃappariap]	'sparrow'
CVVCVCVVVCVVC	(577) [dzeimareipuaŋ]	'saviour'

3.5 SYLLABLE INITIALS

Most of the consonants could occur syllable initially except for the glottal stop /ʔ/ which occurs only syllable finally in combination with the voiceless velar stop /k/ which may follow it, or with the alveolar flap /r/ which precedes it. The syllable initial consonants are the following:

p ^h		
p	t	k
b	d	g
	tʃ	h
f	s	
v	z	dʒ
m	n	ŋ
	ʈ	
	l	
	r	
w	ɹ	j

3.6 SYLLABLE FINALS

The following eleven consonants occur in the syllable final positions:

p	t	k	ʔ
	d	g	
m	n	ŋ	
	l		
	r		

3.7 PHONOLOGICAL PROCESSES

3.7.1 Assimilation across morpheme boundary

There is anticipatory assimilation across morpheme boundary in the Puroik. The voiceless velar stop /k/ is assimilated to the voiceless dental stop /t/. The following examples are noted:

(578) [agait ka] ~ [agaik ka] 'hand span'

(579) [gait knien] ~ [gaik knien] 'elbow'

A consonant of the following morpheme assimilates the consonant of the preceding morpheme. In case of (578) and (579), the final phoneme /t/ takes the feature of the following word initial phoneme /k/, causing it to assimilate into the voiceless velar stop.

However, the following pairs prove to be problematic and it is hard to explain why this kind of assimilation occurs: Consider the following examples:

(580) [gait sik] ~ [gaik sik] 'nails'

(581) [lak lat] ~ [lak lak] 'shirt'

3.7.2 Vowel Epenthesis

Vowel epenthesis is noted in certain clusters. The following examples are found:

(582) [turuk] ~ [truk] 'pumpkin'

(583) [bələk] ~ [blo:k] 'fool'

(584) [gərai] ~ [grai] 'we'

(585) [mirik] ~ [mrik] 'rat'

3.7.3 Vowel Elision

In some compound words, the vowel /a/ is deleted: The following examples are noted:

(586) [asarang] → [asraj] 'holy'

- (587) [ba] + [asraŋ] ———→ [basraŋ] 'unholy'
 NEG holy 'unholy'
- (588) [ba] + [aniyaŋ] ———→ [baniyaŋ] 'bad'
 NEG good bad
- (589) [ba] + [itʃait] ———→ [batʃait] 'not hungry'
 NEG hungry not hungry

3.7.4 Nasalization

The direction of nasalization in Puroik is from left to right in most cases. Consider the following examples:

- (590) [amūin] 'feather'
 (591) [tʃanūiʔ] 'cotton'
 (592) [kanījak] 'brain'
 (593) [lainīen] 'joy'
 (594) [nīere] 'tiger'
 (595) [tuŋmāin] 'grandfather'

But in some cases, the direction of nasalization is from right to left.

- (596) [hōŋ] 'salt'
 (597) [pivīen] 'insect'

Nasalization also takes place even when the nasal consonants are absent. The presence of the glottal fricative /h/ seems to be the most conducive environment for nasalization besides the nasal consonants. The following examples are interesting:

- (598) [ahīe] 'black'
 (599) [ahīek] 'rotten'
 (600) [hōŋ] 'salt'
 (601) [hūyi] 'one'

3.7.5 Palatization

Palatization consists in the partial assimilation of a consonant to a neighbouring front vocalic segment. Palatization in Puroik is anticipatory assimilation. The most conducive environment is the palatal glide [j]. The following examples are noted:

- (602) [adjeit] ~ [adzjeit] 'below'
 (603) [madjeit] ~ [madzjeit] 'world'

Chapter 4

SUPRASEGMENTALS

4.1 TONE

Tone is the use of pitch in a language to distinguish difference in meaning. Most languages make use of intonation to express emphasis, emotion, or other such features, but only some languages use tone to distinguish meaning. In such a case, tones function as phonemes and they are called tonemes, and the languages are tonal.

Sun Hongkai *et al* (1991) analysed Puroik as a tonal language. This was mentioned in Namkung (1996):

- Since the mid level and high level tones do not contrast, they can be considered a single toneme, which is transcribed <³³>. Similarly, since the high falling and mid falling tones do not contrast, they can be considered a single toneme, which is always transcribed <⁵³>.
- Syllables in the high falling tone, and syllables with diphthong rhymes in the low falling tone, and in a glottal stop [ʔ]. All syllables ending in /h/ are in the low falling tone.
- Prefixed syllables are pronounced with a reduced tone, but are transcribed in the mid level tone.¹

This treatment of tone in ZMYCC is what led Sun (1993) to state the following:

¹ Quoted in Ju Namkung, ed. 1996. *Phonological inventories of Tibeto-Burman Languages*. STEDT Monograph Series No. 3. Center for Southeast Asia Studies, UC, Berkeley. pp. 353-355. The assignment of numbers to tones is a common Chinese tradition and this was followed in ZMYCC as well. For instance, Mandarin has four tones which are assigned numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4. A string of different numbers shows starting and ending pitches, so /³⁵/ is a tone contour. The lowest pitch is 1, and the highest pitch 5.

Sulong has developed a rudimentary system of tones, ignored completely in Tayeng's manual. The basic contrast seems to be between two pitch registers, mid level (varying with high level) versus low level. A further falling tone is recognized by Ouyang, but seems to be predictably associated with the glottal codas -ʔ and -h.²

While most languages use intonation or pitch to convey grammatical structure or emphasis but this does not make them tonal languages. In these cases, tones can change how the audience is intended to interpret a word but in tonal languages, the tone is an integral part of a word itself. Great care is taken to find out the contrastive function of pitch in Puroik during this investigation but whatever pitch variations Puroik have do not function to change the meaning of words. I could not find any minimal pair for tones in the language.

4.2 LENGTH

Speech sounds that are identical in their place or manner features may differ in length or duration. In Puroik the tense vowels /a/, /ɔ/, /u/, and /i/ are usually longer than lax vowels. However, vowel length is not phonemic in Puroik. The following examples illustrate the long vowels in Puroik:

(604) [a:m]	'yes'
(605) [a:ɔk]	'hole'
(606) [ɔ:]	'cave'
(607) [bɔ:]	'down there'
(608) [i:]	'die'
(609) [api:]	'river course'
(610) [pu:]	'beer'

² Jackson T. S. Sun, 1992. "Review of Zangmianyu Yuyin He Cihui "Tibeto-Burman Phonology and Lexicon." *Linguistics of Tibeto-Burman Area*. Volume 15:2 — Fall 1992. p. 80. Since the original work of Sun Hongkai, *et al* is not accessible, the review of the book by Sun is used to refer to the work.

Puroik has geminate consonants which are double or long consonants that make difference in words. When a consonant is long, either the closure or obstruction is prolonged. Consider the following examples:

/-kk-/

(611) [hukkriaʔ] 'belt' vs. (612) [sakrio] 'thirst'

(613) [kɔkkum] 'pillow' vs. (614) [kɔkar] 'circle'

/-pp-/

(615) [patʃappariap] 'sparrow'

(616) [seppəw] 'vessel'

/-tt-/

(617) [jetta] 'and' vs. (618) [jatam] 'preach'

(619) kaittam 'fortress'

(620) luittam 'scold'

(621) madzjeittak 'earth'

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The 'hidden' people in the hilly areas of Arunachal Pradesh are no longer hidden. The first chapter of this thesis not only introduced the people and their problem but also discussed in detail what had been done on their language and what is still lacking in the field. It was shown of how the affinity of the language caused much confusion and posed many unanswered questions especially among comparative linguists who are working on the languages of this area. With the statement of the problem, the situation urgently called for a thorough linguistic analysis of the language. The first step in this direction was a reliable description of its phonology.

The second chapter of the thesis deals with segments found in the language. After a careful and painstaking analysis it has been confirmed that there are thirty one segmental phonemes in the language. Among these phonemes twenty four are consonantal phonemes and seven are vowels. All these phonemes are clearly described and illustrated with minimal pairs as far as possible. Near minimal pairs were also employed when minimal pairs were not available.

Chapter 3 presented the phonotactic constraints of the language and this proved to be exciting and problematic at times. A number of linguists had treated consonant clusters merely as consonantal phonemes occurring next to each other even when syllable boundaries clearly separate them. However, consonant clusters are analysed in this thesis as consonant sequences which may be a sequence of two or more phonemes of the same class, occurring together without the intervention of any other phoneme of different class or syllable boundary. It is found from the study that there can be a maximum cluster

of two consonants at the syllable initial position. Thirteen consonants can take the first position in syllable initial consonant clusters. These consonants are /p/, /b/, /t/, /k/, /g/, /f/, /v/, /s/, /m/, /n/, /l/, /r/ and /w/. There are six consonants which can act as the second member in syllable initial consonant clusters. These are /n/, /r/, /x/, /l/, /w/ and /j/.

In the medial clusters there can be upto two consonants in the same syllable. The first members in the clusters could be /p/, /pʰ/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, /g/, /tʃ/, /f/, /v/ and /n/. The second position in the medial clusters can be occupied by seven consonants namely /n/ /m/ /r/ /x/ /l/ /w/ and /j/.

There are two types of consonant clusters in the syllable final position. The first members in a syllable final consonant cluster can be the glottal stop /ʔ/ and the alveolar trill /r/. The second or final member can either be the voiceless velar stop /k/ or the glottal stop /ʔ/.

The vowel sequences may be diphthongs which are single vowel sounds that begin in one vocalic position and end in another vocalic or glide position, and triphthongs. There are altogether seventeen diphthongs in the language. These are /iu/, /ie/, /io/, /ia/, /uə/, /ui/, uu/, /uε/, /ua/, /ei/, /eu/, /əu/, /əu/, /ai/, /æ/, /ou/ and /oi/. Triphthongs also occur in Puroik which may be defined as a monosyllabic vowel combination usually involving a quick, but smooth movement from one vowel position to another that passes over a third one. In a $V_1V_2V_3$ combination, V_1 is always occupied by the high back rounded vowel /u/. V_2 is usually occupied by the mid low central unrounded vowel /a/, and in one or two cases it may be the mid front unrounded tense vowel /e/. This two vowel sequence ends in V_3 which is the offglide, the high front unrounded tense vowel /i/. There are two triphthongs in Puroik which are /uai/ and /uei/.

Puroik allows a maximum of four syllables in a word. However, tetrasyllabic words are of very low frequency in occurrence. Most of the monosyllabic words in Puroik have CV patterns whereas the VC patterns are of very low in

frequency of occurrence. Puroik also has codaless syllable of the form V and VV. The syllable canon in the language is (C)(C)V(C). In a CVC pattern, the onset of a syllable can be filled by a maximum of two consonants and they could be any of the consonants other than the glottal stop /ʔ/. The peak position in the syllable can be occupied by any vowel. The coda may contain two consonants at the maximum.

Phonological processes of the language that are noted and explained include anticipatory assimilation that occurs across morphological boundaries, vowel epenthesis, vowel elision, nasalization and palatization. There is anticipatory assimilation across morpheme boundary in Puroik. The voiceless velar stop /k/ is assimilated to the voiceless dental stop /t/. Vowel epenthesis is noted in certain clusters which usually involves compound words. Vowel elision also occurs in some cases. Nasalization in Puroik is usually from right to left and the most conducive environment is the presence of the voiceless glottal fricative /h/ besides the nasal consonants. Palatization is noted in very few words and the phonetic motivation is the palatal glide /j/.

Chapter 4 looked at suprasegmentals found in the language. Some researchers like Sun (1991) had analysed Puroik as a tonal language having two or three contrasting tones. However, as far as the extensive data collected for this thesis are concerned there is not enough evidence to prove that the language is tonal. No minimal pairs could be found to illustrate tonemic contrasts. Contrastive function of vowel length is also ruled out from the analysed data but there are a few consonantal geminates in the language.

5.2 IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

This research work has presented a thorough and detailed analysis of the phonology of Puroik and the phonological rules and processes of the language are presented in a very scientific manner for the first time supported by appropriate data. It has paved a way for other researcher to look further into other

aspects of the language including morphology and syntax which will eventually lead to a complete description of its grammar.

