

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This thesis describes the grammar of Geba Karen in Myanmar. Geba is the one of the Karen languages spoken in northern Karen State. Geba belongs to the Tibeto-Burman language family and is under the Karen branch. According to Bradley (1997:47), Geba is considered a Western Central Karenic group.

Different population numbers have been given for Geba people. According to Saw Hla Mg (2004), Geba people live in 215 villages and the population of Geba speakers is 78,580. However, some local people say that the population of the Geba is between 40,000 and 50,000. According to Saw Lar Baa (2001:14) there are 36 Geba villages. The Ethnologue (2000) mentions, that there are 10,000 Geba speakers. David Bradley (1997) reports, that there are 10,000 Geba living in Myanmar.

Very few grammars of Karenic languages have been written. For Karenic languages, only one modern grammar of a Karen language has been published (Solnit 1997). Therefore, this analysis aims to describe the grammar of Geba.

1.1 Background

The Karens are one of the largest of ethnic minorities in Southeast Asia. Karen people live mostly along the border area of Thailand and Myanmar. Different languages are spoken among Karen. According to Bradley (1997) the population of Karen in Burma was 2,122,825 in 1983 and 292,814 in 1992 in Thailand. The Karen dialects are named geographically so that the according to Kauffman (1993:5) Sgaw and Pwo are southern Karen, Pa-o is Northern Karen and Geba, Bwe, Padaung, Manu, Gheko, Yintale, Kayaw, Yein Baw are central Karen.

This section gives the information about Geba Karen history, geographical background, literacy, sociolinguistic background and other ethnographic information such as work, travel, dress, religion and education.

1.1.1 Historical background

When Taungoo, a city of Burma was ruled by a Karen king in ancient times, the Geba people came to live in his kingdom. When this Karen king's sovereignty ended and the Burmese kings ruled the country, the Geba were captured and forced to fight in the king's army and served as elephant riders. That is why, nowadays, the Geba are referred to by Burmese people who live close to them as 'Thit-Phya-Tha' which means 'persons who cut the branches of the tree on the elephants'. After the battles, they came back to Burma and lived in Tha-Htone for a couple of years. After that they lived along the 'Praelot' river and settled there. Then they spread to eastern Taungoo along the Kan-ni River up to eastern Pyin-Ma-Nar and the northern part of the Mae Hor River. Finally, they returned to live in their old place; they called themselves the 'Kay-Bar-Pho' which means 'people who return'. This later shifted into 'Geba'. The return trip back to their old place was lead by two leaders 'Kwa U' and 'Kar Ni'. 'Kwa U' established a village in Eastern Ye-Tar Shay named Kwa U village later know as 'Kwang-Ong' village. The village is still there today. But 'Kar Ni' settled near the river 'Kan Ni' and the river is still known as 'Kan Ni' river today. Bwe Karen who live near the Geba area call them 'Ko-Oh-Kan-Ni-Pho' which means people 'who live near Kan-ni river'.

1.1.2 Geographical background

The Geba settled in the northern part of the Karen State, in eastern Mandalay Division, and in Pyinmana. In Karen State, there are about 140 villages and in Mandalay Division 10 villages. In Kayah State there are Geba people living with Kayah families. Geba people also live in the major cities of Burma including Taungoo, Taungyi and Yangon. Figure (1) shows the geographical location of Geba Karen and figure (2) shows the location of Geba villages.

