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A preliminary grammar of the Mizo language

Chhangte, Lalnunthangi, M.S.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON, 1986

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300 N. Zeeb Rd.
Ann Arbor, MI 48106

A PRELIMINARY GRAMMAR OF THE MIZO LANGUAGE

by

LALNUNTHANGI CHHANGTE


Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
The University of Texas at Arlington in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS IN LINGUISTICS

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

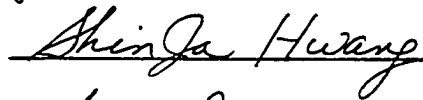
December 1986

A PRELIMINARY GRAMMAR
OF THE MIZO LANGUAGE

APPROVED:



(Supervising Professor)





PREFACE

Most of the data for this thesis comes from my own experience as a native speaker. The sociolinguistic data was gathered during my brief visit to Mizoram (September to November 1985).

I am greatly indebted to the the following for their contributions; I never would have finished the thesis without their guidance and encouragement. First, I would like to thank the members of my committee: Dr. J. A. Edmondson, chairman of the committee, for his enthusiastic help in all matters concerning the thesis, especially with the analysis and presentation of data; Dr. Shin Ja Hwang for her thorough revisions and suggestions; Dr. D. A. Burquest for clarifying critical issues, especially those related to phonology.

I also would like to thank the "honorary" committee members who spent a considerable amount of time critiquing my initial drafts: Dr. F. K. Lehman (University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana) for supplying me with hard-to-locate reference materials and for giving me introductory lessons in Tibeto-Burman linguistics through personal communications; Dr. K. J. Gregerson for helping me with the initial organization of data and for introducing me to the typological

features of southeast Asian languages.

I would also like to thank the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) for their financial sponsorship of this study. Moreover, I have benefitted greatly from the resource materials at the SIL library.

Finally, I would like to thank family and friends from Mizoram who patiently taught me all they knew about the language and culture, and corrected me when they thought it was necessary.

To all of the above I say, ka lawm e (ka-loom e1), thank you.

August 4, 1986

ABSTRACT

A PRELIMINARY GRAMMAR OF THE MIZO LANGUAGE

Lalnunthangi Chhangte, M.A.

The University of Texas at Arlington, 1986

Supervising Professor: Jerold A. Edmondson

This thesis is an overview of Mizo (Lusei/Lushai) morphology, syntax and sentence structure using \bar{X} syntax. It includes a discussion of the mixed ergative system, the syntactic constraints on Stem II verb forms and relative clause structures. Linguistic universals and typological features of related Tibeto-Burman languages are also taken into consideration. Several examples, all fully glossed, are given to illustrate the main points. A chapter on phonology is also included in the beginning.

SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABS.....	Absolutive
ACC.....	Accusative
Adj.....	Adjective
ADV.....	Adverb
AGT.....	Agentivizer
ASP.....	Aspect
Att.....	Attribute
BEN.....	Benefactive
CL.....	Classifier
COMP.....	Complement
COMPL.....	Completive
XM.....	Cross-Modal Conjunction
DECL.....	Declarative
DEG.....	Degree
DPRO.....	Demonstrative Pronoun
DET.....	Determiner
EMP.....	Emphatic
EMT.....	Endearment
ERG.....	Ergative
EX.....	Exemplifier
EXCL.....	Exclamation
FSUF.....	Female Suffix

FP.....	Final Particle
FUT.....	Future
HORT.....	Hortative
HRD.....	Hundred
IMM.....	Immediate
IMP.....	Imperative
INT.....	Intensifier
LOC.....	Locative
MSUF.....	Male Suffix
MOD.....	Mode
N'.....	N Bar
N".....	N Double Bar
NP.....	Noun Phrase
NEG.....	Negation
NLZ.....	Nominalizer
NOM.....	Nominative
NFP.....	Non-Final Particle
NUM.....	Numeral
Obj.....	Object
OBLQ.....	Oblique
OPT.....	Optative
PST.....	Past
PERFM.....	Performative
PL/pl.....	Plural
P.....	Possessive Pronoun
PROG.....	Progressive

PROHIB.....	Prohibitive
PRO.....	Pronoun
Q.....	Question Word
Ql.....	Qualifier
QlP.....	Qualifier Phrase
Ql'.....	Ql Bar
Ql".....	Ql Double Bar
Qn.....	Quantifier
QnP.....	Quantifier Phrase
Qn'.....	Qn Bar
Qn".....	Qn Double Bar
RCP.....	Reciprocal
REF.....	Reflexive
REL.....	Relativizer
S'.....	S Bar
II.....	Stem II
sm.....	Small
Subj.....	Subject
TB.....	Tibeto-Burman
TH.....	Thousand
VP.....	Verb Phrase
WH.....	Wh-Word
// //.....	Underlying Segment
/ /.....	Derived Phonological Form
[].....	Phonetic Form
#.....	Word Boundary

e.....Mid Front Lax Vowel
 o.....Mid Back Vowel
 a.....Low Back Vowel
 ɻ.....Retroflex Lateral
 ʔ.....Glottal Stop
 tɬ.....Lateral Affricate
 tʀ.....Palato-Alveolar Stop
 ŋ.....Velar Nasal
 ph, th, trh, kh.....Aspirated p, t, tr, k
 mh, nh, ngh.....Voiceless m, n, ng
 ɻh, rh, lh, tɬhVoiceless ɻ, r, l, tɬ

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Mizo is a Tibeto-Burman language spoken mainly in the state of Mizoram in northeast India. It is also spoken by Mizos living in areas adjacent to the state. However, this study is an analysis of the language spoken in Mizoram only and will not consider any of the other lects. The language used to be known as 'Lusei' or, by the British, 'Lushai.' Its current name is 'Mizo' and it is a better name for reasons I shall explain later. Mizo is classified as a Tibeto-Burman language but its exact sub-category within that group varies from one analysis to another. Generally it is regarded as one of the central groups in the Kuki-Chin subdivision, cf. Hale (1982). Grierson (1904) and Voegelin-Voegelin (1977) classify it as a Central Chin language, under the Kuki-Chin category. Shafer (1955, 1966) puts it in the Kukish Section of the Burmic division, within which he groups it under the central branch. Benedict (1972) and Egerod (1974) classify it as a Central Kuki within the Kuki-Naga branch. Of these surveys, Grierson's is probably the most comprehensive and most reliable since he collected most of the data himself. To my knowledge, the other surveys were made through sources other than native

speakers since foreigners were hardly ever allowed to enter these areas after 1947.

This thesis will be one of the first synchronic studies of the grammar, using current linguistic theories. Most other linguistic analyses have either been comparative studies or analyses of the phonology. Because the scope of this thesis is to provide a broad outline of the grammar without pursuing every aspect in great depth, I will refrain from etymological speculations and restrict myself to laying out the foundations of the syntax. I will, however, make some revisions on the phonology and include a brief section on sociolinguistics.

Before getting into the technical detail, I would like to devote the first chapter to the history and sociology of the people who speak the language. Though much has been written about the culture and the society, most of the works reflect the prejudices and misunderstandings of the writers. The most accurate and comprehensive materials were those written by British officers. Mackenzie (1884), Shakespeare (1921), Parry (1928) and McCall (1949) give excellent descriptions of the customs. The other officers, Tuck and Carey (1896) and (1932), Lewin (1912) and Reid (1942) are more detailed though less accurate in their distinction of the different races. Missionaries such as Lorrain (1940) and Chapman (1968) provide further insights into the daily

life of the people. But they too are not immune from the ethnocentricisms of the colonialists.

More recently, Indian government officials and anthropologists such as Das (1969), Baveja (1970), Chatterji (1979), Goswami (1980) and Ray (1982) have tried to explain modern Mizo society. These have not been too different from those just mentioned, and perhaps even less reliable as the data is often inaccurate. Others, like Goswami (1979) deal specifically with recent political events. Mizo scholars such as Thanhlira (1969), Thanga (1978), Kailiana (1980), Lalmachhuana (1980), and Thangmawizuala (1980) clarify much of the information presented by foreign authors. There is also a variety of literature written in Mizo, some of the best being those by Challiana (1969), Liangkhaia (1976) and Thanga (1984). Unfortunately, the work of Mizo scholars remains unknown outside of northeast India. In addition to these, journalists such as Kalbag and Pushkarna (1982) have provided poignant and accurate reports of civilian life in politically troubled northeast India. Such reports, published in leading magazines like India Today are much more reliable than those published by the censored newspapers.

In general, literature about Mizos is either outdated or inaccurate. Thus, in this paper I will try to present the Mizos as they see themselves, rather than how foreigners see them, or even how they would like foreigners to see

them. Having been there recently myself (Sept.- Nov. 1985), I can present a more up-to-date report on the language.

1.1 Geography and History

Mizoram is a state about the size of Massachusetts (8143 sq. miles) and has a population (1981 census) of 493,757. (About 90 per cent of the population are Mizos). The place has changed names several times within the last century. It was first known to the outside world as the Lushai Hills, after which the name was changed to Mizo Hills. Though the Mizos themselves have always called it Mi-zoul-raml, meaning, 'land of the Mizos,' the name Mizoram was not used officially until 1972 when it became a centrally administered union territory. These changes of names reflect the gradual emancipation of the Mizos. But it was not until June 1986, after many years of political violence, stalled peace talks and broken treaties that Mizoram finally became a full-fledged state, thus fulfilling the Mizos' dream of independence.

There have also been internal changes. The area used to be divided into the north and the south, in accordance with the traditional lines of enmity. The so-called 'north dialect' and the 'south dialect' served as linguistic boundaries. This north-south division extended even to the religious institutions so that the Presbyterians stayed in

the 'north' and the Baptists kept 'south' of the border. More recently, what was once known as the 'south' has been sub-divided so that there are now three districts: Aizawl district, Lunglei district and Chhimtuipui district, cf. Fig. 1. Of these, the first has about two-thirds of the population and the latter about one-eighth of the population, cf. Tab. 5. All three districts are connected by one major highway that runs north to south.

The term 'Mizo' is a fairly recent innovation and is synonymous with the term 'Lusei,' only with reference to the language. Foreigners do not always understand this distinction so I will explain it here. If one is referring to a race or a political entity, the terms have very distinct meanings. First of all, Mizo is a generic term covering the major tribes: Lusei, Ralte, Hmar, Paite and Pawi; it also includes the minor tribes, such as: Chawhte, Chawngthu, Khawlhing, Khiangte, Ngente, Pautu, Rawite, Renthlei, Tlau, Vangchhia and Zawngte, cf. Tables 8, 9. These tribes, then were what the Bengalis indiscriminately called 'Kukis,' and the Burmese 'Chins.' Sometimes they were also known as 'Shendus' or 'Lushais.' On the other hand, the people simply referred to themselves as 'Zou,' to distinguish themselves from the plains inhabitants.

At one time, all of these tribes had their own language but the Lusei (or Duhlian) language has replaced the

language of the Raltes and all the other minor tribes. Modern Mizo reflects some features of these extinct languages so that one finds the original Lusei language only within Lunglei district. These differences are, however, minimal so that most people do not distinguish between 'Lusei' and 'Mizo' if one is referring to the language only. Thus, the word Mizo has become a political term, referring mainly to the Luseis and their related tribes, who live within the boundaries of Mizoram. Those living outside that area may or may not call themselves Mizo. For instance, Hmars living in Manipur do not consider themselves Mizos but those living in Mizoram generally consider themselves a Mizo clan. Of the other tribes inhabiting Mizoram, the Chakmas and the Lakhers are not usually called Mizos as they have been influenced considerably by other cultures.

1.1.1 Geography

The land-locked state is isolated from the rest of the country and even more so from the rest of the world, cf. Fig. 2. The Chin Hills and the Arakans of Burma flank its eastern and southeastern borders while the Chittagong hill tracts border part of the west. The state of Manipur lies to its northeast, the Cachar district of Assam directly north and Tripura on the northwest corner, cf. Fig. 1. Most of these areas, with the exception of Assam, are mountainous regions so that ground transport is very limited. The only

road connection is through Cachar district. All other trade routes to Burma and Bangladesh were closed when India gained its independence from the British. (This had an adverse effect on the economy since the Mizos had always communicated with the rest of India via Bangladesh.) A small airstrip outside Aizawl connects to the national airways, if and when it operates.

Within the state itself, one major highway links the north to the south. Telephone connections between Aizawl in the north and Lunglei in the south were disconnected during the political uprising of the 60's. These have not been re-installed to this date. Thus, the area south of Aizawl is even more isolated from the rest of the world, particularly since the majority of the population lives in the north.

Mizoram is a mountain state. Six parallel ridges run continuously from the northern edge of the state to its southernmost tip. The highest elevation peak is Phawngpui (phong2-puii2), also known as Blue Mountain. (See Tab. 6). Though often referred to the 'foothills of the Himalayas,' the mountains are anything but hills, even if they are smaller than the gigantic ranges further north. From the distance, the ridges look like long stretches of greenery fading into a majestic blue wall.

The rugged and precipitous terrain is rich in flora. Plantains, bamboo and temperate forests cover the slopes. Rhododendrons and wild orchids abound in the higher elevations where one also finds pine trees. Wildlife, however, is no longer as abundant as it once was. Bears are still found occasionally but rhinos, elephants and tigers no longer frequent the jungles. Moreover, a good deal of the forests were cleared out during the insurgency so that even the wild birds are not as plentiful as they once were.

Terrace farming is gradually replacing swidden cultivation, as a result of a nation-wide program aimed at preserving the forests. Rice is grown annually on the slopes but because over two-thirds of the population now live in urban areas, Mizoram is no longer self-sufficient in its basic diet. Apart from locally grown vegetables and fruit, Mizoram imports almost all its food from neighboring Assam. The semi-tropical climate is ideal for coffee, tea and various fruit trees. Transportation problems have however limited exploiting these areas agriculturally.

Mizos are fond of meat and those who can afford it eat pork and beef regularly. Chicken and eggs are more expensive since these are usually imported from Assam. Those who have enough land raise their own pigs and poultry or pay someone else to raise them. A few people in the villages own cows. Domesticated mithuns (the Indian bison), siall, have become extremely scarce.

The climate ranges from sub-tropical forests in the lower ranges to temperate pine forests in the higher elevations. Though rainfall is heavy during the monsoons (May to Sept.) water is scarce during the dry spells. Temperatures range from a high of 86 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer to a low of 50 degrees Fahrenheit in the winter. These temperatures also vary according to the elevation. Winter evenings can be rather chilly, but apart from the monsoon rains, Mizoram's climate is very pleasant year round.

Thus, the word zoul is what the Mizos use to describe the qualities of the healthy mountain air. Note that the word is not a noun, meaning 'mountain.' Rather, it is an adjective with connotations similar to words like 'spa' or 'alpine resort.' This word was also used to refer to all the people living in these areas and it was a generic term covering the tribes otherwise known as Kukis or Chins. The addition of the word mii3, meaning 'people,' appears to be a fairly recent innovation.

1.1.2 History

Very little is known about the Mizos before they entered Burma about 900 years ago, cf. Tab. 7. Mizos remained unknown to the outside world until they made their appearance in British territory. Eventually, they became British subjects themselves, though they had much more autonomy than those living in the plains. Soon after the

British assumed political control over the Mizos, the missionaries came. Their impact was literacy and the emancipation of women. The missionaries had a great influence on the culture, but their influence has usually been overestimated. For instance, even though the missionaries introduced education, they discouraged higher education.

But the greatest change of all took place between 1966 and the present time. It began as an armed revolt by a small group of men. Their goal was political independence and their weapon was violence.

In order to understand the motives for the rebellion, one has to understand the Mizo's concept of independence. Traditional Mizo society was democratic and socialistic. It tolerated authority only so long as it met the needs of the people. Thus, a tyrannical or incompetent chief soon found himself without subjects. Social stratification was minimal; everyone participated in the daily chores, including chiefs. Crimes such as theft, rape or murder were rare. A well-organized system of administration maintained peace and harmony within the community. Naturally, the Mizos did not consider it necessary to have an outside authority controlling their lives. Furthermore, the democratic culture of the Mizos was incompatible with the fatalistic and caste-dominated culture of their Hindu neighbors in the plains.

Racial differences also contributed to their feeling of alienation. Mizos, like many of the tribes in northeast India, have very little in common with the south Asian populace in the mainland. Thus, many Mizos resented bitterly the authority of the vaail, a derogatory term for the plains people. They did not trust their motives and were tired of their condescending attitude. Therefore, simple as it may sound, all the Mizos wanted was a home of their own where they could be left alone. It was an innocent and sincere desire for independence; there was nothing ideological or revolutionary about it. Unfortunately, because the rebels adopted such violent tactics they earned the wrath of their rulers and Mizoram became a battlefield.

Much of the bloodshed would have been averted if the rulers of those times had understood the feeling of the Mizo people. Instead, the government tried to 'crush the rebellion' by force. It sent in troops who terrorized the innocent civilians and went so far as to bomb the capital. The army did not stop at this. They took over the roads and installed roadblocks and check posts wherever they wished. The Mizos became prisoners in their own land.

The army was in total control. They instated curfew, shot on sight any one who came in their way (even the imbecile). Moreover, the young men were rounded up periodically for brutal interrogations and the young women were

molested. People were arrested by the household if one member of the family was suspected of being connected to the underground. The prisoners were then shipped off to distant prisons in Assam, where, if they were lucky a Mizo living in that area would locate them and notify their kin.

Every Mizo suffered. With bullets whizzing through the bamboo walls and daytime curfew in force, food and sleep were luxuries, not to mention trips to the outhouse. Furthermore, the rebels foraged the villages for food, money and shelter. Thus, the people were forced to help them even if they risked being shot by the soldiers.

These were not the only hardships. Remote villages were herded together in one central location set up for 'administrative convenience.' These grouping centers were detrimental to the Mizo society. For instance, social crimes such as stealing and murder which were virtually unknown in the past became common in these grouping centers. As people who were accustomed to a hard day of work in the fields were forced to remain idle, they became restless and alcoholism increased. Those who were young and strong often joined the rebel forces. Thus, ironically, the institution that was designed to facilitate administration became a convenient recruiting center for the rebels.

Over the last ten years life has been slowly returning to normal. Fortunately, most of the young people do

not remember the violence. Those who lived through it are ready to forget and begin a new life. Indeed, the atmosphere today is one of optimism as the dream of political independence, becomes a reality. The Mizos are also beginning to appreciate the advantage they have in being citizens of India. The constitution grants them special status under the Scheduled Castes and Tribes policy, because of which they are able to compete fairly with the rest of the country. Furthermore, the inner line restrictions of northeast India keeps them from being overrun by other races. Thus, their lot is much better than those of Mizos in the adjacent countries which provide very little benefits for its minorities.

Mizos are also becoming more conscious of national events and are beginning to participate in athletic events and academic competitions sponsored by the government. Because of their high literacy rates, Mizos have entered in various academic fields. The civil services still attracts the best and many women are in the police force.

The government, also, has taken a conciliatory position and has invested considerably in the economic development of that area. Thus, both sides are willing to forgive and forget the past, a happy ending that one hardly ever sees.

1.2 The Society

Modern Mizo society is a blend of the old and the new. In spite of its geographic isolation and its lack of industry Mizoram manages to keep up with the latest trends. It is one of the few places in India where one can find punk-rockers and the latest in video and music. Like many southeast Asians, Mizos love to dress and the stores are full of the latest styles in fabrics, patterns and ready-made clothes. Women still use the traditional puan², a wrap-around skirt tucked in at the waist. These used to be designed and woven by the wearer herself but machine-woven ones are preferred nowadays. Apart from this, the women's blouses and menswear are all taken from the latest in fashions.

Mizos are also fond of music and the best selling cassettes are those recorded by local artistes. The songs are either love songs or religious songs. Many of the songs are also about the beauty of the land: its clear streams, refreshing mountain air and its beautiful flowers. Hymns borrowed from the West have been adapted to fit Mizo music styles. In recent years, the younger generations have shown an interest in traditional music, poetry and dance. Thus, many song writers still use the archaic forms in their compositions.

Yet, in spite of their fascination with Western fashions and trends, Mizos are extremely loyal to their own culture. For instance, every Mizo still observes the ancient etiquette of tloom-ngaih-nal which requires all, young and old, to put the interest of others before their own. Thus, a Mizo will gladly help any Mizo in distress, even total strangers. For this reason, even a city such as Aizawl can call the community for nha-tlaangl 'community workday,' whenever there is a disaster.

Voluntary youth organizations such as the Young Mizo Association (YMA) and the Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP) are the zealous guardians of Mizo traditions. For instance, the YMA organizes all community events: this includes providing for and setting up seats; providing and serving refreshments. They are also the ones who serve the public in times of disasters. No funeral is conducted without the YMA's participation; for they are the ones who dig the grave, notify next of kin, and host mourners on behalf of the bereaved family. Indeed, one has to attend a Mizo funeral to fully understand the spirit of tloom-ngaih-nal.

There are some traditions that are dying out. One is that of hand weaving. Technology has replaced the simple but efficient Mizo loom so that very few girls today know how to weave. The women's pipe is another dying tradition, as the nicotine water they used to produce is now produced

by a machine. This manufactured nicotine water, though less potent than the original, is sold in empty whisky bottles and empty medicine jars. Tobacco use, however, would probably never die out as about 90 percent of the population uses it in some form or the other. Alcohol consumption, however, is a controversial issue because of the tendency to abuse it. Drug abuse is also becoming a problem in the major towns and cities.

Religion is an important part of the society. Its form has changed from that of animism to Christianity. Its function, however, has not changed as it continues to dominate all aspects of the society, including politics. A politician's career is short-lived if the church leaders do not approve of his moral conduct. Thus, in many ways, the churches have taken over the functions of the traditional chief. The churches also serve as the voice of the people. During the height of the political violence, the church leaders served as intermediaries between the rebels and the government.

More recently, the churches have contributed to the solidarity of the Mizo people by removing the north-south boundary which separated the Presbyterians and the Baptists. The decision to remove the boundaries created some controversy at first but once it was legalized, people accepted it.

Education is also extremely important in the society. The area still has one of the highest literacy rates in India. Most people can at least write their own names and many can read the daily paper or the Bible. The few illiterates are those who live in very remote areas or those who have come from other places.

1.3 The Scope and Limits of This Thesis

As mentioned before, this study will concentrate mainly on synchronic data. The phonology still needs more elaboration, especially in terms of tone analysis. Acoustics studies would be helpful but I have not performed them due to lack of informants and equipment. The syntax is still largely unexplored territory. Since most Tibeto-Burman linguistics consists of comparative study, very little with modern techniques has been done on the syntax of the languages. Part of this lack has been due to the problem of texts, and inaccessibility of native speakers. In Mizo, further study has been hampered by the absence of tone marks in our orthography. Geographic and political factors have not been favorable either. Thus, as a native speaker, from that area, I have both the data and the freedom to collect more data. Also, as a native speaker, I have the advantage of knowing the entire range and detail of the language structure that is sometimes lacking in studies by outsiders. Thus, I am able to show the differences in differ-

ent contexts. For instance, I have shown how the speech of women differ from the speech of men under certain circumstances.

In sum, the purpose of this thesis is to lay the basic foundations of Mizo grammar, concentrating on the syntax and morphology. As I am more interested in the language as such than its relationship to other languages, I will make cross references to other languages only where I consider necessary. This self-imposed restriction will also keep this project within manageable bounds.

In my examples I have tried to use culturally relevant material. For instance, I have included the pig in several of my examples because it is such an important part of Mizo society. I have also glossed words according to their meaning within the context. Sometimes I have used colloquial interpretations. Thus, aarl is generally considered to mean a full grown hen unless one specifies otherwise. ('Hen' is also shorter than 'chicken.')

One of the problems in translation is that a short and simple item in one language requires a rather lengthy explanation in another. I have avoided such terms. For instance, uul simply means 'elder (sibling),' and it really has no equivalent in English. Other times, the English equivalent is no longer in use so the readers will have to bear with such archaic renditions as: 'maiden,' 'hither,' and so on. In general, I have avoided polysyllabic or compound words.

The following chapters will now deal with the linguistic aspects of the language. Chapter two is an overview of the phonology with some additional rules. In this chapter I have suggested how the phonology is better analyzed in terms of the syllable. With regards to tone, I have listed the various tone sandhi rules and the specific conditions where they apply. I have also suggested that the glottal be treated as a prosody rather than a segment.

In chapter three I have outlined the structure of the phrases and their constituents. This, to my knowledge, is the first time the noun phrases and verb phrases have been analyzed thus. In both chapters three and four I have explained the mixed ergativity in Mizo, and the usage of verb stems. In chapter four I give detailed examples of simple sentences, including: verbal sentences, wh-questions, yes-no questions, imperatives and hortatives. Chapter five examines complex sentences, with special reference to the relative clause in Mizo. In all of these chapters I use several examples to illustrate my point.

CHAPTER II

PHONOLOGY

Mizo phonology has been described in detail by Henderson (1948), Bright (1957), Burlings (1957) and Weidert (1975). More recently, Lehman (1975a) and Chhangte (1985) have conducted instrumental analyses on some aspects of the language. Thus, the basics of Mizo phonology have been dealt with in these studies. However, very little has been said about how the tones and other phonological units relate to higher level units. Therefore, this chapter will deal with some of the tone sandhi rules as these, eventually, relate to the grammar of the language.

In this thesis I will be using a slightly modified version of Mizo orthography for representing the language. Since in our daily writing system tones are not marked, however, I will indicate them as follows: High Tone 1, Rising Tone 2, Falling Tone 3 and Mid-Low Tone unmarked. Phonological boundaries will be indicated as follows: ## represents full (external) word boundaries; # represents internal word boundaries; + represents morpheme boundaries and \$ represents syllable boundaries. (The last symbol will be used for rules pertaining to syllables only.)

2.1 Syllable Structure

It has been traditional to analyze the tone languages of the Asian mainland in terms of syllables or segments. Both approaches have some advantages. Previous studies of Mizo have generally employed the segmental approach with only peripheral consideration of the syllable as a linguistic unit. However, some features speak for using the syllable.

If one takes the syllable as primitive, then it may be further divided into: initials- the optional consonantal onset of the syllable; nuclei- the obligatory nucleus of the syllable; finals- the optional consonantal or vocalic coda of the syllable; and tone- the fourth feature of the syllable. Aside from these four units of the syllable, the nuclei and finals have an internal structure themselves. A nucleus may be composed of: the main vowel the only obligatory unit of a nucleus and the head the unit preceding the main vowel. The final may consist of: the tail the unit following the main vowel or the consonantal finals, cf. Harris (1983).

Within the syllable itself, the finals seem to play the most important role. There is a distinct relationship between the finals and certain tone sandhi rules. The finals also seem to relate to vocalic length contrasts, that is, complex nuclei occur with only certain finals. All of

these will be discussed in the next section.

2.1.1 Syllable Shapes

The basic Mizo syllable can be defined as:

(1) C(V)V(T)(G)

where C stands for 'initial consonants, 'G stands for 'glottal,' and T for 'tail consonants or vowels.' Cf. Tables 1 through 3. The basic syllable structure of Mizo has already been discussed by Henderson and Weidert so I will not go into extensive detail except to explain some of the points I mentioned above. In particular, I would like to suggest alternative methods of analyzing tone with respect to syllable finals.