This paper has dealt with the phonology of modern spoken Puroik. This will contribute to the ongoing research that is being carried out on the languages of Arunachal Pradesh. The language is very interesting from the stand point of Comparative Linguistics mainly because Puroik does not seem to fit into any language family of the region. Some researchers went as far as to suggest that it might belong to Austro-Asiatic family. This is hardly surprising considering the unique linguistic features and vocabulary of the language which hardly has cognates with the neighbouring languages. This phonological description will help typologists, especially Tibeto-Burman linguists to compare Puroik with other languages of the region and it will be useful in helping them reach a satisfactory conclusion regarding the affinity of the Puroik language which had puzzled a number of linguists for a long time now.

A number of languages in Arunachal Pradesh are spoken by small groups of people and since they are socially and economically disadvantaged and under heavy pressure from larger languages like Hindi, Assamese and Nyishi, they are beginning to lose speakers and they are potentially endangered languages.¹ Puroik is among these potentially endangered languages. A number of youths had left their villages and came in contact not only with their neighbouring tribes but people from outside their homeland and they could not help but use other bigger languages like Hindi or Nyishi in their day to day lives and in so doing they are losing speakers among children and youths. This research work not only analysed the phonology of the language but also documented and preserved the language in a very reliable way by presenting data on the language. The findings of this research work will also help in the reduction the language to writing and the designing of the much needed orthography for the language.

¹ after David Crystal. 2001. *Language Death*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge. p. 21.

5.3 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

While thirty one segmental phonemes are identified from this analysis it must be stated here that there is still a possibility of error in this work mostly because of the unavailability of spectrographic instruments while the recorded data was analysed. Allophones of some of the phonemes are hard to identify because of problematic pairs like the ones which are presented in 2.2.2.1. There seem to be assimilative shifts between the voiceless dental stop /t/, the voiceless velar stop /k/, and the glottal stop /ʔ/ due to the influence of the high front vowel /i/. However, this treatment is problematic and at present it is hard to come to a conclusion about why the changes occur and under what conditions.

Tone in Puroik is of a great curiosity. While Sun Hongkai *et al* (1993) analysed Puroik as a tonal language having three contrastive tones I could not find minimal pairs for tones. The nearest I could find are of different grammatical category, and of different dialects. Phonemic tone is not a prevalent feature in the Tani languages of Arunachal Pradesh among which is the Nyishi language.² Chhangte also ruled out the presence of tone in Nyishi. She also expressed her doubt about the analysis of other Tani languages like Apatani as tonal languages.³ Sun (2003) mentioned that one dialect of Nyishi named Na Bengni has tonemic contrasts while another dialect has lost the tonemic contrast but are distinguished by vowel qualities instead.⁴ So it appears that tone in Nyishi is dialectal in some cases.

According to Gussenhoven (2004) tone is usually an areal rather than genetic feature.⁵ In other words, a language may

² Jackson T. -S. Sun. 2003. *Tani Languages* The Sino-Tibetan languages, ed. by Graham Thurgood & Randy J. LaPolla, London & New York: Routledge. p. 457.

³ Thangi Chhangte. Nd. *Phonology of the Nishi Language*. Ms. p. 13. Also see fn. # 24 on p. 20.

⁴ Jackson T. -S. Sun. *ibid*.

⁵ Carlos Gussenhoven. 2004. *The Phonology of Tone and Intonation*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge. p. 42.

acquire tones through bilingualism if influential neighbouring languages are tonal, or if speakers of a tonal language switch to the language in question. Sun Hongkai's Sulong (Puroik) data is collected in Lagong District, Longzi [Lhunze] County, Tibet Autonomous Region of China,⁶ and after so many years of separation between the two Puroik groups it is highly possible that their dialects underwent changes and one of them could have acquired tonemic contrasts due to the influence of the neighbouring language or languages in Tibet. Since Nyishi (Bangni), the language of the masters of the Puroik serfs, is a non-tonal language and since it also is a language that has the most regular and prolonged contact with the Puroik language it might not be too far fetch to suggest that the Puroik spoken in Arunachal never acquired tone but remains non-tonal as it has always been. So, the tonality of Sun's (1993) Sulong could be simply due to a dialectal difference. However, this hypothesis has to be carefully investigated until we can make a satisfactory conclusion.

While it was Sun (1993) who first made the tentative suggestion about the affiliation of Puroik to the Sherdukpen, Bugun/Khoa and Lishpa branch of the Northern Group he also mentioned the presence of Austroasiatic phonological features in another place:

Sulong (sic) is also characterized by a set of remarkable Austroasiatic phonological features, such as full-fledged vocalism, a contrast between two unrounded back vowels /u/ and /ɯ/ and palatal (-ɲ and -tɕ) as well as glottal (-ʔ and -h) syllable codas.⁷

Burling (2003) followed Sun in grouping Puroik with the same group of languages and suggested that its place in the Tibeto-Burman family is secure because of the cognates it shared with these languages. But it must be noted here that Sherdukpen and Bugun/Khowa have contrasting tones while

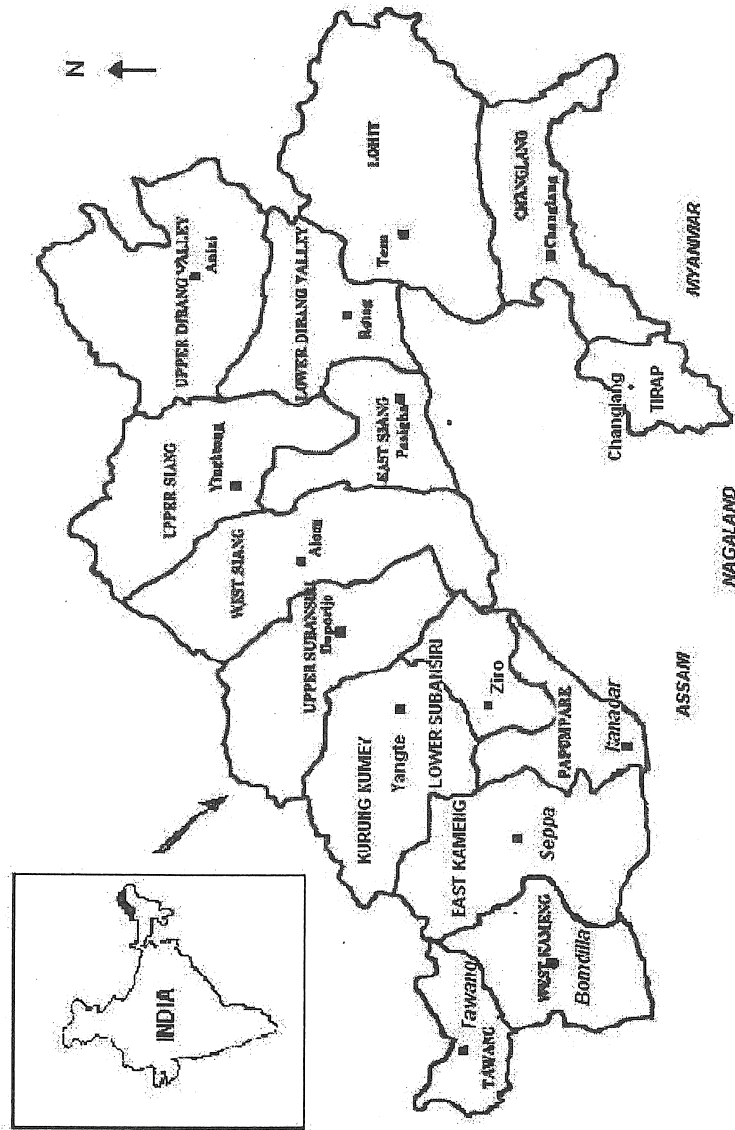
⁶ Ju Namkung (ed.). 1996. *op. cit.* p. 353

⁷ Jackson T.S. Sun, 1992. *op. cit.* p. 80. fn. 19.

Puroik has none.⁸ Some linguists are still skeptical about the genetic affiliation of Puroik to the Tibeto-Burman family. This is one of the areas which call for an urgent and proper linguistic research in order to clarify the confusion and put the matter to rest for good. Moreover, a complete grammatical description of the language is yet to come up. Morphological and syntactical analyses must be carried out until these can be accomplished. Research works in these aspects will bring about answers to a lot of questions that remain unanswered on the language and will be instrumental in the full documentation and development of the language. This will require a lot of hard work and dedication for any interested linguistic researcher.

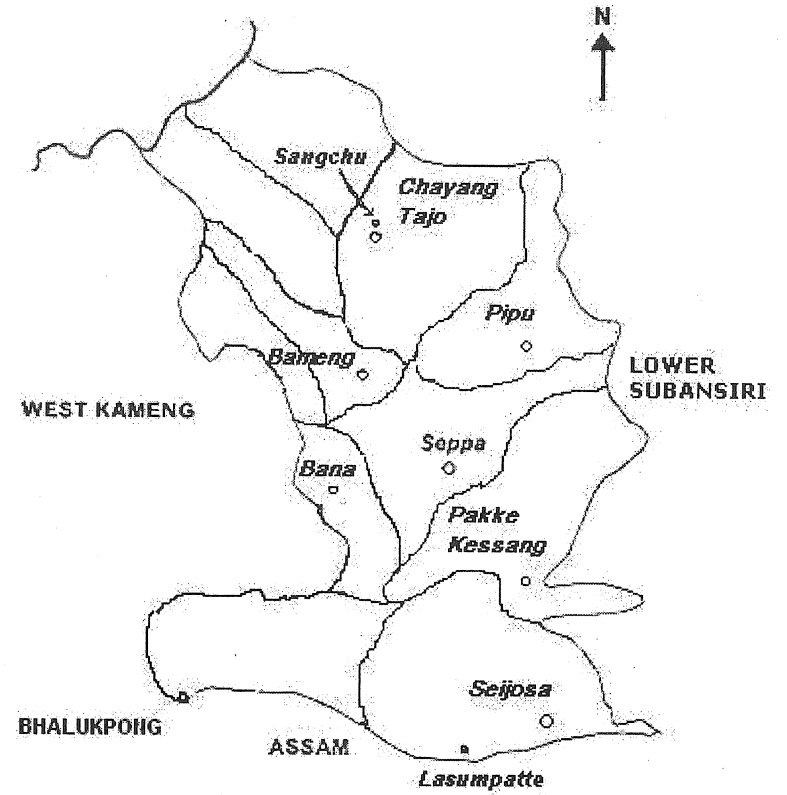
⁸ Burling. 2003. *op. cit.* p. 173

APPENDIX A



Map 1. Map of Arunachal Pradesh

APPENDIX B



Map not to scale

Map 2. Map of East Kameng District

APPENDIX C

Request of an official for the release of a Puroik boy sold as
a slave

**GOVERNMENT OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH
SDO's OFFICE : KURUNG
KUMEY DISTRICT: KOLORIANG**

No. KLG/JUD/-1/2001/
the 4th October, 2001

Dated Koloriang,

To:

The Sub-Divisional Officer,
Chayangtajo
East Kameng District

Subj: Release of Shri Chinku Tagh S/o. Shri Waru Tabom of
Ramboo Village

Sir,

It is reported that one Shri Sape Taha has sold Shri Chinku Tagh S/o. Shri Waru Tabom to Shri Bagang Gungnia of Chayang Tajo area without taking consultation with the parents. On the other hand, the sold one is still a boy and he belongs to Puroik (Solung) community. The boy is now with Shri Bagang Gungnia of Chayang Tajo area. The parents of the boy and party are proceeding to Chayang Tajo for further release of the boy.

Therefore, you are highly requested to direct Shri Bagang Gungnia to release the boy to his parents accordingly.

Yours faithfully,
Sd/-
(N. BENGIA)
Circle Officer,
for SDO
Koloriang.

Memo. No. _____

Copy to:

1. Shri Bagang Gungnia for information and similar action.
2. Waru Tabom, Village Ramboo for information.
3. Office Copy

Sd/-

(N.BENGNIA)

APPENDIX D

An order in pursuance of the request to release a Puroik boy
sold as a slave

**GOVERNMENT OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH
OFFICE OF THE SUB-DIVISIONAL OFFICER
CHAYANGTAJO
EAST KAMENG DISTRICT**

NO. CTJ/JUD-10/99-2000

Date C/Tajo, the 9th Oct/01

ORDER

In pursuance of a letter received from the SDO, Koloriang, Kurung Kumey District, stating that a minor boy named Shri Chinku Tagh has been illegally sold to one Shri Gungnia Bagang by some vested persons, Shri Gungnia Bagang is hereby directed to produce Shri Chinku Tagh in the office of the undersigned immediately without delay for further handing over of the minor to his parents.

Failing which further legal action shall be initiated against Shri Gungnia Bagang.

Sd/-

(K.NYODU)
Circle Officer
i/c SDO,
C/Tajo.