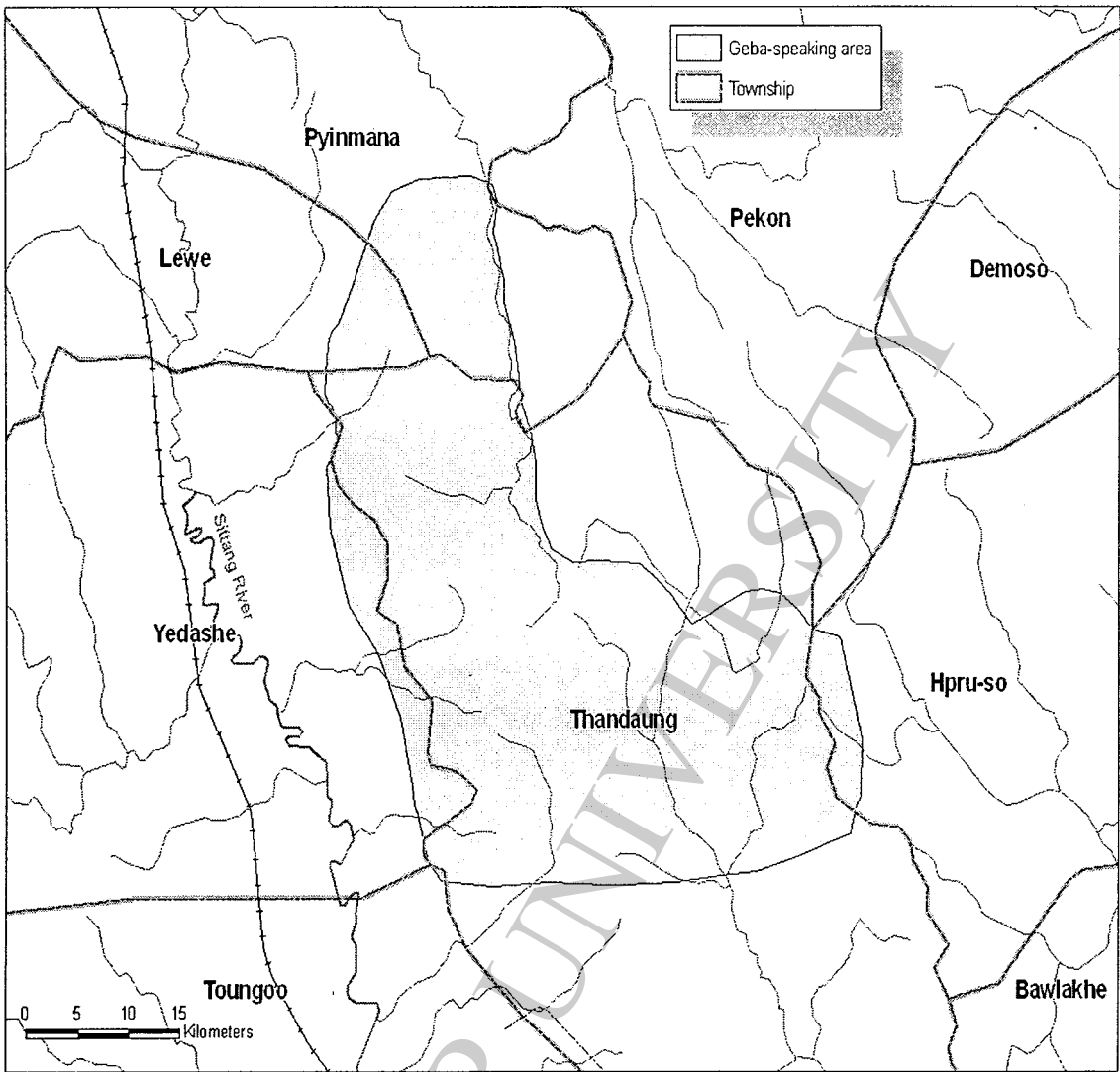


Figure 1 Geographical location of Geba
Karen in Northern Karen State

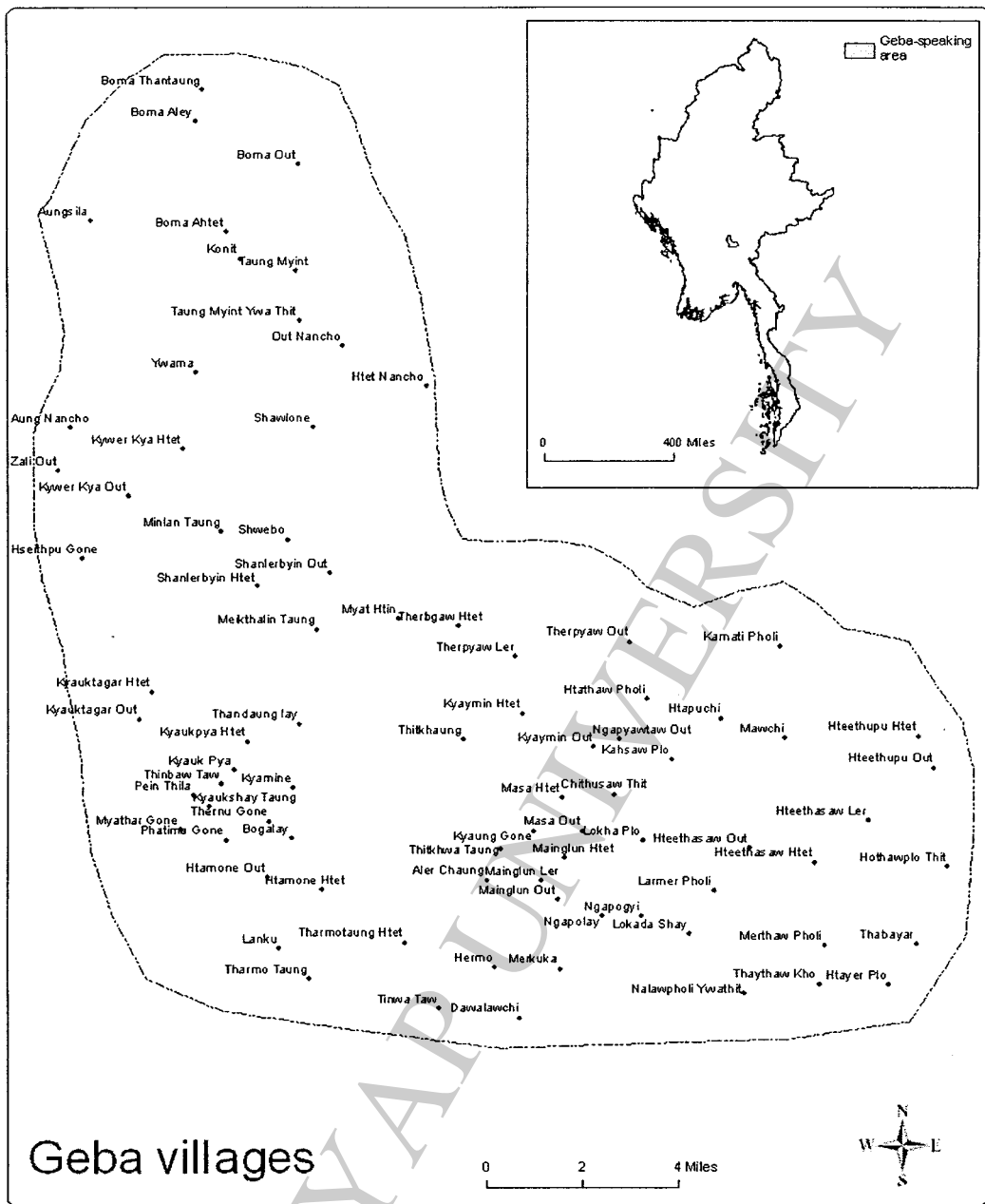


Figure 2 Geba villages in Myanmar

1.1.3 Literacy development background among Geba

Geba literature developed more than a hundred years ago through the efforts of Fr. Gofferedo Conti, a Roman Catholic Priest. Prayer books, song books, primer