First of all, it might be best to consider tone as a feature of the syllable rather than assigning it just to the nucleus of the syllable. This is so because in many instances it is extremely difficult to determine the beginning and end of a tone. For instance, if the final is a nasal, the rise of a rising tone begins later in syllables with long nuclei. Since it was not possible to do an instrumental study of this phenomenon, I will not speculate any further except to suggest that syllables with long nuclei have phonetically different tones than those with a short nucleus. Moreover, these types of syllables have distinct tone sandhi patterns that depend on the length of the nucleus. See Section 2.3.2.2.

Secondly, I would like to suggest that the final glottal is a feature of the tone rather than the syllable. That is, even though I will treat the final glottal as a syllable final, for the time being, I suspect it is a reflex of the tone and should be considered a prosody rather than a segment. For instance, the phonological rule SYLLABLE STRENGTHENING affecting syllable finals ignores glottals so that it appears that the glottal is not considered a segmental 'tail' in syllable string but a prosodic, suprasegmental unit unaffected by a segmental rule. The treatment of the final glottal as a segment also poses some problems with syllable patterns. If syllable final glottals are treated as segments, we have a segment following a consonantal tail, as in [r?, l?], or a vocalic tail, as in [i?, u?]. This creates a rather awkward problem with the syllable structure of Mizo which does not have consonant clusters. The problem will be resolved easily if the glottal is treated as a prosody rather than a segment.

Thus I am arguing that since glottals are not segments, words with final glottals should be represented with a different series of tones. That is, low tone with glottal finals should be assigned a different tone than those without a glottal final. This analysis simplifies the syllable pattern and eliminates the need to list the exceptions where words with final glottal do not have low tone. Though this analysis seems better than the one used in this paper, it

needs some acoustic data to verify the hypothesis that words with final glottals and those without have different tones. However, because the emphasis of this thesis is the grammar of Mizo, extensive phonological analysis will have to be postponed for a later date.

2.1.2 Syllable Patterns Within a Word

Every syllable of Mizo must have a consonantal head. If one does not exist, then a glottal (hard onset) is inserted preceding the head vowel, as in

(2) GLOTTAL EPENTHESIS

$\emptyset \rightarrow [+glottal]/\#__V$

Thus, words that begin with a vowel always have an epenthetic glottal, as in

- (3) a. $\#\#?uii2\#\#$ 'dog'
 b. $\#\#?aar1\#\#$ 'fowl'
 c. $\#\#?iitt3\#\#$ 'covet'

This restriction also applies to syllables within a word so that if one has a checked syllable preceding a headless syllable, the consonantal tail of the checked syllable re-syllabifies and becomes the head of the following syllable, as in:

- (4) a. eng\$al\$taanl ----> e\$ngal\$taanl
 what reason 'for what reason'
 b. daml\$tak\$inl ----> daml\$ta\$kinl
 well very OBLQ 'farewell'

See sec. 2.2.2 for details of rules. Resyllabification also indicates that Mizo phonology prefers open syllables pre-pausal. Thus consider:

- (5) ##?eng#ngee3## --> ##?e#ngngee3##

Furthermore, since Mizo does not allow consonant clusters syllable initial, the geminate consonants coalesce and

- (6) ##?e#ngngee3## --> ##?e#ngee3##

2.2 The Segments

The segments of Mizo do not show any great phonologically conditioned variation. Most of the variations have been discussed in previous literature about Mizo phonology. Bright, in particular, gives a lengthy explanation of each of the segments and their phonetic variants. There are, however, some unresolved questions concerning the nature of final glottals (see Lehman 1975a). To this I would add vowel length contrast, especially in syllables with final nasals.

Besides variations by one speaker, there is also sociolinguistic variation. Since this has not been mentioned in any of the literature, I will discuss them briefly later.

2.2.1 Mizo Consonants and Vowels

The consonants and vowels of Mizo are as shown on the tables below:

(From here on phonetic characters will not be used unless specified).

Table 1: SYLLABLE INITIAL CONSONANTS

	<u>Labial</u>	<u>Dental</u>	<u>Palato-Alveolar</u>	<u>Velar</u>	<u>Back</u>
<u>stops</u>	p ^h p b	t ^h t d	t ^h t	k ^h k g*	ʔ
<u>affr.</u>		tʃ dʒ*			
<u>fricat.</u>	f v	s z			h
<u>nasals</u>	m n	ŋ		ŋ	
<u>lat-affr.</u>		tʃ tʃ			
<u>lat.</u>		l			
<u>flap</u>		ɾ ɾ			

* only in words of foreign origin

Table 3: SIMPLE VOWELS AND DIPHTHONGS

		Simple vowels				
		Front	Central	Back		
High		i				u
Mid		ɛ				ɔ
Low						ɑ

		Diphthongs				
		Main Vowels (Nucleus)				
		i	u	ɑ	ɛ	ɔ
Q N S e t	H e a d	i	ii	iu	ia	
	v	u	ui	uu	ua	
	o	ɑ	ɑi	ɑu	ɑɑ	
	e	ɛ	ɛi	ɛu		ɛɛ
	l					
	s	ɔ	ɔi	ɔu		ɔɔ

Table 4: TRIPHTHONGS

Tail Vowels (Coda)

	i	u
ii		iiu
uu	uui	
cc	cci	
εε	εεi	εεu
aa	aa <i>i</i>	aa <i>u</i>
ia	ia <i>i</i>	ia <i>u</i>
ua	ua <i>i</i>	ua <i>u</i>

2.2.2 Phonological Rules

There are very few truly phonological rules in Mizo; most of the rules changing phonological properties of segments are morphologically conditioned. The two major ones affecting syllables are what I call SYLLABLE STRENGTHENING and SYLLABLE WEAKENING respectively. A strengthened syllable has a geminate tail and a weakened syllable has a de-

geminated tail and a reduced nucleus. The conditions for these two are as follows: only the last syllable before a full word boundary is affected by the SYLLABLE STRENGTHENING rule; conversely, all syllables preceding internal word boundaries (that is, non-final syllables) are affected by the SYLLABLE WEAKENING rule. These two rules are in turn affected by the phonological rules of the language. In the following examples I will show that though these two rules are related, they are not the same.

(7) SYLLABLE STRENGTHENING

$$\emptyset \text{ ---> } \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{A consonantal} \\ \text{B high} \end{array} \right] / \text{---} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{A consonantal} \\ \text{B high} \end{array} \right] \#\#$$

A, B = + or -

The above rule is especially noticeable in open syllables, though the rule applies to both consonants and vowels.

- (8) a. ##?auul## 'to shout'
 b. ##laal## 'young and mature'
 c. ##zaann## 'night'
 d. ##zakk## 'shy; armpit'

Moreover, the vocalic tails //i, u// are adjusted for their sonority so that they become /y, w/ respectively preceding an internal word boundary.

- (9) a. $\text{soiil\#ang2} \rightarrow \text{soiyl\#ang2}$
 say MOD 'will say'
- b. $\text{auul\#ang2} \rightarrow \text{auwl\#ang2}$
 shout MOD 'will shout'

As mentioned in sec. 2.1.2, resyllabification occurs across word boundaries if a headless syllable follows a checked syllable. Thus we get,

- (10) a. $\text{soiyl\#ang2} \rightarrow \text{soil\#yang2}$
 say MOD 'will say'
- b. $\text{auwlang2} \rightarrow \text{aul\#wang2}$
 shout MOD 'will shout'

Moreover, since Mizo doesn't possess w initials, any w segment that is created by this rule will resegment and become a voiced labio-dental fricative by a subsequent rule, I call GLIDE HARDENING (see Chou 1985):

(11) GLIDE HARDENING

$$\left[\begin{array}{l} -\text{syll} \\ -\text{cons} \\ +\text{lab} \end{array} \right] \rightarrow [-\text{son}]/+ [+syll] ([+\text{glot}])___[+\text{syll}]$$

Note that the glide hardening rule applies even if there is a glottal between the glide and the word boundary, thus

indicating that the final glottal is a reflex of the tone and not of the syllable. Thus, consider the following examples:

(12) //Vu(h)#V// --> /Vu(h)#vV/

as in:

- a. aul#wang2 --> aul#vang2
 shout MOD 'will shout'
- b. thou2#waal --> thoul#vaal
 arise NFP 'arose and ..'
- c. deu?l#wiŋl --> deu?l#viŋl
 somewhat OBLQ 'somewhat'

As has been mentioned before, SYLLABLE WEAKENING affects syllables at internal word boundaries. That is,

(13) SYLLABLE WEAKENING

$$\begin{bmatrix} \text{A consonantal} \\ \text{B high} \end{bmatrix} \text{ ---> } \emptyset / \text{ --- } \begin{bmatrix} \text{A consonantal} \\ \text{B high} \end{bmatrix} \#$$

A, B = + or -

For instance, if 8c and 8d are modified so that their boundaries are affected, we get

- (14) a. zan#khat 'one night'
 b. zak+zuml 'bashful'

Thus, syllable preceding word boundaries are shorter than syllables preceding full word boundaries.

The other difference is that the SYLLABLE WEAKENING rule can be blocked by some special conditions. In particular, not all open syllables are affected by this rule. The exceptions to the rule are determined by the phonological shape of the corresponding Stem II form. That is, the rule applies only if the Stem II form has a final stop and is either a low tone or a falling tone. (The length of the nucleus is irrelevant.) Thus, compare the following:

(15)	Stem I	Stem II	Short Form	Gloss
	a. tlee2	tleet3	tlel-	'to shine'
	b. thiil	thi?	thil-	'to die'
	c. tree2	tree	—	'to cry out'
	d. siil	sii	—	'to drizzle'

This exception was explained inadequately by Bright (1957:102) when he says that all words with high and mid-low tones shorten before pause but some verbs with rising tone, such as hoo2 'to go home' do not shorten. However, I have shown in the above examples that the phonological shape of the Stem I word is irrelevant and that it is the phonological shape of the Stem II word that determines whether or not an open syllable word will shorten. Furthermore, since hoo2

has an alternate form hoong2, and the Stem II form hoon, it does not fit any of the criteria I have listed in order for it to be shortened.

The above restriction does not seem to apply to some adjectives. (Compare example 16 below with example 15 a above.)

(16)	Stem I	Stem II	Short Form	Gloss
a.	tee2	teet3	—	'small'
b.	aa2	aat3	—	'mad/crazy'

The above exceptions suggest that there may be more to Stem II forms of adjectives. Indeed, there are a few verbs relating to animates which have a corresponding noun in the Stem II form.

(17)	Noun (Stem II)	Gloss	Adj/Verb (Stem I)	Gloss
a.	nuu3	'woman; mother'	nuu	'female'
b.	paa3	'man; father'	paa	'male'
c.	thau	'fat; lard'	thaul	'fat; obese'
d.	EEK3	'feces'	ee	'to defecate'
e.	zun	'urine'	zungl	'to urinate'

When the nucleus consists of a high vowel followed by a low vowel, the sequence is shortened to a mid vowel

corresponding in backness to the high vowel, i.e. //ua ia//
 --> /o e/. This is similar to the vowel coalescence in Latin where ai and au become e and o respectively in Romance languages.

(18) VOWEL COALESCENCE

$$\begin{bmatrix} V \\ +high \\ A \text{ back} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} V \\ +low \end{bmatrix} \text{ --> } \begin{bmatrix} V \\ -high \\ -low \\ A \text{ back} \end{bmatrix}$$

A = + or -

The VOWEL COALESCENCE rule applies to both verbs and nouns though it is more common in the former. Thus, consider:

- (19) a. ka#hua2#lou --> ka#hol#lou
 I hate NEG 'I don't hate'
- b. ka#rhia2#lou --> ka#rhe1#lou
 I know NEG 'I don't know'
- c. puan2#sen1 --> pon#sen1
 cloth red 'a red cloth'
- d. khuaal#puii2 --> khol#puii2
 village great 'city'
- e. khua1#zuul --> khoil#zuul
 bee nectar 'honey'

The changes in tone and vowel have been mistaken by some for a different verb stem. The above examples prove that this is not so as the phenomenon occurs in NP's also.

The SYLLABLE WEAKENING rule is a good test for determining the boundaries of the grammatical word.

There is another form of nuclear shortening where a vowel is elided. This occurs between one syllable words where the first does not have a tail and the second does not have a head, as in:

- (20) a. kal#nuu3#tel#in --> kal#nuu3#ten3
 1P mother EX ERG 'My mother, etc. (did)'
- b. ka#zaam2# lou#ang2 --> ka#zaam2#lo#ang3
 1PRO afraid NEG MOD 'I won't be afraid'

or

ka#zaam2#loong3

- c. a# soul#taa3#al#loom2 --> a#soul#ta#loom2
 it boil yet finally 'It's finally boiling'
- d. i#kall#lou#em2#nii --> i#kall#loom2#nii
 2PRO go NEG Q be 'Didn't you go?'
- e. lou#kall#roh#uul --> lou#kall#ruul
 come IMP PL 'You all come!'

2.3 Tone

While still controversial as a linguistic universal, Mizo contour tones are best treated as sequences of level tones, cf. Anderson (1978). Evidence from morphology supports this view. If a suffix or a clitic beginning in a vowel has the opposite tone of the preceding open syllable word, then the suffixed word assumes the tone contour dictated by the sequence, as in:

- (21) a. (hei3)#hi+an --> (hei3)#hi-an3
 (this) this ERG 'this one here'
- b. Maam#il#in --> Maaml#in3
 -FSUF ERG 'Mami (did)'

The above examples illustrate the rule of tone sandhi I call

(22) TONE CONTOURING

H + L --> HL

In the above examples, a contour tone is created from a sequence of dissimilar tones. What happens here is that two syllables are reduced to one. The tones on each syllable are also retained but are perceived as a contour tone, rather than a sequence of level tones.

2.3.1 Tone-Syllable Shape Restrictions

The tones of some words can be predicted from their syllable structures. However, there are enough exceptions that I will not write phonological rules but state the general rule in prose and then list the exceptions.

The low tone has two phonologically conditioned variants. In open syllables it is low tone and in syllables

checked with a stop it is mid tone. The last mentioned syllable type also has a limited distribution. For instance, there is no contrastive vowel length (as it is with syllables that have either vocalic or nasal or lateral tails). Furthermore, these types of words generally have the mid-low tone. In the few instances where this syllable type has high tone, the SINGULAR PRONOUN CLITIC TONE SANDHI rule does not apply, suggesting that their underlying form is something other than a high tone (perhaps a low tone). See sec. 2.3.2.1 for examples.

Words with a final glottal usually demonstrate low tone. There are exceptions to this rule if the final is a glottalized high vowel or a glottalized lateral, as in:

- (23) a. poi?3 'Pawih (Haka/Laai Chin)'
 b. boi?3 'slave'
 c. doi?3 'coward'
 d. oi?3 'steep; to believe'
 e. tral?3 'with determination'

The following words end in a high, sometimes extra high, tone.

- (24) a. cia?1 'exactly; just now'
 b. dai?1 'long time ago; far away'
 c. treu?1 'very many'
 d. toi?1 'cute; sweetheart (slang)'

The high tone may seem to be a part of the intonation since words of this type are usually found in expressive contexts. While intonation may play a part in raising the pitch, it seems better to consider the high tone to be contrastive since there are minimal pairs such as:

- (25) a. cia?1 'exactly; just now'
 b. cia? 'to soak'

and

- (26) a. toi?1 'cute; sweetheart'
 b. troi? 'rotten'

Many of the low tone words are Stem II words so that we also have the grammar restricting the distribution of tones.

2.3.2 Tone Sandhi Rules

Tone sandhi rules in Mizo are regressive, that is, a tone is affected only by the what follows it. The sandhi rules operate over both internal and external word boundaries. There are two major kinds of tone sandhi: one involves level tones and is peculiar to singular pronoun clitics. The other involves contour tones and there are two types, depending on the length of the nucleus. Of these rules, the first type has been mentioned by Lehman (and I

have revised them). The second has never been mentioned, at least, not as a tone sandhi rule. In all of these rules, the syllable structure plays an important part and I have included these in my rules. The tone sandhi rules are not difficult to state once the different types are identified. The following are the most important ones:

2.3.2.1 Pronoun Clitic Tone Sandhi Rule

The pronoun clitic is a widespread phenomenon in the Kuki-Chin languages. Their phonological status is unclear as they are weakly stressed in many languages. Their obligatoriness varies from one language to another where languages like Mizo use it only preceding nouns or verbs. Other languages tend to use it for all word classes. Their grammatical function is as equally puzzling as their phonological form, though there has been more discussion of the former than of the latter. At any rate, the following discussion is the most thorough explanation of the tone sandhi involving pronoun clitics.

The tone of the singular pronoun clitics dissimilates in height to the endpoint of the underlying form of the word it precedes, cf. Lehman (1975a). Thus, for example:

generally have low tone). In this instance, the clitic has the same tone as the following word, as in:

- (29) a. al#nhek1 '(S)he punched'
 b. al#lek1 '(S)he waved (something)'

This rather unusual exception which correlates with syllable type-tone distribution reinforces the notion that there is a historical relationship between the syllable shape and tone.

As to the status of al, one possibility is that the pronoun clitic was originally high tone which is now lost in most cases except in the forms just mentioned. There are also other instances, such as the following where al, retains its high tone, as in:

- (30) a. al#trangl 'from'
 b. al#piangl 'each of'

Moreover, in this instance al indicates that whatever is being referred to is one item out of a larger set, cf. sec 4.4.3. One possible solution is that the boundary in this case is a morpheme boundary and not an internal word boundary, because of which the PRONOUN CLITIC TONE SANDHI rule does not apply. Moreover, words such as these are one grammatical word and cannot be divided as the case would be if the al is a clitic.

This theory is difficult to verify as comparative data with tone markings are scarce. The information I have on Thadou, a closely related language, marks all the pronoun clitics as high tone. However, there is no mention of tone sandhi rules so there is no way of finding out whether or not the rule mentioned above also applies to Thadou.

The plural pronoun clitics follow the LONG CONTOUR TONE SANDHI rule, as described in the next section.

2.3.2.2 Contour Tone Sandhi Rules

There are two types of contour tone sandhi rule depending on the length of the nucleus. Rising tones or falling tones with a short nucleus follow the SHORT CONTOUR TONE SANDHI rule. The short nucleus may also be a long nucleus shortened as per rules mentioned above (SYLLABLE WEAKENING and VOWEL COALESCENCE). The other rule, LONG CONTOUR TONE SANDHI, applies to rising tones with long nucleus.

Short Contour Tone Sandhi Rule: The SHORT CONTOUR TONE SANDHI rule applies to the following syllable types: open syllable with falling tone; words with a final nasal or lateral and a rising tone; words with nuclei shortened as the SYLLABLE WEAKENING rule or VOWEL COALESCNCE rule.

(31) SHORT CONTOUR TONE SANDHI

$$[A \text{ low}] \rightarrow \emptyset / \underline{\quad} [-A \text{ low}] X$$

A = + or -

In other words, the contour tone retains only its endpoint, regardless of the tone of what follows it. That is, a falling tone becomes a low tone and a rising tone becomes a high tone. The possible tone changes are:

- (32) a. HL + L --> L L
 b. HL + H --> L H
 c. HL + LH --> L LH
 —
 d. HL + HL --> L HL
 e. LH + L --> H L
 f. LH + LH --> H LH

Thus, this rule seems to operate across morpheme boundaries only.

Consider the following examples:

- (33) a. faa3 + paa --> fa+paa
 offspring male 'son'
- b. saa3 + keil --> sa+keil
 animal wildcat 'tiger'
- c. paa3 + kua2 --> pa+kua2
 unit nine 'nine'
- d. paa3 + riat3 --> pa+riat3
 unit eight 'eight'
- e. uu2 + trok --> ul+trok
 frog spotted 'frog'
- f. thei2 + tee2 --> thei1+tee2
 fruit small 'plum'

It is interesting to note that there are not very many words that undergo this change. Also, the older form of this type of nouns have the syllables metathesized, as in:

- | | | |
|------|--------------|-------------|
| (34) | Modern | Archaic |
| | a. va+kull | kull+vaa3 |
| | b. mi+rhingl | rhingl+mii3 |

The above are examples of shortened nuclei. The SHORT CONTOUR SANDHI rule also applies to words with rising tone and a short nucleus. This type of words are rare and they occur only with words that have a lateral or nasal final. (These are the only class of words where one can find contrastive vowel length in contour tones. See also Chhangte (1985)). Consider the following examples:

(35)	in		inl		Gloss
	ERG		OBLQ		
a. kil2	kill	in	kil	inl	'corner'
b. thang2	thangl	in	thang	inl	'trap'
c. sam2	saml	in	sam	inl	'hair'

Thus one can also get:

- (36) a. bul2#a? --> bull#a?
 side LOC 'beside'
- b. bul2#inl --> bull#inl
 root OBLQ 'with root'
- c. hul2#ang2 --> hull#ang2
 dry MOD 'will dry'

The SHORT CONTOUR TONE SANDHI rule does not apply to falling tones where we get

- (37) a. vel3 # in --> vel3#in
 to peel ERG 'that which was peeled'
- b. vee13 # in --> vee13#in
 surroundings ERG 'the surroundings'

Long Contour Tone Sandhi Rule: This type of tone sandhi involves only rising tones with a long nucleus, thus we get:

(38) LONG CONTOUR TONE SANDHI

[A low] --> Ø/[-A low]___[A low]

A = + or -

That is, a rising tone becomes a low tone when followed by a high tone or a falling tone. In this type of tone sandhi the endpoint of a tone assimilates to the following tone if both tones are high, as shown:

- (39) a. LH + H --> L H
 b. LH + HL --> L HL

Consider the following examples:

- (40) a. koor2 + vaarl --> kor+vaarl
 clothing white 'white dress'
- b. puan2 + chia3 --> pon+chia3
 cloth bad 'rags'

Thus, the tone sandhi rules can be predicted from the grammar. However, the rules can be complicated by the verb-stem alternation which often causes a change in tone. Take for instance the word kor2 cei meaning 'woman's traditional dress (lit. decorated dress).' The above word seems to be made up of the words kor2 meaning 'dress' and cei 'to decorate.' The word cei becomes a low tone for no apparent reason. The change is not due to phonological conditions but rather to grammatical reasons. In this instance, the difference between the two stems is in the tone, that is Stem I has high tone and Stem II has low tone. The grammatical reason for this is that Stem I is used for the norm (a verb, in this example) and Stem II for the derived form (a derived noun, in this case). Therefore, if one knows the origin of a word (that is, whether or not it was derived from something else), it becomes much easier to understand the tone patterns of Mizo.

2.4 Sociolinguistic Factors

Mizo segments do not exhibit a great deal of phonological variants. The so-called 'north dialect' and the 'south dialect' are mainly distinguished by lexical variations, which, by the way, is not very rich. These lexical variations may be lexical, as these:

(41)	South	North	Gloss
a.	pal-langl	sail-dooi-uuml	'bottle'
b.	nuul-nhuun	thing-fang3-mhaal	'papaya'
c.	la-ui	laam-khuangl	'jackfruit'

The other type of variations are differences in Stem II verbs, thus we get:

(42)	South	North	Gloss
a.	luak3	lo	'vomit'
b.	ziak3	zia?	'writing'
c.	bei-ruaal	bei?-ruaal	'campaigning'

Furthermore, whatever lexical differences that might have existed in the past are fast disappearing due to the recent political upheavals. For instance, many families from the south have moved to Aizawl in the north and as a result a majority of the Mizo population today speaks the 'Aizawl tawng' variety of the language. Teenagers seem especially susceptible to slang, which always originates from Aizawl.

The dream of a united Mizo society has also smoothed out some of the north-south differences which were major areas of contention in the past. Thus, as the term 'Mizo' strives to include non-Luseis, the true Lusei speech claimed by the south is giving a wider berth to other varieties. Though biases might still exist, they are no longer as controversial as they were a few years back. This move towards homogeneity is fairly recent and could perhaps be attributed to the uprising of the sixties (see chapter 1 for recent political events).

In addition to geographical differences, there are phonological variants of certain segments depending on the person. Age and sex also contribute to the sociolinguistic variation. The following points illustrate some of the differences.

2.4.1 Variants Depending on a Person's Speech Habits

While I have as yet carried out no systematic field work on the linguistic variation, I have the following impressions from my own experience.

An individual's speech style often affects how certain segments are articulated. The major factors are speed and force. Generally, those who are soft-spoken tend to front all segments within the alveolar region. Thus, the palato-alveolar stops are pronounced like the alveolar stops

in English. Conversely, those whose speech is more forceful tend to back the same segments, sometimes even retroflexing it. The difference shows up most between the speech of a shy woman and that of a male preacher.

Mizo speech is generally slow-paced but rapid speech is becoming more and more popular, especially in Aizawl, and in particular among the youth. This difference in speed shows up in the articulation of finals. Slow speakers geminate finals, often releasing them into voicelessness. On the other hand, those who speak rapidly tend to flap their laterals and curl the tongue to form retroflex post-alveolars. Thus, to a certain extent, the rate of speech correlates with age, sex and geography as young male speakers of Aizawl seem to talk the fastest.

2.4.2 Variations According to Sex

Some male speakers tend to produce their alveolar fricatives with considerably more friction and palatalization than others. Thus, [s,z] sound more like [š,ž]. The same could be said of the voiceless laterals. Speakers with this variant sometimes alternate with the alveolar position but speakers who do not have this variant never use it. The other variants of male speech have already been mentioned.

2.4.3 Variations According to Age

This is perhaps the most productive of all variants and is a growing phenomenon. The teens of Aizawl have developed a particular style of speech as well as a vocabulary of slang expressions. (Most of this is attributed to a popular piece of journalism called 'Sudden Muanga' which periodically contributes new words and phrases.) This style of speech is also popular among the children. The adults are vehemently opposed to this 'desecration' of the language but, nevertheless, use it sometimes with their children.

This new style of speech has added new phonological items to the language. The following are two of the most significant developments:

First of all, there is the creation of a new vocalic segment, [ɨ], as in:

(43) kal du? liɨu3 'I don't want it'
 1NOM want NEG

instead of

(44) kal du? lou 'I don't want it'
 1NOM want NEG

In the above examples, the negative suffix has undergone extensive phonological modifications. First of

all, the tone has been changed from a low tone to a falling tone (which often starts extra high). The mid front vowel is raised, unrounded and then backed to the same position as the following back, rounded vowel. In the process the vowel is also lengthened (perhaps to accommodate the falling tone) so that the word sounds like a succession of glides. In some speakers, the first vowel starts out lower, closer to the mid position. Interestingly, this new development is restricted to the negation marker.

Another recent development is rhotacization. This is probably a result of watching American TV as this phenomenon is predominantly among video fans. Thus [kɔr2] 'dress' becomes [kɔɾ2]. Similarly, the voiceless lateral flap becomes a voiceless retroflex as in

(45) a. ka ɾhel lou 'I don't know'
 lNOM know NEG

or

b. ka ɾhel liɰu
 lNOM know NEG

instead of

(46) ka rhel lou 'I don't know'
 lNOM know NEG

Finally, there is the latest slang

(47) [tɔiʔl] 'cute; sweetheart'

This adds to the list of words that end in glottal but do not have low tone. Furthermore, the new word is treated like a full noun or an adjective so that the high tone can hardly be considered to be a part of expressive intonation. This perhaps shows that final glottal and low tone are not necessarily redundant features.