Memo _____

Copy to:

1. Shri G. Bagang, Village Jayang Bagang for compliance.
2. Waru Tabom for information.
3. SDO, Kurung Kumey District for information please.
4. Office Copy

APPENDIX E

THE INTERNATIONAL PHONIC ALPHABET (revised to 1993, corrected 1996)

CONSONANTS
(PUL MONIC)

	Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Plosive	p b			t d		ʈ ɖ	c ɟ	k ɡ	q ɢ		ʔ
Nasal	m	ɱ		n		ɳ	ɲ	ŋ	ɴ		
Trill	ʙ			ʀ					ʀ		
Tap or Flap				ɾ		ɽ					
Fricative	ɸ β	f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ	ʂ ʐ	x ɣ	χ ʁ		ħ ʕ	h ɦ
Lateral fricative				ɬ ɮ							
Approximant		ʋ		j		ɻ	j	ɰ			
Lateral approximant				l		ɭ	ʎ	ʟ			

Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a voiced consonant. Shaded areas denote articulations judged impossible

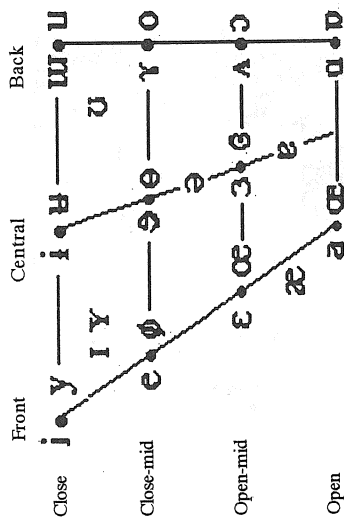
CONSONANTS (NON-PULMONIC)

Clicks	Voiced implosives		Ejectives	
	ᵀ	ᵇ	ʼ	ᵇᵃᵇᵃᵇᵃᵇ
ᵀ	ᵇ	ʼ	ᵇᵃᵇᵃᵇᵃᵇ	
ᵀ	ᵇ	ʼ	ᵇᵃᵇᵃᵇᵃᵇ	
ᵀ	ᵇ	ʼ	ᵇᵃᵇᵃᵇᵃᵇ	
ᵀ	ᵇ	ʼ	ᵇᵃᵇᵃᵇᵃᵇ	
ᵀ	ᵇ	ʼ	ᵇᵃᵇᵃᵇᵃᵇ	

OTHER SYMBOLS

ᵀ	ᵇ	ʼ	ᵇᵃᵇᵃᵇᵃᵇ
ᵀ	ᵇ	ʼ	ᵇᵃᵇᵃᵇᵃᵇ
ᵀ	ᵇ	ʼ	ᵇᵃᵇᵃᵇᵃᵇ
ᵀ	ᵇ	ʼ	ᵇᵃᵇᵃᵇᵃᵇ
ᵀ	ᵇ	ʼ	ᵇᵃᵇᵃᵇᵃᵇ
ᵀ	ᵇ	ʼ	ᵇᵃᵇᵃᵇᵃᵇ

VOWELS



Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a rounded vowel.

APPENDIX F

Puroik – English Dictionary

(Data transcribed in IPA letters. Refer to symbols and abbreviations given on page viii)

aiui?

aduak khrw

a

- aiui? *n.* wing, fin of fish.
- a:m *num.* three. [Source: Tagangpu village.]
- a:ɔk *n.* hole.
- aba *n.* plateau.
- abait *adv.* before. See: pɔ.
- abanain *n.* platform.
- abəg *adj.* first.
- abw *adj.* round.
- abiarai *adv.* midnight.
- abio *v.* love. See: apak ‘love’.
From: Nyishi.
- abren *n.* name. na abren ha?
What is your name?
- abria *n.* ladder. From: Nishyi.
- abruai *n.* partridge.
- abua *n.* 1) son-in-law. 2) brother-in-law. [Note: A relative by marriage]
- abualain *n.* authority. See: buaruatɔ ‘authority’.
- abudzadzɔ? *adj.* abundant; too much. Variant: abudzadzak.
- atɕw *v.* to sneeze.
- atɕi ami *n.* animal.
- atɕia *adj.* bitter.
- atɕiap *n.* daughter-in-law.

- atɕie *adv.* far.
- atɕieŋ *n.* pipe.
- atɕik *n.* night, dark. Variant: atɕit.
- atɕik hak *n.* evening.
- atɕik kalaŋ *adj.* dark.
- atɕiŋ *adj.* sour. Variant: atɕyɛŋ.
- atɕɔ *n.* strength.
- atɕuait *v.* to break into half. See: patɕiak ‘half’.
- atɕuaŋ *LOC.* on top of. Variant: tɕuaŋ.
- atɕuit *n.* maternal aunt. Variant: atɕui?; atɕhui?.
- atɕje *n.* step mother.
- adau *n.* child. See: adou.
[Source: Lasum Sangchu.]
- adw *n.* age.
- adɔli *n.* coin.
- adou *n.* child. Variant: adau.
[Source: Sangchu.]
- adou fu *n.* son. See: dou ‘son’.
- adou umui? *n.* daughter.
- adua *n.* friend. na adua gɔ dairai tana I want to meet your friend
- aduak *adv.* slow.
- aduak khrw *adj.* honest; faithful. See: migap kɔw ‘honest; faithful’.

adjeit *prep.* below. **gə madjeit**
adjeit bu? dʒe My land is
down below. Variant: **adʒjeit**.
ae 3s. he.
afa:k *adj.* angry. See: **lukraŋ**
‘angry’.
afi aram *adj.* hard; difficult.
afu *n.* he; man. **haŋ afu**
patajap gaja dʒa This man
is reading a book
afu dʒua *n.* youngman; boy.
agaik ka *adj.* handspan. See:
gait ‘hand’. Variant: **agait**
ka.
agait viak *n.* handspan.
agar? *adj.* tiredness of the
muscles of the whole body
due to continual work; stiff
muscle.
agja *adj.* high.
agja ta huilə *PREP.* fall from
height.
agriam *n.* thin person. See:
asarai.
agrieniaŋ *adj.* beautiful. Variant:
agienieŋ.
aguanaŋ *n.* middle.
agui *n.* maternal uncle.
ahidw *n.* winter. Variant:
agui?.
ahuk *n.* belt.
ahie *adj.* black. **jo hui buar**
ahie One big black dog
Variant: **ahie?**.
ahiek *adj.* rotten. See: **ariŋ**.
ai *n.* elder sister.
aiduitna *v.* suicide.

aik *v.* kill.
aik *n.* cloth.
aik krw *vp.* washing clothes.
ai? *AUX.* auxiliary verb.
ait *adj.* red, crimson.
ait sui?tʃi *v.* bath.
aitpak *n.* body.
aitruan *n.* handloom. Variant:
airua.
aitsulua *adj.* pink.
adzei ha?kbə *n.* the month of
January. Variant: **ratta**
ha?kbə.
adzemuai *n.* mother-in-law.
adzit *adj.* warm, hot. **adzit**
dʒadʒa? very hot Variant:
adzi; adʒi?.
adzuaŋ *n.* boy, child. **bi hio hui**
adzuaŋ hiek dʒada Some
man is hitting the child
ak.ruei *n.* phaesant.
aka *n.* brother, elder; big brother.
aka *adj.* strong; hard. See: **a:ei?**.
akabaŋ *n.* radish.
akarmuai? *n.* fishing hook.
əkək *n.* eye. Variant: **kək**.
akeu *n.* father-in-law. Variant:
akw.
akw *adj.* worthy.
akiaŋ *adj.* light.
akie u *v.* journey, travel.
akiŋ *num.* one. [Source:
Tagangpu village.]
əkək *n.* head.
a-kra *n.* adult.
akɛ *num.* six. [Source:
Tagangpu village.]

akrie *n.* branch. See: **reinkhe**
‘branch’.
akuŋ *adv.* later, late; after. See:
bala ‘later’.
ala *n.* chaff.
alai *n.* leg. **tai jo te alai dʒaik**
The dog hurt it’s leg
alak *n.* leaf. See: **masai** ‘leaf’.
alapdw *n.* summer.
ala? *adv.* nothing; no.
alau *n.* mountains. Variant:
alu?.
a-ŋaŋ *LOC.* outside.
a-ŋiŋ *n.* marrow.
a-ŋui *n.* small intestine.
alə *adj.* middle; half. See: **aguanaŋ**
‘middle’.
alə retʃi *adj.* equal.
alu *n.* potato. From: Hindi.
alui? **maŋ** *n.* enemy. See:
badzai mi ‘enemy’.
aluk *n.* heart.
am *adv.* yes.
ama tʃhui? *n.* paternal aunt. See:
atʃuit ‘maternal aunt’.
amain *n.* lake.
amaiaŋ *n.* grandmother. See:
amua ta amua ‘mother’s
mother; grandmother’.
amaiaŋ *adj.* old.
amam *adj.* thick; fat.
amaŋ *n.* rice; food. See: **ambiaŋ**
‘rice’.
amaŋ dʒa *v.* to grind rice.
amaŋ dʒuŋ *v.* sifting rice grain.
See: **amaŋ dʒa**.
amaŋ pu: *n.* rice wine.

amaŋ jap *v.* to sieve rice.
amaŋ se *n.* rice grain.
ambiaŋ *n.* rice. **ambiaŋ gungak**
ta The plate has got rice See:
amaŋ ‘rice; paddy’.
ambə *n.* month.
— *n.* moon. See: **ha?kbə**
‘month’.
amtʃia *v.* praise; thank.
amua *n.* mother.
amua ta amua *n.* grandmother.
See: **amaiaŋ** ‘grandmother’.
amui *n.* girl, woman; lady.
— *pro.* her, she. **gə amui raŋ**
dʒaima I saw the girl
haŋdʒe amui də This is her
son See: **dana** ‘woman’.
amui dʒuaŋ *n.* young woman.
amui main *n.* old woman.
amui takrə? *n.* petticoat.
amui *n.* 1) feather. 2) hair;
body hair.
anaiaŋ *adj.* flat.
aŋ *n.* small herbs. From: Nyishi.
aŋtʃi? *n.* sweat.
aŋhui? *n.* wind. Variant: **ahui?**.
aŋə *num.* five. [Source:
Tagangpu village.]
aŋphrə *n.* rain. Variant:
aŋphrio.
aŋprə *n.* moon. See: **ambə**
‘moon’.
aŋsak *n.* storm.
aŋua *adj.* ugly. See: **awama**
‘ugly’.
aŋuamuanaŋ *adj.* ugly. **jo hui**
buarw kalaŋ aŋuamuanaŋ

One big black ugly dog *See: awamaŋ* 'ugly'. [*Source: Lasum dialect.*]
ajua'nia? *adj.* pretty; beautiful.
ajvik *n.* hailstone.
anime *n.* tail.
anieŋ *v.* obey.
anua *n.* 1) younger brother.
anui *adv.* near.
anjaŋ *adj.* good. *See: anijam.*
anje *n.* milk. *See: nje* 'breast'.
anji *num.* two. [*Source: Tagangpu village.*]
apak *v.* love.
apek *adj.* long.
api *adj.* blue.
api *n.* sister-in-law.
apieit *n.* cobra.
apiet *n.* liver.
api: *n.* river course. [*Source: Lasum dialect.*]
apiŋ *n.* honey bee.
 — *adj.* sweet. *See: kumui* 'bee'.
apiju *n.* cane carpet.
apɔ:k *n.* nose. *Variant: aprɔk.*
apre *n.* morning.
apriaŋ *adj.* long; tall. **dze kajo nime apriaŋ** The dog has a long tail
apri *num.* four. [*Source: Tagangpu village.*]
apriaŋmi *adj.* lonely.
aprieŋ *n.* long dao.
apɔ: *n.* dish. **apɔ: tɕuaŋ ambiq**
 rɔ Rice is served on plate
apua *n.* father.
apua ta apua *n.* grandfather.

