International Conference on Sino-Tibetan Languages and Linguistics

ICSTLL 53 will be hosted via ZOOM by the University of North Texas, October 2 - 4, 2020 with a pre-conference meeting of the Computational Resource for South Asian Languages on October 1st from 4:00 pm - 10:00 pm. (Central Standard Time)

Advisory committee:

- Mark Turin, Professor, Anthropology, University of British Columbia
- Kristine Hildebrandt, Associate Professor, English, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
- Alexis Palmer, Assistant Professor, Linguistics, University of North Texas
- Ken Van Bik, Assistant Professor, English, California State University

Organizing committee:

- Shobhana Chelliah (Lead Organizer), Associate Dean and Professor, College of Information, University of North Texas
- Mary Burke, 3rd Year PhD Scholar, Information Science - Linguistics Concentration, University of North Texas
- Marty Heaton, NSF-funded RA, 1st Year PhD Scholar, Information Science - Linguistics Concentration, University of North Texas
- Adam Chavez, UNT College of Information, Web Content Manager
- Sadaf Munshi, Professor and Chair, Linguistics, University of North Texas
- Taraka Rama, Assistant Professor, Linguistics, University of North Texas
- Oksana Zavalina, Associate Professor, Information Science, University of North Texas
- Ava Jones, UNT College of Information, Communications Specialist
Welcome

As the Dean of the College of Information at the University of North Texas (UNT), it is an honor and a pleasure to welcome you at the International Conference on Sino-Tibetan Languages and Linguistics (ICSTLL53), taking place online during October 2-4, 2020.

We at UNT are proud to have a world-class Linguistics department, with distinguished researchers who are involved in cutting-edge research funded by NSF, IMLS and others. With that backdrop, I am confident that the hosting of ICSTLL53 will not only benefit from the exchange of those pioneering efforts but also advance the field further, aligned with the expectations of UNT as a Tier 1 Carnegie Research university.

We at UNT have been emphasizing the importance of educational innovation. Specifically, we offer online courses, along with students’ career planning and development. During the outbreak of coronavirus disease, we have managed to respond adequately and ensure students’ rights.

Last but not least, I would like to thank the organizing team for planning and preparing this conference, which is the culmination of months of hard work to provide the community with the fruitful conference. It is particularly noteworthy that the Linguistics Department has continued the tradition of innovation and has quickly restructured the conference to pivot online format, our second international conference since the emergence of pandemic.

I, on behalf of the UNT’s College of Information, hope that you enjoy this conference as both a learning and a virtual yet social event. Thank you again to all of you, colleagues, members and friends for making this online conference happen.

Dr. Kinshuk
Dean
College of Information
University of North Texas
Denton, Texas, USA
ICSTLL53 will be held via ZOOM in these ROOMS

Location: Four zoom rooms (links provided below)

Passcode: The passcode (same as password) to login for all 4 rooms is UNT2ICSTLL

ICSTLL 53 Conference - Room 1
https://unt.zoom.us/j/96985734702?pwd=RzFxaiVkrmp6NHdoQ3Z6M1BpzdNNdz09
Meeting ID: 969 8573 4702
Passcode: UNT2ICSTLL

ICSTLL 53 Conference - Room 2
https://unt.zoom.us/j/97314322031?pwd=KzFXWE43UDN4aDZ5RDhbkQwT29DZz09
Meeting ID: 973 1432 2031
Passcode: UNT2ICSTLL

ICSTLL 53 Conference - Room 3
https://unt.zoom.us/j/91893397345?pwd=dC95RlI2Wi83dmRSTFluaG5XSUIrdz09
Meeting ID: 918 9339 7345
Passcode: UNT2ICSTLL

ICSTLL 53 Conference - Room 4
https://unt.zoom.us/j/95775770726?pwd=MXJDMTg5bUZTU2h3eVp2empZNd5UT09
Meeting ID: 957 7577 0726
Passcode: UNT2ICSTLL

Recordings will be available after the conference at: https://icstll.ci.unt.edu
### October 1

**Thursday**

Room 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Speaker(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4:00 PM</td>
<td>Welcome/CoRSAL update</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:15 PM</td>
<td>Kristine Hildebrandt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:30 PM</td>
<td>David Bradley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:45 PM</td>
<td>David Peterson and Ken Van Bik</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:00 PM</td>
<td><strong>BREAK</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>5:15 PM</td>
<td>Mark Turin</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:30 PM</td>
<td>Mary Burke, Marrion Dale, &amp; Samir Debrama</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:45 PM</td>
<td>Alec Coupe and Priynakoo Sarmah</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
<td><strong>BREAK</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>6:15 PM</td>
<td>Stephen Morey and Mark Post</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:30 PM</td>
<td>Randy LaPolla</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:45 PM</td>
<td>Karthick Narayanan &amp; MeirabaTakhellambam</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:00 PM</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>8:00 PM</td>
<td>Close of 2020 CoRSAL meeting</td>
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Rooms 2, 3 and 4 will be empty this day
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>October 2</th>
<th>Room 1</th>
<th>Room 2</th>
<th>Room 3</th>
<th>Room 4 Networking/Salon</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4:00 PM</strong></td>
<td><strong>Opening Ceremony</strong></td>
<td><strong>Words of Welcome with Dr. James Matisoff</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Deixis</strong></td>
<td><strong>Historical Computational</strong></td>
<td><strong>Field Reports</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Chair</strong></td>
<td><strong>Chris Donlay</strong></td>
<td><strong>Alex Smith</strong></td>
<td><strong>Shobhana Chelliah</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Student Organizer</strong></td>
<td><strong>Merrion Dale</strong></td>
<td><strong>Carmen Colón</strong></td>
<td><strong>Jonathan Paramore</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Zoom Greeter</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mary Burke</strong></td>
<td><strong>Marty Heaton</strong></td>
<td><strong>Shobhana Chelliah</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4:30 PM</strong></td>
<td>Guillaume Jacques and Aimée Lahaussois: Elevational Deixis in the Kiranti verb</td>
<td>Yunfan Lai and Johann-Mattis List: The phylogeny of Gyalrongic</td>
<td>Sean Foley: Naruo: an endangered Ngwi language spoken in Yunnan, China</td>
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<td>James Wamsley: Definite Expressions in Hakha Lai</td>
<td>Taraka Rama and Johann-Mattis List: An interactive edition of the “Comparative Vocabulary” in Grierson’s “Linguistic Survey of India” from 1928</td>
<td>Kelsuke Huziwara: A brief introduction to Mokha Kadu</td>
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<td>Agnes Conrad, Tsutri Wangmo and Winifred Conrad: Beyond Verbs: The Deictic Prefixes ʌ- and o- in Western Minyag</td>
<td>Kenneth Van Bik and Honeiah Karimi: Computational Reconstruction of Proto-Central-Chin Tones</td>
<td>Patricia McDonough: A preliminary look at agent and patient marking in Thangal (Koirao)</td>
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<td><strong>6:00 PM</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>6:15 PM</strong></td>
<td><strong>Special Session:</strong> Kristine Hildebrandt, Sienna Craig, and Geoff Childs: Giving cultural and social meaning to disaster: Himalayan highlander responses to the 2015 earthquakes in Nepal</td>
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<td><strong>October 2 continued</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
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<td><em>Chair</em> Taraka Rama</td>
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<td><em>Student Organizer</em> Evaline Blair</td>
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<td><em>Zoom Greeter</em> Mary Burke</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Sadaf Munshi</em></td>
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<td>7:30 PM</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>David Peterson and Muhammad Zakaria: The diachrony of causative/applicatives and middles in Southeastern and Southwestern Kuki-Chin</em></td>
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<td><em>Pascal Gerber and Selin Grollmann: A field report on Sam Rai (Kiranti)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00 PM</td>
<td><strong>Field Reports</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Scott Delancey: Paths to Speech Act Participant Object Indexation in South Central (Kuki-Chin)</em></td>
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<td>8:30 PM</td>
<td><strong>Field Reports</strong></td>
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<td><em>Alexander Coupe: Isomorphism in Tense/Mood/Nominalizing morphology in the Aoic languages: how did it develop?</em></td>
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<td><em>Hideo Sawada: On Borrowed Words in Lhangsu, an Undescribed Northern-Burmish Language</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00 PM</td>
<td><strong>Field Reports</strong></td>
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<td><em>Selin Grollmann: Syncretism in the agreement morphology of Kiranti: areal and diachronic implications</em></td>
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<td><em>Keita Kurabe: Semantics of Burmese zoonyms</em></td>
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</table>

October 2
Friday

Room 1
Room 2
Room 3
Room 4
Networking/Salon
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>October 3</th>
<th>Room 1</th>
<th>Room 2</th>
<th>Room 3</th>
<th>Room 4 Networking/Salon</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Saturday</strong></td>
<td><strong>Information Structure</strong></td>
<td><strong>Field Reports</strong></td>
<td><strong>Field Reports</strong></td>
<td><strong>Networking/Salon</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Chair</strong></td>
<td>David Peterson</td>
<td>Tricia McDonough</td>
<td>Rachel Garton</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Student Organizer</strong></td>
<td>Jonisha Ash</td>
<td>Merrion Dale</td>
<td>Mary Burke</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Zoom Greeter</strong></td>
<td>Adam Chavez</td>
<td>Shobhana Chelliah</td>
<td>Mary Burke</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4:00 PM</strong></td>
<td>room empty</td>
<td>Naomi Peck: The phonetics and phonology of Mindri, a dialect of Kera’a</td>
<td>Takenori Murakami: Negative Form of the Perfect -ta in Vaiphei</td>
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<td><strong>4:30 PM</strong></td>
<td>room empty</td>
<td>Anju Saxena, Lars Borin, Bernard Comrie: Kanashi: Fieldwork pieces for a genealogical and contact-linguistic puzzle</td>
<td>Takumi Ikeda: Negation in the Mu-nya Language</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5:00 PM</strong></td>
<td>Yu Li: Differential object marking in Zauzou</td>
<td>room empty</td>
<td>Zakir Hussain Zakir: Balti Script བལ་ཏི་རི་ཇོག༹། and its Revitalization Efforts in Baltistan</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5:30 PM</strong></td>
<td>Satoko Shirai: Prosody of topic and focus in nDrapa</td>
<td>room empty</td>
<td>Stephen Morey: Creating a new script: Bringing Tangsa language into the Facebook era</td>
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<td><strong>6:00 PM</strong></td>
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**NSF funded special session:** Standards for Interlinear Glossed Texts in Related Languages

Data formats and annotation standards vary widely for transcribed and translated linguistic data. This means that we cannot easily mine data for hypothesis testing and typological discovery. In this special session, we meet to explore consensus building on shared annotation standards for Interlinear Glossed Texts (IGT). We invite participants to discuss standards and procedures for the creation of Interlinear Gloss Texts (IGT) and a generalized ontology for annotating linguistic concepts for related languages. Recommendations from ICSTLL conference participants and subsequent meetings organized by Shobhana Chelliah, Mary Burke, and Marty Heton will be documented in a white paper. The white paper will focus on lessons learned including: the power of cross corpora comparison for grammatical analysis, reuse of archived data through improved metadata, and incorporating information of legacy data into current investigations for improved analysis and results.