books, and some Bible verses were translated into Geba. This literature is in a Roman based script which the Roman Catholics still widely use.

For the Baptist and Anglican Geba, there is no literature, but they speak and write Sgaw Karen well enough for religious and other purposes. Therefore, Sgaw Karen language and scripture are widely used among the Geba Baptists. In order for the Geba Baptists to read Geba in a Sgaw-based orthography, in 2001, they developed a Sgaw-based Geba script and there are many Geba people who are interested in it. In July 2001 a Literature Production workshop, a Curriculum workshop and a Writers workshop were held. Again in 2003 a teacher training and a Bible translation workshop were held in order to develop the Geba literacy program and Bible translation.

Through the work of the Geba literature committee, the drafts of a primer, listening stories, shell books, flip charts, and short songs were finished in 2004 and after that the materials were edited by the local people and leaders.

Currently, there are two writing systems: the Roman-based orthography which is widely used by Roman Catholic Geba and the Sgaw-based orthography which was recently developed and is used exclusively among Anglican and Baptist Geba people.

1.1.4 General information

Almost all the Geba live in the mountains and farms for their living. The available natural resources provide the daily necessities for the people. In addition, coffee, cardamon, and jenkol bean plants are grown as cash crops in almost every village. There is only one main road in the Geba region from Taungoo to Loi Kaw. There are some smaller roads from Than Moe Taung to Kyauk Pya, Yeni to Aung Chan Tha and Swa to Ye Kan To for trading and carrying wood and bamboo. These roads are available only in dry season.

There are three different Christian denominations in Geba: Anglican, Baptist, and Roman Catholic. These cover 97% of the Geba population. The rest follow the traditional religion 'Pho-Wer-Ko'. Primary schools occur in almost every village. The middle schools are situated in Kyauk Pya, Than Moe Taung, and

Shan Ler Pyin and there is a joint middle school in Bor-Mu-Der. There is the only one high school for Geba students, which is in the Geba area in Leiktho.

The Geba dances, 'Taung-Ya-Yein' which means "hill-side cultivation dance", and 'Daing' dance, which means "shield dance", are presented occasionally at festivals. Playing the flute is one of the Geba traditions and it is played at fun fairs, weddings, Christmas and New Year festivals.

A Geba woman's sarong is known as 'ni-ya-hso-shi'. The colour is red and is worn with a 'shi-doe-li-ka' a black blouse. Men wear black pants with coats similar to other mountainous Karen people.

The Geba mainly speak Geba in their homes, but sometimes they use other Karen languages such as Bwe and Sgaw. At work, in the market and in funerals they use Geba, Bwe, Sgaw and Burmese. For village meetings they use Geba and Burmese, but at church services they use mainly Sgaw and sometimes Geba and Burmese. At Government offices they only use Burmese.

1.2 Linguistic affiliation of Geba Karen

The Karen languages belong to the Tibeto-Burman language family. One significant characteristic of the Karen languages that distinguishes them from other Tibeto-Burman languages is SVO sentence structure. This kind of structure is different from other Tibeto-Burman Languages which are typically SOV (Bradley 1997:46). Bradley also summarizes different findings regarding Karen languages by other scholars. The following discussion summarizes Bradley (1997).

Different linguists categorize Karen languages in different ways. Extensive data and a reconstruction are provided in Jones (1961). Benedict (1972) categorizes Karen as a coordinate subgroup with Tibeto-Burman and Sinitic within Sino-Tibetan, but later (Benedict 1974) mentions that Karen seems to be within Tibeto-Burman and is actually close to the Burmic portion of Tibeto-Burman. Share (1974) places Karenic within Tibeto-Burman as a different group related to Burmic, Bodic and Baric (Bradley 1997:46).

The following diagrams show the linguistic affiliation of Geba Karen by different linguists. The classification of Karen is represented most often by the geographical distribution of the languages.

Figure (3) is adapted from Kauffman (1993:5) which shows the Karen classification in geographical terms. According to this diagram, Geba is classified geographically as West Central Karen.