Thus, to understand Mizo phonology, one has to consider the variants and the conditions for the variants. Previous studies have not taken this into consideration, partly because the linguists were not able to observe a wide variety of speakers. These studies all relied on male speakers who probably displayed some of the phonetic variants peculiar to male speakers. For this reason, my observations do not always tally with those made by other studies. Some of the variants are not obvious until one listens to a conversation, or one has the opportunity to meet a variety of speakers. Most of my conclusions were drawn from listening to people speak and I later checked these with tapes I had made of some conversations. There is much more work that needs to be done in this area as Mizoram is undergoing rapid changes.

2.4.4 Influence of Other Languages

Mizo vocabulary has been influenced by its immediate neighbors and by its rulers. Of all these, the influence of Indo-European languages merits some mention as these have contributed to the Mizo lexicon. Most of these words are objects or concepts that are not native to the area. Technical and legal terms, such as: committee, pastor, class, school, etc. are usually borrowed from English. Terms for merchandise and anything connected to the business world are usually borrowed from one of the Sanskrit-based languages, such as Bengali or 'bazaar' (pidgin) Hindi. These borrowed words have been adjusted to fit Mizo phonology by adding tone and changing some of the segments so that many of these words sound 'native.' On the other hand, the loan words have not influenced the phonology of the language. Thus consider the following loans from Hindi/Bengali:

(48)	Loan word	Original Form	Original Meaning (if different)	Gloss
	a. rongl	rang		'color'
	b. in-kheel	kheeyl		'game/play'
	c. ru-mali	roumal		'handkerchief'
	d. si-hal2	shyal		'jackal'
	e. ca-bii2	cabi		'key'
	f. ta-laa3	taala		'lock'
	g. le?-khaa3	likhaa	('to write')	'paper'
	h. mhar-caa3	mirc		'red pepers'
	i. mo-zaa3	moujaa		'socks'
	j. si-pai	sepoy		'soldier'
	k. saap3	sahiib	('master')	'British'

The amount of loan words in actual use is fairly large, especially in cities like Aizawl where there is constant trade with outsiders. Thus, the Mizo language is not immune to outside influences in spite of its geographical isolation.

2.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that the phonological rules of Mizo depend on the syllable structure. Thus, the length of the nucleus is important in deciding the type of tone sandhi rule one gets. Furthermore, there are certain

constraints on syllables within a word which allows only the final syllable to be long. That is, before a word boundary, the syllable tail will be lengthened and a long nucleus will be shortened before a formative boundary.

The tone sandhi rules are fairly simple once the different categories are recognized. As has already been mentioned, the length of the main vowel (or syllable nucleus) determines which type of tone sandhi rule it will follow. Tone sandhi rules are also affected by grammatical constraints. For instance, there is a special rule for singular pronoun clitics only. Tones can also change if a Stem I verb becomes a Stem II verb for grammatical reasons.

Sociolinguistic factors also play an important role in modern Mizo. These may either affect only the lexicon (as in the north-south lectal differences) or they may affect the actual pronunciation of the word (as in the difference between male speakers and female speakers). Thus, the phonology of Mizo, while simple in some ways, shows a diversity and complexity which require further investigation.

CHAPTER III
PHRASE STRUCTURE AND MORPHOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Mizo grammar has received much less attention than phonology. For one, the area is basically inaccessible to foreigners so that fieldwork is virtually impossible. Also, very few, if any, Mizos are trained sufficiently in theoretical linguistics so that non-Mizos attempting to study the language have very scant resources. Moreover, since most of the literature about Mizos have been written by foreigners, the available information is not completely reliable either. I will comment on some of these errors and explain why they are unacceptable. I will also clarify some issues in instances where they have not been explained adequately.

In chapter 1 I explained some aspects of modern Mizo society and clarified the usage of the terms 'Mizo' and 'Lushai.' Likewise, in the following chapters I will clarify some of the issues relating to Mizo syntax. I will spend a considerable amount of time explaining the mixed ergative system. Later on, in chapter 5, I will deal with the relative clause. Before I do that, however, I will briefly survey what has been written about Mizo and comment on their relevance to this thesis.

3.1.1 Overview of Literature

The works of the missionaries, Lorrain and Savidge (1898) provide the most thorough and accurate representation of Mizo grammar. All other attempts at describing the language have borrowed heavily from Lorrain and Savidge. The volume is fairly exhaustive and gives several useful examples. In spite of its scholastic excellence, the work suffers from a strong Indo-European bias and other technical shortcomings of that era. For instance, they list several examples of 'tense,' even though the Mizo examples they give are identical! The other problems are absence of tone markings and inaccurate phonological data. The latter was corrected in a later revision of the dictionary by Lorrain (1940). However, in spite of such flaws, the work of Lorrain and Savidge is a masterpiece of linguistic fieldwork. The technical flaws reflect the shortcomings of the linguistics of that era and not of the linguists themselves.

Previous to Lorrain and Savidge, there were several word lists prepared by British officers such as Lewin (1874) and Shakespear (1921). Most of these are not very accurate as the writers had their own way of transcribing data.

A detailed and extensive volume was written by a Bengali surgeon, Brojo Nath Shaha (1884). This work is well-organized and adequately illustrated. Unfortunately, most of the examples are either grammatically unacceptable

or their glosses are wrong and for that reason I do not recommend it for a data source. The writer either did not get native speakers as informants or his interpreter was linguistically incompetent. It is also likely that the writer was influenced by his own language as the examples he gives are what a Mizo would consider 'Vai Mizo,' that is, a version of Mizo used by Bengalis or Assamese.

Grierson (1904) used most of the above sources in his survey. The section on Tibeto-Burman (TB) languages not only compares the related languages but also gives data. Many of the languages mentioned in the survey, such as Ralte, are now extinct. The texts, though inadequately glossed, were useful in comparing certain grammatical features. For instance, I was interested in the ergative marker and the oblique marker, both of which are present in Mizo. It turns out that the grammatical structure of Hmar is the most similar to that of Mizo, even though it is a more distant relative than some of the other languages. Perhaps this has to do with the close contact these two groups have had.

More recently, Lehman has written several articles on Mizo grammar, many of them in relation to Burmese or Haka (Laai) Chin. Most of my analysis are based on his articles and comments through personal correspondences. Various articles in the TB Linguistics series dealing with morphologies of TB languages have also been extremely helpful.

Pedagogical grammars are not very helpful in terms of analysis. They are usually based on the grammar written by Lorrain and Savidge, which, as I have mentioned already, is based on Latin grammar. Nevertheless, they are useful for data source and I have benefitted from the textbooks written by Khiangte (1964) and Remkunga (1977).

3.1.2 Overview of Purpose and Methodology

The major aim of this thesis is to describe the basic syntactic structure of modern Mizo using current linguistic theories. My approach will be typological and I will refer to linguistic universals and not restrict myself to the TB language groups. My main aim is to describe the language as the Mizos themselves see it. Some of my assumptions are based on comments people made to me during my visit to Mizoram. Furthermore, this being a synchronic study, comparative discussions will be kept to a minimum. I will, however, refer occasionally to Thadou, a northern branch of the Kuki-Chin languages, as I have a fairly good description of its syntax and phonology. Unfortunately, Krishnan's (1980) grammar of Thadou, though published recently, was actually written in the early 70's and does not refer to any current linguistic theory.

This description of Mizo grammar will be comprehensive and it will also try to relate some of the grammatical features to the phonological system. This will be mainly in

the area of defining word boundaries. For the moment, I have decided to mark only two grammatical boundaries: morpheme boundaries are indicated by - and word boundaries are marked with a space. My decisions are based on the guidelines given by Hyman (1978) and Zwicky (1985). These boundaries correspond to phonological boundaries as follows: the phonological word corresponds to the grammatical phrase; internal word boundaries in phonology correspond to grammatical word boundaries; morpheme boundaries are the same, though they are much more significant in the grammar than in the phonology. I have not marked the grammatical phrase boundary as it is marked morphologically by the case markers.

The following chapters are an attempt to bring together the works mentioned above, using more recent linguistic tools. I have used terms, such as N', in the manner of Radford's "Transformational Syntax" (1981) and the categorizations are based roughly on Givon's (1984) typological approach to syntax. Even though this thesis will not get into the theoretical details, I will make theoretical assumptions based on current linguistic theories. In particular, the notion of ergativity, a recent linguistic development, will be a major consideration of the following chapters. In this area I am indebted to the Lehman's (1985) and DeLancey's (1981a) discussions about ergativity in TB languages.

3.2 Noun Phrase Structure

The noun phrase structure of Mizo is fairly complex. The most characteristic feature of the NP's is that they are demarcated on the left by a demonstrative pronoun and on the right by a case marker. The obligatory case markers for the NP are preceded by the determiner; plurality markers and locational markers are suffixed on the demonstrative pronoun.

Since every NP must possess a case marker (although the absolutive case is encoded with zero) it is thus not subcategorized for the N'. Moreover, since no constituent may follow the case marker, I assume that a node N" separates the determiner noun from its case marker.

There are several reasons for this NP structure. First of all, there is no subcategorization between the case marker and the rest of the NP. Furthermore, the case marker (CM) is obligatory and always comes last, even when there is a full determiner (with case markings). There is also evidence from relative clauses that demonstrates that the CM is on the rest of the NP. Take for instance

- (1) nu-laal thing2 phur? in
 maiden wood carryII ERG

'The wood that the maiden carried'

In the above example, the CM is over the relativized construction, which is an incorporated object. The above example in its normal form is:

(2) nu-laal in thing2 Ø a phurl
 maiden ERG wood ABS 3NOM carry

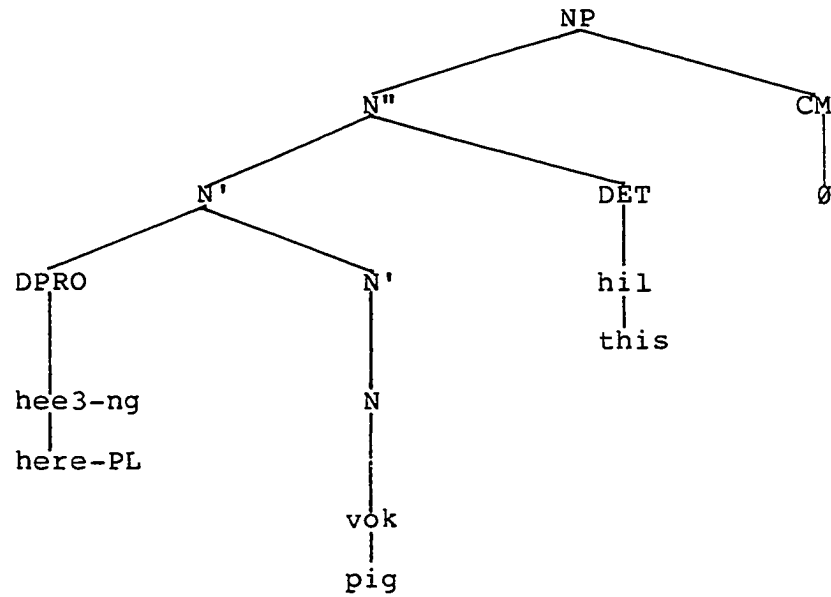
'The maiden carried firewood'

Evidence from phonology also favors the analysis that the CM is a separate word. Take for instance the GLIDE HARDENING rule which operates over phonological word boundaries only. The case marker is affected by this rule so that we get:

(3) thou vin
 fly ERG

Thus, the basic unmodified NP would have a structure

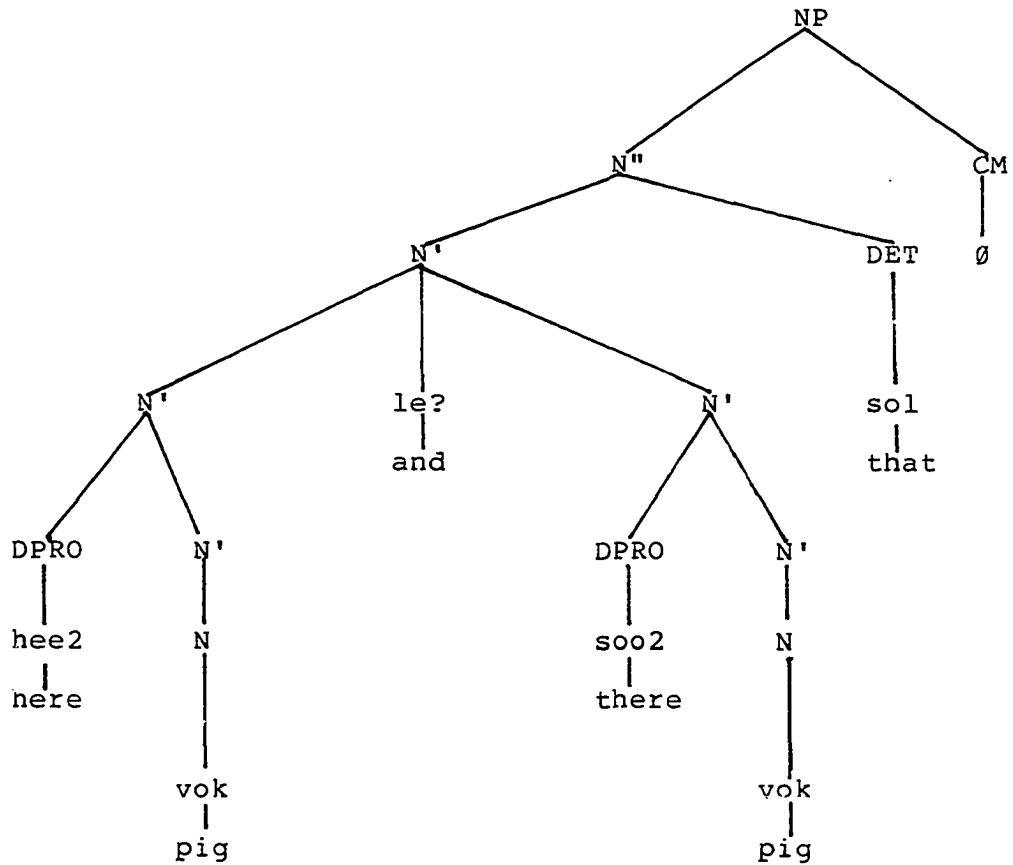
(4)



'these pigs'

I say that the demonstrative pronoun and the determiner demarcate the extremities of the NP because they occur before the first and after the last in compound NP's, i.e.

(5)



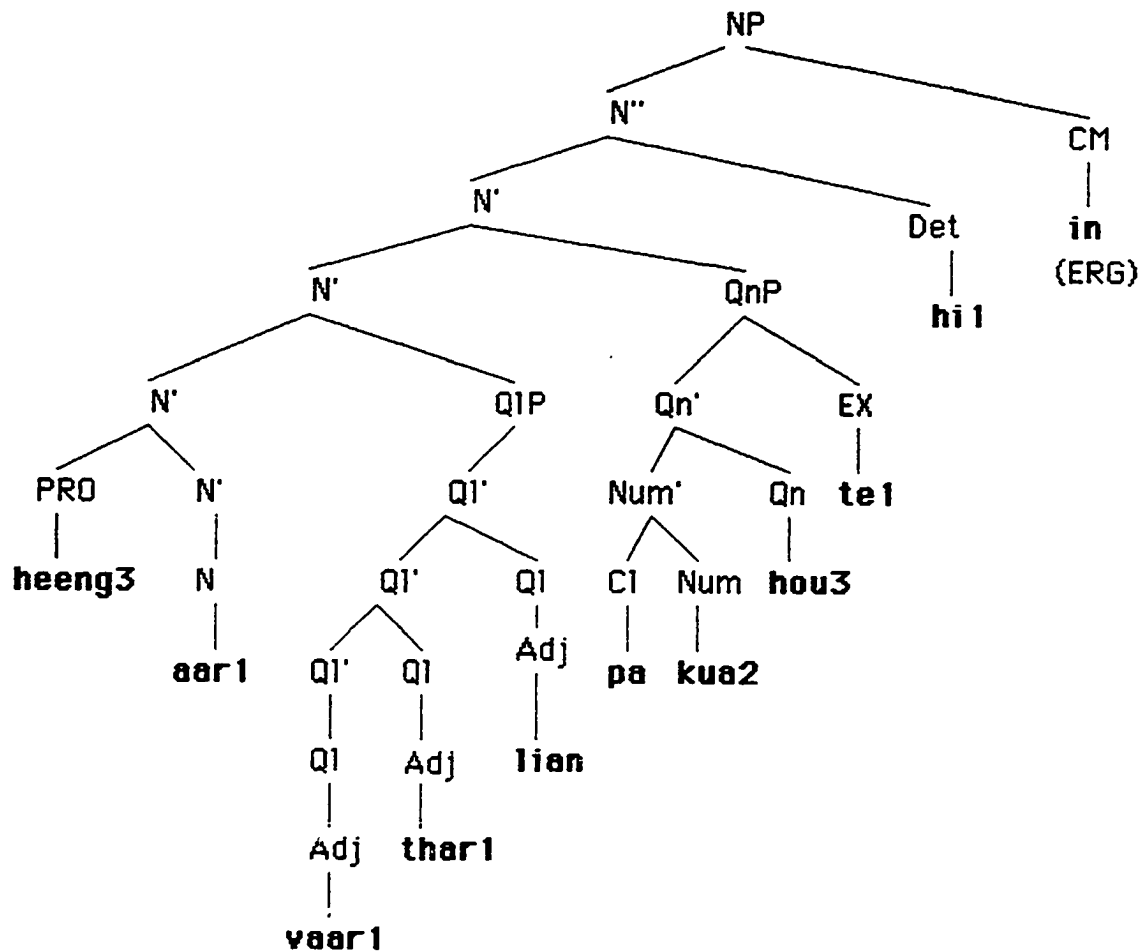
'this pig here and that pig there'

Structures such as (5) are further support for the analysis placing the demonstrative pronoun hee2 and the determiner sol at different levels and not as constituents of the NP. The demonstrative pronouns hee2 etc. are much more noun-like in that they are incompatible with proper names; sometimes they occur alone; other times they are replaced by possessive pronouns or wh-question words. Occasionally they

will co-occur with a proper name, as in hee Lall-il meaning 'this here Lali,' when the speaker wishes to emphasize that it is this Lali and not any other Lali. This type of usage is probably a form of reduplication since both proper name and demonstrative pronoun are not necessary and yet the presence of both gives an emphatic effect.

The basic structure of the NP can be elaborated by modifiers of quality and quantity. These occur in that order after the head noun and before the determiner. Though modifiers typically precede in SOV languages, as in Japanese, cf. Greenberg (1963/66), postpositional modifiers are not uncommon either, cf. Comrie (1981). Thus, the maximally modified NP would have a structure:

(6)



'this (group of) nine, new, big, white hens'

Some examples of NP's are:

- (7) a. Both demonstrative pronoun and determiner

hee3-ng aarl vaarl pa-liil hil (kal du?)
 DPRO-PL hen white unit-four DET (1NOM want)

'(I want) these four white hens'

- b. Possessed noun

i aarl vaarl pa-liil hil (kal du?)
 2P hen white unit-four DET (1NOM want)

'(I want) your four white hens over here'

- c. Full pronoun

nang-ma-al aarl vaarl pa-liil (kal du?)
 2PRO-EMP-REL hen white unit-four (1NOM want)

'(I want) your (not X's) four white hens'

- d. No demonstrative pronoun or determiner

aarl vaarl pa-liil (kal du?)
 hen white unit-four (1NOM want)

'(I want) four white hens'

- e. No head noun

hei3 hil (kal du?)
 DPRO DET (1NOM want)

'(I want) this one'

All of these will be explained in subsequent sections.

3.3 Noun Phrase Constituents

The major constituents can be further subdivided as follows:

3.3.1 Demonstrative Pronoun and Determiner

The demonstrative pronoun and the determiner usually agree for the deictic degree, e.g. proximal demonstrative goes with the proximal determiner, etc. There are six pronoun-determiner pairs that occur, cf. 3.6.3.1. The plural suffix, -ng and the locative marker a(?), respectively follow the demonstrative pronoun and case markers -an and -anl follow the determiner. In the surface structure, number, location and case markers all suffix to the elements on their immediate left and thereby lose their ability to stand alone as syntactic units.

There are also certain phonological changes which are peculiar to demonstrative pronouns and determiners. Of the two, the demonstrative pronoun undergoes tone changes depending on its syntactic environment.

In addition to the tone changes, the demonstrative pronoun hei3 undergoes segmental changes. If it is followed by a full noun it becomes hee which is shortened to he if followed by a locative marker. With regards to the tone

changes, the demonstrative pronoun becomes a falling tone if it followed by the determiner only.

(8) Singular, normal form

hei3 hil

DPRO DET

'this one here'

But if the following word is a noun the demonstrative pronoun changes to a rising tone.

(9) a. Singular form followed by noun with low tone

hee2 vok hil

DPRO pig DET

'this pig here'

b. Singular form followed by noun with rising tone

hee2 ui2-tee hil

DPRO dog-small DET

'this puppy here'

Furthermore, because of the LONG CONTOUR TONE SANDHI RULE, the demonstrative pronoun becomes a low tone if the following word is either high tone or falling tone.

- (10) a. Singular form followed by noun with high tone

hee aar1 hil

DPRO hen DET

'this hen here'

- b. Singular form followed by noun with falling tone

hee boong3 hil

DPRO cow DET

'this cow here'

Finally, if it is followed by a locative marker, it becomes a high tone.

- (11) Singular form followed by locative marker

hel tal vok hil

DPRO LOC pig DET

'this pig here'

Thus, the demonstrative pronoun can have any of the four Mizo tones depending on its environment. (This environment is not phonologically conditioned.) The plural form does not undergo any tone change but remains a falling tone.

(12) Plural form

hee3-ng vok (tel) hil

DPRO-PL pig (EX) DET

'these pigs here (and such)'

In all of these instances, the syllable shape of the following word does not affect the tone changes.

The determiners do not display such a wide variety of segmental or tone changes. The only segmental change involves so1 which, when followed by the ergative (or oblique) marker becomes soon3 instead of soan3. The reason for this change may be that because Mizo does not allow the vowel sequence //oa//, it changes it to /oo/.

3.3.1.1 Plural Marker

The demonstrative pronoun carries the suffix -ng for the plural and ∅ for singular.

(13) hee3-ng aarl hil

DPRO-PL hen DET

'These hens here'

3.3.1.2 Location Markers

The demonstrative pronoun can also take a suffix for location. (See also sec. 3.6.2.4 for other locative forms).

- (14) he1 tal aar1 hi1
 DPRO LOC-REL hen DET
 'this hen here'

3.3.1.3 Case Markers

The ergative suffix -an and the oblique suffix -an1 are suffixed to the determiner.

- (15) a. hee aar1 hi-an3 mil cuk
 DPRO hen DET-ERG 1ABS peck
 'This hen here pecked me'
- b. hee aar1 hi-an1 kal tlheng3
 this hen DET-OBLQ 1NOM exchange
 'I exchanged it with this hen'

Determiners such as hi1 whenever it belongs to an NP that is the subject of the clause that contains it, requires the ergative suffix -an. This ergative suffix is often obscured by the ergative case marker in because in non-emphatic contexts the two collapse and undergo predictable tone sandhi, for example

(16) //hil + an# in// --> /hian3/

In emphatic contexts, however, this rule may be inhibited leaving both ergative suffix and ergative case marker intact, as in:

(17) //hil + an# in// --> /hian3 in/

The same is true for the oblique marker inl.

Plurals, location markers, gender suffixes and nominalizers are separated from noun stems by the formative boundaries (+) whereas case markers are separated by internal word boundaries (#).

3.3.2 Nouns

Nouns occur in all syllable types and in all four tones. Generally, they have only one basic form unlike verb-stems which show two suppletive manifestations depending on their syntactic environment. They undergo changes of tone because of their internal structure; some have affixes, some are compounds.

The sub-classes of nouns include:

3.3.2.1 Non-derived Nouns

There are very few non-derived, morphologically simple nouns. Common everyday objects and domestic animals tend to fall into this category, as in:

(18) a.	vok	'pig'
	b. ruull	'snake'
	c. thing2	'tree'
	d. tlaangl	'mountain'
	e. ceml	'knife'
	f. ip	'bag'
	g. sam2	'hair'
	h. mit	'eye'

3.3.2.2 Derived Nouns

Derived, polysyllabic, morphologically complex nouns are the most common type of nouns. They form one phonological word where the second morpheme is some sort of modifier of the first morpheme. In a few cases, the meaning of the individual morphemes is opaque. The following words illustrate a number of these combinations:

- (19) a. saa3 + mak = sa-mak
 animal strange 'rhinoceros'
- b. faa3 + paa = fa-paa
 offspring male 'son'
- c. mii3 + paa = mi-paa
 person male 'man/boy'
- d. seer + thuur2 = seer-thuur2
 citrus sour 'lemon'
- e. bee3 + tee2 = be-tee2
 beans small 'type of bean'

Names of birds and animals are usually prefixed by vaa3 'bird' and saa3 'animal' respectively. However, in most cases the second morpheme does not have any particular meaning. For instance:

- (20) a. saa3 + voml = sa-voml 'bear'
- b. vaa3 + rak = va-rak 'duck'

Thus, the word is 'non-Fregean,' that is, it cannot be divided into meaningful parts.

- (21) a. cingl-nhia2 'wolf'
- b. cai-ciiml 'mouse'
- c. fang3-mhiir 'ant'
- d. be-raam 'sheep'

3.3.2.3 Nominalized Nouns

Abstract nouns are derived by nominalizing adjectives or verbs (see also sec. 3.6.1.5). For example:

- (22) a. mooi + nal = moi-nal
 beautiful II 'beauty'
- b. rhiat3 + nal = rhiat3-nal
 to hear II 'knowledge'

3.3.2.4 Proper Nouns

Given names usually contain two to four syllables. The full form is rarely used, as nicknames or diminutive forms of the given name are preferred. It is also not uncommon for terms of endearment to be affixed to names.

Proper names of people are not taken from any specific lexical domain. For example, the names of women and men may be identical except for the gender suffix. The male gender suffix is -al and the female gender suffix is -il. Both gender suffixes have high tone except in citation form where the male gender suffix takes low tone. See also sec. 3.6.1.1.

(23) a. Full Name

Lall-rin3-om3-a

-MSUF

Variants

Rin3-a, Rin3-tee3-a, Maal-rin3-a

-MSUF -sm-MSUF EMT- -MSUF

b. Full name

Zoul-than-paar1-il

-FSUF

Variants

Zoul-il, Than-il, Paar1-il,

-FSUF -FSUF -FSUF

Zoul-tel-il, Paar1-tel-il,

-sm-FSUF -sm-FSUF

Than-puil-il, Zoul-than-il

-big-FSUF -FSUF

Aal-than-il

EMT- -FSUF

Titles and kinship terms precede the name:

- (24) a. Pul Rem-a 'Mr. Rema'
 b. Pil Kuung3-il 'Ms. Kungi'
 c. ka uul 'my elder (sibling/cousin)'
 d. pa tee3-a 'youngest paternal uncle'

Adults who are on more intimate terms generally use teknonyms, as in:

- (25) a. Vaall-al paa3 'father of Vala'
 b. Vaall-al nuu3 'mother of Vala'

where Vala is the firstborn. Parents also address each other this way.

Mythological characters sometimes have different names. Female characters take the suffix -nuu3 probably to indicate that they are full grown females, as in

- (26) a. cingl-pirl-il-nuu3 'Chingpirinu'
 b. mhui-cuk-cu-ru-duun3-il-nuu3 'Hmuichukchuruduninu'
 c. phuung3-pui-nuu3 'Phungpuinu'

(It is interesting that the first two names are also names of birds, an owl and a dove respectively. Their names are often used to frighten children.)

