

Current Situation of Dimasa Language in Assam Written by

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Abstract:

Assam is a state in the North East of India. There are many ethnic groups living in Assam today. Therefore, many languages are spoken in Assam. Some of these languages have emerged in written form. However, some languages are still used in spoken form. Again, some languages are disappearing with the change of time due to lack of use among us. Many aspects of the ethnic languages that are currently spoken or used in written form are still neglected and undiscovered. These languages require special study in order to be used or preserved. Only then will these languages survive in the future. Among such languages, Dimasa is a language of the Tibeto-Burmese branch of the larger Sino-Tibetan language family. Therefore, the topic 'Current Situation of Dimasa Language in Assam' has been chosen for the research.

Keywords: Sino-Tibetan, Tibetan-Burmese, Language- Discussion, Dimasa Language, Current Situation.

Research Methodology: Primary and secondary sources have been used to conduct the research in an analytical manner.

Scope of Research:

The research on the topic of 'Current Situation of Dimasa Language in Assam' discusses the place of this language in the educational centers of Dimasa speaking areas. The purpose of the study is to assist later language researchers with such discussions.

Dimasa Language:

Dimasa is a notable language of the Bodo branch of the Tibeto-Burmese language family. Before coming to Dimapur, the Dimasas identified themselves as Bodosa. History tells us that the Ahom entered Assam in the early 13th century. At that time, the Kachari kingdom extended from Dikhou to Kalang in the southern region of the Brahmaputra. They ruled Dimapur for about 450 years and probably established their capital at Dimapur in 1285 AD. However, during the reign of the Ahoms, there was conflict between the Kacharis and the Ahoms. As a result, the Dimasas left Dimapur in 1536 AD. They first took refuge in the Dhansiri Valley. But gradually they spread to North Kachar, Kachar district. After ruling in Dimapur, they also ruled in Maibang until 1745 AD. The Dimasas are currently living in the northern Kachar Hills of Assam, Shillong sub-division of Kachar district, the plains of Mikir Hills, Nagaon district, Naga Hills and Tuensang (Nagaland), Dimapur, Dhansiri region etc. The majority of Dimasa people live in North Cachar district. The word Dimasa means the son of a large river. The word Dimasa derives the names of some of the tributaries of the Brahmaputra. According to some, these people are called Dimasa because they live on the banks of the Dhansiri River.¹

The Dimasas are currently divided into four branches: Hawarsa (speaking the Dewan dialect of Kachar), Hasan (speaking the standard language of North Kachar), Demrasa (speaking the dialect of the Hojai Lanka region of Nagaon) and Dijuwasa (speaking the dialect of the Dhansiri region of Karbi Anglong). In addition, there are 40 clans of Dimasa men. Similarly, there are 42 clans of Dimasa women.²

Current Situation of Dimasa Language in Assam:

The Boro Sahitya Sabha was formed on 16 November 1952 by the Bodo and Dimasa people together to keep alive the Dimasa language, which belongs to the Tibeto-Burmese language. Its President was Jaybhadra Hagjer and its General Secretary was the late Sonaram Thaosen. However, the Dimasa people did not pay much attention to the Dimasa language at that time. As a result, the language lags behind. In 1992, the Dimasa Zila Parishad decided to use the Roman script to record the Dimasa language. The Dimasa Zila Parishad printed some textbooks to introduce the language as a subject at the primary level. However, teachers were not appointed to teach the classes. Therefore, Dimasa teachers who teach other subjects in primary schools decide to teach this language. Even the books produced by the Dimasa Zila Parishad were not launched.

The Dimasa Sahitya Sabha was formed on 26 January. The first president of the society was Jatindra Lal Thaosen and the general secretary was Matilal Nunisa. In 2008, the 3rd class book 'Parijen' was published by the Dimasa Sahitya Sabha. This textbook was initially introduced but was discontinued after a few days due to script controversy. In 2008, the Dimasa Writers Forum was founded. The first President of this organization was Mukteshwar Kemprai and the General Secretary was Shri Raikali

Sudhir Bhaotung Langthasa. After that, the Dimasa Sahitya Sabha started publishing textbooks in Dimasa language from first grade. These include Ahni Grao-I (2010), Ahni Grao-IV (2010), Ahni Grao -V(2012), Ahni Grao-II(2015), Ahni Grao-III(2016) etc.. The Dimasa language is still spoken at the primary level.³ The Dimasa Sahitya Sabha has been working for the development of this language since 2017 at the secondary level. However, teachers have not been recruited in schools to teach Dimasa language. A petition has already been sent to the government to make Dimasa language compulsory in schools teaching English and Hindi subjects. They have also sent a petition to the government to recognize Dimasa as the fourth language in the New Education Policy. Therefore, there are efforts to keep this language alive among the Dimasas.⁴

1. Kour, Arpana: Bhasha Sahitya Adhayan, p. 69
2. Rabha Hakacham, Upen: Asamiya aru Bhasha-Upabhasha, p. 26
3. Data : Thauxen, Dhinendra: President, Dimasa Sahitya Sabha, Silchar, 02/09/2019.
4. Kemprai, Mukteshwar: President, Dimasa Writers Forum, Karbi Anglong, 17/09/2019.
7. Rabha Hakacham, Upen. Asamiya aru Asomar Bhasha-Paribhasha. 1 st edition. Panbazar, Guwahati. 2009.Published.
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9. Kour, Arpana: Bhasha Sahitya Adhayan, p. 69
10. Rabha Hakacham, Upen: Asamiya aru Asamar
11. Bhasha-Upabhasha, p. 26
12. Data : Thauxen, Dhinendra: President, Dimasa Sahitya Sabha, Silchar, 02/09/2019.
13. Kemprai, Mukteshwar: President, Dimasa Writers Forum, Karbi Anglong, 17/09/2019.

Conclusion:

The Dimasas are a notable ethnic group in Assam, located in the North-East of India. These Dimasas have already taken various measures to keep their language alive. But the results have not been as expected. However, the Dimasa Sahitya Sabha and the Dimasa Writers Forum have published various textbooks but have not recruited teachers. Some of the people who are currently working for the development of the Dimasa language are Prasanna Hasnu, Kalijay Hengyu, Surya Thaosen, Dhinendra Thaosen, Mukteshwar Kemprai and others.

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