6:15 PM [James Matisoff keynote](#)

6:45 PM Instructions & Breakout rooms: Bodish, BodoGaro, Lolo-Burmese, NagaGeneral, Other languages of Manipur, Sino, SouthCentralTB (aka KC) IGT Examples

7:15 PM Discussion and plans for future meetings on the topic

October 3 continued

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
<th>Historical Chinese</th>
<th>Syntax: Clause Structure</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:45 PM</td>
<td><strong>Agreement</strong></td>
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<td>Break</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Chair</strong></td>
<td>Alexis Palmer</td>
<td>Xian Zhang</td>
<td>Dorian Roehr</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Student Organizer</strong></td>
<td>Carmen Colón</td>
<td>Benjamin Hull</td>
<td>Wesley Scivetti</td>
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<td><strong>Zoom Greeter</strong></td>
<td>Mary Burke</td>
<td>Marty Heaton</td>
<td>Shobhana Chelliah</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00 PM</td>
<td>David Peterson and Kenneth Van Bik: Participant marking in Lawmtuk-Ruawghawn</td>
<td>room empty</td>
<td>Tanmoy Bhattacharya, Ishani Guha and Eshani Baishya: Ex-k-lamatives in Meeteilon!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 PM</td>
<td>Mathieu Beaudouin: A hypothesis regarding Tangut verb stem alternation in intransitive contexts</td>
<td>Yushan Wang and Yun Zhao: Diachronic Change of the Chinese Name of Sugarcane and the Synchronic Distribution of the Name in Ethnic Minority Languages</td>
<td>Md. Mostafa Rashel: Copula Structures of Tripura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00 PM</td>
<td>Pascal Gerber: First person singular indexation in Mewahang (Kiranti)</td>
<td>Man Hei Lee: High degree of Similarity between Bai and Caijia</td>
<td>Gargi Roy: Reduplication as a Syntactic Strategy in Kokborok—A Descriptive Study</td>
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</table>

**October 3 Saturday**

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<tr>
<th>Room 1</th>
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<th>Room 4 Networking/Salon</th>
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</table>

**Social Hour**
Organized by Subgroup
Starting at 9:30pm
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Room 1</th>
<th>Room 2</th>
<th>Room 3</th>
<th>Room 4 Networking/Salon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4:00 PM</td>
<td>Room empty</td>
<td>Graham Thurgood: Directional prefixes and</td>
<td>Sakuntala Longkumer: Unergatives and</td>
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<td>the subgrouping of Sun’s (1990) ‘Qiangic’</td>
<td>Unaccusatives in Mongsen</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:30 PM</td>
<td>Jacques Guillaume: Old Tibetan</td>
<td>Tyler Davis: The Status of Ngawn in South</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and Proto-Tibetan</td>
<td>Central (Kuki-Chin)</td>
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<td>5:00 PM</td>
<td>Hongdi Ding: Tailhead linkage</td>
<td>Room empty</td>
<td>Norihiko Hayashi: Noun Phrase Structure in</td>
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<td>in Liangshan Yi</td>
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<td>Menglun Akeu</td>
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<td>5:30 PM</td>
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<td>SHORT BREAK</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:35 PM</td>
<td><strong>Special Session</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shobhana Chelliah, Kelly Berkson, Sara Champlin, Ken Van Bik</td>
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<td>Linguistically Underserved</td>
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<td>Communities and Health: the</td>
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<td>LUCAH project</td>
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</table>

**Room 1**
- **Chair**: Shobhana Chelliah
- **Student Organizer**: Wesley Scivetti
- **Zoom Greeter**: Shobhana Chelliah

**Room 2**
- **Chair**: David Bradley
- **Student Organizer**: Merrion Dale
- **Zoom Greeter**: Mary Burke

**Room 3**
- **Chair**: Dina Kapetangianni
- **Student Organizer**: Jonisha Ash
- **Zoom Greeter**: Adam Chavez

**October 4 continued**
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Room</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:15 PM</td>
<td>Nancy Caplow</td>
<td>A unified account of the epistemic-evidential system of Tibetan</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:15 PM</td>
<td>Cathryn Yang</td>
<td>Intermediate stages on the pathway from &quot;-? to rising: Evidence from Ngwi (Loloish)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:45 PM</td>
<td>David Bradley</td>
<td>Modality in Lisu</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:45 PM</td>
<td>Marius Zemp</td>
<td>Revisiting the development of phonemic tone (tonogenesis) in Tibetic languages</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:15 PM</td>
<td>Chris Donlay</td>
<td>Question Formation and Epistemicity in Khatso</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:15 PM</td>
<td>Savio Meyase</td>
<td>Phonological Conspiracy in Tone</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:45 PM</td>
<td>Huade Huang</td>
<td>Evidentiality and engagement in Kua’nsi</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:15 PM</td>
<td>Closing remarks by Dr. Scott DeLancy</td>
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<td>Talent Show</td>
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**October 4 Sunday**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
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<td>Yunfan Lai and Johann-Mattis List</td>
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Elevational deixis in the Kiranti verb

Guillaume Jacques and Aimée Lahaussois

CRLAO/ CNRS, Histoire des Théories Linguistiques, CNRS

Elevational (or topographical) deixis has been described as a pervasive typological feature in Trans-Himalayan (Post, 2019), and is particularly conspicuous in Kiranti languages, where all languages have a tripartite (up, same level, down) elevational contrast (Bickel, 2001; Jacques & Lahaussois, 2014; Michailovsky, 2017), and some languages additionally appear to distinguish an upstream/uphill vs downhill/downstream dimension distinct from the vertical one (Michailovsky, 2015). Elevational deixis is not only encoded by locational adverbs and nouns, demonstratives and case markers, but also by motion and manipulation verbs (including intransitive verbs and their causative counterparts). The present work focuses on the encoding of elevational deixis in the verbal system.

Of the Kiranti languages for which reliable data is available, Belhare (Table 1) presents the most elaborate system of elevational deixis: it has a tripartite up-same level-down elevational contrast for both the translocative ‘go’ and the cislocative ‘come’ basic motion verbs and their transitive counterparts. The elevational contrast is marked by three pairs of primary verb roots, in addition to two motion verbs with neutral elevational deixis.

Kiranti languages other than Belhare only have the elevational contrast for the cislocative motion and manipulations verbs, and only a single translocative motion verb (the one with neutral elevational deixis, generally a cognate of Belhare kʰat).

Table 1: Elevational deixis in Belhare intransitive motion verbs (based on Bickel 1999, 94)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Translocative</th>
<th>Cislocative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>up</td>
<td>$t^\text{haj}$-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>across</td>
<td>$p^\text{en}$-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>down</td>
<td>$\text{yu}$-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neutral</td>
<td>$k^\text{hat}$-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The cislocative motion verbs with elevational deixis across Kiranti are almost in all cases cognate with the Belhare verb roots in Table 1, but we find three patterns of correspondences:
Athpare, Yakkha and Yamphu (the languages closest to Belhare phylo-genetically, Michailovsky 1994) have the same roots for the cislocative as Belhare and have lost the translocative ones.

Limbu, Bantawa, Camling and Kulung (belonging to different sub-groups of Kiranti, Michailovsky 1994) have cognates of the Belhare translocative verbs, but use them as cislocative motion verbs, implying a shift in deixis relative to the deictic center.

Other languages, including Khaling, Dumi, Thulung and Hayu, have cognates of the Belhare translocative verbs as cislocative ones like the second group, but have a distinct verb meaning ‘come up’ (in the case of Thulung cogerate of Belhare kat- ‘come up’).

The aim of the presentation is twofold. First, we will describe the use of verbal elevational deixis across Kiranti languages and its interaction with the expression of elevation in other parts of speech. Second, (Michailovsky 1994, Jacques 2017), we will lay out the patterns of cognation across languages, and propose a reconstruction of the motion verb system in proto-Kiranti and its evolution in each of the attested languages.

References


Michailovsky, Boyd. 2015. On Limbu directionals and locative expressions.


Researchers have argued that definiteness is correlated with features such as uniqueness, identifiability, individuality (Lyons 1999), familiarity (Heim 1982), or combinations of these features (Schwarz 2009, Gillon 2009). An analysis put forward by Schwarz (2009) argues for two types of definiteness: (i) strong definiteness, which is linked to anaphoric reference (or discourse familiarity), and (ii) weak definiteness, which is linked to uniqueness and identifiability. In English, the definite article the corresponds with both weak and strong definiteness. However, in languages such as Akan (Niger-Congo, Arkoh & Matthewson 2013) and Rapa Nui (Austronesian, Kieviet 2017), definite articles are argued to correlate solely with Schwarz’s strong definiteness. The current analysis of two previously little-described (see Barnes 1998 and Bedell 2001 for previous discussion) definite articles in Hakha Lai (also known as Hakha Chin and Laiholh), a Kuki-Chin language, aims to contribute to the body of research on expressions of definiteness.

Hakha Lai is spoken in Chin State (in western Burma/Myanmar), and by a large community of Burmese refugees in Southern Indianapolis. Data analyzed herein are from roughly 18 months of targeted elicitation conducted with native speakers from the Indianapolis community.

The articles discussed, kha and cu, follow a head noun referent to mark it as definite. The first article, kha, appears postnominally and correlates with Schwarz’s (2009) weak definiteness. Examples (1) and (2) provide contexts in which kha is obligatory. In both cases, kha is obligatory due to the addressee’s ability to identify the referent in the wider situation. In (1), the addressee is presumed to have seen the item that was not found. In example (2), the addressee is presumed to know the individual who is referred to by the third person singular pronoun. These contextual restrictions fit within the definition of weak definiteness as defined by Schwarz (2009).

(1) ka ttawh lo mi tu kha a thaw deuh men lai
1SG find NEG REL NOM FAM 3SG be.good must maybe FUT
‘The one that I didn’t find must have been the good one’

(2) Amah kha ka hal lai
3SG.Pro FAM 1SG ask FUT
‘I will go ask him’

In contrast, the second definite article in this study, cu, is linked to Schwarz’s strong definiteness, which is defined by anaphoric reference. Examples (3) and (4) below show how cu is utilized in Hakha Lai to denote anaphoric reference (or strong definiteness).

(3) Liang nih doctor pa party-ah a sawm. [Anih cu] ka
Liang ERG doctor MASC party-LOC 3SG invite. 3SG.Pro cu 1SG
rem lo.
friendly NEG
‘Liang invited a doctor to the party. I don’t like him (the doctor).’

(4) ram lak-ah a um mi biakinn kan hmu. An biakinn
forest-LOC 3SG be.at REL church 3PL see. 3PL.Poss church
[inn-ka cu] a sen
door cu 3SG be.red
‘We found the church in the forest. The church’s door was red.’
In example (3), the doctor and the referent for the pronoun in the following sentence are co-indexed. Because the same referent appears in the previous sentence, and thus, previously in discourse, the pronoun is obligatorily accompanied by the strong definite, cu. In example (4), inn-ka ‘door’ is followed by the strong definite, cu, via anaphoric part-whole bridging. The church is mentioned previously in discourse and thus, the door which is part of the church is also discourse familiar.

This talk will analyze the conditions under which different types of definiteness marking appear in Hakha Lai. In addition, comparisons will be drawn between Hakha Lai and previous research on German (Schwarz 2009), Akan (Arkoh & Matthewson 2013), and Rapa Nui (Kieviet 2017), in an attempt to contribute to crosslinguistic research on definite expressions.

REFERENCES
Western Minyag (iso639-3:mvm) is an understudied Tibeto-Burman language spoken in western Sichuan, People’s Republic of China. The current study makes use of natural speech data gathered through extensive fieldwork to examine the distribution and application of two deictic prefixes: the proximal ʌ- and the distal o-. These two affixes are used widely throughout Western Minyag’s pronoun system to encode personal, spatial, and discourse deixis. As they are highly fused with personal and demonstrative pronouns, to date there is little published research investigating their deictic functions (Bai 2019). However, analysis of ʌ- and o- as independent morphemes is supported by the fact that they can be optionally affixed to a limited number of adverbs and postpositions. Using the Pembushi dialect as its main point of reference, section one provides a detailed overview of the deictic functions of ʌ- and o- and their attested distributions throughout the language. Section two offers comparative data from the Liuba and Pusharong dialects, as well as the related and undescribed Eastern Minyag language. Based on these data and other relevant regional studies, this section also proposes theories to account for the historical syntactic and phonological development of the prefixes. Section three discusses new analyses of Western Minyag’s pronoun system and its component morphemes made possible by understanding ʌ- and o- as deictic prefixes, with special focus paid to the semantic feature of definiteness. Finally, section four considers the broader typological significance of deixis in Western Minyag. A defining and well-researched feature of languages like Western Minyag, which are located within the Qiangic diffusion area (Chirkova 2012), are their rich system of topographically deictic, verbal prefixes. This study’s investigation of deictic prefixes as a feature affixable to word classes other than verbs not only sheds light on the development of Western Minyag’s own deictic system, but offers data useful to regional studies on deictic affixes and typologies of deixis at large.
The phylogeny of Gyalrongic

Yunfan Lai and Johann-Mattis List

Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History, Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History

From the new reconstruction of Old Chinese (Baxter & Sagart, 2014) to various debates on the origin and subgrouping of the whole family (Blench & Post, 2014; Sagart et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2019), recent years have seen significant advance in Sino-Tibetan (Trans-Himalayan) historical linguistics. Meanwhile, field studies on under-documented Sino-Tibetan languages, especially Gyalrongic languages, flourished with several brand new grammars seeing the light of the day (Prins, 2017; Lai, 2017; Gong, 2018; Honkasalo, 2019), new languages being discovered (Zhao, 2018; Nyima & Suzuki, 2019), as well as the extinct language, Tangut, gradually being accepted as a Gyalrongic language (Jacques, 2014; Lai et al., forthcoming).

