

Introduction to Zomi Grammar

by Dr. Thang Za Tuan

Zomi Research Institute

Published on Zomi Language Platform

Chapter 1: Introduction to Zomi Language

The Zomi language belongs to the Kuki-Chin branch of the Tibeto-Burman language family. It is spoken by approximately 1 million people across Myanmar, India, and diaspora communities worldwide.

This grammar guide provides a systematic overview of the language, covering phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics.

Chapter 2: Phonology and Tonal System

Zomi is a tonal language with distinct pitch patterns that change word meanings. The language has the following tone categories:

1. High tone - marked with acute accent
2. Low tone - unmarked
3. Rising tone - marked with caron
4. Falling tone - marked with circumflex

Consonant inventory includes stops, nasals, fricatives, and approximants.

Chapter 3: Noun Classes and Morphology

Zomi nouns can be classified into several categories:

1. Animate nouns (people, animals)
2. Inanimate nouns (objects, concepts)
3. Mass nouns (water, rice)
4. Count nouns (books, houses)

Noun phrases follow a head-final structure with modifiers preceding the head noun.

Chapter 4: Verb Conjugation

Zomi verbs are conjugated for tense, aspect, and mood:

Present tense: verb + -hi

Past tense: verb + -ta

Future tense: verb + -ding

Example: ka pai hi (I go), ka pai ta (I went), ka pai ding (I will go)

Chapter 5: Sentence Structure

Zomi follows a Subject-Object-Verb (SOV) word order:

Ka (I) sa (meat) ne (eat) hi (PRES) = I eat meat

Questions are formed by adding interrogative particles:

Na min bang a hiam? = What is your name?

Negation uses the particle lo before the verb.

Chapter 6: Complex Sentences

Relative clauses in Zomi precede the noun they modify.

Subordinate clauses use conjunctions such as:

tua ahih leh - therefore

bang hang hiam cih leh - because

a leh - but/however

Chapter 7: Practice Exercises

Exercise 1: Translate the following sentences:

1. I am learning Zomi language.
2. The children are playing outside.
3. She went to the market yesterday.

Exercise 2: Identify the tones in these words:

1. inn (house)
2. in (drink)
3. tui (water)