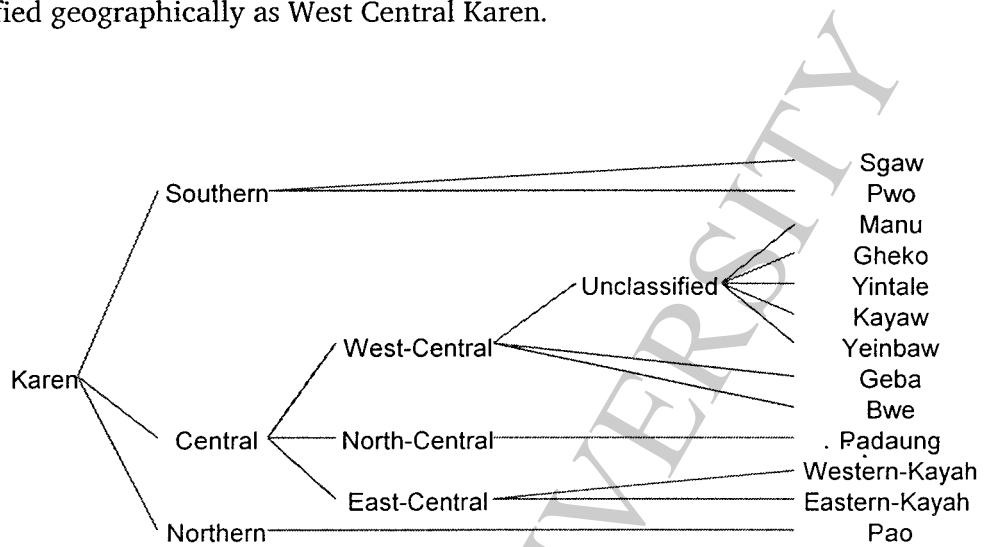


Figure 3 Karen Language Relationships
(Kauffman1993:5)

In figure (4), Bradley (1997) illustrates the classification of Karen within Tibeto-Burman and similarly to Kauffman regards Geba as one of the West Central Karen groups.

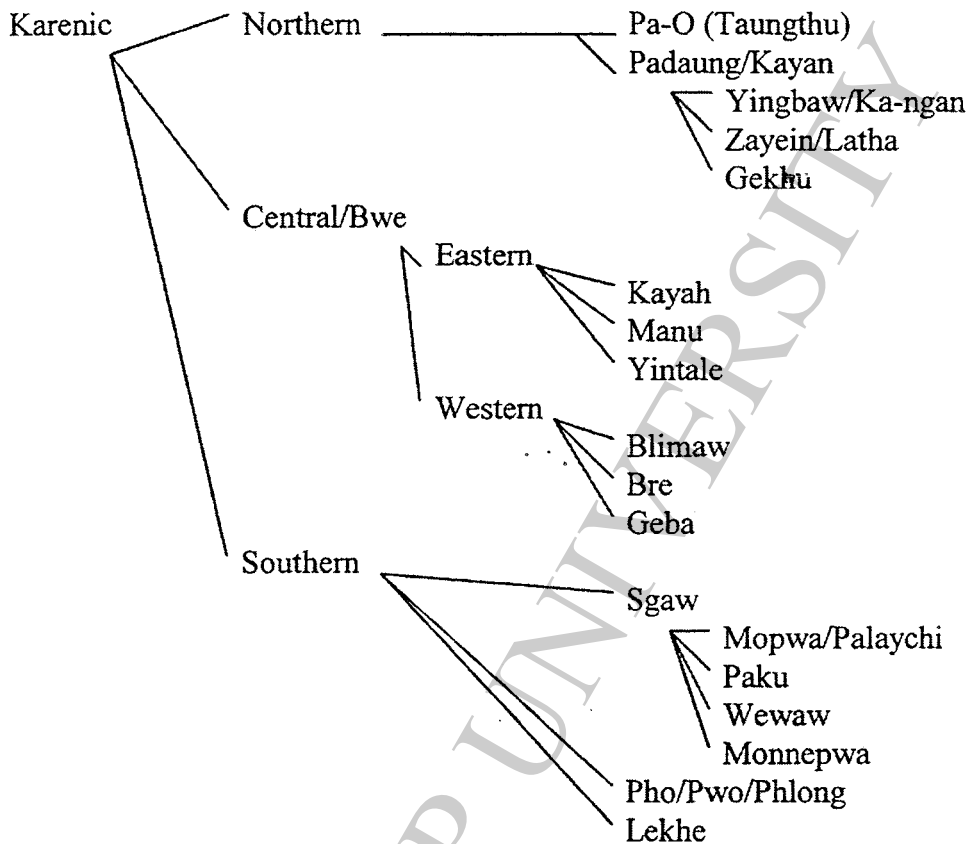


Figure 4 Karen Language Classifications (Bradley 1997:47)

According to Manson (2002), figure 5, summarizes a lexicostatistic analysis showing that the central Karen languages do not belong to a unified group within Karen. This diagram is based on wordlist data collected from 20 Karen wordlists¹. The analysis is based on lists of 32 words. The seven clusters show clear phonological innovation to support the subgrouping (Manson 2008).