Widely considered one of the most complex and conservative branches in the family in terms of phonology and morphology, Gyalrongic languages are an indispensable key to the in-depth understanding of the history of Sino-Tibetan. A better understanding of their phylogeny will facilitate further investigations on linguistic typology, sound change, shared innovations, as well as the reconstruction of Proto-Sino-Tibetan. It may also hint at the homeland of the speakers of Gyalrongic languages, and their later migration patterns.

In light of all its importance, the present paper aims at investigating the phylogeny of the Gyalrongic languages adopting a computer-assisted workflow. Starting from mostly first-hand lexical data from more than 20 Gyalrongic varieties, covering all recognized sub-branches (including Gyalrong languages, Horpa, Khroskyabs and Tangut), we use transparent interactive methods for the annotation of cognate sets List (2017), and then apply state-of-the-art methods for Bayesian phylogenetic inference to reconstruct Rgyalrongic phylogenies.

At the time, our analysis is still work in progress. All languages have been assembled, and the cognate set annotation has just begun. In the talk, we will present the workflow in due detail and show the first results of our analysis.

References


An interactive edition of the “Comparative Vocabulary” in Grierson’s “Linguistic Survey of India” from 1928

Taraka Rama and Johann-Mattis List

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The “Comparative Vocabulary” in Grierson’s “Linguistic Survey of India” from 1928 is a rich historical resource of South Asian linguistic diversity, offering translations for 168 concepts across 387 language varieties from five language families (152 Sino-Tibetan, 118 Indo-Iranian, 19 Dravidian, 28 Austro-Asiatic languages and 7 Hmong-Mien varieties). The collection of languages includes ancient languages, such as Sanskrit, Avestan, me-dieval languages, such as Old Meiteilon, and various spoken languages which were by then documented for the first time. Given the high number of languages covered in a single volume, the “Linguistic Survey of India” is interesting both from a historical and a comparative linguistics viewpoint. Historically, scholars compare individual languages as they have been documented today with the documentation provided almost 100 years ago and investigate to which degree early language documentation was capable of handling complex linguistic features, such as tone and complex sound patterns. For the purpose of language comparison, the data offers still one of the largest collections of lexical diversity in South Asia and can be used for various quantitative and qualitative approaches to historical and typological language comparison, including phylogenetic reconstruction, dialect geography, or lexical typology.

To make these resource available to quantitative and qualitative investigations by the linguistic community, we have digitized the data in the “Comparative Vocabulary” and successively retro-standardized to a state of high comparability with other cross-linguistic lexical resources. The process of retro-standardization includes the linking of language varieties to Glottolog [Hammarström et al., 2019], the mapping of concepts elicited in the resource to Concepticon [List et al., 2016], and the conversion of the transcriptions to the International Phonetic Alphabet in the specific version proposed by the Cross-Linguistic Transcription Systems initiative [List et al., 2019]. To allow for an enhanced storage and exchange, data were converted to the tabular formats recommended by the Cross-Linguistic Data Formats initiative [Forkel et al., 2018]. To allow for a convenient qualitative inspection of the data, we are currently preparing an interactive Cross-Linguistic Linked Data (CLLD) application, which presents the data in form of an interactive web application, providing the look-and-feel known from popular CLLD applications such as WALS Online (https://wals.clld.org, Dryer and Haspelmath 2013), or CLICS (https://clics.clld.org, Rzymski et al. 2020).

In the talk, we will report in detail on the process of digitization and retro-standardization and then provide detailed examples showing how the data can be used for quantitative and qualitative investigations.
References


Computational Reconstruction of Proto-Central-Chin Tones

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In this paper, Proto-Central-Chin (PCC) tones are reconstructed for live syllables based on three “core” Central Chin languages: Falam Chin, Hakha Lai, and Mizo. Using the computer programming language, Python, this computational reconstruction is assigned five categories of PCC tones. The tonal data, 719 PCC etyma in total, are gathered from Van Bik (2009) which established the cognate sets of these three languages. Table (1) shows the tonal correspondences which result from the most salient statistical probabilities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PCC Tone Category</th>
<th>Falam Chin (4 tones)</th>
<th>Hakha Lai (3 tones)</th>
<th>Mizo (4 tones)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*1</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*2</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*3</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*4</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*5</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (1): Correspondence of PCC Tonal Cognates (Present Study)

The significance of this computational reconstruction is that it warrants a fifth proto-tonal category as opposed to hypothesized in Van Bik (2009) that reconstructed four tonal categories, as shown in Table (2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Falam Chin (4 tones)</th>
<th>Hakha Lai (3 tones)</th>
<th>Mizo (4 tones)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*1</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*2</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*3</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*4</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (2): Correspondence of PCC Tonal Cognates (Van Bik 2009)

This paper also explains how we arrive at the statistical probability of PCC tones using Python. In Python, we used the Pandas library to read the data and the Collections library to calculate the tonal correspondences. This was done with the open-source Python distributor, Anaconda, and within Anaconda, Jupyter Notebook was used to edit and run the code. We used Counter in the Collections library to give us the most common tone pairings among the cognates to help us reconstruct the PCC tones.

Finally, etyma for these reconstructed PCC tones are provided as five appendices as PCC Tone *1, *2, *3, *4, and *5. This reconstruction lays a good foundation for further comparative tonal investigations with other Kuki-Chin languages.
Naruo: an endangered Ngwi language spoken in Yunnan, China

Sean Foley
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Naruo is a highly endangered Ngwi language spoken in various parts of Yunnan province in southwestern China. Previously, there was little to no documentation done on Naruo, only mentions of the language’s existence in various literature. Bradley (2007) grouped Naruo into both the Central Ngwi and Northern Ngwi sub-branches of the Ngwi branch of Tibeto-Burman, as pointed out by Lama (2012). This is the result of Naruo being reported in Sichuan, being similar to Nasu (Northern Ngwi), and in Yunnan, being similar to Talu (Central Ngwi). Speakers of Naruo classify themselves as belonging to the ‘Shuitian’ ethnicity (lit. ‘irrigated field’), which includes numerous peoples in Yunnan and Sichuan provinces, although they are officially classified as part of the Yi nationality. Previous research suggests some ‘Shuitian’ peoples speak Northern Ngwi languages, such as Muhisu (Zhu & Zhang 2005).

Fieldwork carried out on the Naruo language spoken in Yongsheng County in northwestern Yunnan yields the first look at this highly endangered language. Word lists of around 300 words were collected from the villages of Guangming and Yonghong, which are located in northwestern Yongsheng County. The comparative method was applied to compare Naruo to Proto-Ngwi (Bradley 1979) and both Central Ngwi and Northern Ngwi languages. The results reveal a number of shared lexical innovations between Naruo and more well-known Central Ngwi languages, such as Lisu (Huang & Dai 1992) and Talu (Zhou 2005). Shared innovations include the nominalizer-prefixed lexical innovation of ‘fire’, cognate with Lisu ᾱ聱to⁵⁵, and several Naruo two-syllable compounds have cognates in Talu, Lisu, and Tagu (Tagu data from Cathryn Yang, p.c.) (Table 1). Based on the above shared innovations and Naruo’s overall similarity to Lisu, Talu, and Tagu, it can be concluded that Naruo should be grouped within Central Ngwi.

This paper will present these findings on Naruo, placing it in the context of nearby Central Ngwi languages, including Lisu, Talu, Tagu, and others. These findings provide further insight into the history of the numerous peoples that inhabit Northwestern Yunnan and also provide further evidence that the exonym ‘Shuitian’ may refer to speakers of both Northern and Central Ngwi languages.
Table 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Proto-Ngwi</th>
<th>Innv.</th>
<th>Naruo (C)</th>
<th>Tagu (C)</th>
<th>Lisu (C)</th>
<th>Nosu (N)</th>
<th>Nasu (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fire</td>
<td>*C-mi²</td>
<td>*C- &gt; a-</td>
<td>a⁵⁵t̖o²¹</td>
<td>a⁵⁵t̖o²¹</td>
<td>a⁵⁵t̖o²¹</td>
<td>a⁵⁵t̖o²¹</td>
<td>mu²¹t̖o³³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foot</td>
<td>*kre¹</td>
<td>*pha</td>
<td>tê³¹⁵⁵pʰa³³</td>
<td>tê³¹⁴³³pʰe³³</td>
<td>tê³¹⁴³³pʰe³³</td>
<td>tê³¹⁴³³pʰe³³</td>
<td>tê³¹⁴³³pʰe³³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bone</td>
<td>*ʃə-ro²</td>
<td>*-to</td>
<td>o²¹t̖o³³</td>
<td>ho³¹t̖o³³</td>
<td>xu/o²¹t̖o³³</td>
<td>c³¹t̖o³³</td>
<td>vu²¹d̖u³³</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: (C) – Central Ngwi; (N) – Northern Ngwi

References


A brief introduction to Mokha Kadu
Kelsuke Huziwara
Kyoto University

Mokha Kadu is a variety of Kadu (ISO 639-3 zkd; Tibeto-Burman > Sal > Jingpho-Luish > Luish) spoken in Mokha region of Pinlebu Township, Sagain Division, Burma. Among the three major variety of Kadu (Setto, Molang, Mokhwang), Mokha is most similar to Molang. Although there are several papers on Kadu (Brown (1920), Sangdong (2012) for Setto, Luce (1985) for Molang), Mokha is hitherto unreported.

Salient characteristics of Mokha is summarised as follows.

1. Voiced obstruents are phonemic: (1)
2. More intervocalic voicing than other Kadu varieties: (2)
3. Proto-Luish dental and bilabial codas merge into dental ones: (3)
4. No secondary creaky tone: (4)
5. The Burmese low tone corresponds to the high tone in borrowed verbs: (5)
6. In Shan loans, n in Setto Kadu corresponds to l: (6)

Examples

Abbreviations

C: Cak (Huziwara 2016); MK: Mokha; ML: Molang; MW: Mokhwang; PLu: Proto-Luish (Huziwara 2012); PTB: Proto-Tibeto-Burman (STEDT); ST: Setto; T: Shan (Sao Tern Meng)

(1) Phonemic voiced obstruents
   b. ‘come’ MK di; ML di, MW li, ST li; cf. PTB *la-y (STEDT #3569)
   c. ‘ride’ MK bì; ML bí, MW pi, ST pí
   d. ‘mirror’ MK zàn; ML zàn, MW sàn, ST sân; cf. T tsam3

(2) Secondary voicing
   a. ‘moon’ MK shɔdá; ML shotá, MW shotá, ST shotá; cf. C sɔdá, PLu *s-tá
   b. ‘sparrow’ MK sabɔdí; ML sapɔdí, MW —, ST sapɔtí

(3) The merger of PLu dental and bilabial codas
   b. PLu *-n ‘bite’ MK kán; ML kán, MW kán, ST kán; cf. C káiŋ. PLu kán
c. PLu *p ‘leaf’ MK təlat; ML təlap ~ təlat, MW təlap, ST təlap; cf. C ?áta?, PLu *tap, PTB *s-lap (STEDT #824)
d. PLu *t ‘rice’ MK ʔəshat; ML ʔəshat, MW ʔəshat, ST ʔəshat; cf. C kvúsai?, PLu *sat

(4) The secondary creaky tone in Kadu: L → C / M__; in Mokha and Mokhwang, this sandhi is absent.
a. ‘hate’ MK yunî; ML yunî, MW yunî, ST yunî

(5) Burmese low tone as the high tone in borrowed verbs
a. ‘put upward’ MK táj; ML táj, MW táj, ST táj; cf. Burmese <tang> [tin]

(6) Shan loan l vs n

References

STEDT Database. The Sino-Tibetan Etymological Dictionary and Thesaurus. http://stedt.berkeley.edu/~stedt-cgi/rootcanal.pl (last accessed on 2020-04-19)
This paper uses novel data collected via fieldwork to highlight preliminary observations of agent and patient marking in Thangal (Koirao), a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in the Senapati District of Manipur in Northeast India. The Thangal community identifies as one of the smallest Naga tribes, with a population of approximately 1200 (Thangmi 2012).