araiq *n.* root.
 — *n.* vein.
arait *n.* sister. *Variant: arai?*
arait dɕuaŋ *n.* younger sister.
Variant: arai?
araŋ *adj.* sick; pain.
araŋ *n.* almirah. *See: hikraŋ*
 'almirah'.
arei? *adj.* strong. *See: niarɔ;*
 aka 'strong'.
arie *adj.* fresh.
arie? *n.* ribs.
aria *n.* handsaw. *From: Hindi.*
arie *adj.* green.
arieŋ *n.* bamboo tube.
arieŋ *LOC.* under. *Variant: areiŋ.*
arieŋ tɕaŋ *num.* ten. *See: swe;*
 [*Source: Tagangpu village.*]
ariŋ *adj.* original.
ariŋ *v.* to rot. *See: hīap.*
ariŋ ba *adj.* bad.
ariŋ haba? *adj.* very bad.
ariŋŋ *adj.* white.
ari? *n.* stomach.
ari? *n.* light (of day).
ariuk *adj.* red.
arua? *n.* weaving.
arue *n.* tongue.
asa asa *adj.* different.
asaidu *n.* monsoons.
asak *n.* big brother's wife;
 sister-in-law.
asarai *adj.* thin. *See: agriam.*
ase *n.* paddy grain. *See: amanɕe*
 'rice grain'.
asi *n.* vine.

asik *n.* alive. *See: sidui?*
asiridɔ *adj.* thin; small.
asraŋ *adj.* holy; clean; clear.
Variant: asaraŋ.
asua *n.* cat. *Variant: hasua*
 (Sangchu dialect); **asa**
 (Lasum dialect).
asukasai *n.* summer-winter.
asukasai alɔ? *n.* spring.
asulua *adj.* yellow.
ataŋ *n.* bread.
ata? *adj.* flat.
atɔk *n.* lord; master.
atua *adj.* sharp-edged.
atuŋmain *n.* grandfather. *See:*
apua ta apua 'grandfather'.
Variant: tukmaiŋ.
atuwa *adv.* lightly.
aua *adj.* itch.
avreu *n.* dew.
avuk *n.* tomb.
awa *adv.* down; below.
await *n.* step father.
awaitbɔ sasait *n.* dry leaf.
awama *adj.* ugly. *See:*
aguamuauŋ 'ugly'.
awamaŋ *adj.* ugly. *See:*
aguamuauŋ 'ugly'. [*Source: Sangchu village.*]
awaŋ kaju *n.* hill.
awaniaŋ *adj.* pretty.
awe *n.* seed.
awe *n.* wife.
awei *n.* husband.
aweikbua *n.* lion. *See: namria*
 'lion'. [*Source: Sangchu Lasum dialect.*]

aweit *n.* paternal uncle. *Variant: awei?*
aweit *adj.* dry.
aja? *v.* ascend. *See: kɔ:*
ajek *v.* well.
ajem *v.* hate; dislike.
ajw *adj.* good. **takia ajw bi**
 Takia is a good man
ajw maia *n.* goodnews; gospel.
See: iatɕebɔ 'goodnews'.
Variant: ajw paiio (Sangchu dialect).
azai *adj.* hot. **jaŋdak azai** chilli
 is hot
azait *n.* bone. *Variant: azaik.*
azou *n.* husband.
azua *adj.* fat.
azua *adj.* boring.

b

ba *n.* axe. *See: vio* 'axe'.
ba *NEG.* no. **gɔ miŋdak ba jaima** I have not seen buffalo
 [*Source: Sangchu.*]
ba ta pait *PREP ph.* cut with
 axe.
batɕhai? *n.* mosquito. *See:*
tɕuŋkhrie 'mosquito'.
batɕilua *adj.* poor.
badai *n.* python. [*Source: Lasum.*]
badar *n.* bottle. [*Source: English.*]
bae *n.* fire. *Variant: baie.*
bae tɕak *n.* torch; stone lighter;
 matches. *Variant: bae tɕait;*
bae atɕa?

- bae kuʔ *n.* smoke. *See:* dɔwa 'smoke'.
- bae rak *n.* ashes.
- bae va *n.* charcoal.
- bae ze *n.* spark.
- bafi aram *adj.* easy; not difficult.
- baimueŋ *adj.* everlasting, eternal.
- bajai *v.* neg + see; not see.
- bajai mi *n.* enemy. *See:* aluiʔ maŋ 'enemy'.
- bakam *n.* crane.
- bakap *n.* ceiling above the fireplace.
- bala *adv.* later. *See:* akuŋ 'later'.
- balak *n.* flute. *See:* piuŋri.
- baltʃa *n.* shovel; spade.
- balɔː *n.* mirror. *See:* sisa 'mirror'.
- baluiʔ *n.* truth (neg+lie).
- baluŋ *n.* garden.
- bamidait *v.* forget. *See:* bamilua.
- bamilua *v.* to forget. *See:* bamidait. *Variant:* bamiloa.
- baŋ *n.* money. *See:* taŋkua 'money'. [*Source:* Nyishi.]
- baŋte *n.* lion.
- baʔkħɔs *n.* box. [*Source:* Assamese.]
- baʔniek *v.* lose.
- bari *n.* hearth.
- basraŋ *adj.* dirty; unholy. *Variant:* basaraŋ.
- baupik *v.* neg + steal.

- bajam *n.* tomato. *See:* briaduʔ 'tomato'.
- bazar *n.* market. *From:* Hindi.
- be *n.* pulp of sago palm; rangbang; the staple food. *See:* be rak; be kəp; be za. [*Note:* The staple food of the Puroiks, prepared from sago palm is called 'be'. 'Be' is given different names depending on how it is made. It is obtained from the wild sago-palm tree locally called *bemuwang*. There are two kinds of wild sago-palm. One is called *beyik* and another *beriyong*. The flour obtained from *beyik* is yellow in colour; and the one obtained from *beriyong* is white. The tree is cut down and the leaves are lopped off. The bark is removed until the core is edible. The pith is chopped off into sections. These are then pounded on a flat stone usually nearby a stream with a baton-shaped wood one end of which is curved downwards. The curved end of the baton is tightly inserted into a bamboo tube called *pina*, which is a bout one foot in length and three inches in diameter. This device is called *Frukhiyong-khiyok*. The coarse fibres *bekana* of the sago-palm are

- then hammered with a a wooden club. Water is frequently poured over the coarse fibres in order to make it soft. The fibres are beaten to pulp. The pulp is then put inside a finely woven elongated cane bag called *riyeik*. The cane bag is placed on a cane mat *wa*. Water is frequently poured over the pulp inside the cane bag until the flour is collected on a cane mat. The fibres that remain inside the cane bag is thrown off. The flour is left on a cane mat for sedimentation. The sedimented flour is known as *belo*.]
- be kəp *n.* fried rangbang.
- be rak *n.* rangbang made with boiled water.
- be za *n.* rangbang burnt in the fire; roasted rangbang.
- bi *n.* man; person. *hangje bi tʃuk* This is the man's house
- bi ait *n.* men's cloth.
- bi pak *n.* man.
- bia tʃik *adv.* last night.
- biari *n.* yesterday. *takia biari rei ganta gɔ kuŋ, tuŋ raʔ* Yesterday Takia stayed with me for four hours *See:* poriu.
- bije *n.* people.
- bik klio *n.* bul bul.
- buruei *v.* to carry child.
- biuŋ *v.* suck.
- bla *adv.* later.

- bligbliŋ *n.* lightning; reflection. *See:* kəktʃaŋ 'lightning'.
- blɔːk *n.* dumb; bad; foolish. *Variant:* bɔlək.
- bɔ *n.* woman's basket.
- bɔ WH. question mkr.
- bɔ *n.* dog. [*Source:* Lada Village.]
- bɔ *adv.* there; down there. *See:* buː. [*Source:* Lasumpatte Sangchu.]
- brek *n.* comb.
- briak *v.* beat.
- briŋria *n.* jhum hut; farmhouse.
- briabɔ *adj.* mad.
- briaduʔ *n.* tomato. *See:* bajam.
- briakna *v.* to beat.
- briŋ *v.* rise.
- briŋ *adj.* clever; sly.
- briiklɔ *v.* melt.
- briona *v.* to scratch. *See:* brɔmua.
- brɔmua *vt.* scratch. *See:* briona.
- bruː *n.* crocodile. *Variant:* brau (Lasum dialect). [*Source:* Sangchu.]
- bua *adj.* big.
- bua NEG. no. *See:* ba. [*Source:* Tagampu.]
- buaitsi *adv.* last year.
- buaru *adj.* big. *jo hūi buari ahieʔ* One big black dog
- buaru atʃɔ *n.* authority. *See:* abualain 'authority'.
- bueta *adv.* firstly.
- buʔ DEC. declarative.
- buːɔ *n.* disciple.

tʃ

- tʃa:p** *v.* weep. *See:* **tʃjap** 'cry'.
tʃabuk *n.* banana.
tʃatʃjuŋ *n.* shadow.
tʃai *n.* trap. *See:* **patəŋ** 'trap'.
tʃai *v.* to eat. *See:* **tʃi** 'eat'.
 [Source: Lasumpatte.]
tʃai kəŋ *n.* thigh.
tʃak *v.* to keep quiet; silent.
tʃaktʃi *n.* wall. *Variant:* **tʃattʃi**.
tʃakʔna *v.* to cry. *See:* **tʃjap** 'weep'.
tʃam nji *num.* twenty. [Source: Tagangpu village.]
tʃamtʃei *n.* crab.
tʃamdak *n.* poison.
tʃaŋ *n.* snot.
tʃaŋkitamei *n.* whirlwind. *See:* **tʃaŋkrui** 'whirlwind'.
tʃanuiʔ *n.* cotton.
tʃap.rio *n.* maize. [Source: Sangchu.]
tʃaʔklian *n.* a cross put up as a sign to signify one's property. *Variant:* **tʃaklian**. [Note: A wooden or bamboo cross put up to signify one's property, and to warn people not to meddle with it.]
tʃarain *conj.* if.
tʃe *adv.* also.
tʃe *n.* knife; dao; sword. **takia tʃe ta madə paittʃiak** Takia cuts bamboo with knife
Variant: **tʃei**.
tʃe *v.* to push with body.

- tʃe dau** *n.* small knife.
tʃe fe *n.* dagger sheath. *See:* **tʃe khriek** 'dagger sheath'.
tʃe jeit *n.* machete.
tʃe khriek *n.* dagger sheath. *See:* **tʃe fe** 'dagger sheath'.
Variant: **tʃe kriek**.
tʃe ku *n.* dagger.
tʃe raŋ *v ph.* making knife.
tʃe vik *v.* to sharpen (a machete).
tʃetʃei *adv.* now. [Source: Lada dialect.]
tʃekrei *n.* pestle.
tʃi *v.* eat. **mate maluaik gait ta tʃi** Mate eats the food with her hand *Variant:* **tʃai**. [Source: Sangchu, etc. Tagangpu.]
tʃiaŋ *n.* light; shine.
tʃiap *v.* cry. *Variant:* **tʃa:k**.
tʃitʃjuŋ *n.* store room. [Note: The Puroiks usually build a store room nearby their houses where the rangbang, rice grains, and other valuables are stored.]
tʃidak riŋdak *n.* harvest season.
tʃiŋ *vt.* stand.
tʃiŋkak *n.* bird trap.
tʃiŋpua *v.* stand.
tʃiŋtri *n.* wheel.
tʃisa *n.* dish.
tʃo *v.* dig.
tʃə:k *adj.* tired.
tʃu *n.* hen. *See:* **haku** 'hen'.
tʃuailak *n.* leaf.

- tʃuaŋ** *LOC.* on; above. **maluaik gungak tʃuaŋ** The food is put on plate
tʃuej *n.* wild banana leaf.
tʃuk *n.* house. **haŋdʒe bi tʃuk** This is the man's house
tʃukna *adj.* patient.
tʃukuiʔ *n.* door. *Variant:* **tʃukiʔ**.
tʃuŋ ləna *v.* roll away.
tʃuŋkik *n.* corner.
tʃuŋkrieʔ *n.* mosquito. *Variant:* **tʃuŋkhrie**.
tʃuŋni tarə *n.* beetle.
tʃu:ŋ *v.* roll.
tʃu:ŋ tʃak *n.* mortar.

d

- da** *particle.* be. **gə kəbuəŋ na tuŋda** I live in the village
da *v.* reach; arrive.
da kua *n.* a wooden feeding trough for pigs; manger (for pigs).
da:k *n.* onion.
dabren *adv.* to eat voraciously.
daebuk *n.* loam; humus; fertile soil. *See:* **madzai aniekbə** 'humus'.
daik *v.* meet. **go kobuaŋ daikma** I met him in the village *See:* **dairai** 'meet'.
dairai *v.* meet. **na adua gə dairai tana** I want to meet your friend *See:* **daik** 'meet'.
Variant: **darai**.
dait *v.* found.