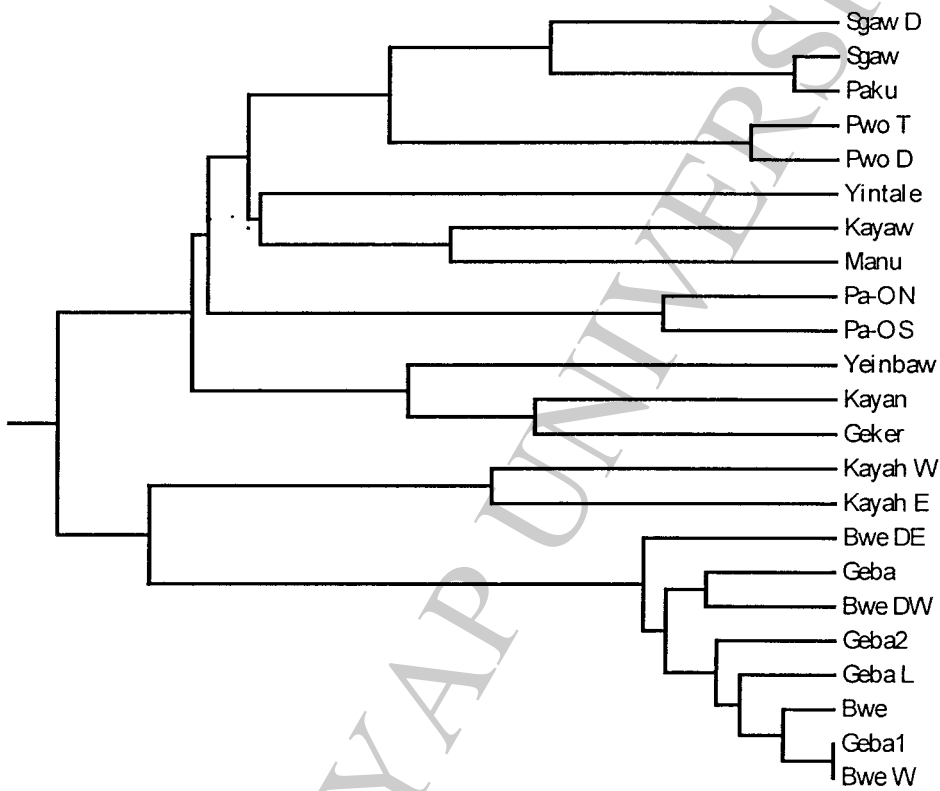


Figure 5 Classification of Karen languages (Manson 2002) by lexicostatistic analysis

¹ Geba 1 and 2 wordlists are collected by Frazer Benett, Geba L is collected by Luce and Geba is collected by Saw Laa Ba.

The following diagrams present an analysis of Karen languages based on lexical similarities, and also based on reported ethnicity by Shintani (2003). The diagram is based on 100 word lists.

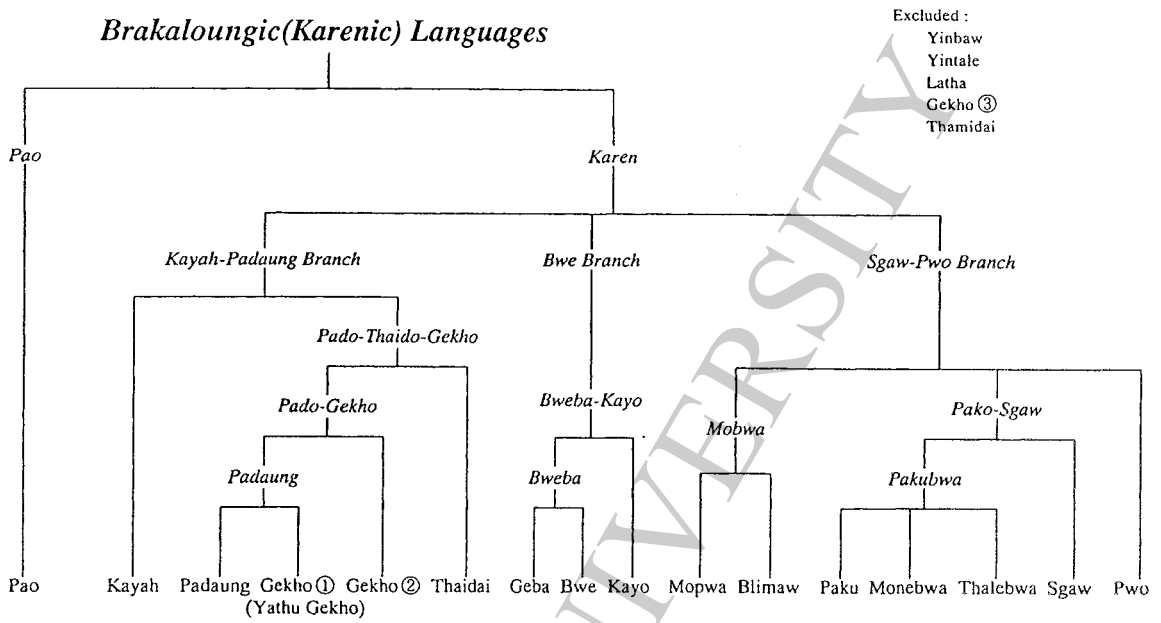


Figure 6 Classification of Karen languages-lexical similarity (Shintani)

It should be noted that in all the above diagrams, all classifications put Bwe and Geba in the same group.

According to Manson (2007), Geba, Kayah, and Bwe are a valid cluster. The evidence shows that they all have regular vowel raising within a specific environment which are not found in other Karen languages. Table (2) shows the vowel raising pattern of Bwe-Geba-Kayah compared to other Karen languages.

Proto-Karen	Bwe	Geba	Kayah, W	Kayah, E	Rest
*a	a ε	a ε	a	ε	a
*e	i	i	i	i	e
*ɤ	u	u	u	u	ɤ

Table 1 Bwe-Geba-Kayah vs other Karen vowel correspondences

1.3 Goals of the study

The following are the objectives of this thesis:

- (1) To introduce Geba, a Karen language, for about which little is known.
- (2) To describe the basic phonology of Geba.
- (3) To describe the basic grammar of Geba Karen.