Little published data about Thangal exist: Primary source data about the language is generally limited to word lists and two folk songs collected in the 19th century (Brown 1837, Grierson 1903, McCulloch 1859) and the much more recent work of Singh (2011). As such, much remains to be explored in the area of Thangal morphosyntax; case markers in Thangal, for example, have been noted, but use of these markers has not been analyzed (Grierson 1903, Singh 2011).

The work herein frames initial findings regarding the Thangal case marking system in terms of the larger, ongoing discussion of ergativity in Tibeto-Burman languages (Chelliah 2017, DeLancey 2011).

The default constituent order in Thangal is Agent (A) – Patient (P) – Verb (V), as seen in Ex. 1.

(1) Moses.ni John.ou kao ye
Moses.AGNT John.PAT kick ASP
“Moses kicked John.”

Thangal generally uses the ‘agent’ marker -ni (AGNT) in past time reference (Ex. 1 and 2); the marker is ungrammatical, for example, in the present progressive in Ex. 3. However, other uses of the -ni marker show it in progressive or future constructions (Ex. 4 and 5), suggesting another factor is at play.

(2) pai.ni tak chi ta.nge
3SG.AGNT rice DDET eat.ASP
“He/she ate rice.”

(3) *pai.ni tak chi ta.amme
3SG.AGNT rice DDET eat.PROG
“He/she is eating rice.”

(4) pui.ni roigum (chi) ta.amme
Mom.AGNT chicken.egg (DDET) eat.PROG
“Mom is eating the eggs.”

(5) sanuibui chi.ni nao chi.ou kasen tou phung.le
woman DDET.AGNT child DDET.PAT back LOC carry.FUT
“She will carry the child on her back.”

Ex. 6 and 7 demonstrate a potential animacy restriction on the ‘patient’ marker -ou (PAT), with “cow” taking the marker while “cart” does not.

(6) hi nao hi.ni tom chi.ou tun ea
PDEM child PDET.AGNT cow DDET.PAT push ASP
“This child pushed the cow.”

(7) hi nao hi.ni gari chi tun ea
PDET child PDET.AGNT cart DDET push ASP
“This child pushed the cart.”

Similarly, comparing Ex. 8 to Ex. 5 above, “child” receives a marker; “basket” does not. Ex. 5 also demonstrates the ‘patient’ marker co-occurring with a determiner.

(8) sanuibui chi.ni anthop chi kasen tou phung.le
woman DDET.AGNT basket DDET back LOC carry.FUT
“She will carry the basket on her back.”

Regarding the animacy of constituents taking the ‘agent’ marker, most are human, but Ex. 9 shows an exception.

(9) car chi.ni hei sanaoba.ou rot ea
car DDET.AGNT 1SG brother (younger).PAT throw ASP
“The car hit my (younger) brother.”
Little typological work has been done on the many Tibeto-Burman languages that do not follow a straightforward alignment system and are affected by discourse and information structure (Chelliah 2017). By investigating uses of the ‘agent’ and ‘patient’ markers in Thangal in terms of volitionality and animacy, this work serves as a valuable contribution of data to the topic of ergativity in Tibeto-Burman languages.

References


In this paper we argue for the common origin of two seemingly unrelated valence-affecting constructions in South Central Tibeto-Burman (aka Kuki-Chin). The main languages bearing on this issue are members of the Southwestern and the Southeastern branches of the subgroup (Peterson 2017). The common origin we propose for these constructions may provide evidence for closer relatedness between Southeastern and Southwestern languages than for other branches of South Central; there is otherwise only tenuous support for such a grouping, despite widespread traditional recognition of a “Southern Chin” subgroup.

On the Southwestern side, the construction in question involves a comitative/instrumental applicative marker of the form -haj, as seen in Rengmitca (1-2).

(1) Rengmitca instrumental/comitative applicative (comitative sense):

| p’thun=lò³ mün²=tì³ t’-la¹-haj² |
|‘P’thun (bear) took along a large basket.’ (215.8) |

(2) Rengmitca instrumental/comitative applicative (instrumental sense):

| m’khit-haj³-sut³-nak³=lò³ t’håj⁴-khüm wala t’=dök⁴ |
|‘After he used it (bamboo twine) to wind around him, leaving it there, he was just there swinging back and forth.’ (163.58) |

Clearly related constructions and morphology are seen in Southwestern South Central languages like Khumi and Lemi, where the cognate morphology (–hay and –hai, respectively), marks causatives, alongside applicative usages. This causative usage is unsurprising given frequently observed causative/applicative patterns: applicatives apparently sometimes develop via a causative > sociative causative > comitative/instrumental route.

More surprising, however, is the apparently cognate morphology seen in Southeastern Kuki-Chin. Hyow’s middle marker, -ey, has a complex array of functions, including the marking of prototypical middle situations, such as reciprocals and reflexives, as seen in (3):

(3) Hyow middle marker (reciprocal sense):

| í-ní-kòp-ëy-hyɔ̃=ní í-ní-shùn-ëy-hyɔ̃=dɔ |
|‘They shot each other. They stabbed each other.’ [ZM_ARGS2_082015_Hyow_0005_0007] (Zakaria 2017:370) |

In Sumtu (Watkins 2013), the clearly related suffix, –i, has prototypical middle readings, as in Hyow, but Watkins nevertheless dubs it an applicative, with representative semantics seen in examples like (4):
We suggest that these seemingly unrelated constructions involve an original causative or comitative applicative element which has developed into middle marking in Southeastern, with residual applicative semantics there. (Remarkably, a similar situation may be attested in West Africa, where Creissels and Nouguier-Voisin 2004 propose that in Wolof (West Atlantic), causative, applicative, and middle semantics have developed from an original marker of “co-participation”.)

In this talk we will discuss the synchronic characteristics of the respective languages more fully (in addition to likely related elements attested elsewhere in South Central, including comitative adpositions and plural markers). We will also more fully outline scenarios under which the current semantic properties of the resulting constructions have arisen.
In most Tibeto-Burman languages with verb agreement, indexation follows a hierarchical pattern in which Speech Act Participants (SAP) are indexed in preference to 3rd person arguments, regardless of syntactic function. This is the prevalent pattern in Rgyalrongic, Qiangic, Nungish, Jinghpaw, Northern Naga, and Kiranti. The Western Himalayan and South Central (Kuki-Chin) languages, in contrast, generally have subject-agreement/accusative alignment. But in some South Central languages we find innovations which reflect the same focus on SAP indexation that we find in the hierarchical languages (DeLancey 2017). One such innovation which has occurred independently at least twice in the branch is the development of a morpheme which indexes SAP objects, i.e. the same index marks agreement with either a 1st or a 2nd person object argument. Consider the SAP object indexes in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>1OBJ</th>
<th>2OBJ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mizo</td>
<td>mi- na- naŋ- nah-</td>
<td>-cê cha niŋ-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mara</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purum</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sizang</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daai</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This paper will briefly note the various pathways through which the individual languages have developed SAP object indexation, but our primary interest is in two particular pathways which have resulted in a single form indexing both 1st and 2nd person objects: incorporation into the transitivity system of what was originally a directional cislocative, as in Sizang, and extension of what was originally a 2nd person index, as in Purum. The second of these is of considerable typological interest; it seems counterintuitive, but is demonstrably the source not only for the SAP object index in Purum but also the 1Obj markers in Mara and Dai. (Note that a similar development has been documented in Karbi (Konnerth 2015), which is fairly closely related to South Central).

References:


Isomorphism in Tense/Mood/Nominalizing morphology in the Aoic languages: how did it develop?

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This paper compares nominalizing morphology with tense/mood marking morphology in the Aoic languages of central Nagaland, specifically looking at Lotha, Mongsen Ao, Chungli Ao, Northern Sangtam and Yimkhiung.

An extensive range of morphemes is used in Aoic not only for the nominalizing, genitivizing and relativizing functions widely reported in Sino-Tibetan languages, but also for encoding various categories of tense and mood marking. This isomorphism is noteworthy from a diachronic perspective, because it suggests that nominalizers have undergone extended grammaticalization and reanalysis, thereby resulting in these newer functions of tense/mood marking. The new grammatical categories plausibly developed historically out of the loss of a clause-final copula, leading to the reanalysis of clause-final nominalizers in stand-alone nominalizations as tense/mood markers. Some nominalizer-cum-tense/mood markers have cognate forms across the Aoic languages, suggesting that the process began during Proto-Aoic, although the actual tense category that an isomorphic form encodes may differ — for example, the suffix \(-tʃhō\) is used as the citation form nominalizer in Northern Sangtam and an identical form \(-tʃhō\) serves as its past tense marker; an isomorphic form \(-tʃhō\) is also used as the citation and past tense form in Lotha, whereas in Yimkhiung, an identical form \(-tʃhō\) is used exclusively to encode present tense.

Three Aoic languages (Mongsen Ao, Chungli Ao, Yimkhiung) also demonstrate the typological rarity of marking their past tense with a zero morpheme. This suggests that Proto-Aoic originally had a mood marking system with a zero-marked realis mood, but after clause-final nominalizing morphology was reanalyzed as marking various temporal contrasts, the old mood system was reinterpreted as a tense system. The paper will present textual data from these languages in support of this interpretation.
The Kiranti languages of eastern Nepal (Trans-Himalayan/Tibeto-Burman) are known for their complex biactantial verbal agreement, which indexes person, number and clusivity. The agreement morphology of the Kiranti languages is predominantly suffixing, but especially the south-eastern Kiranti languages (the South-Central and the Greater-Yakkha-Limbu branches) exhibit a number of agreement prefixes.

The agreement paradigms (both intransitive and transitive) of Kiranti languages usually exhibit some syncretisms, frequently in number, but also in person. The syncretisms reflect both conservative features of underspecification and innovative collapses of markers.

This talk aims to discuss some syncretisms in the suffix morphology and their diachronic implications. Across various Kiranti languages, recurring patterns regarding syncretism can be observed, e.g. first and third person dual, second and third person and third person singular and plural. It will be shown that these syncretisms interact with the presence or absence of agreement prefixes in the south-eastern Kiranti languages in that the introduction of innovative agreement prefixes in these languages is the result of a disambiguation process. Moreover, it is observed that this disambiguation by prefixation is a development confined to the region of the south-eastern Kiranti languages and therefore may represent an areal feature.
A field report on Sam Rai (Kiranti)

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Abstract

The villages Limkhim, Khatangma, Mempang and Tintama in the valley of the Irkhuwa river, a tributary to the Arun river in Eastern Nepal, are home to an ethnic group called “Sam” or “Sam Rai”. The identity of this group and their language has been a matter of debate. While the accounts in the literature concur that it constitutes a Kiranti group, no linguistic or anthropological data has been presented, and the phylogenetic position of the language has been a matter of much speculation. Hanßon (1991: 84–85, 111), based on the data collected during the Linguistic Survey of Nepal, is of the opinion that certain of the “idioms” subsumed under “Sam” are most closely related to Mewahang, although certain other “idioms” also show a close affinity to Sampang. However, van Driem (2001: 704–705) assumes that the similarities between Sam and Mewahang are based on contact, since the Sam territory verges on Mewahang area in the north and east. Van Driem (2001: 615, 689–698, 704–705), in contrast to Hanßon (1991), proposes the classification of Sam within “Khambu” (together with Kulung, Nachiring, Sampang), whereas Mewahang is classified with Lohorung and Yamphu in a subgroup called “Upper Arun”. Gaenszle (2000: 77) states that while in the perception of the Mewahang people, “this group [Sam] is classified among the Mewahang in a broad sense, it is linguistically distinct”. However, none of these proposals has been substantiated with empirical linguistic evidence.

Based on a field trip, this talk will assert the identity of the Sam and their language. Unfortunately, the language spoken by the people identifying themselves as Sam Rai is by now extinct, so that no linguistic data can be presented. However, indirect evidence, that is the ethnocultural self-perception of the people, which is still carefully preserved, and a few words indicate that the language of (most of) the Sam Rai was in fact Mewahang, although the accounts of the Sam Rai themselves indicates that the migration into the Irkhua valley took place in several independent waves. This talk will give an account on the general ethnolinguistic situation on the northern slopes of the Irkhuwa valley and discuss the meaning and etymology of the term “Sam”. This clarification is relevant for the wider picture, since ethnic and cultural auto- and exonyms are an important tool for identification and segregation in the wider Kiranti area, but do not always concur with the linguistic evidence.