Male characters are suffixed either by -paa3 or -puul as in

- (27) a. baak-voml-tel-puul 'Bakvawmtepu'
 b. sa-zal-tel-paa3 'Sazaltepa'

Names of places generally describe the terrain or some event associated with the place. Here are some examples:

(28) a. Ail-zooll	'Aizawl'
b. Lung2-lei	'Lunglei'
c. Hna?-thial	'Hnahthial'
d. Lung-raangl	'Lungrang'
e. Thill-tlaangl	'Thiltlang'
f. Seer-chiip3	'Serchhip'

In the past, most places, except for Aizawl and Lunglei, were small villages. In recent years, some of these villages have become towns. Places with a sizeable population often subdivide into smaller sections called veengl.

3.3.2.5 Pronouns

Pronouns come in two forms: free forms and clitic forms. The free forms are found only in the noun phrase, whereas the clitic forms can be found in both noun phrase and verb phrase. The free forms are optional in sentences whereas the clitic forms are obligatory. Cf. sec. 3.6.2.1 for a further discussion of pronoun clitics in the VP.

(29) a. Free forms:

Person	Singular	Plural
1	kei2	kei-nii3
2	nang2	nang-nii3
3	al nii3	an-nii3

b. Clitic forms:

Person	Singular	Plural
1	kal/ka	ka2-n
2	il/i	i2-n
3	al/a	a2-n

The free forms are used mainly for emphasis. Thus we have:

(30) a. kei2 ka kall ang2

1PRO 1NOM go MOD

'I will go (whether or not others go)'

b. kei-nii3 pa-liil ka-n kall ang2

1PRO-PL unit-four 1NOM-PL go MOD

'We four (not anyone else) will go'

c. an-nii3 le? nang-nii3 i-n kall ang2

3PRO-PL and 2PRO-PL 2NOM-PL go MOD

'You and they (not anyone else) will go'

The clitic forms are used in the NP to denote possession, as in:

(31) a. ka aarl al nii
 1P hen 3NOM is

'It is my hen'

b. i aarl al nii
 2P hen 3NOM is

'It is your hen'

The pronoun clitics can also precede comparatives and quantifiers:

(32) a. al-trhaa berl kal du?
 it-good most 1NOM want

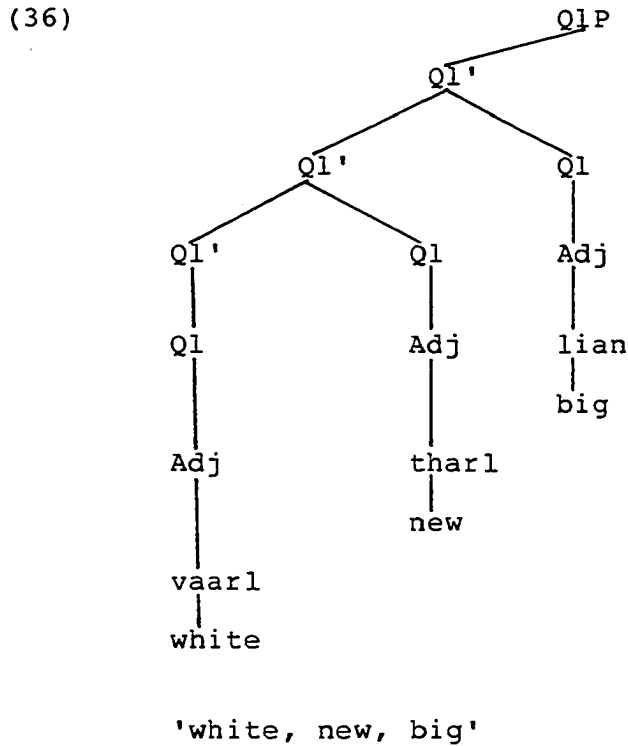
'I want the best one'

b. a-vaai2 inl ka eil
 it-all OBLQ 1NOM ate

'I ate all of it'

In the above examples, the third person nominative marker is used to indicate part of a greater whole, cf. sec. 4.4.3.

In the NP, however, they follow the noun they qualify. The qualifiers are adjectives of color, quality and size. These three can come in any order though the order just mentioned is the preferred one. The adjective-type words have this construction



Because the qualifiers can occur in various orders I assume that Q1' are recursively embedded. The following illustrate the possible combinations:

(37) a. Color, quality:

puan-senl-baal 'dirty red cloth'
 cloth-red-dirty

b. Color, size:

in - senl-lian 'big red house'
 house-red-big

c. Quality, size:

in -lhuil-lian 'big old house'
 house-old-big

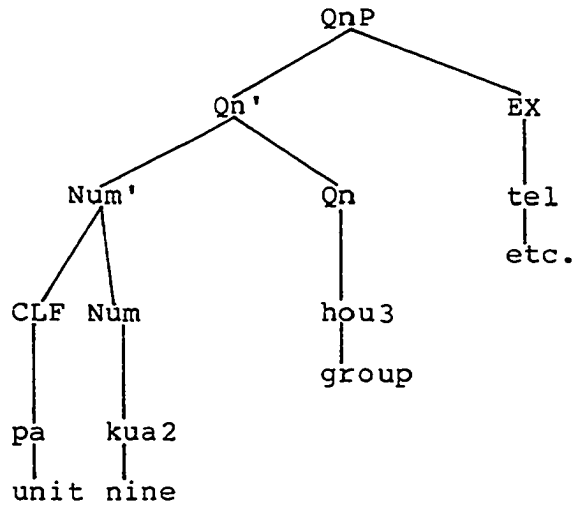
d. Color, quality, size:

aarl-vaarl-tharl-lian 'big new white hen'
 hen-white-new-big

3.3.5 Quantification

Quantification is perhaps the least important constituent of the NP since plurality can be indicated elsewhere. When it does occur, quantification is preceded by all the other constituents within the NP, except for the determiner and the case marker. Unlike qualifiers, quantifiers show a much more rigid word order:

(38)



'group of nine and such'

The quantifiers in the NP agree in number with the subject pronoun clitics in the VP. The logic of quantification in Mizo is more involved and it will be discussed separately in sec. 4.1.2. See also Lehman (1979b).

3.3.5.1 Numeral Quantifiers

Unlike most other southeast Asian languages, Mizo does not have a system of noun classifiers, cf. Lehman (1979a). The numbering system, however, does display a system of classifiers where the unit classifier is pa-, (as suggested by Lehman in personal communications). The classifiers for tens, hundreds, thousands, etc. are soom, zaa, saang2, respectively. The numbering system is decimal, as shown below:

(39) a. pa-khat	'one'
b. pa-nhi?	'two'
c. pa-thum1	'three'
d. pa-lii1	'four'
e. pa-ngaal	'five'
f. pa-ruk	'six'
g. pa-sa-ri?	'seven'
h. pa-riat3	'eight'
i. pa-kua2	'nine'
j. soom	'ten'
k. zaa	'one hundred'
l. saang2	'one thousand'
m. siing2	'ten thousand'
n. nuai3	'one hundred thousand'
o. mak-ta-duai3	'one million'
p. vail-beell-chia3	'ten million (lit. broken tobacco pipes)'
q. vail-beell-che-tak	'100 million'
r. tluuk3 le? din3 oon2	'one trillion'

The following examples illustrate the numbering system. Multipliers follow the multiplicand (the classifier):

- (40) a. som-nhi? 'twenty'
 ten-two
- b. za-nhi? 'two hundred'
 HRD-two
- c. siing2-nhi? 'twenty thousand'
 ten TH-two

Lower number follow higher numbers, as in:

- (41) a. soom (le?) pa-nhi?
 ten (and) unit-two
 'twelve'
- b. za-nhi? som-nhi?
 HRD-two ten-two
 'two hundred and twenty'
- c. za-nhi? som-nhi? le? pa-nhi?
 HRD-two ten-two and unit-two
 'two hundred and twenty two'

Combination of Numerals with Nouns: Non-animates generally do not take classifiers, that is, they become the classifiers themselves.

- (42) a. nu pa-khat 'one woman'
 b. boong3 pa-sa-ri? 'seven cows'
 c. nil-thuml 'three days'
 d. in-thuml 'three houses'

If the value of the noun (its weight, volume or price) is measured, then the noun becomes the classifier, as in:

(43) thing2-pui-noul-khat
 tea -cup -one

'One cup of tea'

Compare this with

(44) noul pa-khat 'one cup'

Ordinal Numbers: These are formed by suffixing -nal to the cardinal number. Furthermore, numerals with high tone or rising tone become low tone. Since there is no obvious phonetic motivation for this change in tone, I assume the numerals have a Stem II form which surfaces only in this particular constructions. This explains why the low tone and the rising tone, the only possible tones for Stem II forms, do not change. Moreover, the suffix -nal always affixes to Stem II forms. Some examples of cardinal and ordinal numbers in NP's are:

- (45) a. aarl pa-liil kal du?
 hen four lNOM want
 'I want four hens'
- b. aarl pa-lii-nal kal du?
 hen unit-four-NLZ lNOM want
 'I want the fourth hen'
- c. aarl pa-kua2 kal du?
 hen unit-nine lNOM want
 'I want nine hens'
- d. aarl pa-kua-nal kal du?
 hen unit-nine-NLZ lNOM want
 'I want the ninth hen'
- e. aarl pa-riat3 kal du?
 hen unit-eight lNOM want
 'I want eight hens'
- f. aarl pa-riat3-nal kal du?
 hen unit-eight-NLZ lNOM want
 'I want the eighth hen'

Alternate numbers are indicated by the word dan meaning 'every other,' followed by the locative marker a?. There is no tone change in this case.

- (46) nil-thuml dan a? kall ro?
 day-three every LOC go IMP
 'Go every three days'

3.3.5.2 General Quantifiers

General quantifiers are either particles or clitics and can occur both in the NP and VP. The more common NP quantifiers are: zong zong3 'each and every,' trhenl khat 'some (of the whole),' vaai2 'all/everything,' zaa 'all/every,' tam2 tak 'several, many,' tleeml tee2 'very few' and tin3 'each.' (Refer to sec. 3.6.3.3 for VP quantifiers.) See also sec. 3.6.1.2 for plural markers.

These are examples of NP quantifiers:

- (47) a. aarl zong zong3 'all the hens'
 hen all
- b. aarl tam2 tak 'many hens'
 hen many INT
- c. aarl tleeml tee2 'few hens'
 hen few little
- d. aarl hou3 'group of hens'
 hen group

e. a2-n vaai2 in1 a-n kall
 3P-PL all OBLQ 3NOM-PL went

'they all went'

f. mii3 zong zong3 a-n kall
 people all 3NOM-PL went

'all the people went'

g. mi tin3 a-n kall
 person each 3NOM-PL go

'each person went'

h. an-nii3 hou3 a-n kall
 3PRO-PL group 3NOM-PL go

'they went (together)'

i. an hou3 tel a-n kall
 3P PL group EX 3NOM-PL go

'their party went'

3.3.5.3 Plurality

Number is indicated either by morphology or by cardinal numbers. There is another optional plural particle, tel. When it occurs without the other number markers, tel has a slightly different meaning. In this instance, tel

does not signify 'several of the specified item' but, rather, 'the specified item plus others associated with it.' Compare the following examples:

(48) a. kal nuu3 tel kal paa3 tel
 1P mother EX 1P father EX

'my mother, father, etc.'

b. ka luul tel kal cal tel
 1P head EX 1P forehead EX

'my head, forehead, etc.'

The above examples clearly show that the particle *tel* does not indicate plurality even though it indicates a collection of subjects. Its true contribution, however, more resembles English *etc.* which indicates that the overt forms are merely examples of a longer list. Therefore, it is understandable that *tel* occurs in plural NP's, as the listed forms may be only indicative of a larger set, e.g.

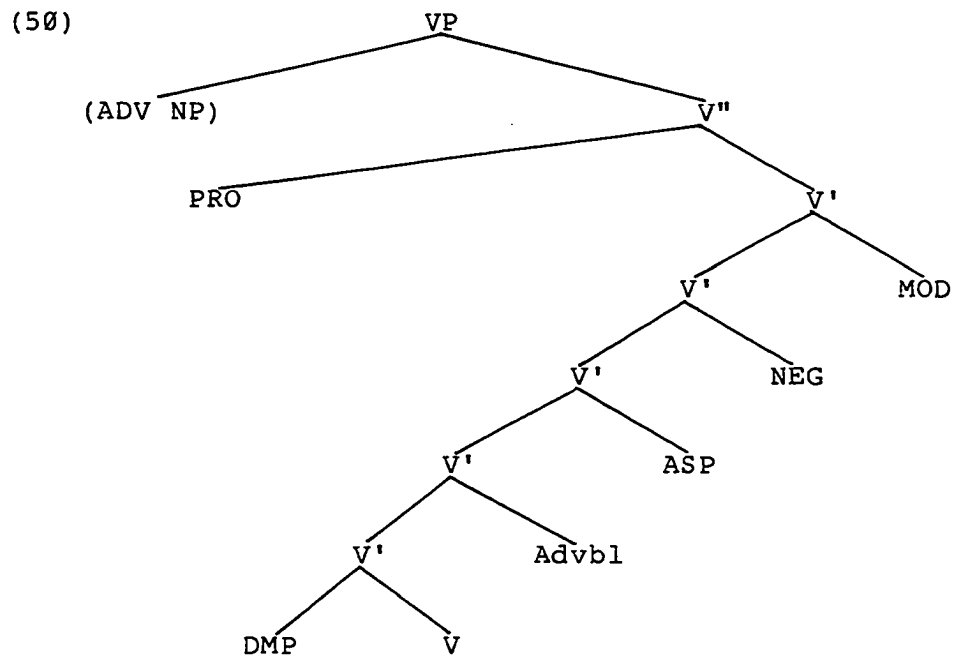
(49) hee3-ng tel hil
 DPRO-PL EX DET

'these (and such)'

3.4 Verb Phrase Structure

The Verb Phrase Structure is the most complex part of Mizo grammar. Part of the complexity comes from the numerous particles that accompany the main verb. In many instances, it is very difficult to decide if the particle is an innovation in the language or if it is derived from some other source. Take for example the subject pronoun clitic. It appears in many of the related languages (such as Laai Chin, Hmar, Thadou) but its phonological form and usage varies widely from language to language. Even in languages that are more distant relatives of Mizo, verb morphology continues to be a rather complex and controversial issue. Furthermore, it is difficult to find sufficient data for comparison as one has to rely mostly on isolated examples cited in other literature. It would be much easier to analyze and compare the syntactic structure of related languages if one had access to a standard text in the various languages. Grierson's survey is helpful in this area as he uses the same text throughout, even when the data is not sufficiently marked for tone. Thus, it is beyond the scope of this paper to deal with the verb morphology in exhaustive detail.

The constituents to be discussed in this section are displayed in the chart below:



First of all, this analysis is supported by the sub-categorization restrictions on Mizo. Adverbs and direct object NP's are optional constituents of the VP just as in many other languages. The clitic pronoun, however, is required in every sentence (except for relative clauses, imperatives and subjectless wh-questions, cf. 4.4.1). Therefore, I assign it to a special level of the VP called V". The remaining particles for the mode, negation, aspect, etc. are optional again. So these can be dominated by a recursive V' constituent. A second and very persuasive argument that the pronoun clitics require their own V-bar constituent (here V") is seen in the behavior of the second person accusative pronoun clitic *cel* 'you,' *cel ul* 'you all,' cf. example 51 below.

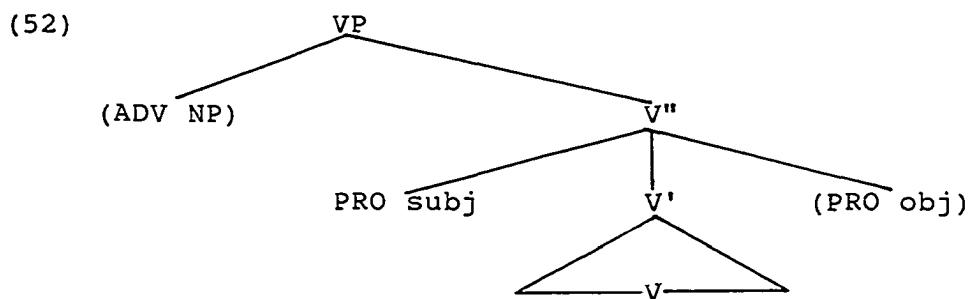
(51) a. mi-sual2 in a man1 cel
 man-evil ERG 3NOM catch 2ACC

'A criminal has caught you'

b. mi-sual2 in a man1 doon1 cel
 man-evil ERG 3NOM catch ASP 2ACC

'A criminal is going to catch you'

At present I know of no tests to decide which of the two clitics is higher in the structure. Therefore, I assume for this preliminary account of Mizo a structure:



3.5 Verb Phrase Constituents

The following are the major constituents of the Verb Phrase. Morphology will be dealt with in greater detail in section 3.6.

3.5.1 Adverbs

Adverbs generally precede the main verb. Manner adverbs can follow the main verb under certain circumstances. The adverbs are manner adverbs, adverbs of time and adverbs of place. The last two adverbs are very similar. Adverbs that precede the verb require some sort of modifier, such as the oblique marker or the locative marker. There is no such restriction on post-verbal adverbs.

3.5.1.1 Manner Adverbs

Manner Adverbs can either precede or follow the verb, depending on the relationship between the verb and the adverb. Manner adverbs of speed can come before or after the verb, as in:

- (53) a. rang2 tak in1 a thou2
 fast very OBLQ 3NOM arise
 '(S)he got up very quickly'
- b. a thou2 rang2
 3NOM arise fast
 '(S)he gets up quickly'

Unexpected events also fall into the above category:

(54) a. al-tlhoon inl a kall
 it-in vain OBLQ 3NOM go

'(S)he went in vain'

b. a kall tlhoon
 3NOM go in vain

'(S)he went in vain'

If the manner adverb is not directly related to the verb, it precedes the verb. These adverbs that precede verbs are really cognitive adjectives that must be turned into adverbs with modifier particles and oblique marker, such as: tak inl 'very,' deu?3 inl 'somewhat,' em3 em3 inl 'very much' and lul-tuk inl 'excessively.'

(55) a. lhiml tak inl a2-n om2
 happy very OBLQ 3NOM-PL exist

'They lived happily'

b. thin-rim3 deu?1 inl al chuak3
 angry very OBLQ 3NOM exit

'(S)he went out angrily'

c. mhan3-mho? em3 em3 in1 a1 chuak3
 hurry very much OBLQ 3NOM left

'(S)he left in a great hurry'

d. lhau2 lul-tuk in1 a2-n om2
 fear excessive OBLQ 3NOM-PL exist

'They lived in great fear'

From the above examples we can see that verbs of actions are related to speed and to probability. On the other hand, attitudes and feelings of the subject have less in common with the verb and are, consequently, restricted in their usage.

3.5.1.2 Time Adverbs

Locative markers follow time adverbs, as in:

- (56) a. ni-minl a? a thiil
 yesterday LOC 3NOM die
 '(S)he died yesterday'
- b. tuuk3-inl a? al chuak3
 morning LOC 3NOM leave
 '(S)he left this morning'
- c. nil-kum a? a thiil
 last year LOC 3NOM die
 '(S)he died last year'

3.5.1.3 Place Adverbs

Place adverbs also take the locative marker, as in:

- (57) a. khol-puil a? a peeml
 town-big LOC 3NOM move to
 '(S)he moved to the city'
- b. Ail-zooll a? zuul a zuarl
 Aizawl LOC beer 3NOM sell
 '(S)he sells beer in Aizawl'

3.5.1.4 Adverbial Particles

Adverbial particles have often been called 'double adverbs,' for various reasons. First of all, they function as adverbs in that they modify the verb. Secondly, they are usually reduplicated.

However, there are phonological and grammatical reasons to distinguish these from the true adverbs mentioned above. Unlike the true adverbs, adverbial particles are iconic and convey a significant amount of information. Some of these include: speaker attitude, size and shape of subject/object, speed of action and aspect. For this reason, they are indispensable in narrative discourse where they are often used to dramatize and highlight significant events. Yet, in spite of their versatility, they do not have lexical meaning in and of themselves. For this reason it is better to consider them as particles rather than independent words.

The vowels in adverbial particles are iconic. Front vowels are used for smaller sizes (children, women, small animals, etc.). A back vowel is used to represent larger sizes (men, large animals, etc.). It is also used for insults or for comic effect. The low vowel a is used for in between sizes (older children, small adults, etc.). This phenomenon is also found in other southeast Asian languages, cf. Gregerson (1984).

Most adverbial particles are reduplicated (hence the term 'double adverbs'). In instances where the two forms are not the same, the first will have a front vowel and the second will have a back vowel, cf. 60 a, b. These adverbs can modify active verbs, as in:

(58) a. a tlaan2 per per3
 3NOM ran small, fast

'(S)he (small) ran smoothly and rapidly'

b. a tlaan2 par par3
 3NOM ran med, fast

'(S)he (med) ran smoothly and rapidly'

c. a tlaan2 pur pur3
 3NOM ran big, fast

'(S)he (big) ran smoothly and rapidly'

They can also modify non active verb, as in:

- (59) a. a nuil sen sen3
 3NOM smile small, pleasant
 '(S)he (small) smiled pleasantly'
- b. a nuil san san3
 3NOM smile med,pleasant
 '(S)he (med) smiled pleasantly'
- c. a nuil sun sun3
 3NOM smile big, pleasant
 '(S)he (big) smiled pleasantly'
- d. a nuil trhuul
 3NOM smile big, teeth showing
 '(S)he (big) smiled broadly (with teeth showing)'
- e. a nuil ker2 ker2
 3NOM laugh small, happy
 '(S)he (small) laughed merrily'
- f. a nuil kur2 kur2
 3NOM laugh big, happy
 'She (big) laughed heartily'

Note in the above examples that the difference between 'to smile' and 'to laugh' is not in the verb but in the accompanying adverbial particles.

Adverbial particles can modify even the most stative verbs.

(60) a. a luul al thur3 bim bem

3P head 3NOM tousled small

'His/her (small) hair is tousled'

b. a luul al thur3 bem bum

3P head 3NOM tousled big

'His/her (big) hair is tousled'

Thadou has a slightly different way of using the adverbial particles. Where Mizo uses front vowels to represent smaller sizes, Thadou uses them to showing pleasure. Similarly, the vowels used in Mizo for representing larger sizes are used to represent displeasure in Thadou, cf. Krishnan (1980:53-55).

3.5.1.5 Adverbs of Degree/Intensity

These type of adverbs show the degree or intensity of the verb. They usually follow active verbs, as shown below. (See also sec. 3.5.1.1).

(61) a. a haaul rhepl

3NOM scold INT

'(S)he gave him a piece of her/his mind'

b. a viin2 tuar2

3NOM yell forceful

'(S)he spoke sharply and forcefully'

c. a aul yakl

3NOM yell loudly

'(S)he shouted loudly'

d. al trap ciaml

3NOM cry much

'(S)he cried loud and long'

e. a cel muangl

3NOM move slowly

'(S)he moves slowly'

3.5.2 Pronoun Clitics

The pronoun clitic in the VP is obligatory in all clause types except in: relative clauses, imperatives and in wh-questions without a subject. Only the deictic motion particles and the reciprocal/reflexive marker can come

between it and the verb. See also sec. 3.3.2.5 for full form pronouns and pronoun clitics in NP's. The influence of cases to produce the different types of pronoun clitics, i.e., the nominative and accusative forms, will be discussed in sec. 3.5.4.2.

These, then, are some examples of pronoun clitics.

(62) a.	ka kall	'I go'
b.	i kall	'You go'
c.	a kall	'(S)he goes'
d.	ka-n kall	'We go'
e.	i-n kall	'You (pl) go'
f.	a-n kall	'They go'

3.5.3 Deictic Motion Particles

One of the characteristics of TB languages is the deictic motion verbs (DeLancey 1985c). In Mizo, these are not verbs but preverbal particles which I call deictic motion particles (DMP). The DMP's cliticize before main verb stems and cause the verbal complex to receive an interpretation of the subject's carrying out the action in a certain manner involving locomotion. In all instances it is the individual expressed by the pronoun, which immediately precedes the DMP, that moves.

The DMP's are limited to five lexical items: val 'away from the speaker;' ron 'toward addressee' in questions when the questioner is the subject and 'towards speaker' in all other cases; lou2 'toward speaker;' han2 'up and away from speaker;' and zuk 'down and away from speaker.' These will also agree semantically with the demonstrative pronoun and determiner on Np's, i.e.

- (63) a. khil-ta? khi-anl han kall ro?
 up there DET-OBLQ up there go IMP

'Go up there!'

- b. hel-laml a? hi-anl ron son3 ro?
 this-side LOC DET-OBLQ hither move IMP

'Move it hither'

- c. kal ron da? doonl em2 nii
 lNOM thither put ASP Q be

'Should I (bring it and) put it there?'

The DMP's val and lou2 can be used only with directional verbs. If they are used with stative verbs, then the sense of the whole becomes a change of state to an excessive degree, as in:

(64) a. a va1 thaau1 vee
 3NOM how fat EXCL

'It's too fat!'

b. a lou2 trha khop mai2
 3NOM here good DEG very

'(S)he was in good health (surprisingly)'

This special restriction can cause some drastic changes in meaning. Thus, even though lou2 and ron both mean 'towards speaker' when used with directional verbs, lou2 has a completely different meaning when used with a non-directional verb. In this instance, it means something like 'meanwhile' or 'contrary to expectations.' The following are some examples of deictic motion particles. Note how they give a sense of motion to non-versatile verbs. See also DeLancey (1985c).

(65) a. ka val pee ang2
 1NOM thither give MOD

'I will go thither and give (it to someone)'

b. kal ron tii ang2
 1NOM come there do MOD

'I will come there and do (it)'

c. kal han kou ang2
 1NOM up there call MOD

'I will go up there and call (someone)'

d. kal zuk biao ang2
 1NOM down there speak MOD

'I will go down there and speak (to someone)'

e. a lou tlhengl ang2
 3NOM to here arrive MOD

'(S)he will arrive here'

3.5.4 Verbs

Mizo has two verbal paradigms: one I call Stem I; the other Stem II. The Stem I verbs and Stem II verbs differ in their phonological shapes. However, it has not been possible to postulate a phonological rule (see Hillard 1974)

relating these suppletive forms to the Stem I forms even though there is some regularity. Usually, the two forms differ both in tone and in the final segment. The Stem II form has mostly low tone or sometimes falling tone; the final segment is either a stop or a glottalized vowel. Stem II verbs are extremely important in Mizo grammar, as explained in sec. 3.5.4.3. In my description of verbs, I will be using terms as used by Givón (1984).

The Stem I verbs can be further subdivided into two main classes: active and stative verbs. The best test for distinguishing between the two types is the durative aspect marker meekl. This marker can be applied only to incomplete actions so that one gets:

(66) a zaail meekl
 3NOM sing PROG
 '(S)he is singing'

but not

(67) *a thil meekl
 3NOM die PROG
 '(S)he is dying'

Adjectives and the verb 'to be' usually fall into the stative category. Another condition for meekl is that

the action should be observable, so that one can say

(68) a trhul meekl

3NOM sit PROG

'(S)he is sitting'

only if one actually sees the person getting into a sitting position. Once the person has sat down, the above can no longer be said. Thus, there are times when a stative verb can become an active verb.