1.4 Research methodology

The first step of this study was doing library research on Karenic languages. After that, primary data was collected from Geba speakers. The data was analyzed according to Basic Linguistics Theory. A brief review of the theories used in the analysis is provided with the analysis procedures done for this research.

1.4.1 Data collection

For data collection a number of natural texts as well as a grammar questionnaire based on the Mahidol (1978) version were collected from various native speakers. The results were recorded and transcribed phonetically.

The following brief sociolinguistic background is based on data collected from five people living in five different villages. The following table shows the biographic data of each informant.

	Informant (1)	Informant (2)	Informant (3)	Informant (4)	Informant (5)
Gender	F	F	F	F	M
Age	63	25	56	56	57
Occupation	Retired	Christian worker	Retired	Retired	Religious teacher
Birth place	Shwe Lone Taung, Northern Thandaung, Karen State	Bogalay, Northern Thandaung, Karen State	Thinbawdaw, Western Thandaung, Karen State	Maing Lun Aler, Western Thandaung, Karen State	Shan Ler Byin, Northern Thandaung, Karen State
First language spoken	Geba	Geba	Geba	Geba	Geba
Other languages spoken	Geba, Kodeit, Sgaw	Geba, Bwe, Sgaw, Burmese	Geba, Bwe, Palichi, Sgaw, Burmese	Geba, Bwe, Paku, Burmese	Geba, Sgaw, Burmese
Father's language	Geba	Geba, Bwe, Sgaw, Burmese	Geba, Burmese, Sgaw, English	Geba, Sgaw	Geba, Sgaw
Mother's language	Geba	Geba, Bwe, Sgaw	Geba, Bwe, Burmese	Geba, Sgaw, Bwe	Geba, Sgaw
Religion and denomination	Baptist Christian	Anglican Christian	Baptist Christian	Baptist Christian	Baptist Christian

Table 2 The biographic data of five informants

Most Geba people are multilingual but their first language is Geba. Regardless of gender or age, all Geba people have similar multilingual backgrounds.

All the informants called their language Geba and outsiders also called them Geba, Geba Karen, or Karen. Three of the informants did not know where they originally moved from. One informant said they came from Tha-Hton (Lower Myanmar) and the other informant said he came from a nearby village.

1.4.2 Analysis procedure

The elicited material was input into toolbox and interlinearised for grammatical analysis. The interlinearized texts are included as an appendix. After a preliminary grammar was drafted, the analysis was re-checked with native speakers. The phonological description is based on the MSEA 436 wordlist used by SIL and supplemented by additional elicited material.

1.5 Scope and limitation of this research

This research is based on six recorded texts and a grammar questionnaire which limit the range of grammar structures. Moreover, the findings are just an overview of the grammar structure of this language helpful for language learners and those who want to explore this language further. Much more research is needed to understand the details and complexities of this language. MSEA 436 wordlist, grammar texts and grammar questionnaires collected from five people are attached in the appendix.

1.6 Literature review

This thesis uses the descriptive categories presented by two authors, T.Givon and Timothy Shopen. These categories are reviewed in this section. Also the background research on Karenic languages compiled by David Solnit and Robert B. Jones, Jr are briefly reviewed. Additionally, a Geba phonology by Saw Lar Ba and the work of Henderson on Bwe are also briefly reviewed.

1.6.1 Theoretical framework

The grammatical theory used for this thesis is 'Basic Linguistics Theory' which is based on traditional grammar but focus on languages other than European languages. Its purpose is to express each grammatical category typologically and give clear explanations that are not dependent on specific grammatical theories.

Languages may vary typologically depending on the way they code the same functional areas. Grammar-coded domains are complex and multi-dimensional. But grammatical coding is chosen only partially for functional reasons (Givon 2001:28).

Grammatical description can be divided into two domains; syntax, which is the study of relation among words in a sentence, and morphology, which is the study of the formal and semantic composition of each words. Sentences consist of words and words are made up of smaller pieces known as formatives or morphemes (Shopen III 1992: 150). Like most Southeast Asian languages Geba has limited derivational morphemes.

According to T.Givon, there are two major groups of vocabulary: the lexical (content words) and non-lexical (function words), which, in turn, divide into grammatical morphemes and derivational morphemes. The lexical words code stable, culturally-shared concepts or experiences, while the grammatical morphemes code the grammatical structures of clauses. This involves the coding of both propositional information and discourse coherence. New lexical items are derived from derivational morphemes. Both morphology and word-order can be used to code the grammatical roles of the subject and object. The grammatical use of word-order means that the temporal sequential order of three core constituents of the clause verb, subject and object can be predicted (Givon 2001:231). Geba uses word order to grammatically code subject and object.

Traditionally, parts of speech are the major classes of words grammatically distinguished in a language. The word's distribution, its syntactic functions and its morphological properties are included in its part of speech classification. Nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs are the open parts of speech classes which occur in a language and they are divided into subclasses depending on the basis of particular relevant grammatical properties. Nouns are the class of words which usually name most persons, places, and things; verbs express actions, process, and the like. Many languages have subclasses of copulative verbs that occur with predicate nominals or adjectives. Adjectives can be defined as the class of words which indicate qualities or attributes. A common functional definition of adverbs is that they modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs (Shopen 1992:3-22). Each of these major word classes exists in Geba.