References


The phonetics and phonology of Mindri, a dialect of Kera’a

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Kera’a (clk, idum1241, ‘Idu’) is a “Digarish” (Kera’a-Tawrã) language spoken by approximately 12,000 Idu Mishmi in Arunachal Pradesh, India. This talk will focus on the phonetics and phonology of Mindri, a dialect of Kera’a spoken in the Dibang Valley district. The phonology of Kera’a (“Idu Mishmi”) has previously been described in various sources (e.g. Jiang 2005, Peck 2020, Reinöhl in press), but no work on the language has yet included insights from this previously undocumented dialect. Based on data collected in early 2020, I will begin by outlining the segmental and suprasegmental phonological systems of Mindri, with particular reference to prenasalised obstruents, glottal stop clusters and tone on monosyllables. I will then follow this with an integrated account of a language-level Kera’a phonology informed by areal, dialectal and historical context.

References


On Borrowed Words in Lhangsu, an Undescribed Northern-Burmish Language

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‘Lhangsu’ is the name of a subgroup of Lhaovo, a tribe constituting Kachin ethnocultural group, and their language. Lhangsu people speak the language which is fairly different from Standard Lhaovo. Due to their ethnogeographical environment, Lhangsu has borrowed a lot of vocabulary from Jinghpaw, and also from Shan, Burmese, and a few other languages, presumably via Jinghpaw in many cases.

In this presentation, I give an overview of loanwords in Lhangsu from viewpoints such as the path of borrowing and their effects on the phonemic inventory of the language.

I argue the following points on the path of borrowing.

1. The major donor languages are Jinghpaw, Burmese, and Shan.


2. If only either of the languages has the form corresponding to a Lhangsu form, we may take it as the direct source of the borrowing of the form.


3. If either Burmese or Shan in addition to Jinghpaw has the forms corresponding to a Lhangsu form, Burmese/Shan can be taken as the direct source of the borrowing to Jinghpaw.


4. If both Burmese and Shan have the ‘corresponding’ form, the path of borrowing is not necessarily ‘Lhangsu (< Jinghpaw) < Shan < Burmese’: It might be ‘Shan < Burmese’ and ‘Lhangsu (< Jinghpaw) < Burmese’.


5. There are two forms of a Modern Burmese word which might be related to a Lhangsu form: the one is a phonological form of the word (indicated by ‘Bur.’), and the other is a transliteration of the word written in Burmese script (indicated by ‘WB.’) The latter reflects a phonological form the word in an earlier stage to a certain degree. If a Lhangsu word corresponds to the latter, the borrowing must have occurred in a relatively earlier stage of Burmese.


6. Sometimes a Lhangsu form ‘corresponds’ to neither of the two though it could be somehow related to them. In such cases, the borrowing is considered to have occurred between the earlier stage reflected by the transliteration and the later stage of Modern Burmese.


The elements introduced by the borrowing are initials \textit{r}– and \textit{j}–, a cluster \textit{Cr}–, and a variety of rhymes, which made the vowel + non-approximant final combinations almost free.
Semantics of Burmese zoonyms

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The zoonym (animal name) is a less studied area in Tibeto-Burman linguistics. The aim of this paper, building upon more than 500 animal names in Burmese collected by the author from Ohno’ (2000) Burmese dictionary and throughout the author’s fieldwork, is to explore Burmese faunal lexicon, paying special attention to its semantics. This presentation will show that Burmese faunal terms illustrate areal and universal issues of phytonyms described by Matisoff (2011) for English, Chinese, Lahu, Thai, Japanese, and other languages.

Productive semantic categories in Burmese animal nomenclature are “locational/habitational”, “appearance”, and “geographical origin”, which are also very common in neighboring languages. For example, the Indian pitta is called ｔａｕ-ｮｕｎ “mountain quail” because of its habitat. The Indian wolf snake, teira batfish, and pineapplefish illustrate the “appearance” semantic category, being respectively called ｃａｉｎ-ｇａｕｎ-mｗｅ “grasshopper-headed snake”, ｎａ-ｓｈｉｎ-nａｙｙｅ？ “elephant-eared fish”, and ｔｈｉｎｙｕｏｉ-bｏｕ-n-ｊａ “pinecone-shaped fish”. Exotic species are sometimes named in relation to their geographical origin, as illustrated by ｄａｕn-kａｌａ “Indian peacock” which expresses ‘grey peacock-pleasant’. A rich array of Burmese animal names exhibits the intra- and inter-kingdom association, where animal or plant names are modified by other animal or plant names. This is illustrated by ｓｈｉｓ-bｏ ‘beetle’ which literally means “elephant bug”, ｓａｇａｌे-ｂａｎ ‘rocket larkspur’ which literally means “sparrow flower”, ｔａｙｙｅ-？ｐó ‘Asiatic rice borer’ which literally means “leaf bug”, and ？ｏｕｎ-ｊａｐｙ？ ‘traveler’s palm’ which literally means “coconut banana”. Burmese also exhibits rich examples of metaphorical animal names. This is illustrated by ｐｉｓｌｅ-ｐａｕｘｍｏｕｎ “sea bread” expressing ‘starfish’, ｃａ-ｌे？０ “tiger claw” expressing ‘giant clam’, ｐｉｓｌｅ-ｈｍｏ “sea mushroom” expressing ‘sea anemone’, ｐｉｓｌｅ-ｐｈｙ？ “sea porcupine” expressing ‘sea urchin’. Burmese also exhibits rich examples of metaphorical phytonyms (plant names) involving animal names, as illustrated by ｃｕｅ-？ｍｙи “rat tail” expressing ‘Typhonium divaricatum’, ｃｉ-ｈｎｏｕ？ “crow beak” expressing ‘Aerides odorata’, ｂｙａｉн-ｃｈｉｄａｕ？ “egret leg” expressing ‘Tamarix dioica’, and ｔａｕ？？-ｌ-ｃ？ｗá “tokay gecko fist” expressing ‘Coldenia procumbens’.

References


Expression of Goal and Source in Burmese: is there an asymmetry?

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Abstract: Cross linguistically, goal and source are not equal concepts and languages manifest a peculiar asymmetry in this respect as shown by Ikegami (1987), Bourdin (1997), Kopecka and Ishibashi (2011) among others. All these studies show that languages are not symmetrically organized with regard to these two contrasting notions of source and goal. They also assert the primacy of goal over source, based on cognitive (Regier & Zheng 2007) and linguistic evidence.

Sentence (1) illustrates the optionality of a goal marker in expressions encoding the final ground (sentence a), while it is not the case for expressions encoding the initial ground (sentence b and c). Thus, zero-marking definitely affords maximal straightforwardness.

Burmese

(1) a. သံရန်ကြန် (ကို) လာတယ်။
θu2 yaN2gon2 (=Ko2) la2 =Tɛ2
3SG Yangon (ALL) come REAL
‘He came/comes (to) Yangon.’

b. သံရန်ကြန်က လာတယ်။
θu2 yaN2gon2 =Ka1 la2 =Tɛ2
3SG Yangon ABL come REAL
‘He came/comes from Yangon.’

c. *သံရန်ကြန်လာတယ်။
θu2 yaN2gon2 Ø la2 =Tɛ2
3SG Yangon come REAL
*‘He came/comes from Yangon.’

In this paper, I investigate the expression of Goal and Source in motion events in Burmese, a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in Burma, looking for asymmetry in the expressions. My presentation is organized as follows. First I introduce the theoretical and methodological background (Trajectoire program), the data collected within the working typology framework, and the hypothesis of Asymmetry between the expression of source and the expression of goal.

The ‘Trajectoire Program’ aims to explore the multidimensional nature of path expressions in a typological approach that combines practices of description and theory (Grinevald 2011). With this in mind and to complement the existing cross-linguistic studies of motion events, the participants of the program developed a visual stimulus to collect comparable data in various languages and provide a more exhaustive treatment of the linguistic means used to express path events.

The data used in this study were mainly collected in Yangon (Burma) between 2008 and 2010 with the video stimulus. Beside these main interviews, other types of data were collected such as elicited stories with the picture book Frog Story from Mayer (1969). Narrative and natural speech are occasionally used to refine or contrast our results and analysis.

Then, I present Burmese morphosyntactic devices that contribute to the encoding of source and goal in descriptions of spontaneous motion events. Three kinds of linguistic tool could be distinguished. The first one belongs to the nominal domain (bare noun, postpositions, relator nouns), the second to the verbal domain (serial verb constructions with motion components appearing in a certain order as in example (2)); the last one being a syntactic strategy (event sequentialization), producing special syntactic constructions to express the different parts of a path, breaking up the sentence into a pair of clauses.
The child runs up [towards me] from the sea to the edge of the hill.

In a third part, I discuss the specificities of the Burmese system from a typological point of view, showing two main points. First, asymmetry between Source and Goal exists in Burmese (Bourdin 1987), although it does not entirely fit the universalist hypothesis according to which languages have more linguistic devices for expressing the Goal. Second, the Burmese data bring to light the importance of deixis, which is an essential ingredient of the description of motion events in that language and which correlates with the expression of source and goal.

References:
Differential object marking in Zauzou

Yu Li

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Tibeto-Burman languages are featured by optional case marking and differential case marking. The differential object case marking pattern (DOM) in TB has been identified in Central Tibetan (Delancey, 2001), Yongren Lolo, and Lahu (Gerner, 2007).

Zauzou is a Loloish language that exhibits the similar DOM case marking pattern as other TB languages. Two case postpositions, xe31 and ʔɔ31, are used to mark core arguments in Zauzou clauses. The case marking pattern in Zauzou is the result of the interaction of two parameters, the syntactic-semantic parameter and the pragmatic parameter. Overall, the Zauzou case marking pattern can be describe in two dimensions: a) the underlying pattern and b) the surface pattern.

First, the underlying pattern is regulated by syntactic-semantic parameters. The argument carries the xe31 marking can be characterized as the macro-role of actor (Van Valin 2005) that covers the semantic roles of agent, causer, and instrument. The xe31-marked argument is linked from the left edge of a causal-chain (Croft, 1991) as this argument represents the participant that initiates a causal-chain, irrespective of the agentivity, volitionality, and intentionality of the actor. The occurrence of xe31 is sensitive to transitivity. It is restricted to monotransitive and ditransitive clauses but strictly prohibited in intransitive clauses. Therefore, the single argument of unergative verbs cannot take the xe31 marker.

The object marking in Zauzou is based on semantics. The use of the postposition ʔɔ31 is regulated by the affectedness of the object. Only the object that is affected in the event denoted by the verb can take this case marker. Therefore, semantic roles like patient, causee, affectee, recipient, and the beneficiary, which typically undergo different degrees of affectedness, can be marked by ʔɔ31. The single argument of unaccusative verbs can also take this case marker. Another factor that is closely related to affectedness is the specificity of the argument. In principle, only specific referents can be affected in an event and, thus, the argument taking the ʔɔ31 marking must be a specific noun phrase.

Second, the surface pattern of case marking is governed by pragmatics, which determines whether a case marker that appears in the underlying pattern should be overtly expressed in the surface form. In many Zauzou transitive clauses, the case postpositions xe31 and ʔɔ31 are optional. The occurrences of the two case markers can be largely explained by the pragmatic function of disambiguation. If the semantic roles can be disambiguated in the context, for example, on the basis of animacy, both postpositions can be omitted. However, if the context does not contain sufficient semantic clues to disambiguate the roles of arguments, at least one case marker is needed.

References:
A unified account of the epistemic-evidential system of Tibetan  
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This paper presents an original and unified analysis of the system of epistemic-evidential markers in Tibetan.  

Like other varieties of the modern spoken language, an integral component of the grammar of Diasporic Common Tibetan (DCT) is its rich and intricate system of main-clause-final linking verbs and auxiliaries. These portmanteau morphemes express tense, aspect, volitionality, and “person”, as well evidentiality (source of information) and epistemicity (degree of certainty). Elicited and narrative data from DCT illustrate twenty distinct epistemic-evidential markers which fall into eight categories: perceptual, personal, factual/unspecified; inference based on perceptual evidence, inference based on personal evidence, inference based on fact/unspecified evidence; reported information, and conjecture.  