These two types of verbs combine to form change-of-state verbs. For example

(69) le?-khaa3 al pot-som3

paper 3NOM tear-pieces

'(S)he tore-up the paper'

Active verbs become causatives when used with stative adjectives, as shown:

(70) a. mil ti-buai2

1ABS make-confuse

'(S)he confused me'

b. a soi2-buai2

3NOM say-confuse

'(S)he got it (story/instructions) mixed up'

c. a siam1-trhaa

3NOM make-good

'(S)he repaired it'

d. al da?-trhaa

3NOM put-good

'(S)he put it away in a safe place'

In the above examples, there is a change of state either from good to bad or from bad to worse. The change of state is brought about by an active verb acting on a stative verb so that the active verb is in effect a causative. See also sec. 3.5.4.4.

3.5.4.1 Intransitive Verbs

Intransitives are those that have at least one nominatively case-marked NP and a nominative clitic pronoun. They can be either active or stative.

Some examples of active verbs are:

(71) a. Zoul-il al khu?
 -FSUF 3NOM coughs

'Zovi is coughing'

b. Doul-a a zuangl
 -MSUF 3NOM jumps

'Dova is jumping'

c. Naul-seenl al trap
 infant 3NOM cry

'A baby is crying'

Stative verbs can take the following forms:

(72) a. Zoul-il inl a? a om2
 -FSUF house LOC 3NOM exist

'Zovi is in the house'

b. kal nuu3 al nii
 1P mother 3NOM is

'She is my mother'

c. Rin3-a zirl-tiirl-tuu3 al nii
 -MSUF SUF teacher 3NOM is

'Rina is a teacher'

Intransitives can have locative or temporal complements, as in:

(73) a. Rou-a thingl a? a loonl
 -MSUF tree LOC 3NOM climb

'Rova climbed a tree'

b. ziingl a? a-n chuak3
 morning LOC 3NOM-PL left

'They left in the morning'

Sentences with reflexives and reciprocals count as intransitive, in regard to their case marking, as in:

- (74) a. al in -vit
 3NOM REF-stab
 '(S)he stabbed herself/himself'
- b. a2-n in- haaul
 3NOM-PL RCP-scold
 'They are quarelling'

Reflexive and reciprocal constructions are intransitive in Mizo because one can have

- (75) Zoul-a al in-vit
 -MSUF 3NOM REF-stab
 'Zova stabbed himself'

but not

- (76) *Zoul-a in al in-vit
 -MSUF ERG 3NOM REF-vit
 'Zova stabbed himself'

That is, reflexives or reciprocals cannot take the ergative case marking, even though the verb is a transitive verb. However, since both markers have the same phonological shape, it is possible that the reflexive or reciprocal de-transitivizes a normally transitive verb.

Meteorological verbs are also intransitive:

(77) a. `rua? a suurl
rain 3NOM rains

'It is raining'

b. kooll a phee2
sky 3NOM flash

'There is lightning'

Another type of intransitive construction involves emotive verbs (inner emotions or physical states).

(78) a. kal luak3 al chuak3
1P vomit 3NOM come out

'I'm nauseated'

b. kal thin al rim3
1P heart 3NOM works hard

'I'm angry'

3.5.4.2 Transitive Verbs

Transitive sentences have the most complex morphology. The NP's display an ergative-absolutive system and the VP has a largely nominative-accusative encoding system. That is, the subject of both the intransitive verb and the

transitive verb are encoded alike in the VP. In the NP, the ergative case marker is in, and the absolutive case marker is ∅.

(79) naul-pangl in aarl ∅ al uum3
 child ERG chicken ABS 3NOM chase

'A child is chasing a chicken'

Thus, the terms 'subject' and 'object' in Mizo refer to what is encoded by the case markers. For instance, 'subject' in Mizo does not always involve an active agent, cf.

(80) a. bangl in kil-liil ∅ al nei
 wall ERG corner-four ABS 3NOM has

'A wall has four corners'

b. nin-lhe3l in tol-peengl ∅ al nei
 mischief ERG consequence ABS 3NOM has

'Mischievousness has its (undesireable) consequence'

c. pil-tarl in Thangl-kuurl-a ∅ a rhiaa2
 woman-old ERG -MSUF ABS 3NOM knows

'The old woman knows Thangkura'

Therefore, I will define a transitive 'subject' in Mizo as one that is marked with the ergative marker in the NP. The transitive 'object' and the intransitive 'subject' are mark-

ed with the absolutive marker in the NP. From here on, I will use the terms 'subject' and 'object' in this specialized sense.

If there is more than one subject, the ergative marker comes at the end of the NP

(81) naul-pang2 le? uil in aarl Ø a-n uum3
 child and dog ERG chicken ABS 3NOM-PL chase

'A child and a dog are chasing a chicken'

Instruments are marked with the oblique marker inl, as in:

(82) naul-pang1 in tiang inl ui Ø al vuaa
 child ERG stick OBLQ dog ABS 3NOM hit

'A child is hitting a dog with a stick'

When it comes to the object (direct or indirect), there is a further complication. If the object is first person, the object is marked absolutive (this is the only explicit absolutive marker) as in:

(83) lall in mi haaul
 chief ERG 1ABS scold

'The chief scolded me'

The first person absolutive marker is found in only a few TB languages and seems to be a recent innovation, cf. DeLancey (1980). It is perhaps for this reason that it is phonologically unstable: it does not always follow the PRONOUN CLITIC TONE SANDHI rule (cf. 84 a, b) and also alternates with the plural form (cf. 84 c). So, one can get any of the following synonymous sentences:

(84) a. mi pe ro?

LABS give IMP

'Give it to me'

b. mi pe ro?

LABS give IMP

'Give it to me'

c. min2 pe ro?

LABS-(PL) give IMP

'Give it to me (us)'

Nowadays, many people use the last example, 84 c, for either singular or plural.

If the object is second person, it is marked both nominative and accusative (the only time there is an accusative marking) so that we get:

(85) lall in a haaul cel
 chief ERG 3NOM scold 2ACC

'The chief scolded you'

If the object is third person, there is no marking,
 as in:

(86) lall in a haaul Ø
 chief ERG 3NOM scold 3ACC

'The chief scolded him/her'

The pronoun clitic system can be summarized thus:

(87)	ABS	NOM	ACC
1	mi/min2	ka	-
2	-	i	cel
3	-	a	Ø

Other aspects of the mixed ergative system will be dealt with in the next chapter.

Transitive verbs are generally active verbs. They usually reflect some kind of change that is registered by the patient/ object. Thus, if the object is created, we get:

(88) a. in ∅ al saa
 house ABS 3NOM build
 '(S)he is building a house'

b. sum ∅ al sui?
 mortar ABS 3NOM carve
 '(S)he is carving a mortar'

c. lhaa ∅ al phua?
 song ABS 3NOM compose
 '(S)he composed a song'

d. beell ∅ al vuaa
 pot ABS 3NOM hit
 '(S)he is making a (clay) pot'

The verbs can also refer to totally destroyed objects, as in:

(89) in2 ∅ a-n trhiat3
 house ABS 3NOM-PL undo
 'They tore down the house'

Most transitive verbs, however, encode some sort of change in the object/patient's state. The change can be a physical change in the object, as in:

(90) a. cem1 Ø al taat3-rhiaaml
 knife ABS 3NOM whet-sharp

'(S)he sharpened the knife'

b. le?-khaa3 Ø al pot-soom3
 paper ABS 3NOM pull-pieces

'(S)he tore the paper to pieces'

c. noul Ø al vo-ke?
 cup ABS 3NOM hit-break

'(S)he hit and broke the cup'

Other transitive verbs refer to the change in the object's location, as in:

(91) a. beell Ø a suan2
 pot ABS 3NOM move from fire

'(S)he took the pot off the fire'

b. aarl-in2 Ø a-n son3
 chicken-house ABS 3NOM-PL move

'They moved the chicken house'

Some transitive verbs encode change with an implied instrument, as in:

(92) a. saa3 Ø a2-n can2

meat ABS 3NOM-PL cut

'They are cutting the meat (with a knife)'

b. pang-paar1 Ø a-n tlhiak3

flower ABS 3NOM-PL break off

'They broke off the flower (with their hands)'

c. tuall1 Ø a2-n saam2

field ABS 3NOM-PL clear

'They are weeding the fields'

Some changes can be considered to be surface change,
as in:

(93) a. puan Ø al suu

clothes ABS 3NOM wash

'(S)he is washing clothes'

b. beell1 Ø al noot3

pot ABS 3NOM scrub

'(S)he is scrubbing pots'

c. aarl1 Ø al pua?

chicken ABS 3NOM pluck feathers

'(S)he is dressing the chicken'

Other changes can be internal, as in:

- (94) a. be-kangl Ø a-n uml
soy beans ABS 3NOM-PL ferment

'They are fermenting soy beans'

- b. saa3 Ø a2-n reep2
meat ABS 3NOM-PL dry

'They smoked the meat'

Thus, the above examples demonstrate that a minimal transitive clause requires an object and a pronoun clitic.

There are a few transitive verbs that seem more stative than active, that is, they cannot usually take the progressive marker meek1 (probably because these events occur over a longer period), as in:

- (95) a. pil-tarl in vok Ø al vul?
woman-old ERG pigs ABS 3NOM raise

'The old woman raises pigs'

- b. saap3 in fa-rha? Ø a2-n coom2
British ERG orphan ABS 3NOM-PL feed

'The British are taking care of orphans'

Verbs of cognition such as rhia2 'to know' tii 'to think/consider' and thiam2 'to know (a skill)' are also stative, as in:

(96) a. pil-tarl in Zoul-a Ø a rhiaa2
 woman-old ERG -MSUF ABS 3NOM knows

'The old woman knows Zova'

b. pil-tarl in Zoul-a Ø trhaa al tii
 woman-old ERG -MSUF ABS good 3NOM thinks

'The old woman thinks Zova is nice'

c. pil-tarl in puan2-ta? Ø a thiam2
 woman-old ERG cloth-weave ABS 3NOM knows

'The old woman knows how to weave'

3.5.4.3 Stem II Verbs

The phonological aspects of Stem II verbs have received considerable attention. With regards to their historical origin and their relationship to Stem I verbs, Löffler (1973), Hillard (1974) and Lehman (1982) have dealt with the pertinent data in related Chin languages. The issue is far from resolved but I will not comment any further except to emphasize that the phonological relationship between Stem I and Stem II is no longer productive. Several

evidences point to this. First of all, some of the major differences between the 'North' and 'South' lects involves differences in Stem II forms. Secondly, children do not master both forms until age five or later.

In this thesis, the distinction between Stem I and Stem II is a purely phonological one. I do not consider them to be separate verb classes. For instance, there are some cases where the Stem II form of an intransitive verb is the Stem I of a transitive verb.

- (97) a. naul-seenl a muul
 infant 3NOM sleepI
 'An infant is sleeping'
- b. naul-seen Ø kal mut
 infant ABS 1NOM sleepII
 'I put an infant to sleep'

There are also instances where the Stem I form is a verb and the Stem II form is a noun, cf example 17 in chapter 2.

It is also possible that the relationship is iconic as Stem II forms are predominantly used for background, or known information (as in embedded clauses). Stem II forms are also less active and more restricted in their choice of environments. Thus, in word formation morphology, the derived form uses the Stem II verb if the derived form is

less animate (or more abstract) than its original form. For instance, one finds:

(98) a. co-chuum-tuu3

rice-cookI-AGT

'a cook'

b. co-chum3-nal

rice-cookII-NLZ

'kitchen (place for cooking)/cooking utensil'

There thus seems to be a relationship between tone, information and syntactic construction. That is, Stem II forms which are mostly low tone (with a few falling tones) are used for known information and more passive constructions. Indeed, Lehman (1982) mentions that Stem II is used when the focus changes from the (more salient) agent to the (more passive) patient. This relationship between tone and grammatical constructions has been noted in African languages, cf. Bearth (1980) and Ubels (1983) and it would not be too far-fetched to assume that a similar correlation exists in Mizo. (I am indebted to Ken Gregerson for bringing this to my attention).

Here are some examples of Stem II verbs with their Stem I counterparts:

(99)	Stem I	Stem II	Gloss
	a. puul	put	'to carry'
	b. rhingl	rhin3	'to give birth to'
	c. ral2	ral	'to disappear'
	d. hua2	huat3	'to hate'
	e. ruak3	rua?	'to empty out'
	f. tlheng3	tlheng3	'to exchange'
	g. tii	ti?	'to do'
	h. rii	riik3	'to make noise'

Note that the Stem II verbs are glossed 'II' (as in Hillard 1974).

3.5.4.4 Serial Verbs and Derived Verbs

Like many southeast Asian languages, Mizo has a productive system of serial verbs, cf. Matisoff (1974). There are two major types: one I call change-of-state verbs; the others are derived from what I call derived verbs. The change-of-state verbs are the most common. Typically these consist of an active verb followed by a stative verb.

- (100) a. noul al ti-ke?
 cup 3NOM make-break
 '(S)he broke the cup'
- b. noul al vo-ke?
 cup 3NOM hit-break
 '(S)he hit the cup and broke it'
- c. noul al tlhau?-ke?
 cup 3NOM drop-break
 '(S)he dropped and broke the cup'
- d. noul al pai?-ke?
 cup 3NOM throw-break
 '(S)he threw and broke the cup'

Thus, from the above examples we can see that the first part of the serial verb indicates the manner or means with which the object reached its current state. In other words, there is a change of state from an unbroken cup to a broken cup via the actions indicated by the active verbs.

In some serial verb constructions, the second verb can no longer exist as a syntactic unit, even though it still has a distinct meaning of its own. I shall call this type of verbs derived verbs for the time being as they are related to the preceding verb. The most common of all is

-lhum meaning 'to become dead.'

(101) a. tuil a? al tla-lhum
 water LOC 3NOM fall-dead

'(S)he drowned'

b. lungl in al del?-lhum
 rock ERG 3NOM fall on-dead

'A rock crushed him/her to death'

c. mii3 a-n ook3-lhum
 person 3NOM-PL hang-dead

'They hung someone (to death)'

In the following examples, the second part of the derived verb indicates the attitude or intentions or purpose of the subject.

- (102) a. al tlu-lui
 3NOM fall-purpose
 '(S)he fell on purpose'
- b. al tlu-tral?3
 3NOM fall-in spite of
 '(S)he (stubbornly) fell on purpose'
- c. al tlu-pal?
 3NOM fall-accidentally
 '(S)he accidentally fell'
- d. a mul-derl
 3NOM sleep-feign
 '(S)he feigned sleep'
- e. al en3-look3
 3NOM look-ahead
 '(S)he looked ahead of time/revised'
- f. al en3-rhaam2
 3NOM look-with great difficulty
 '(S)he looked with great difficulty'

Another type of verb concatenation involves DMP's and motion verbs that form one syntactic unit.

(103) a. a lou-kall
 3NOM hither-go
 '(S)he came (hither)'

b. al chuk-tlhaa
 3NOM descend-downwards
 '(S)he descended'

Note that in each of these examples one of the DMP's, viz. lou2- and tlhaa verbs can no longer stand as a lexical verb. This lexicalization of motion verbs has been attested to in several TB languages. Cf. DeLancey (1983) and (1985c).

The other type of derived verbs modify only Stem II verbs. These are adjectival verbs expressing degree or manner (something like '-ness' in English).

(104) a. il aat3 - ziaa

2P foolishII-ness

'Your foolishness'

b. il aat3 - daan

2P foolishII-manner

'The manner of your folly'

c. al aat3 - tlhaak

3P foolishII-ness

'It is (very) foolish'

The others express benefactive or causative relationships.

(105) a. kor mil lei-sak

dress LABS buyII-BEN

'(S)he bought a dress for/from me'

b. kor mil lei-pui

dress LABS buyII-with

'(S)he helped me buy a dress'

c. kor mil lei-tiirl

dress LABS buyII-compel

'(S)he made me buy a dress'

Still others show movement away from or over the object.

(106) a. ui kal zuan-khum3
dog lNOM jumpII-over

'I jumped over a dog'

b. in kal kal-san3
house lNOM goII-desert

'I deserted the house'

3.5.5 Aspect Markers

Aspect markers are particles and not lexical words. Their position is immediately following the adverbial particles (which can mark aspect also). Aspect markers relate an event to the time axis. They indicate if an event has happened yet, and if the event is completed or about to be completed. They also indicate how soon one can expect an event to take place and also whether or not the event has been a long-awaited one. Several aspect markers have similar meanings with just shades of difference in their interpretation. Traditional grammarians have mistaken them for tense markers, even though their examples clearly show that Mizo does not mark tense (see Lorrain & Savidge (1898)). The following examples illustrate the versatility of aspect markers:

(107) a. a kall to?
 3NOM go PST/COMPL

'(S)he already left'

b. a kall taa3
 3NOM go at last

'(S)he has left at last'

c. a kall cia?1
 3NOM go just now

'(S)he just left'

d. a kall meek1
 3NOM go PROG

'(S)he is going'

e. a kall treep3
 3NOM go IMM FUT

'(S)he is just about to leave'

f. a kall doon1
 3NOM go ASP

'(S)he is going to leave/go'

g. a kall doon1 to?
 3NOM go ASP PST/COMPL

'(S)he is going to leave/go shortly'

h. a kall doon1 treep3
 3NOM go ASP IMM FUT

'(S)he is almost leaving'

3.5.6 Mode Marker

The mode marker ang2 marks a probable event or state. Because it is connected to a future event, it is often mistaken for a future tense marker. The examples below will demonstrate that it is different from the future aspect marker for several reasons. For instance, it follows the negation marker whereas the future tense marker precedes it. The fact that they can both occur within the same phrase indicates that their functions are different.

(103) a. a kall ang2
 3NOM go MOD

'(S)he will go'

b. a kall lou ang2
 3NOM go NEG MOD

'(S)he will not go'

c. a kall doon1 lou ang2
 3NOM go ASP NEG MOD

'(S)he will not be going'

Lehman calls both ang2 and doon1 'future irrealis mode markers,' (in personal communications). I have decided not to make this distinction until I find a satisfactory explanation for their syntactic difference.

3.5.7 Negation Marker

The negation word in Mizo, lou, follows what it negates.

- (109) a. a kall du? lou
 3NOM go desire NEG
 '(S)he does not want to go'
- b. a mul lou
 3NOM sleep NEG
 '(S)he is not sleeping'
- c. a mul doonl lou
 3NOM sleep ASP NEG
 '(S)he is not going to sleep'
- d. a mul lou ang2
 3NOM sleep NEG MOD
 '(S)he will not sleep'

3.6 Morphology and Cliticization

Tibeto-Burman languages tend to have complex morphology, cf. Bauman (1974), Michailovsky (1974) and DeLancey (1983). Mizo is no exception and I will deal very briefly with some of the verb morphology.

To start with, it will be useful to set up some criteria for distinguishing between particles, clitics and affixes. Zwicky (1985) has given some useful guidelines.

For the time being I will distinguish between grammatical words and affixes as the latter is inflectional. Moreover, affixes have a wide variety of phonological shapes and generally also have a wide variety of tones. Cf. plural affixes. I have further subdivided grammatical words into three categories: clitics, particles and words. Of these, only the last can constitute the major word classes while the others are modifiers of some sort. The distinction between clitics and particles is not very clear at this point. In general, clitics are obligatory whereas particles are not, ex. subject clitics and case markers. Particles can also be distinguished by their phonological properties. For instance, particles and words have similar phonological shapes but particles usually do not undergo the SYLLABLE STRENGTHENING rule and are affected by intonation. Moreover, particles have very little lexical content but are highly functional.

The test to differentiate between clitics and affixes is even more difficult to conduct. Phonological rules are helpful in distinguishing between the two. For instance, clitics behave like independent words whereas affixes can change their phonological shape under certain conditions. A good example is the determiners where the tone of the ergative suffix combines with the tone of the determiner to form a different tone. Moreover, affixes are often one phonological unit; the demonstrative pronoun plu-

ral marker -ng, for instance.

3.6.1 Affixes

There are relatively few affixes. These are some of the more important ones:

3.6.1.1 Gender Suffix

All proper names must have a gender suffix (see also sec. 3.3.2.4). The female gender suffix -il and the male gender suffix -al are dropped in the vocative case, if the name is longer than two syllables. The vocative case is indicated by a low tone on the final syllable. For female names, the low tone of the vocative combines with the high tone of the affix so that the tone becomes a falling tone. Thus we get TONE CONTOURING as in the case of determiners followed by ergative markers. (TONE CONTOURING does not apply to male names because they are low tone in citation form.) Consider the following examples:

- (110) a. Maaml-a 'Mama (boy's nickname)'
- b. Maaml-aa 'Mama! (vocative)'
- c. Maaml-il 'Mami (girl's nickname)'
- d. Maaml-ii3 'Mami! (vocative)'
- e. Maaml-boi?-a 'Mambawiha (usually
 -EMT-MSUF firstborn son)'
- f. Maaml-boi?-il 'Mambawihi'
 -EMT-FSUF
- g. Maaml-boi? 'Mambawih! (vocative)'

3.6.1.2 Plural Suffix

Pronouns are the only items marked for number. Each of the different types of pronouns have their own plural form. Thus, -nii3 is the plural marker for full pronouns, -n is the plural marker for subject pronoun clitics and -ng is the plural marker for the demonstrative pronouns. (See also sec. 3.3.1.1 and sec. 3.3.2.5.) For example:

- (111) a. kei2 ka zaail 'I sing'
 lPRO lNOM sing
- b. kei-nii3 ka-n zaail 'We sing'
 lPRO-PL lNOM-PL sing
- c. ka zaail 'I sing'
 lNOM sing
- d. ka-n zaail 'We sing'
 lNOM-PL sing
- e. hee noul hil 'This cup'
 DPRO cup DET
- f. hee3-ng noul hil 'These cups'
 DPRO-PL cup DET

The plural marker for the demonstrative pronoun is restricted to non-humans. Thus one cannot have

- (112) *hee3-ng mii3 hil
 DPRO-PL person DET
 'these people'

Instead, the preferred form is:

- (113) hee mii3 tel hil
 DPRO person EX DET
 'these people and such'

3.6.1.3 Relativizer

The relativizer -a and the third person nominative clitic a probably have the same historical origin, cf. Lehman (1975b). It is used in both relative clause constructions and in genitival constructions. In relative clauses, the relativizer optionally follows the relative clause.

(114) pul-tarl vok leil (-a) khal
 old-man pig buy (-REL) DET

'the old man who bought a pig'

If the subject of the relative clause is female -il may be used instead

(115) pil-tarl vok lei (-il) khal
 old-woman pig buy (-REL) DET

'the old woman who bought the pig'

In genitival-of constructions, the relativizer carries a high tone, as in

(116) nangl-a1 faa3
 2PRO-REL child

'the child of yours'

Furthemore, the relativizer will coalesce with the final vowel of the preceding word, and change the tone of the preceding word as well.

(117) //tuu-al ui2// --> /tuul ui2/
 WH -REL dog WH-REL dog

'whose dog/dog of whom?'

The relativizer has a slightly different meaning and structure in verbal constructions. In such instances, it appears to function as a dummy pronoun 'it,' to indicate complete sets.

(118) a. al-trhaaa trha3
 of-good good

'the best ones (out of the rest)'

b. al-nuu al-paa
 it-female it-male

'both male and female'

c. al-lian a-tee2
 it-big it-small

'both great and small'

There are also instances where al- has become lexicalized, as in the following conjunctions, cf. 4.4.3.

- (119) a. al-trangl 'from'
 b. al-piangl 'whoever'
 c. al-vaang 'because'

The above examples also show that the prefix al- is probably not the third person nominative clitic since it does not undergo tone sandhi.

3.6.1.4 Ergative and Oblique Suffixes on Determiners

The determiners have their own markers which are similar to the regular ergative marker and the oblique marker, cf. sec. 3.3.1.3. The markers on the determiners can co-occur with the other marker, without causing any changes in the meaning, though the complete form sounds more emphatic. Thus, the ergative marker and the oblique marker are optional for determiners. Compare the following examples:

- (120) a. hei3 hi-an3 al vuaa
 DPRO DET-ERG 3NOM hit
 'This (one) hit him'
- b. hei3 hi-an3 in al vuaa
 DPRO DET-ERG ERG 3NOM hit
 'This (one) hit him'
- c. hei3 hi-an1 al vuaa
 DPRO DET-OBLQ 3NOM hit
 '(S)he hit it with this'
- d. hei3 hi-an1 in1 al vuaa
 DPRO DET-OBLQ OBLQ 3NOM hit
 '(S)he hit it with this'

3.6.1.5 Nominalizer

Verbs and adjectives are nominalized by the suffix -nal. See also sec. 3.3.2.3 on nominalized nouns. The same suffix is used for ordinal numbers.

(121) a. a-mheell a? mooi-nal a om2 lou
 3P face LOC pretty-NLZ 3NOM exist NEG

'There was no beauty on his face'

b. kal trhut-nal a? i trhuul
 1P sitII-NLZ LOC 2NOM sit

'You're sitting where I sat/ my chair'

c. pa-khat-nal al nii
 unit-one-NLZ 3NOM is

'(S)he was first'

3.6.1.6 Agentivizer

The agentivizer -tuu3 is equivalent to the English '-er,' as demonstrated in the following examples.

(122) a. puan trhuil-tuu3 'tailor'
 cloth sew - AGT

b. khooll chul-tuu3 'typist'
 machine strike-AGT

c. be-raam veengl-tuu3 'shepherd'
 sheep guard-AGT

It seems like both the nominalizer and the agentivizer are rather recent developments since both are used mainly for things that are foreign to traditional Mizo society. Another similarity between the two is that both are suffixed to a similar class of words. The major difference between the two is that the nominalizer is used on words derived from Stems II verbs, whereas the agentivizer is used on words derived from Stem I verbs.

3.6.1.7 Reflexive/Reciprocal Prefix

The reflexive and reciprocal prefix are morphologically the same. The difference between the two is indicated by the preceding nominative marker where the singular form is used for reflexives and the plural form for reciprocals. Reciprocity (of an action) is indicated by prefixing in- to the main verb. For example:

(123) a. al in-meet3
3NOM REF-shave

'He is shaving himself'

b. a2-n in-suall
3NOM-PL RCP-fight

'They are fighting (each other)'

Reflexives with full NP's are as follows:

- (124) a. kei2-ma? le? kei2-ma? kal in-biaa
 1PRO-EMP and 1PRO-EMP 1NOM REF-speak to
 'I'm talking to myself'
- b. nang2-ma? le? nang2-ma? il in-biaa
 2PRO- EMP and 2PRO- EMP 2NOM REF-speak to
 'You are talking to yourself'
- c. al-ma? le? al-ma? al in-biaa
 3PRO-EMP and 3PRO-EMP 3NOM REF-speak to
 '(S)he is talking to herself/himself'
- d. a2-n ma?-nii3 le? a2-n ma?-nii3
 3PRO-PL EMP-PL and 3PRO-PL EMP-PL
 a2-n in-bum
 3NOM-PL REF-cheat
 'They are cheating each other/one is
 cheating the other'

I have chosen to call in- a prefix because in many cases, words containing this prefix have become one lexical item. That is, words such as in-du? means 'to be proud' and is no longer associated with its original meaning 'to desire oneself.'