The tense, aspect and modality (TAM) system is one of the most complex sub-systems in Tibeto-Burman grammars. The morphological system of TAM tends to be grammaticalized with the verbs which also co-occur with many other verb-inflectional sub-systems such as negation, pronominal agreement, speech-

acts marking, and cross-clausal connections. The morphology realizations of TAM are bounded by clausal structure, but their functional scope is not limited to the propositional semantics of the event or state. Rather, it extends to pragmatics or the connection of the clause in relation to its discourse text (Givon 2001:285). Most of these generalizations apply to Geba.

The grammar of pronouns and grammatical agreement are two functional domains which intersect and interact. The semantic domain involves different classification systems that arise during the diachronic rise of pronoun systems. At the end of this process, person (speaker and hearer), number, gender and class, deixis, and case-role, which are the classical paradigms of independent pronouns, are found. Geba has a pronoun system that uses only some of these categories and no agreement at all.

Relative clauses are embedded in the noun phrase as clause-size modifiers. Syntactically, they are parallel to other major types of subordinate clauses. Functionally, relative clauses and other noun modifiers participate in the grammar of referential coherence to provide either anaphoric or cataphoric hints for referent identification (Givon II 2001:175). In Geba, several relative clause constructions occur.

Persons, spatial location, and time reference are the main kinds of information which are described by deictics in the world's languages. Grammatically, person deictics describe reference to the speaker or the addressee of the utterance. Spatial deictics specify the spatial location of an object related to the location of the speaker or the addressee, and temporal deictics distinguish the time of an event or state related to the time at which the utterance occurs (Shopen III 1992:259). Geba's system of deictics also includes information about specificity. These basic descriptive categories are used to describe Geba in the remainder of the thesis.

1.6.2 Karen grammar studies

Besides a description of theories, background research on related language was also done for this thesis. Two books were found which benefit for this thesis. The first one is *Karenic Linguistic Studies* written by Robert B. Jones Jr and the

other is Kayahli grammar written by David Solnit. Both books provided help for doing this grammar in Geba Karen and related languages.

1.6.2.1 Jones' Karen linguistic studies

In 'Karen Linguistic Studies' (Jones 1961), the author expresses a general overview of phonology and grammar structures found in Karen languages. Moreover, the author adds the comparison and reconstruction of Karen languages. He also incorporates some texts from different Karen groups to help the reader get some knowledge of what Karen languages look like. In the following each section, a brief discussion about Karen linguistic studies (Jones 1961) and Kayah Li grammar (Solnit 1997) are presented.

Verbs

According to Jones, verbs in Karen languages are syntactically free form. When they occur in an attributive construction with a headnoun, they follow after the noun. Modal verbs can be found before verbs in verb constructions. Adjectival verbs immediately follow primary verbs and it is attributed to the verb. The secondary verb is situated in final position in verb constructions and they are attributed to the entire construction. Modal auxiliaries occur only in preposed position with other members of this verb class while aspectual auxiliaries are found only in postposed position with other verb classes (Jones 1961:16-17).

Noun

Noun constructions are defined as minimal free constructions which include no verb and can combine with a classifier phrase. Pronouns can be found in some constructions in the noun position, but they do not occur with classifier phrases. Demonstratives occur in final position in noun constructions (Jones 1961:18).

Minor Categories

There are three kinds of prepositions. Two kinds have specific semantic functions 'to' or 'toward' and 'with', and the third is a general subordinating preposition which include the semantic function 'for', 'in', 'by', 'from', 'who', 'which', 'that' are found in Karen languages. Conjunctions are sometimes monosyllables but combination forms are commonly found and identified as

members of other word classes. Adverbials occur in a special initial position in extended constructions (Jones 1961:16-21). Coordinate markers, topic markers, interrogative terminal markers, and narrative markers are widely used in Karen languages. Most interjections are found in utterance final position in Karen languages (Jones 1961:16-23). In Karen languages there is no morphological distinction between words and morphemes (Jones 1961:24).

Compounding

There are three types of verb compounds in Karen languages: a verb plus adjectival, a verb plus a noun, and a repeated verb. In repeated compounds, the second member is an adjectival verb and in verb-noun compound, the second member is either 'self' or 'thing'. Verb and adjectival compounds are usually based on adjectival verbs (eg *.jǐ jǐ*'very far', *jǐ*'far') (Jones 1961:24-25).

Noun compounds in Karen language are primary or attributive, syntactic or asyntactic. Noun-verb compounds are syntactic in the sense that the second member is attributive to the head as in a clause. Pronoun-verb compounds are syntactic, and they are the most frequent manner of deriving nouns from verbs by compounding with the third person singular pronoun. Pronoun-Classifier compounds are asyntactic, while Pronoun-Demonstrative compounds are syntactic. Partitive-Demonstrative Compound, Specifier-Marker Compounds, Repetitive Noun compounds are also found in Karen languages (Jones 1961:25-27). Adverbial compounds are asyntactic and they have as head either 'like' or 'in the manner of' (Jones 1961:28-29).

1.6.2.2 Solnit's Eastern Kayah Li

In Solnit's 'Eastern Kayah Li' grammar, one finds not only a typological outline, a phonology, detail grammar structures, dialectic and orthographic information about Kayah Li, which is one of the central Karenic group languages, but also information about other related Karen languages.