Under the present model, every marker in the system conveys information about both evidentiality and epistemicity. These are analyzed as binary indexical parameters which, together, advise the listener about the level of confidence with which he can regard the speaker’s utterance (Table 1). Markers of certainty recommend the highest level of confidence: the speaker’s claim is based on some type of evidence, and she is certain that it is the case. Markers of inference are hedging: the speaker indicates that her assertion is supported by some type of evidence, but she is not certain that it is actually the case. Non-evidentials caution the listener that there is no evidence to support the content of the proposition, and the speaker does not claim to be certain about the situation, either.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A. Markers of certainty</th>
<th>B. Markers of inference</th>
<th>C. Non-evidentials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>evidence</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>certainty</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1: Levels of confidence defined by evidence and certainty*

Table 2 below shows DCT’s twenty distinct markers, the eight categories into which they fall, and the three discrete levels of confidence that they convey.
Nearly all previous analyses of other varieties of Tibetan have focused on what are identified here as “markers of certainty”; these are considered elsewhere to comprise the complete set of “evidentials”. Likewise, the “markers of non-certainty” (which have received considerably less attention in the literature) are considered elsewhere to comprise the complete set of “epistemics”. (Bielmeier 2000; Denwood 1999; DeLancey 1984, 1985, 1986, 1990; Garret 1999, 2001; Tournadre 1994; Tournadre and Dorje 1998, 2003; Tournadre and Jiatso 2001; Vokurová 2008; Hášler 2001; Haller 2000; Hein 2001; Hongladarom 2007; Huber 2000; Sun 1993; Zeisler 2018; and Zemp 2017.)

Thus in contrast to Aikhenvald (2003, 2004, 2015), Aikhenvald and LaPolla (2007), and others who distinguish epistemics and evidentials as separate categories, the present study claims that every marker in the system inextricably conveys both evidential and epistemic information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A. Markers of certainty</th>
<th>Markers of non-certainty</th>
<th>B. Markers of inference</th>
<th>C. Non-evidentials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct evidentials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptual</td>
<td>'dug, song, [bzhag]</td>
<td>yin sa 'dug, yod sa 'dug</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>yin, yod, byung</td>
<td>yin sa yod, yod sa yod</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect evidentials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factual</td>
<td>red, yod red</td>
<td>yin sa red, yod sa red</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported</td>
<td>ze</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Written Tibetan correlates of DCT’s epistemic-evidential markers
Prosody of topic and focus in nDrapa

Satoko Shirai
ILCAA, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

The nDrapa language (or Zhaba; ISO 639-3 zhb) has distinctive tones: The Mätro dialect (Zhongni district, Daofu county) has (i) high-level, (ii) high-falling, (iii) low-rising, and (iv) low-rising-falling tones. However, previous studies mention that tone values are somewhat unstable. For example, ŋa3, the first person pronoun, bares Tone 3 (low-rising) in a subordinate clause or with a genitive particle, as seen in (1). However, it often has Tone 1 (high-level) as in (2), or it even has Tone 2 (high-falling) in limited examples, as in (3).

(1) jɛnə3 ŋa3 vo=ta3, ŋa=ra3 shwi1 safa=ta1
yesterday 1SG come=PCL 1SG=GEN man sofa=upside
t-jeɭə3 hci-a3 tɕu-ɛ2.
NTL-lay.down PST-PFV exist-NEGO.IPFV
When I came home yesterday, my husband was laying on the couch.

(2) ŋa1 anɭ1 aɣu=ʔo1 tɔ̃t1 to-htɕu1 ɕu-ɛ3.
1SG today maternal.uncle=place letter NTL-send need-NEGO.IPFV
I need to send a letter to my uncle today.

(3) jɛnə3 ŋa2 mɛŋkho=rə3 ŋge3 a-mwi3 ɦɨi3.
last.night 1SG hospital=GEN door DWN-shut PST.1
Last night, I shut the door of the hospital.

One possible reason for such pitch alternations is that they are triggered by information structures. Based on my field data, a topic tends to have a high-level pitch, e.g. (2); whereas a focus tends to have a high-falling pitch, e.g. (3). Moreover, the original tone (or lexical prosody) is replaced to such (post-lexical) prosody. In this study, I analyze the patterns of pitch alternations using examples of folktales collected in my fieldwork.

Abbreviations: 1 - first person; DWN - downward directive; GEN - genitive; IPFV - imperfective; NEGO - non-egophoric; NTL - neutral directive; PCL - polysemic clause linker; PFV - perfective; PST - past; SG - singular.
Negative Form of the Perfect -ta in Vaiphei

Takenori Murakami
Kyoto University

Vaiphei is a Northern Kuki-Chin language with app. 50,000 speakers in Northeast India and its bordering region in Myanmar. It has SV / AOV order and aspect / mood is marked with verbal suffixation. In general, the negative of aspectually marked sentence doesn't require aspect marking and only negative marker 'pua' (/pṷɔ/) is used. For example,

\[
Bu a= ne -ta -i.
\]

rice 3SG eat PERF FIN

means "He has eaten food" in perfect sense but its negative counterpart "He hasn't eaten food" is substituted by negative present / non-future sentence without any aspect marking, namely,

\[
Bu a= ne pṷɔ -i.
\]

rice 3SG eat NEG FIN

However, the negative form of -ta perfect exists as well and gives different meaning from the presumed negative perfect,

\[
Bu a= ne -ta pṷɔ -i.
\]

rice 3SG eat PERF NEG FIN

is "He no longer eats food" and it is an observational remark of the speaker that he used to eat food but has stopped eating and has not been in the state of eating till now (perhaps because of illness or religious fasting). This negative form of -ta perfect is also employed for stative / adjectival verbs like 'eng' to be yellow,

\[
T-shirt tւ a= eŋ -ta pṷɔ -i.
\]

T-shirt that 3SG yellow PERF NEG FIN

means "The T-shirt is no longer yellow" (because the color has totally faded or was dyed in different color). Semantically it is rather discontinuation of the verb than negating the perfection of the action or state, as it even combines with verbs without any concept of telicity and the positive counterpart doesn't necessarily exist in perfect sentence. What is strange about this -ta negative is that it doesn't negate the perfect sense of the past action / state of the directly suffixed verb yet marks the change of state into negative, which is contradictory considering the original word order and the agglutinative trait of this language, but *pua-ta is inexistent.

In this presentation aspect / mood negations in Vaiphei is outlined and then the irregularity of the negative form of the -ta perfect is discussed from the perspective of Kuki-Chin syntactical system, and the author concludes that the concept of 'negative perfect' itself is not so obvious or easily applied to this language.
Negation in the Mu-nya Language

Takumi Ikeda

Institute for Research in Humanities, Kyoto University

The Mu-nya language belongs to the Qiangic branch of the Tibeto-Burman language family and is spoken by Tibetans living around Mt. Minya Konka in Sichuan, southwest China. The general expression for ‘not be’ by the speaker’s recognition, such as ‘A is not B’, is expressed as A /ɯʰ⁵⁵ŋɐ⁵⁵(tᵢ³³)/ in Mu-nya. /ŋɐ⁵⁵/ is a declarative, a part of speech, which expresses a statement with certainty, while /ti³³/ is another declarative that conveys a statement with confirmation. These two declaratives are often used in combination, and the negator /ɯʰ⁵⁵/ precedes them. Huang (1991) revealed that Mu-nya has three kinds of negative prefixes: /ɯʰ⁵⁵/ is the general negator and is also used in the verb predicate under the imperfect aspect; /mɯʰ⁵⁵/ is used under the perfect aspect; and /tɕɯʰ⁵⁵/ is used for prohibitive statements. Apart from Huang’s simple observation, Mu-nya has complex negative expressions that have not been reported in detail thus far. This study analyzes the basic functions and grammatical behavior of negators in Mu-nya concerning evidentiality, focusing on negating target items such as the verb, the suffix (aspect), or the declarative (evidential) in verb predicates. From my perspective, the negator /ɯʰ⁵⁵/ does not negate the verb stem directly (except for stative verbs), and mainly appears preceding the position of declaratives, or often precedes the imperfect verb suffix /-poʰ⁵⁵/ to negate it directly. In contrast, the negator /mɯʰ⁵⁵/ appears at the preceding position of an active verb stem under the perfect aspect, or often negates the perfect verb suffix /-stuʰ⁵⁵/ directly. In addition, I will introduce some dialectal varieties corresponding to the general negative expression /ɯʰ⁵⁵ŋɐ⁵⁵(tᵢ³³)/ ‘not be’ in Mu-nya.
Balti Script and its Revitalization Efforts in Baltistan

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University of Baltistan, Sakrdu

Abstract

“Balti belongs to the Western Tibetan branch of the Tibetan language family, which is part of the larger Tibeto-Burman language family. Its territory is situated at the extreme western end of the chain of Tibeto-Burman languages” (Backstrom and Radloff, 1992, p.9). It has its own script known as Balti/Bodi Agay/Yige of Tibetan script written from left to right and top to bottom. Balti, is a west Tibetan dialect, grouped with Ladakhi, Purigi, Zanskari and Lahouli. Today, approximately 93 percent of the population considers Balti as their mother tongue (Thsering, 2004). The origin of Agay/Yige script dates back to the pre-Buddhist, Zhang Zhung period of Bon religion. According to Chogyal Nam Khai Norbu, ‘the Early Period, the history of Ancient Zhang Zhung,” considers the rise of early human generations and the Bon lineages of ancient Zhang Zhung, its dynasties, language, and culture. Zhang Zhung was an ancient culture and kingdom of western and northwestern Tibet, which pre-dates the culture of Tibetan Buddhism in Tibet.’ The Balti Script Agay still used in Skum, Tibet and Laddakh was being used in Baltistan before five hundred years ago. After religious conversion of Buddhist population of Baltistan to Islam, Arabic and Persian languages were introduced here and the Tibetan Script was gradually abandoned considering it the symbol of Buddhism (Hussainabadi, 1984). The Bodi Agay was mistakenly or deliberately presented as Buddh(st) Agay and a symbol of Buddhist religion. Due to such socio-political (mis)interpretations, and influences, the Balti Agay script was abandoned and discouraged in Baltistan. There have been efforts of revitalization in near past but without any institutional patronage.

This paper covers the story of past, situation of present and prospects of future of this endangered script in Baltistan. A recent effort of revitalization of the script with phonetic approach has been presented and published in form of a Balti Primer named ‘My Balti Elementary Book’. The youth of Baltistan are using Yige script as their social media IDs and use phrases frequently showing the encouraging trend of learning the script.
Creating a new script: Bringing Tangsa language into the Facebook era

Stephen Morey

La Trobe University

Around 80 Tangsa language varieties are spoken on both sides of the India-Myanmar border, between Changlang district of Arunachal Pradesh State in India, and the northern part of Sagaing division in Myanmar. The average number of speakers of each subtribe is probably less than 1500 and while some of the varieties are fully mutual with another nearby variety (such as Cholim and Longri), others are completely mutually unintelligible (such as Cholim with Champang).

Until the 1960s the only written examples of Tangsa language was an 1897 publication, *Moshang Naga Words*, by J.F. Needham. The first attempts to write Tangsa languages by native speakers appears to have been a Ngaimong Primer which was supressed because speakers of another Tangsa variety did not approve of it.

In recent years multiple Roman based orthographies have been developed, and some of these are starting to develop some written literature (e.g. Bible Translations, Hymn books). Some of these orthographies are close to phonemic in terms of notating vowel contrasts and tone contrasts as well as consonant contrasts, whereas others are less careful in notating all these contrasts. Several of these orthographies have undergone multiple revisions over the last 10-15 years.

One of the longest lasting and most stable writing systems for Tangsa, however, is a fully invented script, created by Mr Lakhum Yogka Mossang in 1990, and revised several times. This script contains 89 characters, consisting of

- 48 symbols for vowels and sounds considered by the script’s inventor to be vowel-like (including final -ŋ and syllabic nasal sounds),
- 31 consonants and
- 10 numerals which are fully decimal.