- (125) a. in-suall 'to fight'
 RCP-fight
- b. in-doul 'to be at war'
 RCP-war
- c. in-ceil 'to be dressed up'
 RCP-decorate
- d. in-khoom3 'to meet as a group'
 RCP-gather
- e. in-du? 'to be proud'
 RCP-want
- f. in-tiat3 'to be of the same size'
 RCP-same size

When the direct cause of an event cannot be determined for sure, the prefix in- is used (sometimes to clear oneself of blame).

- (126) a. kongl-kaal al in-hongl
 door 3NOM REF-open
 'The door is open (who knows who opened it)'
- b. kal la-phiaar al in-trhiat3
 lPRO-thread-knit(II) 3NOM REF-undo
 'My knitting got undone (by itself)'

The reflexive usually suggests volitional action by the subject, so that

(127) ceml inl kal in-aat3
knife OBLQ lNOM REF-cut

'I cut myself with a knife'

implies that the subject was careless. That is, the above example could be interpreted to mean 'I wasn't watching what I was doing so I cut myself.' On the other hand, the following sentence implies that the action was accidental, as in:

(128) ceml in mil aat3
knife ERG lABS cut

'A knife cut me'

This example could mean that 'the knife slipped and cut me.' The case markers on 'knife' are different in the above examples. In 127 it is marked with the instrumental or oblique marker but in 128 it is marked with the ergative marker. Similarly, the first person nominative becomes first person absolute, that is, the subject in 127 is the object in 128. Thus, when there is no reflexive, the speaker becomes the object, that is, the patient of an action beyond his/her control. It is also interesting to note that Tibetan has a way of distinguishing between volitional and non-volitional, cf. DeLancey (1985a, b).

3.6.2 Clitics

Because their phonological shapes and properties are so similar, it is often difficult to distinguish between particles and clitics. Historically, they might have all been particles. However, it seems as though clitics have lost their grammatical independence, and in the case of pronoun clitics, even their phonological independence. Thus clitics are obligatory in certain constructions whereas particles are not.

3.6.2.1 Pronoun Clitics

As mentioned earlier pronoun clitics are tightly bound to whatever they precede. There are only three types in the noun phrase (see sec. 3.3.2.5) whereas in the verb phrase there are two more besides these: the first person absolutive marker and the second person accusative marker. The following examples will demonstrate how the different forms are used in a transitive clause.

The subject pronoun clitics in a transitive clause are as follows:

(129) a. poonl a? kal chuak3
outside LOC 1NOM exit

'I went outside'

b. poonl a? il chuak3
outisde LOC 2NOM exit

'You went outside'

c. poonl a? al chuak3
outside LOC 3NOM leave

'(S)he went outside'

The pronoun clitics for objects are as follows:

(130) a. aarl in mil cuk
hen ERG 1ABS peck

'A hen pecked me'

b. aarl in al cuk cel
hen ERG 3NOM peck 2ACC

'A hen pecked you'

c. aarl in al cuk ∅
hen ERG 3NOM peck 3ACC

'A hen pecked (her/him/it)'

Plural forms of the pronoun clitics are as follows:

(131) a. aarl-rual in a2-n cuk ∅
 hen-flock ERG 3NOM-PL peck 3ACC

'A flock of hens pecked it'

b. aarl in al cuk cel ul
 hen ERG 3NOM peck 2ACC PL

'A hen pecked you (pl)'

c. aarl in a2-n cuk cel ul
 hen ERG 3NOM-PL peck 2ACC PL

'(Several) hens pecked you all'

3.6.2.2 Ergative Marker

Like many languages of this area, Mizo is a partially ergative language. In transitive clause, the agent is marked by a case marker on the noun phrase. At the same time, the obligatory pronoun clitics in the verb phrase are organized according to nominative-accusative principles (see preceding section and sec. 3.5.4.2).

The ergative case marker is a clitic and not an affix because it follows the whole noun phrase (including conjoined NP's), and is attached to whatever happens to be the last item in the noun phrase. It is optional when there

are determiners. (See also sec. 3.3.1.3.)

- (132) a. Dou1-an3 mil vuaa
 -MSUF ERG LABS hit

'Dova hit me'

- b. kal nuu3 in mil vuaa
 1P mother ERG LABS beat

'My mother beat me'

- c. kal nuu3 le? kal paa3 in min2 vuaa
 1P mother and 1P father ERG LABS beat

'My mother and my father beat me'

- d. hee naaul le? soo naaul soo3-n in mil veel
 this child and that child DET-ERG ERG LABS hit

'This child and that child hit me'

3.6.2.3 Oblique Marker

The oblique marker also marks instruments. Furthermore, it has two phonological forms: inl for words and the suffix -anl for determiners and relative clause constructions. The ergative marker and the oblique marker are identical except for their tone (see also sec. 4.1.1). For example:

- (133) a. tiang inl mil vuaa
 stick OBLQ 1ABS beat
 '(Someone) beat me with a stick'
- b. tui2 le? chang inl ka tlail
 water and bread OBLQ 1NOM be satisfied
 'I am satisfied with (just) bread and water'
- c. la-senl le? la-pool inl kai triaal
 yarn-red and yarn-blue OBLQ 1NOM stripedII
 'I made the stripes with red and blue yarn'

3.6.2.4 Locative Marker

As mentioned earlier (sec 3.3.1.2 and 3.5.1.3) the locative marker has two basic forms: a? for any noun and ta? for determiners.

- (134) a. Ail-zooll a? ka peeml doonl
 LOC 1NOM move to ASP
 'Im going to move to Aizawl'
- b. sol ta? sool-n ka kall du?
 DPRO LOC DET-OBLQ 1NOM go desire
 'I want to go there'

The above two forms are further modified in non-main clauses (e.g. relative clause) or in transitive clauses by the addition of the relativizer, -al.

(135) a. Ail-zool-al kal kal niil kha-anl
 Aizawl LOC-REL 1NOM goII day DET-OBLQ

'On the day that I went to Aizawl'

b. Sol tal mii3 sol kal en3
 there LOC-REL person DET 1NOM look

'I'm looking at that man over there'

3.6.3 Particles

As mentioned earlier, particles are distinguished by their unique phonetic characteristics, and by their grammatical function. Particles are usually low in content but high in function, especially in conveying the attitude of the speaker. Some particles are obligatory, depending on the context, but they are usually optional.

3.6.3.1 Demonstrative Pronouns and Determiners

As mentioned earlier, the demonstrative pronoun and the determiner agree in deictic degree. Refer to secs. 3.3.1, 3.3.1.1, 3.3.1.2, 3.3.1.3, 3.6.1.2 and 3.6.1.4 for demonstrative pronoun and determiner morphologies. See also

Benedict (1983). The following are the six possible pairs in Mizo:

(136)	Dem Pro and Det	Gloss
a.	hei3 hil	'this (near speaker)'
b.	khaa3 khal	'that (near addressee)'
c.	khii3 khil	'that (up there)'
d.	khuu3 khul	'that (down there)'
e.	soo3 sol	'that (far)'
f.	cuu3 cul	'that (out of sight)'

It is worth noting here that out of the above determiners, there are two that have a different meaning within the context of a discourse. The two khal 'that' and cul are anaphoric, where khal refers to something that the speaker has heard or seen but that the addressee has maybe only seen or heard of; and cul refers to something the addressee has seen or heard of but the speaker has only heard of. When used in this sense (that is, to refer to something in the past) the determiners khal and cul can follow any of the other demonstrative pronouns, as in:

(137) a. hel tal mii3 khal
 here LOC-REL person that
 'the person who was over here'

b. sol-laail al mii3 cul
 that-about LOC-REL person there
 '(I wonder about) that person over there'

The anaphoric function of the determiners becomes obvious when one compares the above examples with the examples shown below:

(138) a. hel tal mii3 hil
 this LOC-REL person this
 'this person over here'

b. sol-laail al mii3 sol
 that-about LOC-REL person that
 'that person over there'

Moreover, the determiner cul is the only determiner that can follow any of the other demonstrative pronoun and determiners pairs. When this happens, cul effectively negates the whole NP, as in:

- (139) hei3 hi1 cul
 this this that
 'Not this one'

3.6.3.2 Emphatic Particles

The emphatic particle for demonstrative pronouns is ma? It can be roughly translated to mean something like 'excluding all else.' Cf. Lehman (1977).

- (140) a. eng3 ma? kal mhu lou
 WH EMP 1NOM see NEG

'I don't see anything'

- b. al-nii3 ma? a lou-kall
 3PRO-PL EMP 3NOM come

'Even (s)he came'

3.6.3.3 Quantifying Particles

Quantifying particles can occur both in the noun phrase and the verb phrase. The most important ones in the noun phrase were shown in sec. 3.3.5.2. Those in the verb phrase are modal in character and are postverbal. It is usually not necessary to have quantifying particles in both noun phrase and verb phrase.

The examples below will show the difference between the two types.

- (141) a. ka aarl zong zong3 mil lei sak
 1P hen all 1ABS buyII BEN
 '(S)he bought all my hens for/from me'
- b. ka aarl min2 lei sak vek1
 1P hen 1ABS buyII BEN all
 '(S)he bought all my hens for/from me'
- c. aarl tam2 tak a lei2
 hen many INT 3NOM bought
 '(S)he bought several hens'
- d. aarl a lei treu?1
 hen 3NOM buy many
 '(S)he bought several hens'
- e. a2-n vaai2 in1 a-n chuak3
 3PRO-PL all OBLQ 3NOM-PL exit
 'They all left'
- f. a-n chuak3 vek1
 3NOM-PL exit all
 'They all left'

Thus, from the above it appears as though the quantifiers in both the noun phrase and the verb phrase have similar meanings. However, there are fewer types of quantifiers allowed in the verb phrase. The post verbal quantifiers also seem to express degree, besides quantity. They are used mostly for uncountable items whereas the quantifiers in the noun phrase are usually countable.

Compare the following examples:

(142) a. voi3 tam2 tak mil vuaa
times many INT lABS beat

'(S)he beat me several times'

b. mil vo rhepl
lABS beat severely

'(S)he gave me a severe beating'

3.6.3.4 Intensifiers

Intensifiers generally follow a general quantifier or an adjective, as in:

- (143) a. pang-paarl tam2 tak ka lei2
 flower many INT lNOM buy
 'I bought many flowers'
- b. pang-paarl mooil tak kal mhuu
 flower pretty INT lNOM see
 'I saw a very beautiful flower'
- c. pang-paarl mooil em3 em3 kal mhuu
 flower pretty INT lNOM see
 'I saw a very, very beautiful flower'
- d. pang-paarl mooil lul-tuk kal mhuu
 flower pretty INT lNOM see
 'I saw a gorgeous flower'

Intensifiers, when they modify the verb, are post-verbal (like the VP quantifying particles). Thus we can have:

(144) a. coo3 ka eil nhem3 lul-tuk
 rice lNOM eat much INT

'I ate too much (rice)'

b. al trap nal-sal lul-tuk
 3NOM cry very much INT

'(S)he cried too much'

c. coo3 ka eil nghek1
 food lNOM eat INT

'I ate a lot/ had a huge meal'

3.6.3.5 Non-Final and Final Particles

The non-final particle is aal, cf. 5.4, and the final particles are el for declaratives and vee for exclamations, cf. 3.5.3.

- (145) a. coo3 ka ei aal ka muu
 food 1NOM eat NFP 1NOM sleep
 'I ate and then I slept'
- b. coo3 ka eil el
 food 1NOM eat DECL
 '(I declare) I am eating'
- c. coo3 i-n va eil mhaal vee
 food 2NOM-PL how eat early EXCL
 'You are dining so early!'

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a brief glance of the basic syntactic structure of Mizo. Being an SOV language, the NP's precede the VP with the indirect object preceding the direct object. The internal structure of the phrases are not always consistent with those of typical SOV languages. Thus, quantifiers and qualifiers follow the head. Each phrase is made up of words, clitics, particles and affixes, some of which are more important than others. The general principle of organization is left-branching with some important exceptions. Each NP has a case marker and each VP a pronoun clitic.

Some of the important features of the language, such as ergativity, questions and relative clauses will be discussed in the following chapters.

CHAPTER IV

SIMPLE SENTENCES

This chapter will deal with simple sentences as well as the various forms of questions and imperatives. These examples will be an expanded form of what has already been mentioned in the preceding chapter. Grammatical roles and agreements will also be discussed in this chapter. Thus, this chapter will give the reader a view of what Mizo sentences really look like and how they relate to the larger context of speech acts and syntactic constraints. As in the previous chapter, most of the terminology used in describing the various sentences are from Givón (1984).

4.1 Grammatical Roles and Relations

The grammatical roles and relations are clearly marked both in the noun phrase and the verb phrase. It is interesting to note that the noun phrase displays an ergative system while the verb phrase displays a largely nominative-accusative system.

4.1.1 Ergativity

As a comparison of transitive and intransitive clause shows that the direct object in the transitive requires the same CM as that on the intransitive, cf.

(1) a. boong3 Ø a thiil

cow ABS 3NOM die

'A cow has died'

b. boong3 in nhim3 Ø al pet

cow ERG grass ABS 3NOM graze

'A cow is grazing (eating grass)'

The ergative case marker comes at the end of the subject NP in the transitive clause, as shown:

(2) a. boong3 le? keel in nhim3 Ø a2-n pet

cow and goat ERG grass ABS 3NOM-PL graze

'A cow and goat are grazing'

b. kal boong3 zong-zongl in nhim3 Ø

1P cow all ERG grass ABS

a2-n pet

3NOM-PL graze

'All my cows are grazing'

- (4) a. rhiaul inl al chun
 needle OBLQ 3NOM pierced
 '(S)he pierced (it) with a needle'
- b. rhiaul in ∅ al chun
 needle ERG ABS 3NOM pierced
 'A needle pierced him/her'
- c. tuil inl al lei?-hu?
 water OBLQ 3NOM pour-wet
 '(S)he (poured) wet it with water'
- d. tuil in ∅ al lei?-hu?
 water ERG ABS 3NOM pour-wet
 '(S)he got soaked (by water)'
- e. al kee inl a daal2
 3P leg OBLQ 3NOM block
 '(S)he blocked it with her/his leg'
- f. al kee in ∅ a daal2
 3P leg ERG ABS 3NOM block
 'Her/his leg blocked (it)'

4.1.2 Subject Clitic Agreement with NP

The subject markers generally agree in number with the subject. There are, however, some exceptions as shown below.

Non-human mass nouns are generally singular, as in:

- (5) a. ka puan2-phou al tlaa
 1P cloth-to sunII 3NOM fall

'My laundry has fallen (to the ground)'

- b. i2-n huan al pang-paar1 a mooil
 2P-PL garden LOC-REL flower 3NOM pretty

'The flowers in your garden are beautiful'

- c. i-n ran1-vul? al trhaa
 2P-PL animals-raise 3NOM good

'Your (domestic) animals are in good health'

Animate subjects with the quantifier tin meaning 'each and all,' or al piang1 meaning 'whoever/whichever,' require plural agreement with the subject clitic. Thus:

(6) a. nulaal tin in thing2 Ø a-n phurl
 maiden each ERG wood ABS 3NOM-PL carry

'Each maiden is carrying firewood'

b. nulaal al-piangl in thing2 Ø a-n phurl
 maiden whoever ERG wood ABS 3NOM-PL carry

'Whoever was a maiden carried firewood'

c. al thei al-piangl a-n kall
 3NOM can whoever 3NOM-PL go

'Whoever could go went'

d. ui2 tin in aarl a-n uum3
 dog each ERG hen 3NOM-PL chase

'Each dog chased a chicken'

Non-humans, however, require singular agreement with the subject clitic. Compare example 6 above with those below:

- (7) a. pang-paarl tin al tlaa
 flower each 3NOM fall
 'Each of the flowers fell'
- b. arl-tuil tin al keh
 egg each 3NOM break
 'Each of the eggs broke'

When there is more than one subject, then the person of the subject pronoun is determined by the following hierarchy: first person outranks second person which outranks third person. Thus, if all three are in the subject NP, then the subject clitic is determined by the first person, as in:

- (8) kei2 le? nang2 le? al-nii3 ka-n kall ang2
 1PRO and 2PRO and 3PRO-PL 1NOM-PL go MOD
 '(S)he, you and I will go'

If there is only first person with either one, then first person outranks the others, as in

(9) a. kei2 le? nang2 ka-n kall ang2
 1PRO and 2PRO 1NOM-PL go MOD

'You and I will go'

b. kei2 le? al-nii3 ka-n kall ang2
 1PRO and 3PRO-PL 3NOM-PL go MOD

'(S)he and I will go'

If there is only second and third person, then the subject agreement is with the second person, as in:

(10) nang2 le? al-nii i-n kall ang2
 2PRO and 3PRO-PL 2NOM-PL go MOD

'You and (s)he will go'

Objects are also ranked similarly. In this case, the first person absolutive clitic or the accusative markers indicate agreement, as in:

(11) a. uil in kei2 le? nang2 le? al-nii3 mil uum3
 dog ERG 1PRO and 2PRO and 3PRO-PL 1ABS chase

'A dog is chasing you, him/her and I'

b. uil in nang2 le? al-nii3 al uum3 cel ul
 dog ERG you and 3PRO-PL 3NOM chase 2ACC PL

'A dog is chasing you and him/her'

The above agreement rules are true for all clause types except hortatives, in which case one finds the second person marking in both nominative and accusative forms, i.e. i, and uul:

(12) i kall ang uul
 2NOM go MOD HORT

'Let us go!'

The second person object marker, i may be a dual inclusive, as in Thadou. Cf. Krishnan (1980).

4.1.3 Word Order

Mizo is a fairly rigid SOV language. In the previous chapter we have seen the internal structure of the phrases: attributes follow the head noun (cf. sec. 3.3.4 and 3.3.5); case markers follow the head noun (cf. sec. 3.6.2.2 and sec. 3.6.2.3); genitival-of constructions precede the

head (sec. 3.3.3 and 3.6.1.3). Moreover, as we will see in chapter 5, relative clauses precede the main clause.

At the sentence level, the normal order is SOV.

(13) naul-pang1 in sa-zuu3 Ø a man1
 child ERG rat ABS 3NOM catch

'The child caught a rat'

Permutation is allowed when there is a change in focus. Thus, if the object is in focus, the word order is OSV.

(14) sa-zuu3 Ø naul-pang1 in a man1
 rat ABS child ERG 3NOM catch

'The child caught a rat (not a cat)'

If the event is in focus, then the word order is OVS.

(15) sa-zuu3 Ø a man1 naul-pang1 in
 rat ABS 3NOM catch child ERG

'The child caught a rat!'

Example 15 is rather awkward as it sounds like two incomplete sentences. If there is more than one object, the indirect object precedes the direct object.

(16) pil-tarl in naul-pang2 ip Ø al pee
 old-woman ERG child bag ABS 3NOM give

'The old woman gave the child a bag'

Locatives usually come between the subject and the object,
as in:

- (17) naul-pangl in poonl a? ui Ø al uum3
child ERG outside LOC dog ABS 3NOM chase

'A child is chasing a dog outside'

It is also possible to have both instrument and locative

- (18) naul-pangl in poonl a? tiang inl ui Ø al vuaa
child ERG outside LOC stick OBLQ dog ABS 3NOM hit

'A child is hitting a dog with a stick outside'

Furthermore, one can also get an adverbial NP preceding the
nominative clitic marker, so that a maximally modified sen-
tence would look like

- (19) naul-pangl in poonl a? tiang inl ui
child ERG outside LOC stick OBLQ dog
na deu? inl al vuaa
hard INT OBLQ 3NOM hit

'A child is beating a dog with great force outside'

4.2 Verbal Sentences

Verbs with a single argument (objectless verbs) become the subject/topic in a simple sentence. Such verbs may denote either temporary or permanent states of the subject/object. Verbal sentences in which the subject is patient-of-state are:

(20) a. keel a thiil
goat 3NOM dead

'A goat is dead'

b. ceml a rhiaaml
knife 3NOM sharp

'The knife is sharp'

c. noul al ke?
cup 3NOM broken

'The cup is broken'

The subject can also be dativ-of-state

(21) a. Zoul-a a daml-lou
 -MSUF 3NOM well-NEG

'Zova is sick'

b. pil-tarl a lhiml
 woman-old 3NOM happy

'The old woman is happy'

Sentences where the subject is patient-of-change
 are:

(22) a. in al cim
 house 3NOM collapse

'The house collapsed'

b. tlhaai al troi?
 vegetables 3NOM rotten

'The vegetables have rotted'

c. arl-tuil al keu3
 egg 3NOM hatch

'The egg hatched'

Sometimes the change in the object is brought about by an
external agent or an instrument, as in:

- (23) a. tiang in1 noul kal vo-ke?
stick OBLQ cup lNOM hit-break

'I (hit) broke the cup with a stick'

- b. co-mhe? kal chuum-mhin1
food-side lNOM cook-cooked

'I (completed) cooked the side dishes'

In sentences with both the subject and object, the subject can be dative-of-state, as in:

- (24) a. il paa3 ka rhiaa2
2P father lNOM know

'I know your father'

- b. kong1-kaal ka hong1 thiam2
door lNOM open know

'I know how to open the door'

- c. phuung3-pui-nuu3 ka lhau2
lNOM fear

'I'm afraid of Phungpuinu (an evil witch)'

Other verbs are subject-of-change as in:

- (25) a. lhaa2 ka-n zirl
 song 1NOM-PL learn

'We are learning a song'

- b. caang1 a vong2
 verse 3NOM memorize

'(S)he is memorizing verses'

Still others are object-of-change verbs, as in:

- (26) a. Maaml-il kal ti?-traif
 -FSUF 1NOM frighten

'I frightened Mami'

- b. Ruall-a kal ti-thin-rim3
 -MSUF 1NOM make-angry

'I made Ruala angry'

- c. naul-pang2 kal zir-tiirl
 children 1NOM learnII-make

'I'm teaching the children'

Sometimes the objects of sentences coding a physical change do not directly impact the dative object, as in:

- (27) a. naul-pang2 le?-kha-buu3 kal pee
 child book 1NOM give

'I gave a book to the child'

- b. zual-koul ka-n tiirl
 messenger 1NOM-PL send

'We sent a messenger'

- c. le?-khaa3 ka-n thon3
 letter 3NOM-PL send

'We sent a letter'

4.2.1 Obligatoriness of Subjects

The Mizo subject is obligatory in VP's for all clause types, except imperatives. From the examples in the previous section, one can see that the subject is coded the same, whether it is (semantically) an agent or a patient. Moreover, the subject pronoun clitics are the same for both transitive and intransitive clauses.

The subject NP is obligatory for certain verbs. For instance, meteorological verbs, cannot have a dummy subject like 'it,' as in English.

(28) a. niil a saal
sun 3NOM shining

'The sun is shining'

b. tlhiil a thoo2
wind 3NOM blowing

'The wind is blowing'

c. khual al voot3
place 3NOM cold

'The weather is cold'

Emotive verbs also require a subject, as in

- (29) a. ka lungl a leengl
 1P heart 3NOM gone away
 'My heart is lonesome'
- b. ka luul a hail
 1P head 3NOM dizzy
 'My head is dizzy'
- c. ka khual al sik
 1P place 3NOM fever
 'My disposition is feverish'
- d. kal tra? al chuak3
 1P cryII 3NOM leave
 'My tears are coming out'

4.2.2 Sentences with Obligatory Objects

In transitive sentences, the subject must be represented by the obligatory pronoun clitic in the VP but the full NP's are often omitted, cf. example 33. Some sentences require an object. These are usually change-of-state verbs where the object either causes the change or is affected by the change. The object can be animate or inanimate. Thus, consider:

(30) a. ui al vo-lhum

dog 3NOM beat-dead

'(S)he beat a dog to death'

b. ceml al taat3-rhiaaml

knife 3NOM sharpen-sharp

'(S)he sharpened the knife'

c. tuil a? al tla-lhum

water LOC 3NOM fall-dead

'(S)he fell in the water and died (drowned)'

d. milem a thai2-chiaa

picture 3NOM scratch-bad

'(S)he scratched out the picture'

4.2.3 Objectless Sentences

Objectless sentences are used to express meteorological or emotive conditions as shown already. They can also be stative verbs as in:

- (31) a. a ngoul
 3NOM fair
 '(S)he is fair (complexion)'
- b. a thaaul
 3NOM fat
 '(S)he is fat'
- c. a ngui2
 3NOM sad
 '(S)he is sad/despondent'
- d. a rhiaaml
 3NOM sharp
 'It is sharp'

4.2.4 Copular Sentences

The copular verb nii can be used with NP's, as in:

(32) a. mi-sual al nii
 person-bad 3NOM be

'(S)he is evil'

b. noul-tharl al nii
 cup-new 3NOM be

'It is a new cup'

c. zaan al nii
 night 3NOM be

'It is night time'

4.2.5 Transitive Sentences

Transitive verbs are characterized by the ergative marker in on the agent NP and an absolutive marker Ø on the patient NP. Moreover, the pronoun clitics of which there are types depending on the person of the object---nominative, accusative or absolutive---are found in the NP. Since the NP is optional in most cases it will be shown in parentheses to show that its omission is possible.

- (33) a. (keil in) thing2 Ø ka phurl
 (1PRO ERG) wood ABS 1NOM carry
 'I'm carrying firewood'
- b. (nangl in) thing2 Ø i phurl
 (2PRO ERG) wood ABS 2NOM carry
 'You are carrying firewood'
- c. (al nii3 in) thing2 Ø a phurl
 (3PRO-PL ERG) wood ABS 3NOM carry
 '(S)he is carrying firewood'
- d. Zoul in3 thing2 Ø a phurl
 -FSUF ERG wood ABS 3NOM carry
 'Zovi is carrying firewood'
- e. (Zoul-il le? keil in) thing2 Ø ka-n phurl
 (-FSUF and 1PRO ERG) wood ABS 1NOM-PL carry
 'Zovi and I are carrying firewood'
- f. (Zoul-il le? nangl in) thing2 Ø i-n phurl
 (-FSUF and 2PRO ERG) wood ABS 2NOM-PL carry
 'You and Zovi are carrying firewood'

g. (Zoul-il le? Moil in3) thing2 Ø
 (-FSUF and -FSUF ERG) wood ABS

a-n phurl
 3NOM-PL carry

'Zovi and Mawii are carrying firewood'

Transitive verbs can also have an instrumental object, as in:

(34) a. naul-seen1 Ø puan inl ka tuam2
 baby ABS cloth OBLQ 1NOM wrap

'I wrapped the baby with a blanket'

b. pul-tarl in tiang inl naul-pang Ø al vuaa
 old man ERG stick OBLQ child ABS 3NOM beat

'The old man beat the child with a stick'

4.2.6 Sentences with Instrumental NP's

Instrumental NP's are formally very similar to ergative NP's since the morphological markings are similar. The instrumental marker *inl* functions to mark the instrument and manner adverbs, cf.