General

Kayah Li is a tonal language with some tones expressed by phonation and pitch. Most Kayah Li morphemes are monosyllables, but a few polysyllables and prefix syllables are found. The lexicon in Kayah Li falls into classes such as Noun, Verb,

Preposition, Demonstrative, Quantifier, Verb Particle and Sentence particle. The word order of this language is SVO and the nominal modifiers come before the heads while verbal modifiers come after the heads (Solnit 1997:3-7).

Morphology

Affixes in Kayah Li are described in phonological and morphological terms. Different types of prefixes such as *ʔi*, *ce*, *ta*, *ke*, *pe*, *ʔa* are used for different functions and suffixes such as *phu* and *-e* are also found. There are pairs of morphemes which are derivationally related by tone change, but sometimes the relation is a coincidence. Tonal dissimilation and reduplication in the last syllable in a clause are also grammar features of this language (Solnit 1997: 29-55).

Verbs

The verb complex in Kayah Li has extensive verb serialization. The structure of this serialization is in the form of sequential verbs. Verb particles are also included in the verb-complex, but these are put into the initial and final portions of the verb complex. Verb constituents are divided generally into the full verbs, which function as the predicate or main verb of a clause, and verb particles (Solnit 1997: 56-65).

Nouns

The difference between a Subject and a Topic is that a subject is a clause constituent and a Topic is located outside the clause and related to a larger unit. In Kayah Li, there is a class of verbs signifying bodily sensations or emotion where the experiencer of the state can be found post-verbally. Classifiers are a special type of bound noun which must be modified by a Quantifier (Solnit 1997: 147-164).

Quantifiers are not nouns but they are regarded as distinct members of the NP. Prepositions are not nouns, but the Kayah Li prepositional phrase is not very different from the noun phrase because it may function as a direct object. Different types of nouns are also found. Ordinary nouns are divided into Common nouns, Proper Name, and Pronouns. Several types of classifiers and localizers may function as nouns and are a common type of nouns occurring in

Kayah Li. Ordinary nouns combine with other ordinary noun phrases to form clauses while localizers are obligatorily modified by ordinary noun phrases and are themselves preceded by a preposition. Classifiers are obligatory when modified by a Quantifier, especially numerals. The result may be modified by a demonstrative and/or a nominalized clause (Solnit 1997:177-179).

Particles

A nominalized clause in Kayah Li is any clause followed by *nu* or a Classifier preceded by *nu*. If the nominalized clause is autonomous and not followed by Classifiers, the *nu* functions as an illocutionary force-marker or sentence final particle (Solnit 1997:248).

1.6.2.3 Geba research

According to Saw Lar Baa (2001:49-52), the phonological description of Geba is summarized as follows. The syllable structure of Geba can be CVT or CCVT. CCVT is composed of an obligatory consonant followed by an optional medial consonant. The nucleus can be any vowel. Minor syllables are composed of an initial consonant and a central mid-open vowel /ə/. /ə/ appears only in minor syllables.

The initial consonant of minor syllables is most often a stop but the lateral /l/, and the voiceless /d₃/ can occur as the initial consonant of minor syllables. Thirty-two (32) consonant phonemes of plosives, implosives, affricates, fricatives, nasals, trills, approximants and lateral fricatives, along with a few rare phonemes, are noted by Saw Lar Baa.

Regarding the consonant clusters, the first member of the consonant cluster (C1) would be a labial plosive, alveolar plosive, dental plosive, velar plosive, labial or alveolar nasal, alveolar approximant, alveolar fricative, velar fricative, or glottal fricative. The second member of the consonant cluster could be an approximant, (l), or alveolar trill (r). Three front unrounded vowels, three central unrounded vowels and three back rounded vowels are found. Three level tones, high tone, mid tone and low tone, occur in Geba.

1.6.2.4 Bwe research

The language Bwè is a language closely linked to Geba. Henderson (1997) created a dictionary and some texts, but she passed away before the grammar sketch was written. A table of content for a brief grammar outline exists in the SOAS (School of Oriental and African studies) archives.

There are two types of syllables in Bwe: stressed and unstressed. Minor, or unstressed syllables, always precede a stressed syllable. The pronoun system has several elements indicated by phonological processes. For the prefix forms there are no distinctions in tone, but the suffixes take the tone of the immediately preceding syllable, if the suffix has a voiced initial. Elaborate expressions are widely used in Bwe (Henderson 1997: front matter).

There are three tones in Bwe; high level, mid level and low level. Tonal alternation, which can occur together with vowel alternation, alternation of the initial consonant, or final consonant alternation, is found in reduplicative or repetitive expressions (Henderson 1967:171). Some similarities between Bwe phonology and syntax structures and Geba are found.

1.7 Overview of the thesis

In this thesis, the first part of chapter (1) introduced the Geba people and historical background, the geographical background, sociolinguistic background and current state of literacy. It also presented characteristics of Karen languages. The second part was about the goals, research methodology, the scope and the overview of this thesis. The third part was the literature review which covered some theories and previous research. In chapter (2) a brief phonological sketch of Geba is presented. Chapter (3) discusses several types of word classes and also word formation. Chapter (4) describes many of the different kinds of phrases found in Geba. Chapter (5) presents simple sentences and chapter (6) examines the complex sentence structures. Finally, chapter (7) concludes the whole thesis. The front matter and back matter are attached for the reader's benefit.