CHAPTER 8
CONCLUSION

This thesis made an attempt to describe and document Tedim Chin, a northern Kuki-Chin language of the Tibeto-Burman family. The language data is based on Tedim spoken in Churachandpur district of Manipur. This study covers linguistic description of Tedim ranging from phonemes to sentences. It follows a descriptive approach to analyse various grammatical features in the language.

A summary of the present thesis is given below. It consists of 8 chapters. Chapter 1 is an introduction about the language and the speakers including geographical location and number of speakers. It also highlights the position of Tedim Chin within the Tibeto-Burman language family. The socio-cultural aspect of the community such as dress, religion, marriage, inheritance, festivals etc. is also discussed. The previous works on Tedim Chin and related languages are briefly summarised in the later part of this chapter.

The sounds, its patterns and various prosodic features in Tedim Chin are discussed in Chapter 2 which is broadly classified into segmental and suprasegmental phonology. The inventory of sound segments and description of their features and the occurrences of each vowels and consonants are the main focus under segmental phonology. Tedim Chin has 19 consonants and 5 vowels, 16 diphthongs and 4 triphthongs. All the consonants except /ʔ/ can occupy the initial position. The final position can be filled by consonants such as /p/, /t/, /k/, /ʔ/, /m/, /n/, /ŋ/, /l/. There is no consonant cluster in initial position in monosyllabic word; however, consonant cluster occurs in final position with /ʔl/ in monosyllables. Consonant sequence occurs in disyllables. Among the consonants, /p/, /ʔ/, /k/ are released when it occurs in initial position and it is unreleased in word final position.

The syllable canon is (C) V (C) where V is the obligatory element. Syllables can be monosyllable, disyllable or polysyllable (trisyllable or quadrisyllable). Phonological processes such as gemination, deletion, vowel coalescence and glottalization are present in the language. There are three register tones: High, Mid and Low. Although Tedim is a South Asian language, its tonal features do not exhibit
similarities with tone languages from this area. It has resemblance with the African
tone languages in that Tedim has register tones instead of contour tones. This is also
observed in other Kuki-Chin languages like Thadou. The tonal patterns in
monosyllables and disyllables are examined. The function of grammatical tone as a
marker of possession is also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 3 gives an account of nouns and its sub-types in Tedim Chin. Pronouns
are of seven types namely personal, possessive, demonstrative, reflexive, indefinite,
interrogative and emphatic. Personal pronouns have inclusive-exclusive distinction
in this language. Nouns are categorised based on morphological and semantic
classes. Various nominal categories such as number, gender and classifiers are also
included in the discussion. Noun phrase is structured accordingly with the position
the head and the modifier occupies such as pre-nominal and post-nominal modifiers.
Some complex constructions like nominalization and relativization are also
examined.

Chapter 4 describes adjective as a modifier in a noun phrase. Like many
Tibeto-Burman languages, adjectives are stative verbs in a predicative construction,
that is, it syntactically functions like a verb. In short, adjectives have noun-like and
verb-like characteristics. In a comparative construction, degree word is not lexically
marked.

In Chapter 5, verb morphology and the structure of the verb phrase are
investigated. It also looked into pre-verbal and post-verbal modifying elements. The
two stems, that is, Stem 1 and Stem 2 differ in segments and tone. The occurrences
of these two types of verb stems are discussed depending on the syntactic
constructions. Verbal categories like tense/aspect and mood and modality are also
categorised according to their function. Adverbial particles in free form and
reduplicated form modify the verb.

The relation between grammatical roles is the main focus in Chapter 6. The
subject becomes an agent in a transitive clause. In an intransitive clause, the patient
occupies the subject position. It also discussed about valency which has two sub-
types: valence increasing which has causatives (lexical and morphological) and
applicatives (benefactive, comitative) as its operators and valence decreasing devices
are reflexives, reciprocals and passives.
Chapter 7 determines the order of elements in phrases, clauses and sentences. It also discussed subordinate clauses such as adverbial clause, relative clause and complement clause. The sentence types in Tedim are declaratives, interrogatives, imperatives and exclamatives.

In the appendices, there are two parts: the first part consists of two narratives and the second part has a sample Tedim to English dictionary. It shows entries of 1200 lexical items in both orthographic and transcribed form along with their glosses.