- *v.* know. **gə padau hūji dait** I found one bird **ai loit ba dait** He said he does not know
dam dam *n.* drum.
damkəŋ *n.* a wooden lock for the top knot.
damriak *n.* scar.
dana *n.* woman. *See:* **amui** 'woman'.
daŋ *adv.* also; too; even.
dapə *pst perf.* ASP.
dw *n.* year; age. **takia dw suani** Takia is twenty year old
dəŋge *num.* nine. *Variant:* **dəŋgeʔ**.
dou *n.* son. **haŋdʒe amui dou** This is her son *See:* **adou fu**.
doupaŋ *n.* sons.
dəwa *v.* to smoke.
dua *adv.* early.
duaik klu *v.* return. [Source: Lasum.]
duait *v.* open.
duait kə:k *v.* open.
duit *v.* back; return.
duŋsiŋ *n.* granary.

e

- e.klik** *n.* slip.
eik *v.* bring.
eikruei *v.* carry. *See:* **eitruē** 'carry-on-back'. *Variant:* **akruei**.
eitruē *v.* carry-on-back. *See:* **eikruai** 'carry'.

eke *v.* to walk or to go around carrying something. *Variant:* etfe.

f

fa:kna *v.* to scold.

fae khriuŋ *n.* a branched wooden stick used for beating sago palm to pulp.

faŋmei *n.* widow.

fe *v.* run. gə fe dzada I am running *See:* fena 'to run'.

fena *v.* to run. *See:* fe 'run'.

fraŋna *v.* to write.

fraŋra na *v.* write.

freŋ *v.* rub; press.

frenj *v.* to talk or tell about someone.

g

ga:na *n.* phlegm.

gadam *n.* hook.

gadam *n.* bottom.

gait *n.* arm; hand. mate maluaik gait ta tʃi Mate eats the food with her hand *Variant:* gaik.

gait tʃuit *n.* little finger.

gait dzuaŋ *n.* ulna.

gait knieŋ *n.* elbow. *Variant:* gaik knieŋ.

gait kərue *n.* finger print.

gait mua *n.* thumb.

gait pi *n.* reward.

gait pioŋ *n.* finger.

gait' pioŋ malaŋ *n.* all the fingers.

gait pə *n.* palm.

gait pruit tamna *n.* glove.

gait pioŋ tʃuŋ *n.* middle fingers.

gait sit *n.* fingernails. *Variant:* gaik sik.

gaitmua *n.* thumb.

gaijeŋ *n.* mustard leaf.

gampuaŋ *n.* fence.

gamtaŋ *n.* angel.

garei 3 *p.* we. gərai seppa da bus ha? We came to Seppa by bus *See:* grei 'we'.

gasait *n.* nail. *See:* gait sit.

gaja *v.* fear. *See:* gejjiana 'fear'.

gazar *n.* sieve; a woven cane filter for rice beer.

gejjana *n.* fear. *See:* giriŋ 'fear'.

gie *DET.* this.

gieik *v.* fall down. *See:* 'iok 'fall'.

giriŋ *adj.* fear. *See:* gejjiana 'fear'. *Variant:* griŋ.

gə *pro.* 1) I. 2) my. gə amui raŋ jaima I saw the girl

gorai 1*p.* we.

gəɾə 1*s ACC.* me.

gəseɪ 1*p.* we.

gəta *n.* mine.

graŋ 1*s ACC.* me.

gre *v.* count.

grəɪ 1*p.* we; our. grəɪ tʃi dzada We are eating *See:* gorai 'we'.

grəɪ rei 3*p.* four of us.

grəita 1*p GEN.* ours.

grəm puaŋ *n.* fence.

grieg *n.* mountain. *See:* alau.

griegrə *n.* ant.

grienaŋ *adj.* beautiful.

— *adj.*

gungak *n.* plate. maluaik

gungak tʃuaŋ the food is on the plate.

h

ha *adj.* any.

ha *INT.* very.

ha: *WH.* who. na abreŋ ha? What is your name?

ha:m *n.* house. [*Source:* Lada Village.]

haba *NEG.* no. *See:* ba; bua.

haba? *adj.* bad.

hae *PREP.* for.

hagait *n.* star. *See:* padzait.

haik *v.* waive.

haiŋ 3*s m GEN.* his. dze haiŋ ta kaɟə This is his dog

haku *n.* hen. *See:* sukumua 'hen'; tʃu 'hen'.

hakudou *n.* chicken.

hakupu *n.* cock.

hami *n.* sun. [*Source:* Lada Village.]

hamriaŋ *n.* stick. adaŋ jo siek ja hamriaŋ ta Adang is beating the dog with a stick

hana *LOC.* at; here. gə seppa hana madza I live in Seppa

haŋui? *n.* door. *See:* tʃukui? 'door'.

ha? *INST.* by.

ha?kbo *n.* month. *VerUsage:* archaic. *See:* ambə 'month'.

[*Note:* The younger generation prefer 'ambo' instead of 'ha?kbo' for month.]

harsai *n.* mirror. *See:* siŋsa 'mirror'.

haweit *n.* star. *See:* hagait 'star'. *Variant:* havueit.

hemiaŋ *n.* bat. *See:* piŋtʃhi 'bat'.

həŋ *DET.* this; the. həŋ afu patadzap gaja dza This man is reading a book

həŋ afuta *GEN.* his.

həŋ amuta *GEN.* hers.

həŋ fu *np.* this man.

həŋdze *DET.* this. həŋdze bi tʃuk this is the man's house

hia *n.* time.

hia hiap *v.* to fix a date by tying knots along a rope, one knot each representing a day.

hia hiap rai *v.* the rope used for fixing a date by tying knots along it.

hiak *v.* soak.

hiaŋ *adv.* again.

hiap *v.* rot. *See:* ariŋ.

hibə *WH.* What.

hiek *v.* hit; beat. bi pam dze adzuaŋ hiek dzada Some man is hitting some child

hiha *adj.* many.

hiha? *n.* question.

hikain *WH.* how.

— *n.* reason; because.

hikaŋ be *conj.* but.

hikəin *WH.* how. **na amua hikəinda** ? How is your mother ? *See:* **hiroe** 'how'.
hikraŋ *n.* almirah. *See:* **tsuŋkik** 'almirah'; **pəbɔ** 'almirah'.
Variant: **araŋ**.
hina *WH.* why. **na hina rue da?** Why do you laugh ?
hiŋ gap *adj.* careful. [*Source:* Nyishi.]
hiŋprɔ *n.* courage.
hio *adv.* next.
hio? *CL.* classifier.
hira *WH.* what. *See:* **hibɔ**.
 [*Source:* Tagampu.]
hirue *Wh.* how much; how many.
hək *v.* finish; complete.
həktʃu? *n.* vulture.
həmua *n.* tree.
hərio *n.* today. **gə hərio miŋdak dzaima** I saw buffalo today
See: **riuri**. *Variant:* **hariu**.
huaŋ *adj.* excessive.
hue *n.* blood.
hui *v.* call.
huina *v.* to call.
hui?buŋ *n.* trousers; skirt. *See:* **ləbuŋ** 'long pants'. *Variant:* **huitbuŋ**.
huitbɔ *v.* fall.
hukkria? *n.* belt.
hjáp *adj.* wet.
hjén abuat *n.* flower (of tree).
 [*Source:* Lada Village.]
híap *v.* to tie; to bind; fold.
hõŋ *n.* salt.

hūji *num.* one.
hūji tʃaŋ *adj.* alone; lonely.

i

ia *LOC.* at; in.
iampɔ *n.* egg plant.
ibua *n.* serpent.
itʃai? *adj.* hungry. *Variant:* **itʃait**.
iei? *v.* quake. *See:* **kreŋ** 'move'.
i: *v.* cut. *See:* **tʃe** 'cut'.
i:bɔ *v.* die.
i:da *n.* death.
idzei *n.* snake. *Variant:* **ize**.
irui? *adj.* dead.
irui? sidui? *n.* resurrection.
irjaŋbɔ *n.* saviour.
iugriaŋ *n.* church. [*Source:* Nyishi.]

u

ueg *num.* three.
ueg riu *adv.* three days after.

dz

dza *v.* grind.
dza *v.* live.
dza *v.* sit.
dza *AUX. PROG.* **gə seppa u dzada** I am going to Seppa
dza:p *n.* book. *See:* **patadzap** 'book'.
dza:? *adj.* loud.
dzai *v.* see; look. **go amui raŋ dzaima** I saw the girl

dzai bro *n.* sight (eyesight).
dzai gu *v.* guard.
dzai k *v.* hurt. **tai jo te alai dzai k** The dog hurt it's leg
dzai lak *v.* to see off; to bid farewell.
dzai ŋua *v.* find. **gə miŋdak ba dzai ŋua** I cannot find buffalo today
dzai riaŋ *n.* trace. *See:* **uriaŋ** 'trace'. *Variant:* **kariaŋ**.
dzai ria? *v.* wait. *See:* **tugria k** 'wait'. *Variant:* **dzai ria k**.
dzadza *v.* stay.
dzadza? *adj.* very.
dzakalui *n.* snail.
dzaktəŋ *adj.* true. *See:* **təŋ təŋ kələŋ** 'truth'.
dzana *n.* sound.
dzəŋ *n.* band worn on the calf (by men). *See:* **lakriaŋ** 'band worn on the ankle by women'. [*Note:* The Puroiks used to tie black bands on their calves or ankles.]
dzəŋfi dzəŋfa *v.* to beat severely to interrogate someone.
dzəndzuej *n.* squirrel.
dzəpkrio *n.* safety pin.
dzə? *int.* very.
dzə?hua *v.* tickle.
dzəra hūji *num.* one thousand.
dze *DET.* this. **dze bi rəŋwei tʃi dzada** This man is eating fruit
dzeduaŋ *adv.* now. *Variant:* **dziduaŋ**.

dzeimareipuaŋ *n.* saviour.
dzek *v.* winnowing.
dzepaŋ *3p ACC.* them. **gə dzepaŋ raŋ dzaima** I saw them
Variant: **dzepam**.
dzetak *adj.* enough; finish.
Variant: **dzitak**.
dzeiriak *adj.* ready.
dzi *3s m.* his. **haŋdze ji ta tʃuk** This is his house
dzu *n.* girlfriend; fiancé.
dzi adəŋ *v.* be at. *Variant:* **dzi atəŋ**.
dzuɔdza *v.* burning.
dzita *3s GEN.* his.
dzəkro *n.* stretcher.
dzu *n.* tubers.
dzua *adj.* high standard.
dzuai kruk kutʃuk *v.* wither.
dzuaisem *v.* withered.
dzuit *v.* descend; go downwards.

k

ka *TNS.* future.
ka *PREP.* for. **gə tugria k ka kiŋkəŋ** I am waiting for Kingkong
kabria *n.* stone; rock.
katʃe *n.* lips, lower lip.
katʃehak *PREP.* behind.
Variant: **katʃihak**.
katʃe? *n.* net.
katʃik *n.* backbone.
katʃio *n.* bag.
kadak *n.* rucksack made of a finely woven cane.

kadu *adv.* fast; quick.
kaduaj *n.* ceiling.
kaduimui *n.* beard.
kadui? *n.* upper lip.
kafe rai *n.* level; same.
kahuaj *n.* fish. *Variant:*
kahuaaj (Lasum dialect).
kahuaj nimrei? *n.* fishtail.
kai *WH.* where. **na tfuk kai ?**
 Where is your house ?
Variant: **kain; kaia.**
kaik *v.* work. **gosei ni ma kaik**
kajiein The two of us
 worked together
kaikriet ri ria? *v.* mouth
 watering; spittle. **kaikriet**
bari ria? spittle + neg
kain ha *adj.* like this.
kai?riek *v.* win.
kai?sa *v.* work.
kaira *v.* help.
kairu *v.* help.
kait *n.* work.
kaittfap *n.* fortress. *See:*
kaittam 'fortress'.
kaittfe *n.* sin. *Variant:* **kaitfe.**
kaittsui *adj.* mouth-watering.
kaitkreit *adj.* wrong.
kaitsa *n.* work.
kaittam *n.* fortress. *See:*
kaittfap 'fortress'.
kaijak *n.* pliers, pliers for
 lighted charcoal/firewood.
kaijo *n.* dog. **hajtze kaijo** This
 is a dog *See:* **jo** 'dog'.
kadzaij *adj.* small. *See:* **kasik**
 'small'.