A key design feature of the script is that for each vowel there are four symbols, corresponding to four different tones in Tangsa languages. Although it can be treated as an alphabet, following the Peter T. Daniels classification in the sense that symbols represent either consonants or vowels and each vowel symbol is written independently of consonants, following (to the right) of the consonant that commences a syllable, the fact that there are four symbols for each vowel, as shown in the following table:
This paper will describe this newly created script in detail, and also discuss the ongoing proposal to include this script in Unicode, placing the position of this script in the context of multiple scripts and orthographies in use in the linguistically diverse area of the Patkai ranges on the India-Myanmar border.
Participant marking in Lawmtuk-Ruawghawn

David Peterson and Kenneth Van Bik

Dartmouth College, California State University, Fullerton

This talk will treat participant marking in Lawmtuk-Ruawghawn (LR), which so far has been regarded as a member of the central subgroup of Kuki-Chin (aka South-Central Tibeto-Burman.) It has around 600 speakers in the villages of Lawmtuk (Laamtuk) and Ruawghawn (Ruavaan) in Chin State, Myanmar. We will give as complete a description as possible of the participant marking system based on a naturalistic text corpus we are collecting for the language, supplemented as needed by directly elicited data.

LR’s participant marking system is of particular note in comparison to other systems attested in South Central Tibeto-Burman because unlike many such systems, it involves elements reflecting the historically original suffixal system of the subgroup (DeLANCEY 2013), alongside elements comparable to the more recent prefixal systems found elsewhere in the family. The distribution for these elements is morphosyntactically determined: the suffixal elements are found in declarative main clauses whereas the prefixal elements are found largely in non-declarative and/or subordinate contexts.

The table below shows the marking of participants for intransitive events; Σ indicates the position of a verbal stem.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Suffixal Paradigm</th>
<th>Prefixal Paradigm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1S</td>
<td>Σ-na</td>
<td>ka-Σ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1PEXCL</td>
<td>Σ-jna</td>
<td>kan-Σ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1PINCL</td>
<td>Σ-sa</td>
<td>N-Σ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2S</td>
<td>Σ-ca</td>
<td>na-Σ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2P</td>
<td>Σ-jca</td>
<td>nan-Σ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3S</td>
<td>Σ</td>
<td>a-Σ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3P</td>
<td>Σ</td>
<td>an-Σ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The -j- marker of plurality seen in first and second person of the suffixal paradigm is not the usual marker of plurality for South Central suffixal participant marking systems, where we typically see a -u formative instead; the 1PINCL marker -sa does not have clear correlates elsewhere in the subgroup.

Unsurprisingly, transitive events are more complicated, involving prefixal elements reflecting first (N-) and second person (c’-) P participants. Number distinctions for P participants are neutralized, as often is the case in South Central participant marking systems. Also, in subordinate clauses there are some restrictions on the co-occurrence of second plural A nan- and first person P N-.

We will illustrate the occurrence of these forms with naturalistic text examples where possible and also discuss additional complications seen for irrealis forms, as well as certain situations where participant marking is indicated tonally rather than segmentally. We will further point out aspects of the LR system which resemble aspects of systems found elsewhere in South Central.
A hypothesis regarding Tangut verb stem alternation in intransitive contexts

Mathieu Beaudouin

It is known since the beginning of the millenium that the Tangut verb can be the theatre of flectional phenomena: in a seminal article, Gong (2001) pointed out the existence of rhyme alternations being the result of conversion of agreement rules formerly discovered by Kepping (1975) and obeying patterns of referential hierarchy rules (Silverstein 1976); the process by which Tangut developed such an alternation in 1/2 → 3 contexts is today well known, notably thanks to the contribution of Jacques (2009a), who replaced the pattern in an historical frame by designating a third person agent suffix *-w as responsible of the synchronic sound change.

However an alternation has to day consistently resisted any analysis pertaining to agreement: the alternation found in intransitive verbs as 西 / 姆 sjɨ² vs. 橫 sjɨ¹ "to die" or that of 航 ɕjɨ² vs. 航 ɕjɨ¹ "to go".

In this presentation, it is proposed that this alternation seen in intransitive contexts is related to tense, in a way similar to the distribution observed in Geshiza Horpa (Honkasalo 2019), a language closely related to Tangut.

Bibliography


First person singular indexation in Mewahang (Kiranti)

Pascal Gerber
University of Bern

Abstract

Mewahang (Kiranti, Sankhuwa and Arun valleys, Eastern Nepal) exhibits biactantal verb agreement morphology well known to be a characteristic trait of Kiranti languages and other branches of Trans-Himalayan. Presenting primary data from Western Mewahang as spoken in the village of Bala in the Sankhuwa valley, this talk will give a first account on the agreement morphology of this dialect, focussing on first person singular indexation, which evinces morphological and morphophonological peculiarities.

This talk then assesses these peculiarities historically by undertaking a comparison of first person singular indexation of Western Mewahang, Eastern Mewahang, Lohorung and Yamphu, which together constitute the so far empirically unsubstantiated “Upper Arun” language family (first established by van Driem 2001:689–698). This comparison provides diachronic explanations for the observed synchronic peculiarities related to first person singular indexation in Western Mewahang and enables to determine their age and phylogenetic relevance.

References

The origin and the development of 焉 yān in Old Chinese

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The Old Chinese function word 焉 is frequently interpreted as a fusion of [於 (at/on/in) + 此 (near demonstrative pronoun)] in terms of its meaning. Ever since Kennedy (1940, 1953) argued that 焉 is a fusion of [於 + *an (third-person pronoun)], it has been controversial exactly which third-person pronoun/demonstrative pronoun *an corresponds to in Old Chinese. There is no third-person pronoun/demonstrative pronoun that is appropriate for this reconstruction.

This paper illustrates that 焉 *ʔan is a fusion of *ʔa and *ʔiʔ; *niʔ; *nʔ or *nʔ; *nʔ, which means ‘this’ in the Proto-Austroasiatic language (PAA). It is borrowed into Chinese through language contact in the Early Archaic Chinese period (10th to 6th c. B.C.). This fusion is plausible in historical and phonological terms, while the grammaticalization path of 焉 also accords with that of [於 + demonstrative].

The grammaticalization path of 焉 is examined by analyzing all occurrences of it in the Bronze Inscriptions (BI), The Book of Odes (Shījīng 詩經), The Book of Documents (Shàngshū 尚書) and Zuo’s Commentary (Zuǒzhuàn 左傳). Also, the usages of its etymological doublet 爲, which is considered to be a fusion of [于 *wa (at/on/in) + near demonstrative pronoun], are analyzed in order to strengthen the argument.

Keywords: 焉, Old Chinese reconstruction, Proto-Austroasiatic language, language contact, borrowing, grammaticalization


Diachronic Change of the Chinese Name of Sugarcane and the Synchronic Distribution of the Name in Ethnic Minority Languages

Yushan Wang and Yun Zhao

Yunnan Minzu University, Yunnan University of Finance and Economics

Abstract: Sugarcane first appeared in Pre-Qin period literature The Songs of Chu with the name “zhe柘”. It was then addressed as “柘、藷、蔗、诸柘、都蔗、蒟蔗、竽蔗、干蔗、甘蔗” diachronically. The name is different in Mon-Khmer, Tai-kadai and Tibeto-Burman languages. Through a diachronic comparison of the name in Chinese and a synchronic study of the name in ethnic minority languages in China, this paper holds that “甘蔗” is a loan word from Sanskrit: a transliteration of Sanskrit word śarkarā. Mon-Khmer people borrowed either from Chinese “蜜honey” or from Tai-kadai “ʔɔi” for sugarcane. Tai-kadai people either used their original “ʔɔi” or borrowed from Chinese “蜜honey” for sugarcane while in Tibeto-Burman language family, some languages borrowed Chinese word “蔗” or “蜜”, some borrowed Sanskrit śarkarā. The distribution of the names indicates that Southern China was one of the original places of sugarcane but sugar-production was underdeveloped and sugar culture was introduced to China in pre-Qin period. “甘蔗” was a loan word appeared in pre-Qin period. The development of the name reflected the cognitive habits and perception and also the long history of cultural exchange between China and the world.

内容提要：
甘蔗称“柘”最早出现在先秦文献《楚辞》中，历时经历了柘、蘞、蔗、诸柘、、都蘞、蒟蔗、竽蔗、干蔗、甘蔗等变化。而孟高棉语、壮侗语、藏缅语族各语言各自有关于甘蔗的名称。通过对“甘蔗”汉语名称历时变化和各民族语言之间的共时比较，我们认为汉语“甘蔗”是外来词，是梵语śarkarā借入汉语后派生出来的一个谐声音译词；孟高棉语族民族或借用汉语的“蜜”，或借用侗台语的名称“ʔɔi”指称甘蔗；侗台语族民族或固有自创的“ʔɔi”，或借用汉语的“蜜”，藏缅语的“甘蔗”有借用汉语蔗或蜜，也有借用“梵语”śarkarā的。我们从词汇分布分析，认为中国南方是甘蔗原产地之一，但早期制糖技术不发达，中国的蔗糖文化是先秦时期从印度传入的。“甘蔗”属于汉语先秦时代的外来词。“甘蔗”一词的“汉化”过程既表现了汉民族的认知习惯和思维特点，也反映了中外文化交流深远悠长。
High degree of Similarity between Bai and Caijia

Man Hei Lee
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Bai language and Caijia language are spoken in northern Yunnan and northwestern Guizhou respectively. While their current distributions are not adjacent to each other, these two languages seem to be closely related: high degree of similarity between them can be discerned. Zhengzhang (2010) suggested that Bai, Caijia, as well as two understudied and possibly extinct languages (Longjia and Luren) constitute a subgroup, namely Greater Bai, within Sino-Tibetan. He proposed cognate pairs which he claimed were restricted to Bai and Caijia to substantiate his claim. This paper presents additional evidence to support the claim that Bai and Caijia are akin to each other.

Bai contains a multitude of words of Chinese origins (Wang, 2006; Lee & Sagart, 2008; Gong, 2015); the same holds true for Caijia. Whether they are inherited words or loanwords (which is not the focus of this paper), it is obvious that their respective early Sinitic layers are closely related. A number of early Sinitic words are rarely or not found in mainstream Sinitic languages, e.g. “ant” Bai [pi21 po21] CJ [pä21 pəʊ35] (both 蚁蟻). The shared phonological features of their early Sinitic layers are noteworthy as well. Morphemes pronounced as l- in Middle Chinese predominately have reflex l- in modern Chinese languages, but several l- morphemes have a fricative initial ɣ-/w- in Bai/Caijia: 來loj “to come” Bai [yu35] CJ [yəʊ33], 落 laks “to fall” Bai [yo42] CJ [yä33], 漏 luwiH “to leak” Bai [yu42] CJ [wu22]. Another notable issue is the tonal reflexes of Old Chinese *-s (i.e. qusheng morphemes) in Bai and Caijia. Qusheng morphemes have more than one tonal reflex in Bai and Caijia, and unlike Wu and Yue Chinese, their distributions cannot be solely explained by voicing distinction in earlier stages of Chinese. For instance, the tone of 細 Old Chinese*[s]ˤe(k)-s “small” and 菜*ς.ʔәʔ-s “vegetables” is different from that of 四 *s.li[j]-s “four” and 肺*pʰo[t]-s “lung” in both languages, though all of their OC pronunciations begin with a voiceless consonant.

While Zhengzhang (2010) only focused on Sinitic words, I discovered that dozens of Bai and Caijia words that are etymologically unclear appear to be cognates as well: “left” Bai [pi55] CJ [pä33]; “right” Bai [tsɛ42] CJ [tɕi22]; “to ask” Bai [pie44] CJ [pjä55]; “thin (stick/wire)” Bai [mo42] CJ [mo33].