- (35) a. tiang inl kal vuaa
 stick OBLQ 1NOM hit
 'I hit (it) with a stick'
- b. tiang2 lian-puil inl kal vuaa
 stick big-very OBLQ 1NOM hit
 'I hit it with a big stick'
- c. tiang inl il vuaa
 stick OBLQ 2NOM hit
 'You hit (it) with a stick'
- d. tiang inl al vuaa
 stick OBLQ 3NOM hit
 '(S)he hit (it) with a stick'
- e. tiang inl mil vuaa
 stick OBLQ 1ABS hit
 '(Someone) hit me with a stick'
- f. tiang inl al vuaa cel
 stick OBLQ 3NOM hit 2ACC
 '(Someone) hit you with a stick'

Note that the oblique marker can occur in both transitive and intransitive sentences. In transitive clauses the instrument is usually something concrete whereas intransitive instruments are generally abstract, as in:

- (36) lungl-ngai?-nal inl al khat
sad-NLZ OBLQ 3NOM full

'(S)he was full of sadness'

4.2.7 Sentences with Locative NP's

Intransitive sentences often have locative NP's, as in:

- (37) a. in-chuungl a? al luut3
house inside LOC 3NOM enter

'(S)he went inside the house'

- b. sa-kor cungl a? a cuaangl
horse top LOC 3NOM ride

'(S)he rode on a horse'

- c. Ail-zooll a? a-n peeml
LOC 3NOM-PL move to

'They moved to Aizawl'

Locatives can also occur in transitive sentences, as in:

(38) a. do?-kaan cungl a? noul \emptyset a huungl
table top LOC cup ABS 3NOM place

'(S)he set the cup on the table'

b. sum2 - mhun a? puan \emptyset al ta?
mortar-place LOC cloth ABS 3NOM weave

'She is weaving on the porch'

c. in-cungl a? puan2 \emptyset a phoul
house-top LOC clothes ABS 3NOM to sun

'(S)he is drying the laundry on the roof'

d. poonl a? bu? \emptyset a-n deengl
outside LOC rice ABS 3NOM-PL pound

'They are pounding rice outside'

4.2.8 Sentences with Three NP's

The following are examples of verbs with three NP's: subject, object and indirect object.

- (39) a. Zoul-in3 ip mil pee
 -FSUF ERG bag 1ABS give
 'Zovi gave me/us a bag'
- b. Zoul-il le? Doul-an3 ip mil pee
 -FSUF and -MSUF ERG bag 1ABS give
 'Zovi and Dova gave me/us a bag'
- c. Zoul in3 ip al pee cel
 -FSUF ERG bag 3NOM give 2ACC
 'Zovi gave you a bag'
- d. Doul-a le? Zoul-in3 ip a2-n pee cel
 -MSUF and -FSUF ERG bag 3NOM-PL give 2ACC
 'Dova and Zovi gave you a bag'
- e. Zoul-in3 ip al pee cel ul
 -FSUF ERG bag 3NOM give 2ACC PL
 'Zovi gave you all a bag'
- f. Zoul-il le? Doul-an3 ip a2-n pee cel ul
 -FSUF and -MSUF ERG bag 3NOM-PL give 2ACC PL
 'Zovi and Dova gave you all a bag'

g. Doul-an3 Zoul-il \emptyset ip al pee
 -MSUF ERG -FSUF ABS bag 3NOM give

'Dova gave Zovi a bag'

h. Doul-an3 ip al pee
 -MSUF ERG bag 3NOM give

'Dova gave someone a bag'

i. Doul-a le? Zoul-in3 Rin3-i \emptyset ip
 -MSUF and -FSUF ERG -FSUF ABS bag
 a2-n pee
 3NOM-PL give

'Dova and Zovi gave Rini a bag'

4.3 Comparision

Comparisions can be made either by comparing two items. The standard of comparision need not be mentioned. Comparatives and superlatives are the most common forms of comparision. These can occur both with the full NP or with just the determiners, as shown in the following sections.

4.3.1 Comparatives

In Mizo, comparisions are made by adding ail inl to the object being compared and zook3 to the standard of comparision.

(40) a. ka2-n in aii1 in1 i2-n in
 1P-PL house than OBLQ 2P-PL house

a1 lian zook3
 3NOM big more

'Your house is bigger than our house'

b. i2-n in a1 lian zook3
 2P-PL house 3NOM big more

'Your house is bigger'

c. hei3 aii1 hian1 soo3 sol a1 trha zook3
 this than DET-OBLQ that DET 3NOM good more

'This here is better than that there'

d. hei3 hil a1 trha zook3
 this DET 3NOM good more

'This one is better'

4.3.2 Superlatives

The construction of superlatives is similar to that of comparitives. The only difference is that the object of comparision is extended to include a whole class of something related to it. This is generally done by adding zong zong3 meaning 'all, the whole set' or zong zong3 ziing1 a? meaning 'amongst all.'

(41) a. hee nuu3 hil nuu3 zong zong3 aiil inl
 DPRO woman DET woman all than OBLQ
 a saangl ber
 3NOM tall most

'This woman is the tallest of all other women'

b. hee nuu3 hil nuu3 zong zong3 aiil inl
 this woman DET woman all than OBLQ
 a saangl
 3NOM tall

'This woman is taller than all the other women'

c. nuu3 zong zong3 ziingl a? hee nuu3 hil
 woman all among LOC this woman DET
 a saangl ber
 3NOM tall most

'This woman is the tallest among all other women'

d. hee nuu3 hil a saangl ber
 this woman DET 3NOM tall most

'This woman is the tallest'

4.4 Questions

There are two types of questions in Mizo: wh-questions and yes-no questions. These two types of questions have two different constructions. Wh-questions are marked in the NP while yes-no questions are marked in the VP. Furthermore, wh-questions have both a wh word and a question word. Both types of questions can be modified to fit the situation. Thus, one can have alternative questions where the speaker offers an alternative to which the hearer must respond. Then there are questions to confirm what has just been said or to clarify a point. These types of questions are rhetorical because the speaker already knows the answer but asks a question to let the hearer know that his or her statement has been understood. Lastly, there are some questions that can be stated only in the negative.

4.4.1 Wh-Questions

The wh-question consists of a question word ngee3 and a wh word such as tuu, for humans, eng, for non-humans and khoi3 for deictic questions. There are several variations of wh-questions. The basic form consists of the wh word followed by the question word. Of these, eng can be modified for questions involving time, reason or purpose, cf. 45c, d. The deictic wh word khoi3 can also be used for questions involving spatial location and spatial direction.

Wh-questions are further classified according to whether or not the subject is known. If the subject is unknown but the object is known, then the question takes the regular class of verbs. Moreover, nominative markers are absent in this type of wh-questions. Therefore, questioned subject and object will be differentiated not only in the NP's but also in the choice of verb stem. Wh-questions with Stem I verbs are shown in the next three examples. All wh-questions have the same construction, the only difference being in the choice of the wh word. Thus, questions involving humans are stated thus:

(42) a. tu ngee3 chuak3

WH Q leave

'Who left?'

b. tuu in ngee3 mil kou

WH ERG Q LABS call

'Who is calling me?'

c. tuu in ngee3 haul cel

WH ERG Q scold 2ACC

'Who scolded you?'

Questions about non-humans have a different wh word but are similar in all other respects.

(43) a. eng ngee3 tiaa
 WH Q fall

'What fell?'

b. eng in ngee3 mi daal2
 WH ERG Q lABS block

'What is blocking/hindering me?'

c. eng in ngee3 daal cel
 WH ERG Q block 2ACC

'What is blocking/hindering you?'

Deictic questions are similar to the other wh-
 quesitons:

(44) a. khoi3 in ngee3 cim
 WH house Q collapse

'Which house collapsed?'

b. khoi3 puan ngee3 kaang
 WH cloth Q burn

'Which cloth burned?'

c. khoi3 laail ngee3 naal
 WH about Q hurt

'Whereabouts does it hurt?'

Stem II verbs are used in these types of questions:

(45) a. tu ngee3 il tha?
 WH Q 2NOM killIII

'Whom did you kill?'

b. eng ngee3 il ti?
 WH Q 2NOM doII

'What are you doing?'

c. eng a? ngee3 il ti?
 WH LOC Q 2NOM doII

'Why did you do it?/For what do you want it?'

d. eng tik a? ngee3 il zo? doonl
 WH time LOC Q 2NOM finishII ASP

'When are you going to finish it?'

e. khi3 a? ngee3 il kal doonl
 WH LOC Q 2NOM goII ASP

'Where are you going?'

f. khi3 hi1 ngee3 ka2-n ei ang2
 WH DET Q 2NOM-PL eatII MOD

'Which one(s) shall we eat?'

A question can be made more specific by including a noun or any of its modifiers such as the ergative marker, oblique marker and the locative marker. Thus, the wh-question word basically replaces the head noun in the NP. In genitival-of constructions, the wh word is relativized as shown by the change in tone from low tone to high tone, see sec. 3.6.1.3. The above can be expanded further, thus:

(46) a. tuul vok ngee3 il lei
 WH-REL pig Q 2NOM buyII

'Whose pig did you buy?'

b. eng al-taan1 ngee3 il ti?
 WH purpose Q 2NOM doII

'For what purpose do you want it?'

c. eng vaang in1 ngee3 i lou2-kal
 WH reason OBLQ Q 2NOM comeII

'For what reason did you come?'

d. eng cen3 ngee3 il caam doon1
 WH length Q 2NOM stayII ASP

'How long are you staying?'

e. khoi3 laail a? ngee3 al tlaak3
 WH around LOC Q 3NOM fallII

'Whereabouts did (s)he fall?'

f. khoi3 vok hil ngee3 il du?
 WH pig DET Q 2NOM wantII

'Which one of these pigs do you want?'

g. hei3 hil tuul ui ngee3 nii
 DPRO DET WH-REL dog Q be

'Whose dog is this dog here?'

h. tuul nheen a? ngee3 il om
 WH-REL with LOC Q 2NOM liveII

'Who are you living/staying with?'

4.4.2 Yes-No Questions

Yes-no questions are simpler than the wh-questions. This type of question requires only one question marker em2 at the end of the sentence with the verb taking the stem appropriate for its clause type. Thus, for example:

(47) a. i daml em2

2NOM well Q

'Are you well?' (traditional greeting)

b. i2-n lou-kall doonl em2

2NOM-PL come ASP Q

'Are you planning to come?'

c. vok i2-n vul? doonl em2

pig 2NOM-PL raise ASP Q

'Are you going to raise pigs?'

d. coo3 i-n eil angl em2

food 2NOM-PL eat MOD Q

'Will you be eating?'

4.4.3 Alternative Questions

Wh-questions take the prefix al- when the question is about one particular item out of a larger set, cf. example 118 in chapter 3.

(48) a. al-tuu tel ngee3 lou-kall
 of-WH EX Q come

'Who all came (out of those we invited)?'

b. al-eng tel ngee3 il lei
 of-WH EX Q 2NOM buyII

'Which ones/what all did you buy?'

c. al-eng khul ngee3 ka-n peek3 ang2
 of-WH DET Q 1NOM-PL giveII MOD

'Which of the things down there should we give?'

The above types can sometimes be ambiguous. For instance, example 48b can also mean 'Which of these did you buy for him/her?'

4.4.4 Echo Questions

The simplest form of echo questions is an unmodified wh-question, following a statement. The question 'who?' or 'what?' is inserted mainly for the speaker's benefit. This type of question uses moo2 instead of ngee3.

(49) a. a ei?2 lou. tuu moo2

3NOM answer NEG. who Q

'He did not answer.' 'Who (didn't answer)?'

b. a2-n vok a boul. tuu

3P-PL pig 3NOM lost. who

'Their pig is lost.' 'Whose (pig is lost)?'

c. a uil a-n zongl. tuul ui2

3P dog 3NOM-PL search. WH-REL dog

'They are looking for his dog.' 'Whose dog (....)?'

With yes-no echo questions, the speaker must repeat part of the question in the answer, as in:

(50) a. i2-n zin doonl em2

2NOM-PL travel ASP Q

'Are you going on a trip?'

kei-nii3 moo3. doonl lou ang2

1PRO-PL Q . ASP NEG MOD

'Us?' 'We won't (be going on a trip).'

4.4.5 Requests

Requests are similar to questions except they have no morphological markings of other question forms. The question is indicated by intonation and by the word oo3 which means 'yes.'

(51) a. ka kali ang oo3

1NOM go MOD yes

'Can I go, (yes)?'

b. ka eil ang oo3

1NOM eat MOD yes

'Can I eat this (yes)?'

The above forms are frequently used by children when requesting permission for something they are normally allowed to do.

4.4.6 Positive vs Negative Questions

Questions can be stated so that the expected answer has to be either in the affirmative or negative. To indicate that the interrogator is expecting a positive reply a form of the verb to be nii with the yes-no question marker em2 is used. Another common tag is el-lou which means something like 'Is it really?' Unlike English there is no rever-

sal of polarity; the tag is basically on the question marker itself.

(52) a. co-ei il buat3-sai? em2 nii
 food 2NOM prepare Q be

'You are preparing food (supper), aren't you?'

b. rua? a suurl el-lou
 rain 3NOM rains Q

'Is it raining, really?'

Questions can also be stated so that the answer has to be in the negative, as in

(53) a. ka kor2 i la1 trhuil lou em2 nii
 1P dress 2NOM yet sew NEG Q be

'You have not sewn my dress yet, have you?'

b. hei3 hil il du? lou em2 nii
 this DET 2NOM want NEG Q be

'You don't want this, do you?'

Sometimes lou em2 nii is shortened to loom2 nii so that one has,

(54) ka2-n in-mhu to? al ni loom2 nii
 1NOM-PL meet already 3NOM be NEG-Q be

'We have met already, haven't we?'

The wh-question has a special negation form na-ngee3 which is sometimes used in place of the negated yes-no question. Thus, we can have

(55) i lal thou2 na-ngee3
 2NOM yet arise NEG-Q

'You still have not gotten up, have you?'

instead of

(56) i lal thou2 lou em2 nii
 2NOM yet arise NEG Q be

'You still have not gotten up, have you?'

Sometimes the speaker will assume that the other person does not want to do something, in which case the yes-no question word is replaced by el-mo, which means something like 'perhaps.'

(57) a. min biak3 il caak3 el-mo
 lABS speakII 2NOM desire perhaps

'Perhaps you (don't) desire to speak to me'

b. zin il du? el-mo
 travelII 2NOM desire perhaps

'Perhaps you'd like to go on a trip'

4.5 Imperatives

There are two types of imperatives, one I call standard imperative since this is the normal form; and the other I call familiar imperative since it is used more among close friends and family. The two have been called 'strong imperative' and 'polite/weak imperative' but I will show that this is not the case since the politeness or impoliteness of a request is indicated by the tone of voice. The appropriateness of the request within the social context also determines if an imperative will be considered polite or impolite.

4.5.1 Standard Imperative

The standard imperative is the one used most often. In its simplest form, an imperative consists of the verb followed by the imperative marker ro? as in

(58) a. trhul ro?

sit IMP

'Sit down'

b. lou-kall ro?

come IMP

'Come here!'

c. muangl tee inl kall ro?

slowly very OBLQ go IMP

'Go slowly!'

d. khal ta? kha-anl trhul ro?

DPRO LOC DET-OBLQ sit IMP

'Sit over there!'

The plural form is the same as the plural for the second person accusative, thus:

(59) lou leengl ro? uul

hither visit IMP PL

'You all come and visit us!'

4.5.2 Familiar Imperative

The other imperative te? is used in a similar manner

(60) a. trhul te?

sit IMP

'Sit!'

b. lou-kall te?

come IMP

'Come here!'

The plural form is the same as the other imperative, thus

(61) trhul te? uul

sit IMP PL

'You all sit!'

The standard imperative is certainly not less polite than the familiar because one is expected to say example 58a to a guest who has just entered the house. On the other hand, one would say example 60a to a child who is misbehaving. Thus the politeness or impoliteness of an imperative depends entirely on the context. The second form does not carry as much force as the first one and is usually used among close

friends and relatives. For instance, children use it when they are trying to get the attention of their parents or relatives; mothers use it when they are annoyed with their children. An imperative can be softened by using the plural form but even this is not necessarily more polite.

4.5.3 Weak Imperatives

Weak imperatives sound more like a direct statement to a person. This form is used to encourage or goad a person. The weak imperative is indicated by ta cee3 which roughly means 'I say to you.'

(62) kall ta cee3
go IMP 2ACC

'Go (why don't you)!'

The negative weak imperative is indicated by ma-

(63) kall ma-ta cee3
go NEG-IMP 2ACC

'Don't (bother to) go!'

Another form of the imperative is stated with the future-irrealis mode markers. Thus we get:

(64) a. lou leengl ang cel
 hither visit MOD 2ACC

'Come and visit us!'

b. i2-n lou leengl doonl niaal
 2NOM-PL hither visit ASP be-FP

'You will have to visit us some day'

4.6 Optatives

Optatives are indicated by adding sel after any one of the imperatives mentioned above. Thus one gets

(65) a. trhul ro? sel
 sit IMP OPT

'Let him sit!'

b. thi ro? sel
 die IMP OPT

'Let him die!'

c. mul te? sel
 sleep IMP OPT

'Let him sleep (it's about time)!'

4.7 Prohibitives

Prohibitives are the same for both negative standard imperative negative optatives. Prohibition is indicated by using su? in place of the standard imperative form.

(66) a. kall su?
go PROHIB

'Don't go!'

b. kall su? sel
go PROHIB OPT

'(S)he should not go/Don't let him(her) go!'

For the negative familiar imperative su? is simply added after the imperative, as in

(67) kall te? su?
go IMP PROHIB

'Don't you go!'

4.8 Hortatives

Hortatives can be stated in any of the following ways:

(68) a. i kall ang uul
 2NOM go MOD HORT

'Let us go!'

b. i ti lou mail ang uul
 2NOM do NEG just MOD HORT

'Let's not do it!'

c. i kall te? ang2
 2NOM go IMP MOD

'Let's go (it's time)!'

d. kall ang2 mhiang3
 go MOD sure

'Let us go then (if you want to)!'

e. kall ang2
 go MOD

'Let's go (now)!'

4.9 Performatives

These are as follows

(69) a. kal nei al-cel
 lNOM marry PERFM

'I now marry you'

b. kal fak al-cel
 lNOM praise PERFM

'I praise you now'

Some speakers combine performatives with adjectives or adverbial particles to express their annoyance or pleasure. Depending on the modifier that the speaker uses, this type of statement can have the force of an expletive. Thus, many people use it negatively to insult someone else. The positive form is generally reserved for small children, and these are equivalent to the expression in English, 'How cute!'

The following are some examples of negative usage. Some of the expressions are difficult to translate into English.

(70) a. te?-rok1 al-cel
 impertinent PERFM

'How presumptuous of you!'

b. tei3-vet1 al-cel
 persistent PERFM

'You are such a nuisance!'

Similarly, one can also express pleasure, as in:

(71) a. te?-reu?1 al-cel
 small PERFM

'How cute (of you)!'

b. liam1 liam1 al-cel
 talking in a cute way PERFM

'You have a cute way of talking'

4.10 Conclusion

This chapter has examined the structure of simple sentences in Mizo. Transitive sentences are distinguished from intransitive sentences by the ergative-absolutive case markers in the NP and a mixed nominative-accusative and absolutive clitics on the VP.

The two types of questions: wh-questions and yes-no questions were also examined. These two types of questions have different constructions. Wh- questions have both the wh word and the question word in the NP, where the wh word replaces the head noun in the NP. In contrast, yes-no question words have the question word in the VP; yes-no questions can also be stated in the negative. A further complication to the wh-question is the use of the Stem II verb form when the object is unknown. The only time a Stem I verb is used in a wh-question is when the object is known but the subject is not.

There are several types of imperatives, these along with optatives, hortatives and performatives have basically the same construction.

CHAPTER V
COMPLEX SENTENCES

Complex sentences generally involve embedded clauses. The most common of these is the relative clause which has also received some attention in the past, cf. Hillard (1977) and Lehman (1975a). In this section, I will build on what has already been said about the relative clause in Mizo and add further insights to it.

5.1 Relative Clauses

According to Hillard (1977), subjects in Mizo relativize differently than objects and oblique NP's relativize differently than either objects or subjects. Moreover, subjects relativize obligatorily with participles and objects relativize with sentential constructions. The whole issue of relative clauses in Mizo will be better understood if one looks at it in terms of what happens to main clauses when they become embedded in another clause. In the attributive construction the only changes to the NP's is that the subject or object is missing or phonologically null. In the verb the change is more dramatic, that is, Stem II forms are used when the object is relativized. Furthermore, an incor-

porated object can be optionally followed by the relativizer -al and sometimes -il if the object is female. The subject in the relative clause can be coreferent with the subject of the main clause (transitive or intransitive), as in:

- (1) a. [nu-lal thing phurl] (-il) khal al trap
 [maiden wood carry] (-REL) DET 3NOM cry

'The maiden who was carrying wood is crying'

- b. [nu-lal trap] kha-an3 thing2 Ø a phurl
 [maiden cry] DET-ERG wood ABS 3NOM carry

'The maiden who was crying is carrying wood'

When these are not co-referent, the following are possible:
 The subject of the relative clause can be either the subject or object of the sentence.

(2) a. [nu-laal (eem-al) thing phur1]
 [maiden (basket-OBLQ) wood carry]

(-il) kha-an3 mil mhuu

(-RFL) DET-ERG 1ABS see

'The maiden who was carrying wood (in a basket) saw me'

b. [nu-laal (eem-al) thing phur1]
 [maiden (basket-OBLQ) wood carry]

(-il) khal Ø kal mhuu

(-REL) DET ABS 1NOM see

'I saw a maiden carrying wood (in a basket)'

Similarly, the direct object or the indirect object in the relative clause can be either subject or object of the sentence.

(3) a. [nu-lal (eem-al) thing2 phur?]
 [maiden (basket-OBLQ) wood carryII]

kha-an3 mil del?

DET-ERG 1ABS fall on

'The wood that the maiden carried (in a basket)
 fell on me'

b. [nu-lal (eem-al) thing2 phur?]
 [maiden (basket-OBLQ) wood carryII]

khal Ø kal mhuu

DET ABS 1NOM see

'I saw the wood that the maiden carried (in a basket)'

Finally, the instrument of the relative clause can be either
 the subject or the object of the sentence.

(4) a. [nu-lal thing2 phur?-nal eem]
 [maiden wood carryII-NLZ basket]

kha-an3 mil del?

DET-ERG 1ABS fall on

'The basket that the maiden carried wood in
 fell on me'

b. [nu-lal thing2 phur?-nal eem]
 [maiden wood carryII-NLZ basket]

khal Ø kal mhuu

DET ABS 1NOM see

'I saw the basket in which the maiden
 carried wood'

While it is true that relative clauses employ complex attributes the two constructions are not always the same. Thus, compare:

(5) a. Complex attribute

sa-zuu3 naul-pang man3 khal
 rat child catchII DET

'The child-caught rat'

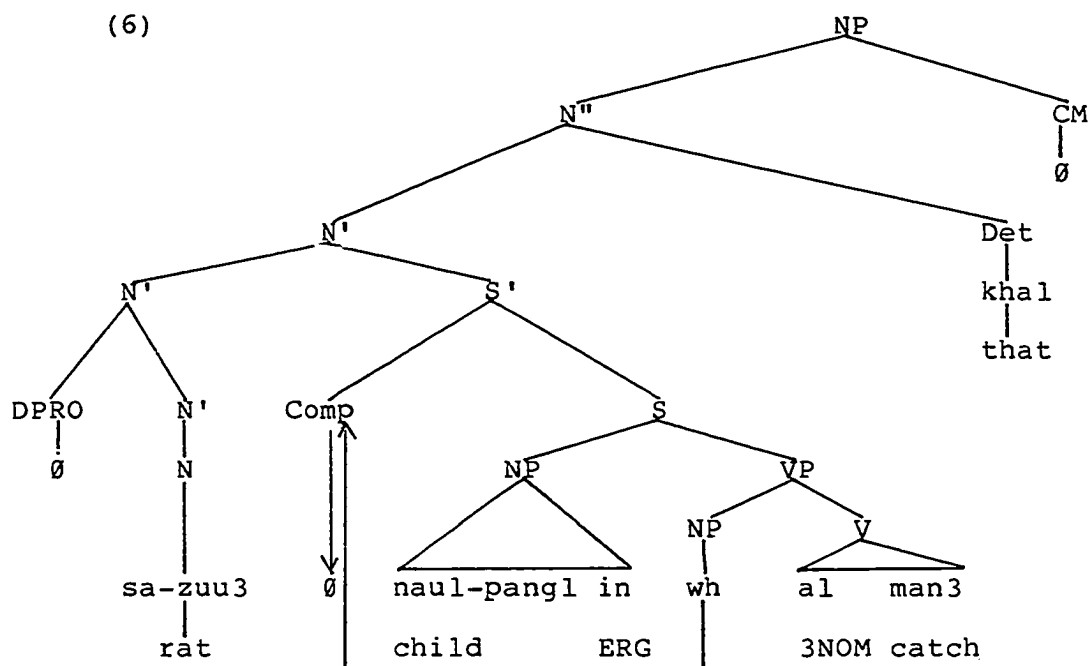
b. Relative clause

sa-zuu3 [naul-pang1 in a1 man3] khal
 rat [child ERG 3NOM catchII] DET

'The rat which the child caught'

Both constructions can be employed in relative clauses and either can be used to modify a head noun in the main clause.

Thus, the complex attribute is a relative clause with the wh component deleted.



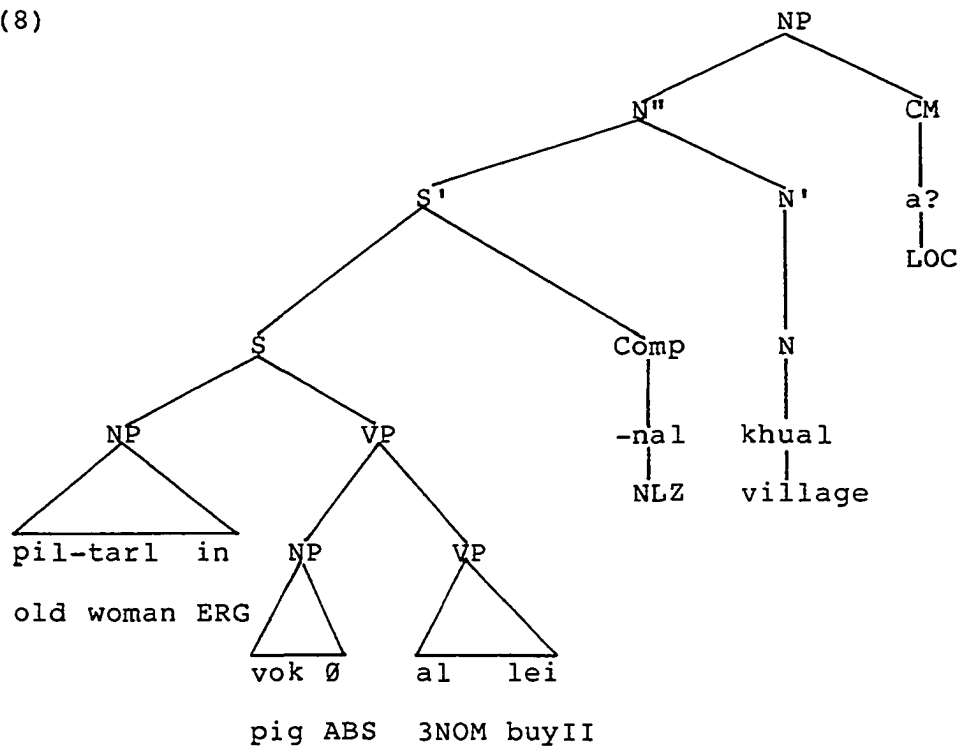
'the rat that the child caught'

The case markers which are the primary links between the NP and the remainder of the sentence are absent in the complex attribute construction. Moreover, the syntactic linkage between the NP's and the verbs through the system of clitic pronouns is also absent in the complex attribute. These clues suggest that the complex attribute construction is not syntactic at all. Thus, in the following examples, a and c are examples of complex attributes; b and d are examples of full relative clauses.