kadzui *n.* snow.
kadzui griej *n.* snow clad
 mountain.
kadzia *WH.* when. **na kadzia**
u ? When are you going
Variant: **kadzia?**
kadzuk *n.* cap.
kadzij *adj.* small. *See:* **kasik**
 'small'.
kadzij bə *adj.* smaller.
kadzij male *adj.* smallest.
kadzək *n.* animal trap; trap for
 small animals.
kakəkriej *n.* raven.
kala *adj.* big. **gə kala kajo h'ui**
ah'ie dzaima I saw one big
 black dog *Variant:* **kla.**
kala bə *adj.* bigger.
kala male *adj.* biggest.
kalai kalek *n.* side.
kalaihek *n.* left hand.
kalaij *n.* rainbow. *Variant:*
kalain.
kalakgag *n.* hiccup.
kalaaj *adj.* most; superlative
 marker.
kalatujkə *n.* kingdom.
kalək *n.* bamboo jug.
kalikalə *n.* weather.
kam *v.* do.
kama:aj *n.* face. [*Source:* Lasum
 dialect.]
kamaaj *n.* face.
kaməj sui? *v.* washing face.
kaməj *n.* sky; heaven.
kamej madzieit *n.* earth.
kampa *n.* hammer.

kaŋ *n.* umbrella.
kaŋtfaj *n.* tobacco pipe.
kaŋsə? *n.* praying mantis.
kanu *num.* seven. [*Source:*
 Tagangpu village.]
kaŋiak *n.* mind; brain.
kapak *n.* banana. **gə nĕbiaj**
tfajma kapak I ate banana
 quickly [*Source:* Nyishi.]
kapei *n.* knee.
karai? *v.* make (wait on?).
karak *n.* fish trap; a tool for
 fishing.
kareibə *v.* to lie in wait for
 someone; wait upon someone
 in secret in order to harm
 him.
kargə *n.* circle.
kasik *adj.* small. *See:* **kadzij**
 'small'.
kasitdə *adj.* very little.
katu *n.* clouds.
katuaaj *n.* teeth; fangs.
katuik *n.* bridge. *Variant:*
katui?
katuj *n.* a big water made of
 bamboo or gourd. *See:* **kazui?**
 'a small water container'.
katu:aj *n.* neck.
katu:aj tʃə *n.* phlegm with
 blood.
kau *n.* jaw; chin.
kavre *n.* serving spoon.
kavrei *n.* tear.
kaweit *n.* leech. *Variant:*
kawait; kəweit.
kaja *n.* squirrel.

kajiein *adj.* together. **gosei ni**
ma kaik kajiein The two of
 us worked together
kajə kadzij də *n.* small dog.
kajədə *n.* fowl.
kajədou *n.* puppy.
kaza:k *n.* frog trap.
kazak *n.* hair.
kazak priejbə *n.* long hair.
kazau *n.* rough; rough behaviour.
kazik *n.* cap. **dze bi pak**
kadzik we This man has a
 cap *Variant:* **kadzə?**
kazikziak *n.* 1) top knot.
 2) helmet.
kazui? *n.* a small water
 container made of a dried
 gourd shell. *See:* **katuj** 'a big
 water container'.
ke *PREP.* to.
kək *n.* eye. *Variant:* **akək.**
kəkba *n.* eyeballs. *See:* **matʃu:aj**
 'eyeball'.
kəktʃaj *n.* 1) lightning.
 2) firefly. *See:* **blij blij**
 'lightning'.
kəktʃuaaj *n.* eyelids.
kekheit *n.* saliva.
kəkmiəj *n.* 1) eyelash.
 2) eyebrows.
kesik *adj.* soft. *See:* **kadzaij.**
khaikriet *adj.* wrong. *See:*
luitriet 'wrong'.
khriok *n.* a bamboo piece fitted
 on the branch of a wooden
 stick used for cutting the sago
 palm.

kuw *Q.* question marker. *Variant:* akwɿŋ.
 kikam *n.* eagle.
 kikam *v.* to draw out water with cup.
 klie *n.* cheek.
 kliŋ *n.* rainbow.
 kɔbuaŋ *n.* village. gɔ kɔbuaŋ daikma I met him in the village
 kɔi?kɔ: *n.* entrance.
 kɔk *n.* head.
 kɔkakrauei *v.* to carry on the head. *See:* savei 'to carry on head'.
 kɔkar *v.* round.
 kɔkkum *n.* pillow.
 kɔlak *v.* enter. gɔ ɔ: raŋ tʃe kɔlak I enter the cave
 kɔŋ *DIR.* there.
 kɔŋiŋ *n.* earring. *See:* kui?viŋ 'earring'.
 kɔ: *v.* ascend; go upwards *See:* aja?. *Variant:* kɔ:ng.
 kɔ:na *v.* to hit.
 kɔ:ŋdʒe *adv.* up.
 kɔrjo *n.* spade.
 kɔrjoŋ *n.* a store for firewoods under the house.
 kɔsak *n.* bamboo, small.
 kɔta? *n.* big sized bracelet.
 kɔtɔŋ *v.* entrap.
 kɔwe *v.* to walk.
 kreŋ *v.* move. *See:* iei? 'quake'.
 kɔai *v.* counting.
 kri *n.* sun.
 kri kɔi? *n.* sunset.

kri kɔpuaŋ *n.* sunrise.
 kri ria *adv.* afternoon. gɔ piari kriria la u I will go in the afternoon tomorrow *Variant:* kari ria.
 kri tek *n.* watch.
 kriey *n.* firewood basket.
 krieykɔ *n.* bamboo jug.
 krɔ tʃuk *n.* ladder. *Variant:* krɔ:k tʃɔ.
 krɔk *n.* spear; javelin.
 krue *WH.* where.
 kruŋ kɔiek *n.* rice container made of from a big gourd. [*Note:* water container, rice container, and other utensils made from the dried shells of the plant family Cucubitaceae are commonly used.]
 kua *n.* water. gɔ lɔitda kua luitda I say that water is boiling
 kua tʃiŋ *v.* to carry water with hand.
 kua eik *v.* to carry water.
 kua kla *n.* sea.
 kuatʃia *n.* landslide.
 kua puzuej *n.* river course.
 kuapɔk *n.* river. [*Source:* Lada Village.]
 kuarua *n.* river. go kuarua raw dzaima I saw frog in the river
 kuasua? *n.* waterfall.
 kutʃiuŋ *n.* bucket.
 kue *n.* walking stick.
 kui? *n.* ear.

kui?viŋ *n.* earring. *See:* kɔŋiŋ 'earring'.
 kuitlak *v.* enter. *See:* lak 'enter'.
 kudʒukna *v.* bow.
 kumui *n.* bee. *See:* apiŋ 'honey bee'. *Variant:* kumui?; kumoit.
 kuŋ *PREP.* with. nanu gɔ kuŋ lɔit ra? Nanu talks to/with me
 kuru:ŋ *LOC.* below; under.
 kutu:ŋrey *n.* throat.
 ku:ŋke *v.* crawl. *Variant:* ku:ŋtʃe.
 kuwaŋ *n.* antler.
 kwaje *n.* stick. *Variant:* kwaje.

I

la *PREP.* in. gɔ piari kriria la u I will go in the afternoon tomorrow
 la: *num.* eight.
 la:ikaba *n.* knee.
 labar *n.* catapult.
 labu ha?kbɔ *n.* the month of November.
 labuŋ *n.* trousers.
 latʃar ha?kbɔ *n.* the month of May.
 latʃi? *n.* shoe. *Variant:* lɔtʃtʃhi?.
 ladu *n.* festival. *See:* adu 'festival'.
 lae *v.* play.
 lae sei? *v.* tired, leg.
 lage *v.* want; choose. [*Source:* Assamese.]

lai *n.* leg.
 lai *n.* bow.
 laibuk *n.* calf (body part).
 laitsuaŋ *n.* shin.
 laihai? *n.* the rope of the bow.
 laik *v.* break; broken.
 laikaba *n.* shin; ankle.
 laikaba *n.* the Puroiks made their bow in such a way that it is tightened with a string in two places. This tightening is 'laikaba'.
 laina *v.* play.
 laiŋ *adj.* than.
 lainieŋ *v.* playing.
 lainien *n.* joy.
 laipioŋ *n.* toe.
 laipɔ *n.* hoof; the upper side of foot. *Variant:* laipɔ?.
 laisik *n.* toenails.
 laitdzaidak *adj.* fair (complexion.)
 lak *v.* enter. *See:* kuitlak 'enter'.
 lakay ha?kbɔ *n.* the month of April.
 lakaprei? *n.* knee.
 laktʃi *n.* finger ring.
 lakduŋ *v.* open a book; turning the page.
 laklat *n.* shirt. *Variant:* lak lak.
 lakpi *v.* bless.
 laknieŋ *n.* a cotton band worn on the ankle by girls.
 lam lam *n.* crowd.
 lamei ha?kbɔ *n.* the month of March.
 laŋ *num.* hundredth.
 laŋ hūi *num.* one hundred.

laŋ nji *num.* two hundred.
 lapia *n.* front leg.
 liek *vt.* lose. gɔ pen liekda I
 lose my pen
 liuŋmatŋiakdɔ *n.* lizard.
 lɔ *v.* sell.
 lɔ *TNS.* Pst.
 lɔbi *n.* spotted deer.
 lɔbuŋ *n.* long pants. *See:*
 hui?buŋ 'trousers'.
 lɔi?njo *v.* speak.
 lɔit *v.* say; talk; speak. ai lɔit
 ba dait He said he does not
 know *Variant:* lɔi?; luit.
 lɔit hua *v.* tease.
 lɔit ŋjaŋ *v.* sing. *See:* luinieŋ
 'sing'.
 lɔit tam *v.* scold. *Variant:*
 luittam *v.* scold.
 lɔitna *v.* to say.
 lɔna *v.* to sell.
 lɔruak *n.* spirit; soul. *Variant:*
 luruak.
 lɔsaŋ *v.* accept.
 lɔja *PREP.* between.
 lubu *v.* break.
 luelak *v.* to tell lie.
 lui *n.* civet.
 lui? *n.* lie.
 lui?grieŋ *n.* glory.
 luit *v.* boil. gɔ lɔitda kua luitda
 I say that water is boiling
 luit *v.* teach. *See:* ja 'teach'.
 luit *v.* read. haŋ afu patadzap
 luit dza This man is reading
 a book *Variant:* gai.
 luit ja:bɔ *n.* teacher.

luitdaire *v.* reconcile.
 luitduit *v.* repeat.
 luitduk *v.* torture.
 luitlak *v.* command.
 luitnieŋ *v.* to sing.
 luitnuarui *n.* word.
 luitrieit *adj.* wrong. *See:*
 khaikriet 'wrong'. *Variant:*
 luikriet.
 luk *n.* heart.
 lukbu *n.* heart.
 lukhie *adj.* nauseated. *See:*
 riŋruaŋ 'drunk'.
 lukraŋ *adj.* angry. *See:* afa:k.
 lu:e *n.* lie.
 luji *n.* squirrel.
 lje *num.* seven.
 lje *adj.* full.
 ljek *n.* monkey's skin.

