

## Abstract 08

### **Tibeto Burman Languages of Northeast India: Problems and Prospects**

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North East India is the eastern most region of India and constitutes 8% of India's size. According to 2011 census, its population is nearly 40 million. The majority of the languages spoken in North East India mostly belong to the Tibeto-Burman (TB) family although in addition to that, there are a few languages belonging to the Indo-Aryan and Austro-Asiatic families. Mostly TB languages are spoken in inaccessible mountain areas and are unwritten, which has seriously hampered in their growth and study. This paper is confined to the Tibeto-Burman (TB) family of languages. The languages of North East India can't be primarily counted since it is linguistically unexplored and the accurate number of languages spoken is difficult to provide. A very little work has been done on the North Eastern languages and whatever small amount of work done and available is not dependable and is lack of adequacy. In the first place, none of these languages including scheduled languages viz., Meitei and Bodo are properly planned and described and nothing much has been done for their standardisation. It is to be highly mentioned that North Easterners don't differentiate between language and tribe. Each tribe is presumed to have its own language and each language is spoken just by one tribe. Nevertheless tradition of naming a language according to each tribe is not true all the time. This is one major difficulty in identifying language and tribe. Another major difficulty is defining the language and dialect since many mutually intelligible dialects are classified as separate languages. This paper will try to investigate and provide a clear picture of the issues and problems related to North Eastern languages.

**Key words:** dialects, North East India, Tibeto Burman, tribes, unwritten languages