- (7) a. [sa-zu naul-pang man3] khal a thiil
 [rat child catchII] DET 3NOM die
 'The child-caught-rat died'
- b. [sa-zuu3 naul-pangl in al man3] khal
 [rat child ERG 3NOM catchII] DET
 a thiil
 3NOM die
 'The rat that the child caught died'
- c. [sa-zu naul-pang man3] khal kal mhuu
 [rat child catchII] DET 1NOM see
 'I saw the child-caught-rat'
- d. [sa-zuu3 naul-pangl in al man3] khal
 [rat child ERG 3NOM catchII] DET
 kal mhuu
 1NOM see
 'I saw the rat that the child caught'

In Mizo, the attribute can sometimes precede the head noun. When the relative clause modifier is formed on a locative, then the attributive sentence uses a Stem II on the verb followed by a nominalizer linking particle. The structure of the construction may be:

(8)



'the village where the old woman bought a pig'

Thus, the following sentences illustrate this construction.

- (9) a. pil-tarl vok lei-nal khuaal a? ka zin2
 old woman pig buyII-NLZ village LOC 1NOM visit

'I visited the old-woman-bought-pig village'

- b. pil-tarl in vok al lei-nal khuaal a?
 old woman ERG pig 3NOM buyII-NLZ village LOC

ka zin2

1NOM visit

'I visited the village where the old woman bought
 the pig'

5.2 Complex Attributes

Complex attributes are very common in Mizo. The attribute generally follows the head noun it qualifies.

- (10) a. ui al kol?

dog 3NOM fierce

'The dog is fierce'

- b. ui2 kol? khal

dog fierce DET

'That fierce dog'

As one would predict from cross-linguistic data, such attributes are incorporated into the higher sentence. The embedded clause loses its status as a sentence as it loses its subject clitic and case markers but retains the absolutive clitic marker and the accusative clitic marker.

(11) Main Clause

a. lall in mi haaul
 chief ERG 1ABS scold

'The chief scolded me'

b. Complex Attribute

lall mi-haaul-tuu3 khal
 chief 1ABS-scold-AGT DET

'the chief who scolded me'

The construction of embedded clauses depend on what is being relativized. Thus, a transitive clause, like

(12) naul-pang in sa-zuu3 Ø a manl
 child ERG rat ABS 3NOM catch

'A child caught a rat'

displays the following constructions when the subject is relativized.

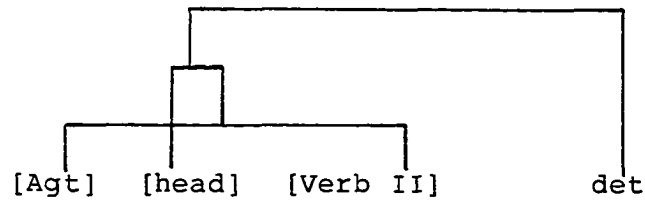
- (13) a. naul-pang2 sa-zu man1 khal
 child rat catch DET
 'the child who caught the rat'
- b. sa-zu man1 naul-pang khal
 rat catch child DET
 'the rat-catch child'

However, when the object is relativized, the word-order possibilities are different.

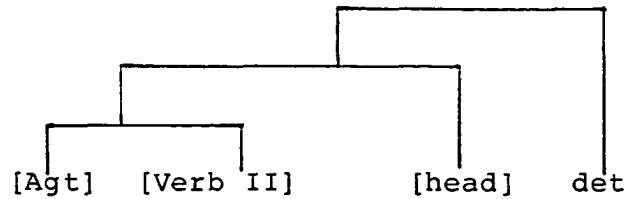
- (14) a. nau-pang2 sa-zu man3 khal
 child rat catchII DET
 'the rat that the child caught'
- b. naul-pang man3 sa-zuu3 khal
 child catchII rat DET
 'the child-caught rat'
- c. sa-zuu3 naul-pang man3 khal
 rat child catchII DET
 'the rat caught by the child'

In other words, when the object relativizes, we get the following possible constructions:

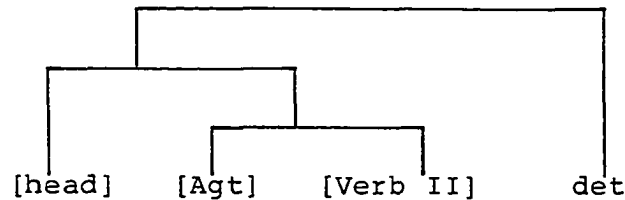
(15) a.



b.



c.

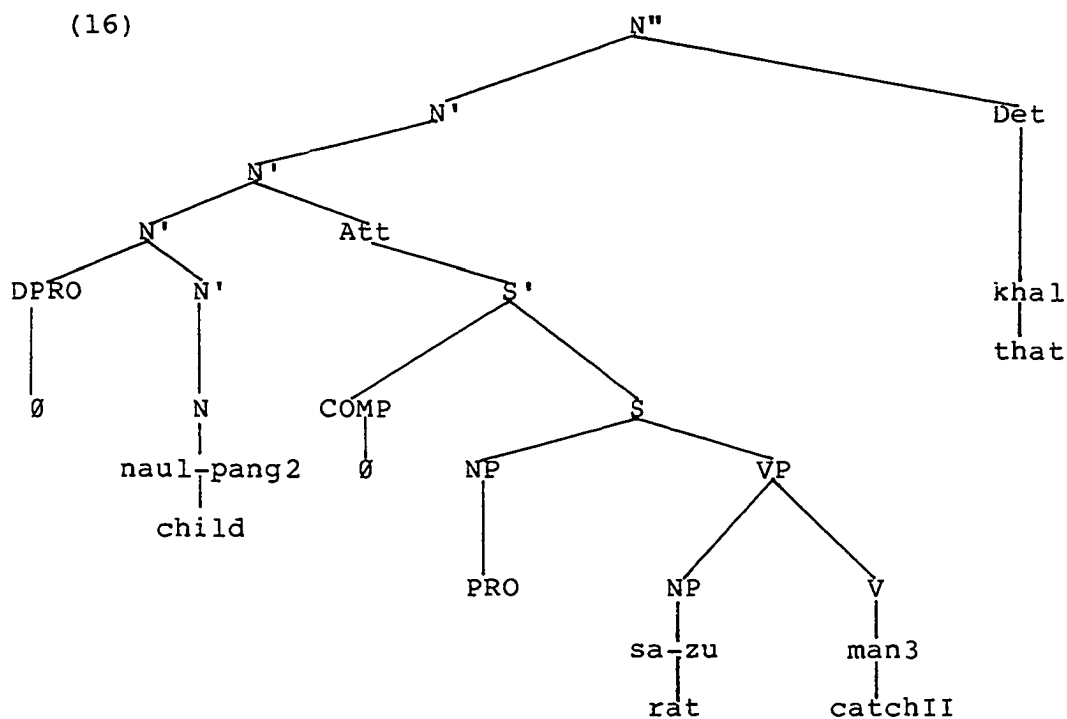


d. *head Verb II Agt det



In the above examples, d is * because the verb cannot precede a constituent from its own embedded sentence. Furthermore, the tone sandhi shows that a is different from either b or c. That is, a is object incorporation because the word for rat shortens word finally, so that we get sa-zu and not sa-zuu3, as in b and c.

From the above examples (14a, b and 15a-c), we can deduce the following structure:



'the rat that the child caught'

Instruments can also be relativized, so that

(17) nu-laal in eem inl thing2 a phur1
 maiden ERG basket OBLQ wood 3NOM carry

'The maiden is carrying wood in a basket'

becomes

(18) [nu-laal thing2 phur?-nal] eem khal
 [maiden wood carryII-NLZ] basket DET

'The maiden-carried-wood in basket'

Locations can also be relativized, also using Stem II forms.

- (19) [pil-tarl vok lei-nal] khuaal khal
 [old woman pig buyII-NLZ] village DET
 'the old woman-bought-pig village'

Benefactives can also be relativized.

- (20) nu-laal thing mil phur? sak-tuu3 khal
 maiden wood LABS carryII BEN-AGT DET
 'The maiden who carried wood for me'

Extended attributes are used to describe the characteristics of some animate being, as in:

- (21) a. mi-bum3-mhang al nii
 person-deceive-habit 3NOM be
 '(S)he is a deceiver'
- b. doot-soi-ciingl mii3 al nii
 lies-say-habit person 3NOM be
 '(S)he is one who is in the habit of lying'

c. sa-aarl-laak3-mhangl al nii
 animal-chicken-take-habit 3NOM be

'The animal is one that is in the habit of
 stealing chickens'

d. ui2-mii3-se?-ciingl al nii
 dog-person-bite-habit 3NOM be

'It is a dog that is in the habit of
 biting people'

The above examples are very similar to the so-called
 'passive' construction, as in:

(22) a. doot3-soi-mhang inl a om2
 lies-say-habit OBLQ 3NOM exist

'(S)he was in the habit of telling lies'

b. aarl-laak3-mhangl inl a om2
 chicken takeII-habit OBLQ 3NOM exist

'It was in the habit of stealing chickens'

c. mii3-huat3-mhangl inl a om2
 people-hateII-habit OBLQ 3NOM exist

'(S)he was in the habit of hating people'

However, these examples sound very unnatural and are usually rejected by native speakers. The preferred form is the one listed previously.

The above constructions are unacceptable for semantic reasons. The word om2 refers to a state that covers a considerable period of time. Thus, if one is to use this construction, it is better to use a stative verb in the embedded constructions. That is, there is nothing wrong with a statement like:

(23) lhiml tak inl a2-n om2
happy INT OBLQ 3NOM PL exist

'They lived happily'

But a sentence like

(24) ui2-se? inl ka om2
dog-biteII OBLQ 1NOM exist

'I am bitten by a dog'

leaves much to be desired as it implies that the person is perpetually bitten by a dog.

Complex attributes are also used in relative clause constructions. The complex attributes can be simple like the examples given above, or they can be more complex, as in:

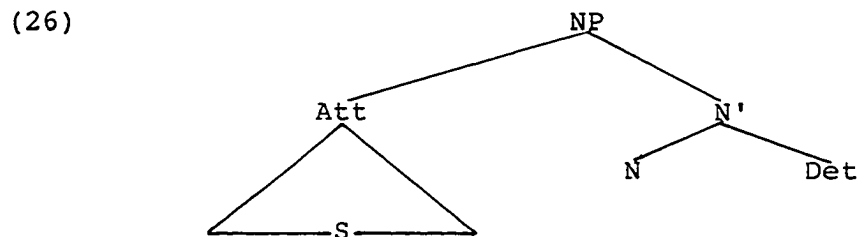
- (25) a. nulal-thing-phurl khal a lou leengl
 young woman-wood-carry DET 3NOM hither visit

'The maiden who was carrying firewood came to visit'

- b. chuaar al ka thill da?-trhat khal a boull
 shelf LOC-REL 1P thing put-goodII DET 3NOM lost

'The thing that I put away on the shelf is lost'

Thus, the structure of complex attributes may be as follows:



5.3 NP Complements

Mizo does not have a separate construction for NP complements. Their construction is similar to relative clauses, mentioned in the preceding section. In sentences with NP complements, the first sentence is followed by ti?, which is the second stem of the verb 'to do/say' and the determiner cul. The higher sentence usually has a VP with stative verbs, such as verbs of cognition.

(27) a. naul-pang1 in sa-zuu3 a man1
 child ERG rat 3NOM catch

ti? cul ka rhiaa2
 sayII DET 1NOM know

'I know that the child caught a rat'

b. naul-pang1 in sa-zuu3 a man1
 child ERG rat 3NOM catch

ti? cul al dik
 sayII DET 3NOM true

'It is true that the child caught a rat'

If the first sentence has complex attributes, it is followed by the copular verb al nii, 'it is.'

(28) naul-pang2 sa-zu man1-tuu3 al nii
 child rat catch-AGT 3NOM be

ti? cul ka rhiaa2
 sayII DET 1NOM know

'I know that (s)he is the child-rat-catcher'

5.4 Conjoined Sentences

Sentences can be conjoined by the non-final particle *aal*.

- (29) a. *in-chuungl a? al luut3 aal coo3 a ei*
 house-inside LOC 3NOM enter NFP food 3NOM eat

'(S)he went inside the house and ate'

- b. *tiang al laa aal ui al vuaa*
 stick 3NOM take NFP dog 3NOM beat

'(S)he took a stick and beat the dog'

Sentences with a cause-effect relationship will have a Stem II verb in the first sentence. In if-then constructions, the last sentence (the consequence) will have the mode marker *ang2*. The conjunctions are either *cuaanl* meaning 'if,' and *al-vaang inl* meaning 'because.' Both of these conjunctions are oblique markers preceded by an anaphoric determiner or a reason word. Moreover, the word for because *al-vaang* has the subject pronoun marker as a prefix *al-* meaning, in this case, 'one out of many others' followed by *vaang* meaning 'reason,' that is, 'one out of many reasons.'

(30) a. Zoul-il ip il peek3 cuaanl a loom2 ang2
 -FSUF bag 2NOM giveII if 3NOM happy MOD

'If you give Zovi a bag she will be happy'

b. Zoul-i ip il peek3 al-vaang inl a loom2
 -FSUF bag 2NOM giveII because OBLQ 3NOM happy

'Zovi is happy because you gave her a bag'

c. thingl a? il loon cuaanl il tlaa ang2
 tree LOC 2NOM climbII if 2NOM fall MOD

'If you climb the tree you will fall'

d. thingl a? il loon al-vaang inl il tlaa
 tree LOC 2NOM climbII because OBLQ 2NOM fall

'You fell because you climbed the tree'

e. ka-puan il laak3 cuaanl kal veel ang cel
 1P cloth 2NOM takeII if 1NOM hit MOD 2ACC

'I'll hit you if you take my cloth'

f. ka puan il laak3 al-vaang inl
 1P cloth 2NOM takeII because OBLQ

kal veel (doonl) cel

1NOM hit (ASP) 2ACC

'I (will) hit you because you took my cloth'

5.5 Cross-modally Conjoined Sentences

An imperative followed by another imperative or prohibitive or a statement takes the special marker lal so that we get:

(31) a. zongl lal il mhuu ang2

seek XM 2NOM see MOD

'Seek and you will find it'

b. val kall lal val pe ro?

thither go XM thither give IMP

'Go thither and give (this)'

c. chuak3 lal lou2 kiir2 to? su?

leave XM hither return COMP PROHIB

'Leave and don't ever come back!'

The plural form is la-ngl, as in:

(32) a. zongl ul la-ngl i2-n mhuu ang2

seek PL XM-PL 2NOM-PL see MOD

'You all seek and you will/should find it'

b. val kall ul lal-ng val pe ro? uul

thither go PL XM-PL thither give IMP PL

'You all go thither and give (this)'

One can also have a hortative instead of an imperative, as in:

(33) a. zongl il lal-ng ka2-n mhuu ang2
 seek 2NOM XM-PL 1NOM-PL find MOD

'Let's look for it and then we will find it'

b. val kall il lal-ng i val pee ang
 thither go 2NOM XM-PL 2NOM thither give MOD

'Let us go thither and give (this)'

5.6 Reduplication

Reduplication is common in Mizo. It is distributive and occurs mainly for iconic purposes, at all levels of the grammar, words, clauses and simple sentences.

Words are reduplicated for several reasons. They can indicate a large set, as in:

(34) al-trhaa trhaa3 kal du?
 it-good good 1NOM want

'I want the best ones'

If its is an active verb, it can indicate that the action is repeated:

(35) a. a eil a eil
 3NOM eat 3NOM eat

'(S)he ate and ate'

b. a kall a kall
 3NOM go 3NOM go

'(S)he went back and forth'

Reduplication can also express degree or intensity.

(36) a. tleem1 tleem1 in1 a eil
 little little OBLQ 3NOM eat

'(S)he ate a little at a time'

b. zoi zoi3 in1 a kall
 slow slow OBLQ 3NOM go

'(S)he went very slowly'

c. rang2 tak tak1 in1 a2-n tlaan2
 fast INT INT OBLQ 3NOM-PL run

'They all ran very very fast'

d. thill trha tak tak1 al hoon
 thing nice INT INT 3NOM bring home

'(S)he brought home (many) very nice things'

The last examples also have a sense of increased number, that is, there is an increase not only in degree but also in physical number.

The reduplicated form is the norm for a few words such as zong zong3. If such words are said in their non-reduplicated form, it implies incompleteness. Thus, reduplicated seems to indicate completeness.

(37) a. hei3 zong zong3 hil mi pee
 DPRO all DET LABS give

'(S)he gave me all of this'

b. hei3 zong hil mi pee
 DPRO all DET LABS give

'(S)he only gave me this much'

In the above examples, b indicates that there was more but the speaker received only part of that.

5.7 Quotes

Mizo does not distinguish between direct quotes and indirect quotes structurally. Because they can be ambiguous, it is often necessary to identify the speaker and the subject in the quote. All quotes are direct quotes, followed by kal tii 'I say,' or il tii 'you say,' or al tii '(s)he said.'

(38) a. trhul ro? al tii (cel)
 sit IMP 3NOM say (2ACC)

'"Sit down," (s)he said (to you)'

b. ka lou-kall doonl al tii
 1NOM come ASP 3NOM say

'"I am coming," (s)he said'

c. a lou-kall doonl al tii
 3NOM come ASP 3NOM say

'(S)he said that (s)he was coming'

d. kal nuu3 in Doul-a Ø a lou-kall doonl
 1P mother ERG -MSUF ABS 3NOM come ASP

al tii
 3NOM say

'My mother said that Dova is coming'

Emotions and opinions are also expressed similarly

(39) a. voot3 kal tii
cold 1NOM do

'I feel cold'

b. trhaa kal tii
nice 1NOM do

'I think it is nice'

c. rhe-om2 kal tii
uncomfortable 1NOM do

'I feel uncomfortable'

5.8 Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with the syntactic structure of complex sentences, such as complex attribute, relative clauses, NP complements, conjoined sentences, quotes and reduplication. Of these, the most complex is the relative clause construction. It is very similar to complex attributes in that it uses Stem II verbs when the object is relativized. The similarity ends here. In the attributive construction, the attribute follows the noun but in the relative clause construction it precedes it. The only time the attribute precedes the head noun is when the relative clause modifier is formed on a locative and a nominalizer

links the two. The other constructions are fairly simple and do not involve the Stem II verb forms.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The major purpose of this thesis was to lay down some preliminary rules about Mizo syntax. Beginning with chapter 2, I have mentioned some of the major characteristics of the language, referring to related works when possible. Some of the major findings were as follows:

Mizo phonology should probably be analyzed in terms of the syllable as many of the phonological rules are affected by the structure of the syllable. For instance, there are two types of contour tone sandhi rules depending on the length of the nucleus and the syllable final. Another problem was that of the final glottal, which I have suggested should be treated as a feature of tone rather than the segments. Finally, I have shown how phonological rules relate to the grammar, that is, concerning word boundaries, what tone sandhi rules provide the best tests.

In chapter 3 I have shown the constituents of the NP's and VP's and how these relate to each other as a whole. I have provided NP and VP charts, using X bar syntax. In my examples I have provided a wide variety of acceptable and unacceptable constructions.

In chapter 4 I have given examples of verbal sentences, questions, imperative, hortatives, optatives and performatives. I have also illustrated the mixed ergative system, which displays two different systems in the NP's and VP's. In NP's the ergative marker is in and the absolutive marker is ∅. Furthermore, the case markers are the highest in the NP. The VP's display a nominative-accusative system with pre clitics. This system is complex as the markings depend on the person of the object. Thus, if the object is first person, it is marked with the first person absolutive clitic. The second person has a full set of both nominative and accusative markers. The third person has zero for the accusative clitic marking.

In chapter 5 I have compared and contrasted complex attributes and relative clauses. These two constructions are very similar sometimes. I have tried to explain more clearly the structure of the relative clause as there are some unresolved issues in this area. My analysis is different from that of Hillard's (1977) who sometimes mixes complex attributes with relative clause constructions. I have also tried to provide more realistic examples.

In conclusion, it may be said that Mizo syntax is complicated and there is much left to be done. Comparisons with other languages have not been too helpful since the available data is usually inadequate. I am also more inter-

ested in showing the structure of Mizo rather than showing its relationship to other languages. In my analysis I have tried to relate my findings to Tibeto-Burman languages and language universals.

The study has been worthwhile and the results should be of interest to linguistics, particularly those in the area of Tibeto-Burman linguistics.

APPENDIX A

MAPS

Figure 1: MAP OF MIZORAM

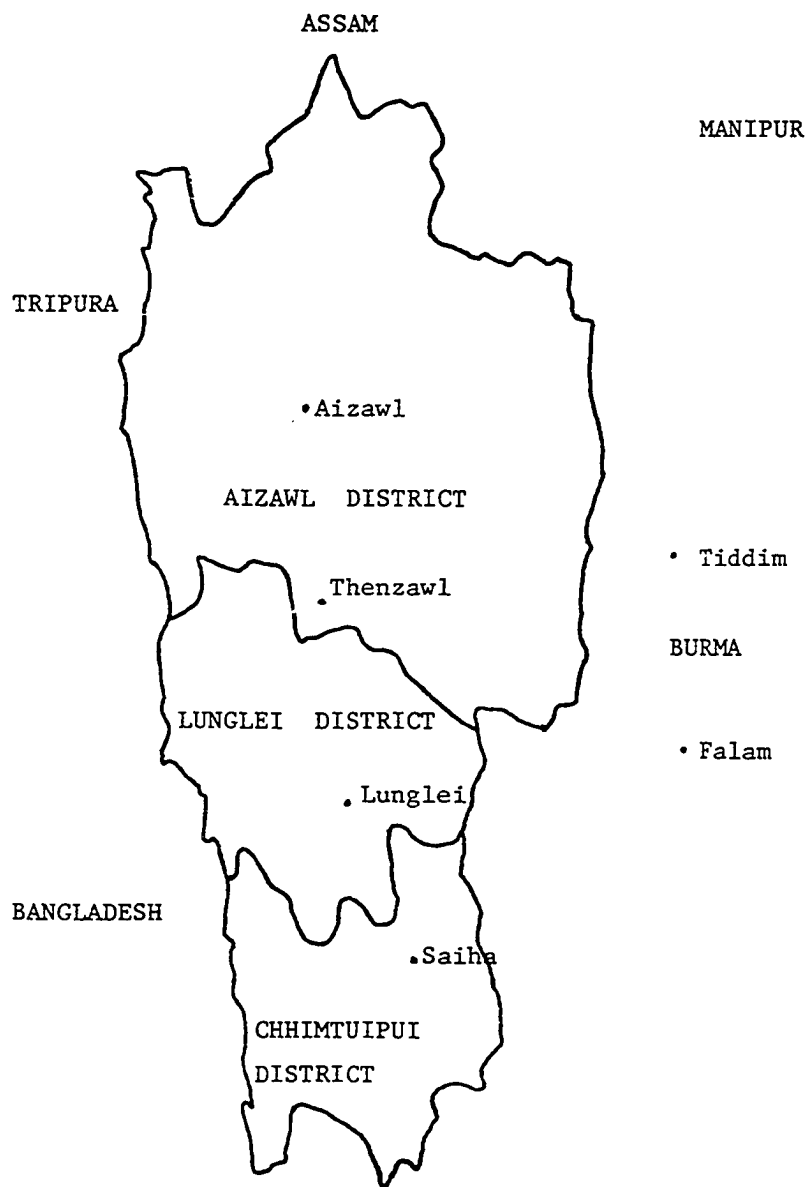


Figure 2: MAP OF INDIA



APPENDIX B
FACTS AND FIGURES

Table 5: CURRENT FIGURES

Area:

<u>Total</u>	8,432	21,081
Aizawl	5,035	12,588
Lunglei	1,814	4,536
Chhimituipui	1,583	3,957

Population (1981 census):

<u>Total</u>	493,757
Aizawl	340,692
Lunglei	83,939
Chhimituipui	69,126

Literacy rate (1981 census)	59.88 per cent
Educational Institutions (1980)	1,081
Teachers in educational institutions (1980)	4,158
Students in educational institutions (1980)	130,497

Table 6: GEOGRAPHY

Elevation:

Average 3,000 ft. (914 m.)

Highest: Phawngpui (Blue Mountain) 7,103 ft. (2,165 m.)

Annual Rainfall:

Range: 70 in. (200 cm.) to 150 in. (350 cm.)

Aizawl: 83 in. (208 cm.)

Lunglei: 140 in. (350 cm.)

Temperature:

Winter: 53° F to 70° F (11.8° C to 21.3° C)

Summer: 68° F to 86° F (20.4° C to 29.8° C)

Road distances:

Aizawl to Silchar 108 mi. (180 km.)

Aizawl to Lunglei 150 mi. (240 km.)

Major Rivers:

Tlawng (Dhaleswari)

Tuirial (Sonai)

Chhimbauipui (Kolodyne)

Khawthlangtuipui (Karnaphuli)

Latitude: 22° 50" to 24° 50" North

Longitude: 92° 20" to 93° 20" East

Tropic of Cancer passes through Thenzawl

Table 7: CALENDAR OF IMPORTANT EVENTS

Date (A.D.)	Event
c.a. 996	First known settlers in Chindwin belt (Burma), probably from Shanghai, PRC.
c.a. 1466	Lentlang village existed around this time. Many Mizo tribes can trace their lineage to this period.
1700-1730	Westward migration from Lentlang.
1740	Selesih, largest known village built around this time (7,000 houses and 7 chiefs). Many tribes adopted Lusei as their mother tongue.
1862	Famine (bamboo flowers).
1890	Advent of the British.
1894	First missionaries, Lorrain and Savidge.
1895	Current Mizo orthography developed.
1896	First school and church.
1947	End of British rule; beginning of Indian Government.
1950	Government of India nationalizes schools.
1952	First elections.
1959	Famine (bamboo flowers).
1966	Beginning of Mizo insurgency.
1972	Mizoram gains union territory status.
1986	Mizoram gains statehood.

Table 8: MAJOR MIZO TRIBES AND THEIR CLANS

1. Lusei Clans:
 - 1.1 Chief Clans:

Palian, Rivung, Rokhum, Sailo, Thangluah, Zadeng.
 - 1.2 Commoner Clans:

Chawngte, Chhakchhuak, Chhangte, Chuaungo,
Chuahang, Hauhnar, Hrahsel, Pachuau, Tochwawng,
Vanchhawng.
2. Ralte Clans:

Kawlnei, Khelte, Siakeng, Relchhun.
3. Hmar Clans:

Banzang, Biate, Darngawn, Hmar-Lusei, Hrangkhawl,
Khawbung, Lawitlang (Hrangchal), Leiri, Lungtau,
Ngurte, Pakhuang, Thado, Thiak, Zote.
4. Paite Clans:

Dapzar Paihte, Sukte, Vuite.
5. Pawi (Haka Chin) Clans:

Falam, Fanai, Hringluma (Zahao, etc.).

Table 9: MINOR MIZO TRIBES

Chawngthu, Chawhte, Khawlhiring, Kiangte, Ngente, Pautu,
Rawite, Renthlei, Tlau, Vangchhia, Zawngte.

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