 †

†aŋ *LOC.* outside. meri tŋuk †aŋ
 †ae Mary is outside the house
 †eŋ *n.* faeces; stool.
 †iok *v.* fall.
 †ui raŋ *n.* stomach ache.
 †uibuk *n.* stomach; belly.
 †uikadzik *n.* waist.

 m

ma *tns mkr.* pst. gɔ amui raŋ
 dzaima I saw the girl
 maŋa *n.* demon.
 mabak *n.* dream.
 mabak bak *v.* to dream
 dreams.

mabrei *n.* spice.
 mabuait *n.* flower.
 matŋa *n.* bamboo shoot.
 matŋa:p *v.* cry.
 matŋiug *n.* shadow; reflection.
See: tŋatŋiug 'shadow'.
 matsu:ŋ *n.* eyeball. *See:* kəkba
 'eyeballs'.
 matsu:ŋ tŋa? *n.* mould.
 mada: *n.* vegetable.
 madau *n.* pig. *Variant:* madɔ.
 made *n.* bamboo. takia tŋe ta
 made paittŋiak Takia cuts
 bamboo with knife
 madjeit *n.* soil. *See:*
 madzieittak 'earth'.
 maga:m *n.* the wooden covering
 of the hearth. [Note: The
 hearth is square in shape and
 made with four logs or
 timber laid down on the
 platform where earth is put]
 maijap *n.* fan.
 maija? *n.* deer.
 madza *v.* live. na kaia madza?
 Where do you live?
 madzai aniekbɔ *n.* humus. *See:*
 daibuk 'loam'.
 madzi *n.* monkey. *Variant:*
 midzi.
 madziaka? *n.* monkey's skin.
Variant: madzikuu.
 madzuaŋ *n.* sheep.
 madzuaŋ dzaigu *n.* shepherd.
 madzue *n.* tiger.
 madzjeittak *n.* world; earth.
See: ueiŋtak 'world'.

maka *n.* ladder.
 makaik *adj.* soft; cooked.
 makek *n.* stool.
 makiek *n.* toilet.
 maklai *n.* cow.
 makuak *v.* cut.
 mala *n.* large owl.
 malai *n.* rat. *See:* mrik 'rat'.
 malɔ *n.* basket for rangbang.
 malou *n.* reflection.
 maluaik *n.* food. mate maluait
 gait ta tŋi Mate eats the food
 with her hand *Variant:*
 maluait.
 maluaig *n.* ornament.
 mam patŋuŋ *n.* fat person.
 maŋ *n.* gun trap.
 maŋa *v.* steal. *Variant:* mŋa.
 mapai *n.* sugarcane.
 mapi *n.* necklace.
 mapia *v.* hunting.
 mara:m *n.* hell.
 marak *n.* tattoo. *Variant:*
 mara?.
 marak tŋɔ *n.* tattoo on the face.
 mari *n.* egg.
 mariak *n.* boar.
 mariak *n.* meat.
 maria? *n.* intestines.
 marit *n.* rabbit.
 marɔk *adv.* secretly; silently.
 marɔ?k *n.* nest.
 marua *n.* forest.
 marue *v.* laugh.
 masai *n.* leaves. *See:* alak
 'leaves'.

masu *n.* the cover or stopper of a bamboo tube/container made of leaves or paper.
masuait *v.* worship.
mata? *n.* rope to carry basket.
majak *n.* deer.
mazait *n.* bone. *See:* azait.
mazua? *adj.* lazy. *Variant:* muzua?. [*Source:* Lasumpatte.]
mələŋ *prep.* all. *Variant:* mələŋə
mi gap *adj.* careful.
midait *v.* repent.
midakba? *adj.* loyal, faithful.
migap **krw** *adj.* honest; faithful. *See:* aduak **khru** 'faithful; honest'.
mi: *v.* hope; wish; want.
 — *n.* feeling.
mi:dza *v.* think.
mi:na *adj.* sad.
midzəŋ *v.* believe.
 — *n.* faith.
mimɔa *n.* wisdom.
miŋ *v.* ripe; cooked.
miŋdək *n.* buffalo. **gə** **miŋdək** **dzaima** I have seen buffalo
miruaŋ *n.* bamboo arrowhead; the pointed portion of an arrow made of bamboo.
mita *adj.* nominal; namesake.
mitak *n.* arrow. *Variant:* mita?.
mijak *n.* barking deer.
mizai? *n.* small species of bamboo the shoot of which is used for preparing pickle. *See:* **muruk**. [*Source:* Sangchu.]

mizak *n.* iron arrowhead; the pointed portion of an arrow made of iron.
mə.bruŋ *n.* cucumber.
məbuk *n.* gun.
məklaŋ *n.* cyclone.
məkru *n.* black clouds.
mələitʃaihak *n.* right hand. *See:* puazuej 'right hand'.
mrik *n.* rat. *See:* malai 'rat'.
mua *n.* enemy.
muruk *n.* a small species of bamboo used to prepare pickle. *See:* mizai?. [*Source:* Sangchu.]
mjomi *n.* fish tail.

n

na 2*s.* you. **na abreŋ ha ?** What is your name *Variant:* nak.
na *LOC.* at. **gə** **kəbuəŋ** **na tuŋda** I live in the village
na *Infinitive.*
na rɔ 2 *ACC.* you.
namria *n.* lion. *See:* aweikbua 'lion'. [*Source:* lasumpatte Sangchu dialect.]
naŋklik *v.* to slip out of grasp.
naŋk.ɾeŋ *v.* catch. *Variant:* naŋkaŋ; naŋkeŋ.
naŋna *v.* smell.
nase 2 *pl.* you.
nasi *v.* to dance.
nata 2 *GEN.* yours.
najap *v.* fan. *See:* majap.

ne *LOC.* in; at.
nei *v.* spread.
ni *AUX.* have.
nia *n.* sound.
niekuar *n.* spectacles.
nieŋ *v.* thanks.
nierai *n.* leopard.
nidzak laŋtak *n.* adam's apple.
nime *n.* tail. **dze kajo nime apriaŋ** The dog has a long tail *Variant:* nimrei?.
nitəp *n.* food. [*Source:* Lada Village.]
nəkakam *v.* collect.
nəgun *n.* story.
nərau *n.* onion. *See:* da:k.
nua *v.* demand.
nuadou *n.* infant; baby.
nuania *n.* child. *Variant:* nunua.
nueŋ *n.* world. *Variant:* ŋueiŋtak (Lasum dialect).
nueŋtak *n.* earth. *See:* satʃaŋ 'Lasum dialect'.
nuŋlak *v.* baptise; to immerse in water.
njabɔ *n.* language. *See:* sak 'language'.
njabɔ *n.* stranger; alien; guest.
njarɔ *adj.* strong. *See:* ahrei? 'strong'.
nje *n.* breast. *See:* anje 'milk'.
nje tʃiaŋ *n.* nipple.
nji *num.* two. **gə** **padau nji dait** I found two birds
njo *n.* fish.
nəme *n.* tiger.

nĕbiaŋ *adv.* quickly. **gə** **nĕbiaŋ tʃaima kapak** I ate banana quickly
nĕre *n.* tiger.

ŋ

ŋiaŋta *PREP.* from.

ɔ

ɔ: *n.* cave. **gə** **ɔ:** **raŋ tʃe kɔlak** I enter the cave

p

pa *adj.* bundle.
pa:kna *n.* belonging, property.
patʃappariap *n.* sparrow.
patʃiak *adj.* half. *See:* atʃuait 'to break into half'.
patʃuk *n.* eagle.
padau *n.* bird. **gə** **padau h'ui ni dait** I found one bird
Variant: pudɔ.
padou *v.* found.
pagrei *v.* to pass stool.
paɯ *v.* make.
paianua *n.* towel.
paida *v.* found.
pait *v.* cut; cut with machete.
pait *v.* swell.
paittʃiak *v.* cut. **takia tʃe ta madə paittʃiak** Takia cuts bamboo with knife
padzai *n.* stars. *See:* hagait. *Variant:* padzait.
padzap *n.* duck.

padzin *n.* crane, a small white bird in the river.
padziŋ *v.* expand.
pakam *n.* crane. *See:* **pupuŋ** 'crane'. [*Source:* Sangchu.]
paku *n.* dove.
pakna *v.* sweep.
pako *n.* a rectangular cane basket.
pako? *v.* turn; turn the page. *See:* **poitduŋ** 'turn'.
pakrei? *n.* earthworm; worm. *Variant:* **pakrei**.
pakrek para *n.* toilet.
pakɔ *n.* peacock. *Variant:* **pakɔia?**.
palai? *n.* hornbill.
paŋ *v.* to judge.
paŋ *CL.* classifier. *Variant:* **pam**.
paŋhaŋbɔ *n.* judge.
paŋhaŋbɔ ri *n.* judgement day.
paŋpit *n.* butterfly.
panua *n.* shawl.
panjo *n.* spoon.
parai *adj.* glad; happy.
pare *n.* louse. *Variant:* **parai**.
pareiri *n.* lice.
pare? *n.* priest.
pariaŋ *n.* hornbill. *Variant:* **parai**.
parɔ *n.* pigeon.
paruag ha?kbo *n.* the month of October.
pasa *adj.* rich.
pasiek *n.* kidney.
pata *n.* paper.

patadza:p *n.* book. *See:* **dza:p** 'book'.
patak *n.* flask.
pata? *n.* bamboo jug, flask; bamboo container.
patu *n.* lion.
patɔŋ *n.* trap.
 — *v.* entrap. *See:* **tfai** 'trap'.
patuŋruŋ *n.* half pants. *See:* **patruŋ** 'half pants'. *Variant:* **patruŋ**.
pajoŋ *n.* owl.
pazɔ *n.* safety pin.
pək *v.* sweep.
perein *n.* bean. *Variant:* **pərein**.
phrɔ *v.* raining.
phrɔɔdza *v.* raining.
pu *v.* wrap; make.
pieit *v.* fly.
pieitbɔ *n.* aeroplane.
pumji *n.* nit; lice.
puna *v.* to make.
pintsi *n.* bat. *See:* **hemij** 'bat'. *Variant:* **piŋtʃi**.
piŋ *v.* sew.
puɔnu? *n.* shawl.
pirua *n.* box. *See:* **ba?kɔs** 'box'.
pusek *n.* caterpillar.
pisraŋ *adj.* blue.
piuŋri *n.* flute. *See:* **balak**.
pivien *n.* insect
pjapɛ *adv.* tomorrow. *See:* **pjari** 'tomorrow'.
pjapɛrɛru *adv.* day after tomorrow.

pjari *adv.* tomorrow. **gɔ pjari** **kriria la u** I will go in the afternoon tomorrow *See:* **pjapɛ** 'tomorrow'.
pjaririu *adv.* day after tomorrow.
puɔbɔ *n.* God; creator.
puɔda *v.* spill.
pliaŋ *n.* parrot.
pɔ *adv.* before. *See:* **abait** 'before'.
poɔu *n.* almirah. *See:* **tsuŋkik** 'almirah'; **hikraŋ** 'almirah'.
poitduŋ *v.* turn; turn the page. *See:* **pako?** 'turn'.
pokra: *n.* edible fern.
poŋba? *n.* 1) shelf. 2) table. *Variant:* **puagba?** (Yakli dialect). [*Source:* Sangchu.]
poŋjo *n.* spoon.
po:kbak *n.* shawl.
pəriu *adv.* yesterday. *See:* **bjari**.
pəriuri *adv.* day before yesterday.
pre *n.* louse.
pretʃi *adv.* next year.
prie prie *adv.* forever. *Variant:* **pe prie**.
prietʃheil *n.* sand.
priprie pepe *adj.* eternal.
prinɔ *num.* eight. [*Source:* Tagangpu village.]
prɔ *n.* firewood basket.
prɔ:k prɔ:k *n.* duck.
prɔ:k prɔ:k adou *n.* duckling.
prɔ:k prɔ:k amui *n.* duck.
pua *n.* father.

pua *TNS.* PROG.
pua sei? *v.* tired, hand; cramps.
puafe *n.* left hand.
puafe *adj.* left.
puafelai *n.* left leg.
puak *n.* crow. *Variant:* **pua?** (Sangchu dialect).
puak *n.* yeast.
puag *v.* exit; come out; complete.
puatuk *n.* shoulder. *Variant:* **puatɔk**.
puazue *adj.* right.
puazuelai *n.* right leg.
puazuej *n.* right hand. *See:* **malaitʃaihak** 'right hand'.
pupuŋ *n.* crane. *See:* **pakam**. [*Source:* Lasumpatte.]
puri *v.* study. [*Source:* Hindi.]
puruit *n.* come-out group. *Variant:* **purɔik**. [*Note:* The tribe name is said to be formed of the two words 'puag' exit and 'ruit' group. **puag** + **ruit** = **puruit**.]
pu: *n.* beer; alcohol.
puzuej *n.* road; way.

r

ra *ASP.* DUR.
ra:m *v.* sleep.
rabre *n.* roof. *Variant:* **rebren**. roof.
rae *n.* field; jhum. *Variant:* **re**.
rae *adj.* like; seem.
rai *v.* take.

rai *n.* marriage.
— *v.* marry.
rai *n.* rope.
rau *n.* frog. **gə kuarua rai**
dzaima I saw frog in the river
rai mata? *n.* clothesline.
raida *v.* deliver.
raimada *v.* brought.
raina *v.* bring.
rau? *num.* six. **gə rau rau?**
dzaima I saw six frogs
rairu *v.* buy.
raisam *v.* to take away.
raiva *v.* exchange.
radzə ha?kbə *n.* the month of February.
rak *n.* shelf above the fire place.
rak bua *n.* the second shelf above the fire.
rakap *n.* tortoise.
ralluŋ *n.* nation.
ralu? ha?kbə *n.* the month of December.
rampua *v.* sleep.
raŋ *PREP.* for. **gə amui raŋ dzaima** I saw the girl
raŋbaŋ *n.* the staple food of the Puroiks. *See:* **be** 'grounded raŋbaŋ'.
raŋlui? *v.* shout; pretending; bluff. *Variant:* **raŋluit**.
raŋmaŋ *n.* thunder. *Variant:* **raŋmak**.
ra? *COMIT.* to. **nanu gə kuŋ ləit ra?** Nanu talks to me
rasin *n.* sackcloth.

rau *v.* place; put.
raubə *v.* help.
rau? *n.* trap for small animlas.
rei *num.* four. **takia biari rei ganta gə kuŋ tuŋ ra?**
Yesterday Takia stayed with me for four hours
reifaŋ *n.* paddy field.
reik *v.* collect.
reina *v.* to take. *Variant:* **rai**.
reipuaŋ *n.* salvation.
— *v.* to take out; save.
reirue *v.* take.
reiseu *n.* help.
reisi? *v.* receive.
rək dou *n.* the first shelf above the fire. *See:* **rək bua**. [*Note:* The fire place of the Puroiks is in the middle of the house. Above the fireplace are two shelves where they keep firewoods and other utensils.]
rena *vt.* shoot.
repait *n.* field; jhum.
ri *n.* day.
ri *n.* egg. *See:* **mari** 'egg'. [*Source:* Yakli dialect.]
ru *AUX.*
ri ruŋ *adv.* day after tomorrow.
riaŋ *Loc.* inside.
riarialain *v.* overpower.
riek *n.* a filte bag made of cane used for filtering rangbang.
ri:ŋtuŋkrieŋnua *n.* wooden seat.
riŋ *v.* drink.
riŋruaŋ *adj.* drunk; nauseated. *See:* **lukhie** 'nauseated'.

riŋrui *v.* drink.
riŋsam *v.* reckless drinking.
rinsem *v.* withered.
rio *v.* know.
ririŋ *adv.* tomorrow.
riru *adv.* day after.
riruŋ *adv.* day after tomorrow.
rit *v.* run away; lost.
riuri *adv.* today.
rə *ACC.* acc mkr.
rə *adv.* very.
rə *BEN.* for.
rə *v.* support with stick.
roufriŋ *adj.* free.
rək *v.* ask; murmur.
rəkna *v.* to ask. **gə rəkna kadzia kəbuŋ u** I ask him when he is going to the village
rəŋ *v.* hear.
rəŋna *v.* to hear.
rəŋriak *v.* to listen.
rəŋwei *n.* fruit; any kind of fruit.
rəŋwei weina *adj. ph.* be fruitful.
rouhiaŋ *v.* forgive; to leave.
roupua *v.* keep.
roupuana *v.* to redeem.
roupuaŋ *v.* to keep out.
rua *v.* weave.
ruaŋdzai *v.* seek.
rue *n.* tongue. *Variant:* **roe**.
rue *vi.* laugh. *See:* **marue**.
ruenieŋ *v.* laughing.
rui *conj.* and.

ruit *n.* group.
ruitbuŋ *n.* skirt.
rudzəŋna *v.* to redeem.
rwaina *v.* to flow.

J

re: *n.* the anterior end of an arrow fitted with a feather.
reimua *n.* tree.
rein *n.* wood.
rein paitbə *n.* wood cutter.
rein wei? *n.* firewood.
reinkhe *n.* branch. *See:* **akrie** 'branch'.
reuwəbə *adj.* strong.
riak *n.* the anterior end of an arrow binded with thread.
rianna *v.* rub.
riek *n.* thread; rope made from the bark of tree.
riŋmiaŋ *n.* wooden stick.
ro *n.* banyan tree.

S

sa *TNS.* fut. **gə fesa** I will run
sa: *n.* cow.
sabreŋ *n.* goat. **gə sabreŋ pam we** I have goats
sabue *n.* rat. *Variant:* **sabue?**.
satŋi *n.* pangolin.
satŋuaŋ *n.* wolf.
safuaŋ *n.* rope for mithun or cow.
saitna *v.* live; grow.
sak *n.* mouth.

sak *n.* language. *See:* **njabo** 'language'.
sak *conj.* and.
 — *adj.* more. **sak hɔ** one more
 — *cl.*
sak hūji *num.* once.
sak nji *num.* twice.
sak sak *n.* fish scales.
sakae *n.* leather bag worn by men.
sakbu *n.* chest.
saktfik *adj.* tired; weak.
saki *n.* porcupine.
sakrio *v.* thirst.
sakupa gru:ŋ *n.* wild fowl.
sali? *n.* betelnut.
sam la *num.* eighty.
sampak *n.* broom.
samsui? *n.* grass.
saŋ *n.* platform; bed.
saŋ kuru:ŋ *vp.* under the bed.
saŋbok *n.* beverage made from rangbang.
saŋŋo ha?kbo *n.* the month of August.
saŋta ha?kbo *n.* the month of September.
sanie *n.* milk.
sarioŋ *n.* mud.
sarpw *n.* bladder.
sasait *n.* leaf.
sasu *n.* fog; steam.
satta *n.* elephant. *From:* Nishi.
savei *v.* to carry on head with rope. *See:* **kəkakruei** 'to carry on head'.

se dl. both.
sedou *n.* calf.
sei matar *n.* bullock.
seiknua *n.* life.
seitda *v.* live.
seitder *v.* change.
senei *n.* sugar.
senji dl. two; both.
seppəw *n.* bamboo raft; boat.
si *n.* mithun; bison.
siali *n.* fox.
sidui? *adj.* alive. *See:* **asik.**
siegesiakla *n.* punishment.
siek *v.* beat. **adaŋ jo siek dza hamriaŋ ta** Adang is beating th dog with a stick
sikdui? *adv.* alive.
siriug *n.* mud.
sis *n.* mirror. *See:* **harsai** 'mirror'. *Variant:* **siŋsa.**
suaiwəg *num.* thirty.
suaisait *adj.* kind.
suait *v.* pray.
suait *num:* thousand.
suanji *num.* twenty. **takiá dw** 'suani Takia is twenty year old *Variant:* **suaini.**
sue *n.* urine.
sui? *v.* wash. **kamaŋ sui?** washing face
suisait *adj.* pityful; kind; compassionate; grace.
suku paŋru:ŋ *n.* wildfowl.
sukudao *n.* chicken.
sukumuwa *n.* hen. *See:* **haku** 'hen'.

sukupu: *n.* cock.
suttum *n.* bear. *Variant:* **sattam.**
From: Nishi.
swe *v.* to pass urine; urinate.
swe: *num.* ten. *See:* **ariəŋ tsaŋ** 'ten'. [*Source:* Sangchu.]
swe:laik hūji *num.* eleven.
swe:laik wəg *num.* thirteen.
swe:laik nji *num.* twelve.

t

ta ABL. from. **gə Lasum ta uruei** I come from Lasum
ta ASSOC. with. **mate maluaik gait ta tʃi** Mate eats the food with her hand
ta paŋ *n.* bamboo rope.
ta: *GEN.* possessive. **haŋdʒe dʒi ta tʃuk** This is his house
tabua *n.* bed bug.
tae DET. that. **meri tʃuk' aŋ tae** Mary is outside the house
tafrei *n.* comb.
taguŋ *n.* mango. **taguŋ hɔmua ueta 'ioklɔ** The mango fell from the tree
tailɔ ha?kbo *n.* the month of July.
taŋ *adj.* others;.
tak *n.* bangles; bracelet. *See:* **kɔta?** 'big bracelet (flat one)'.
Variant: **ta?**
takaŋ *n.* grasshopper.
taku *n.* chest.
takkar *n.* leopard.
taku *n.* chest.

tam *v.* to roll up; to tie up.
tamai *n.* millet.
tamaipu: *n.* millet wine.
tamaitaka *n.* locust.
tambɔ *n.* widower.
tana AUX. can.
taŋ *v.* give. **gə patadzap hio taŋ** I give him a book
taŋ dui? *v.* return.
taŋkua *n.* money.
taŋna *v.* to give.
taŋriakbɔ *n.* giver.
tape *n.* bean. [*Source:* Sangchu.]
ta?tʃe *n.* crab.
ta?tʃerere *n.* cockroach.
taruŋ *v.* mosquito.
tasɔ *n.* baboon.
tasum *n.* prawn; shrimp.
te Gen. it's. **tai jo te alai dʒaik** The dog hurt its leg
tebuŋ *n.* drum.
təŋ duit *v.* return.
təkrw *n.* god; creator.
təku *n.* hook. *Variant:* **təkie.**
 [*Source:* Lasum.]
təkua *n.* phlegm.
təŋ təŋ kələŋ *n.* truth. *See:* **dʒa:ktəŋ** 'truth'.
təŋku: *n.* hook for hanging clothes.
tua *v.* bite.
tua *n.* time; hour. **tua hūi** one hour
tuabɔ *v.* bite.
tuəŋ khri? *n.* gum (of teeth).
tuəŋ kəŋ *n.* wisdom teeth.

tuitna *v.* to throw.
 tuk *n.* heart.
 tuk *v.* to increase; to grow.
 tukruŋ *n.* petticoat. *See:* takrɔʔ
 'petticoat'.
 tukta *n.* forehead.
 tunj *v.* sit.
 tunj *v.* live; stay. gɔ kɔbuaŋ na
 tunɗa I live in the village
 tunɗua *v.* rest.
 tunkam *n.* fellowship.
 tunke tunue *v.* shift; push. *See:*
 uke uie 'shift'.
 tunkuʔ *n.* seat. *See:* tunmuwa
 'seat'.
 tunmai *n.* father-in-law.
 tunmuwa *n.* seat.
 tunmáin *n.* father-in-law,
 grandfather.
 tunnieŋ *v.* rest.
 tunpua *v.* sit.
 tunriaʔ *v.* wait. gɔ tunriaʔ ka
 kiŋkɔŋ I am waiting for
 Kingkong *See:* dzairiaʔ
 'wait'. *Variant:* tunriak.
 turuk *n.* pumpkin. *Variant:*
 truk.

u

u *v.* go
 u tʃaŋ *v.* coming.
 u duit *vp.* go back, return.
 u puaŋ *v.* came.
 ua *adv.* then.
 uainbi *n.* wild boar.
 uarkɔknua *n.* key.

uartaŋ *n.* lock.
 ubɔ *v.* go.
 utfai *n.* to go for toilet, to pass
 stool, excrement.
 uɗuiʔ *v.* go back.
 ue'ij
 ueiŋtak *n.* world. *See:*
 madzjeittak 'world'.
 ueitam *v.* close.
 ueta *PREP.* from.
 ueta 2 *GEN.* yours.
 u kalɔikatʃuai *v.* going round.
 uke uie *v.* shift. *See:* tunke
 tunue 'shift ; push'. *Variant:*
 oke ɔuiʔ.
 una *v.* to walk.
 uɲɔ *v.* hurt.
 uriaŋ *n.* trace, imitate. *See:*
 dzariaŋ 'trace'.
 uruei *v.* come. gɔ Lasum ta
 uruei I come from Lasum
 u: *v.* go. gɔ seppa u dza da I
 am going to Seppa
 u:ŋkasuak *n.* spider.
 uw *num.* five.

v

va *n.* a cane carpet for
 rangbang.
 ve *v.* beat; to clap hands.
 viamua *v.* taste with tongue.
Variant: viaua.
 viana *v.* lick.
 vik *v.* to sharpen.
 vio *n.* axe. *See:* ba 'axe'.
 vrio *v.* heal.

w

wa *DET.* that.
 wa:k *n.* a wooden club used for
 beating sago palm.
 waiʔ *adj.* dry.
 warɔ 3*p.* *ACC.* 1) him. 2) her.
 we *v.* be; have. gɔ sabreŋ pam
 we I have goats
 weta *Reflex.* self.
 wetapa *Reflex.* self.
 wrai *num.* four.

j

ja *v.* teach.
 ja:na *v.* to preach.
 jalɔ haʔkɔ *n.* the month of
 June.
 jaŋdak *n.* chilli pepper.
 jarap *v.* risen; rise up; get up.
 jasar luitsar *n.* punishment.
 jatam *v.* preach.

jetta *conj.* and.
 jo *n.* dog. tai jo te alai dzaik
 The dog hurt it's leg *See:*
 kaijo.
 jo *num.* nine. [*Source:* Tagangpu
 village.]
 jona *n.* odour.

z

za *v.* burn.
 za:k *n.* floor.
 za:na *n.* sound.
 zae *n.* cooking pot.
 zai *n.* girl's bag.
 zai *v.* squashed with hand.
 zai *v.* to squash.
 zak *n.* quiver.
 zak puŋ *n.* the cover of a
 quiver.
 ziŋ *v.* to woke up.
 zua *v.* scream.
 zuit *n.* mongoose.

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