In terms of grammar, Bai and Caijia grammar do not differ significantly. The basic word order of Bai and Caijia is SVO, which is typologically uncommon among Sino-Tibetan languages. Both languages heavily rely on grammatical words and word order and thus are largely analytic. In fact, their grammar resembles that of Chinese, though differences do exist. While [Number + Classifier] precedes the noun phrase it modifies in Chinese (i.e. Number + Classifier + NP), [Num + CL] succeeds rather than precedes NP in Bai and Caijia: Bai [ŋe21 sɑ̃55 pho44] (shoe + three + CL), CJ [ki33 sä33 tɕi55] (chicken + three + CL).
This paper examines the syntax – and to some extent, the semantics – of Meeteilon Wh-exclamatives (which we will justify calling ‘exklamatives’) – clauses made with Wh words but often differing from questions in various ways in their phonology, syntax and semantics; e.g. (1) from English shows that the Wh-words do not perform their usual scope-taking function of asking questions. However, not all Wh elements lend themselves to make up exclamatives (e.g. (2))

(1) a. What a beautiful day! (conveying that the day is particularly beautiful)
   b. How beautiful the girl dances! (conveying that the girl dances very beautifully)

(2) a. *Who it is!
   b. *Which a man!

In Meeteilon too, we find such use of wh-expressions:

(3) kayaa(-da) phaja-khra-ba yum-no!
   ‘What a beautiful house!’ (Lit. How beautiful a house)

(4) karam haina yeng-i-no
   ‘In what a (strange) manner (s)he is looking!’

(5) [kari u-rak-i-no/ u-rak-(k)e haiba] nang thaja-roi ne
   ‘You won’t believe what I saw.’

The wh words kanaa ‘who’, kari ‘what’ do not show up in phrasal or clausal unembedded exclamatives like (3-5), occurring only in the embedded clausal ones (6).

Meeteilon matrix wh questions contain the direct Q(uestion)-particle no. Even though wh-exclamatives do not have wh-question semantics per say, they still use the Q-particle in the language. We see the occurrence of no in all 3 types of exclamatives but the indirect Q-marker -ge is also possible only in the embedded exclamative as in (6), further proving their embedded status.

On the basis of an extended set of data, we examine the thesis whether or not exclamatives have a more articulated sentential structure (Zanuttini & Portner, 2003), and semantically, we examine the claim made about a scalarity cline across the three different chunks discussed above and examine whether or not the proposed syntax can embed the semantics of scalarity adequately (Guha & Bhattacharya, 2020, for Bangla).

This account, we believe, will be of significance in typologically classifying Wh-words in Meeteilon more systematically, and perhaps be tested for other language groups as well; towards this latter goal, we will provide comparative data from Assamese and Bangla to test how the classification proposed for Meeteilon holds for those contiguous Indo-Aryan languages.

References:
Language, 79.1; 39-81.

[Abbr: dat = dative; dir = directional particle; DM = discourse marker; loc = locative; neg = negation; nmz = nominalizer; perf = perfective; prog = progressive; Qdir= direct question particle; Qindir= indirect question particle; quot = quotative]
Tripura language, known as Tripuri, a Tibeto-Burman language is spoken in southern area of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), especially in Bandarban, Khagrachari and Rangamati of Bangladesh, and Tripura state in North-East India. Tripuri is also known as Kokborok in Tripura state. The total number of Tripura in Bangladesh is about 133,789 (2011 census of Bangladesh). The present data collected from the villages of Bandarban based on corpus linguistic method. This paper will present the entire copula structures of Tripura language variety (Usoi). As it is a verb-final language, the Tripura copular verb normally comes at the end of the clause; the Ø form is equational present and past, also locational present position only. The kroi form is locational present and existential present and past negative only. The øŋ form is equational and adjectival future. The tóŋ form is existential except present and past negative, locational past and future, and adjectival past. Particularly, the past suffix –se occurs with Ø or tóŋ, copula kroi and modal mai-se ‘could/might’. The function of the equational copula of Tripura is to connect two independent NPs. The =le is a noun enclitic which often goes on the first of two NPs in a copula sentence, an alternative is =se, but interestingly there is no clear meaning difference between an equational copula sentence with nothing after the first N, with =le or with =se. These two noun enclitics occur in affirmative or negative sentences, while =ba (like =le, =se) occurs in a yes/no interrogative sentence. In the interrogative negative copula sentence, the existential copula is followed by general negative –ja and question –de where the tense is unmarked. Note that, the equational copula can occur clause final, after the second NP including a relative clause. Surprisingly, in future equational copula sentences have the forms øŋ ‘be’ plus tense, negation and question markers like a normal verb instead tóŋ. In imperative negative, hortative prefix ta– and imperative suffix –di occur before and after the equational copula øŋ ‘be’. The Ø copula is also used in a locative form in Tripura but the locative marker –o is required on the second NP. Locative with existential is also used for past or future location with a locative marked noun phrase. Locative future is expressed with tóŋ and future marker –nai /=na. Note that there is no future suffix in the negative. Past suffix –se is added to tóŋ for past locational copula. Note that, sometimes a temporal skaŋ ‘before’ precedes the locative and there is no past suffix other than in positive. Only the existential copula tóŋ can take –oi/=mi in present, –hâ in past and –nai in future and are marked for tense. Future enclitic =na occurs between existential and question marker in an interrogative existential copula sentence. Similarly, –ja is used instead of =na between existential and question marker in interrogative negative copula sentences and they are ambiguous between present and future meanings. The possessor is marked by possessive case suffix –ni in possessive copula sentences.
Reduplication as a Syntactic Strategy in Kokborok—A Descriptive Study

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Reduplication as a syntactic strategy is not uncommon amongst South Asian Languages (SALs). The relativization strategies in the Tibeto-Burman languages such as Mizo, Hmar, and Sema are cases in point. (See Subbarao 2012, Khiangte 2015) In this study, we focus on Kokborok anaphora to demonstrate reduplication as a syntactic strategy in Kokborok, a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in Tripura (one of the North-Eastern states of India). Subbarao et al. (2010) and Subbarao (2012) draw a phenomenon unparallel in the study of SALs where reduplication of the aspect marker or the verb stem in the formation of yes/no question in Kokborok is unique not only to SALs but also to any language studied so far. The present study explores Kokborok reflexives and reciprocals to show the significant role of reduplication in Kokborok anaphora and captures a gradual change in the binding strategy which resulted due to language contact with Bangla (an Indo-Aryan language spoken in Tripura apart from Assam and West Bengal).

Anaphors in Kokborok can be categorised into two: reflexives and reciprocals. Reflexives have the nominal form and reciprocals have both nominal and verbal forms. Reflexives in Kokborok occur as simplex and complex. The complex reflexives sak sak and sak baithaŋ are the reduplicated forms. The form sak sak has identical constituents and sak baithaŋ is a synonymous compound as Inkelas & Zoll (2005) call them or a semantically reduplicated word which has synonymous constituents such as sak meaning body and baithaŋ meaning ‘personal self’ (Jacquesson 2008: 74). The form sak sak blocks long-distance binding and thus conforms to Principle A of binding theory (Chomsky 1981), whereas sak baithaŋ fairly allows long-distance binding thereby leading to the violation of Principle A. The examples (1) and (2) are illustrative. To the best of our knowledge, there is no SAL which shows syntactic implication of semantic reduplication. For example, the semantically reduplicated words sāg sabzī ‘vegetables’ in Hindi-Urdu (Indo-Aryan), bondhu bandhɔb ‘friends’ in Bangla (Indo-Aryan), illu-u vākili-i ‘household’ in Telugu (Dravidian) have no syntactic implications as is observed in the case of sak baithaŋ in Kokborok.

Like reflexives, reciprocals in Kokborok occur in the reduplicated form. The nominal and verbal reciprocal have identical constituents. The nominal form is khɔrɔk-sa bai khɔrɔk-sa ‘each other’ and the verbal form is -lai lai- which is a reduplication of the group marker/sociative marker -lai. Bodo and Kokborok (Tibeto-Burman languages belonging to the Bodo-Garo sub-branch) are the two SALs we know of which exhibit bipartite structure of verbal reciprocal. Unlike Bodo, the verbal reciprocal in Kokborok manifests in restrictive fashion. In Kokborok, it occurs only in the presence of predicates such as kick, kiss, hug and the like which, in general, involve reciprocity in the action. Examples (3)-(8) are illustrative. Note Examples (9) and (10). The predicates such as meet and being angry do not allow the verbal reciprocal as the ungrammaticality suggests.
The verbal reciprocal in Kokborok is an indigenous syntactic category. An extensive field work in Tripura suggests that this verbal strategy is gradually being replaced by the nominal reciprocals in Kokborok. This could be plausibly due to the fact that the language is changing due to the contact with Bangla which has only nominal reciprocals. It is also observed that the interpretation of reciprocity does not exist amongst speakers of the same variety of Kokborok (i.e. Debbarma variety, the so-called standard variety of Kokborok). Instead, the speakers often associate the reduplicated form with the interpretation of group activity. Thus, this study presents a description of two unique instances of reduplication in Kokborok anaphora and demonstrates the phenomenon of language contact where the indigenous verbal reciprocal gradually loses its syntactic implication to get replaced with the nominal reciprocal.

Examples of reflexives in Kokborok

\textit{sak} \textit{sak} blocks Long-Distance binding

\begin{align*}
(1) \text{khumti} & \text{ } \text{khumpui} \text{-} \text{n} \text{c} \text{[PRO} \text{j} \text{sak} \text{sak} \text{-} \text{ij} \text{c} \text{hiccik} \text{-} \text{nani}] \text{sa-} \text{kha} \\
\text{Khumti} & \text{Khumpu} \text{-acc self self-acc pinch-inf tell-pst} \\
\text{‘Khumti asked Khumpui to pinch self.’}
\end{align*}

\textit{sak} \textit{bai} \textit{thai} \textit{j} permits Long-Distance binding

\begin{align*}
(2) \text{khumti} & \text{ } \text{khumpui} \text{-} \text{n} \text{c} \text{[PRO} \text{j} \text{sak} \text{bai} \text{thai} \text{-} \text{ij} \text{c} \text{hiccik} \text{-} \text{nani}] \text{sa-} \text{kha} \\
\text{Khumti} & \text{Khumpu} \text{-acc self self-acc pinch-inf tell-pst} \\
\text{‘Khumti asked Khumpui to pinch self.’}
\end{align*}

Examples of reciprocals in Kokborok

\begin{align*}
(3) \text{jack} & \text{ } \text{bai} \text{ } \text{bil} \text{ } \text{khörk-sa} \text{ } \text{tai} \text{ } \text{khörk-sa-n} \text{ } \text{lathi-ri-lai-lai-kha} \\
\text{Jack} & \text{and Bill person-CL and person-CL-acc kick-give-VREC-pst} \\
\text{‘Jack and Bill kicked each other.’}
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
(4) \text{jack} & \text{ } \text{bai} \text{ } \text{bil} \text{ } \text{lathi-ri-lai-lai-kha} \\
\text{Jack} & \text{and Bill kick-give-VREC-pst} \\
\text{‘Jack and Bill kicked each other.’}
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
(5) \text{jack} & \text{ } \text{bai} \text{ } \text{jil} \\
\text{Jack} & \text{and Jill} \\
\text{khörk-sa} & \text{ } \text{bil} \text{ } \text{lathi-ri-lai-kha} \\
\text{person-CL and person-CL-acc whiff take-VREC-pst} \\
\text{‘Jack and Jill kissed each other.’}
\end{align*}
(6)  jæk  bai  jil  
Jack and Jill  
mɔtom  su-lai-kha  
whiff  take-VREC-pst  
‘Jack and Jill kissed each other.’

(7)  jæk  bai  jil  bɔro-g-ni  
Jack and Jill they-gen  
sajug-no  mɔtom  su-lai-kha  
daughter-acc  whiff  take-pst  
‘Jack and Jill kissed their daughter.’

(8)  *jæk  bai  jil  bɔro-g-ni  
Jack and Jill they-gen  
sajug-no  mɔtom  su-lai-lai-kha  
daughter-acc  whiff  take-pst  
‘Jack and Jill kissed their daughter.’

(9)  jæk  bai  jil  khɔrɔk-sa  bai  khɔrɔk-sa-no  joli-jag-(*)lai-lai)-ɔ  
Jack and Jill person-CL and person-CL-acc anger-em pred-VREC.pres  
‘Jack and Jill get angry at each other.’

(10)  jæk  bai  jil  khɔrɔk-sa  bai  khɔrɔk-sa-no  malai-(*)lai-lai)-kha  
Jack and Jill person-CL and person-CL-acc anger-VREC-pst  
‘Jack and Jill met each other.’

References


Toward a new reconstruction of Proto-Hmong-Mien

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Since the publication of Purnell’s reconstruction (Purnell 1970), several reconstructions have been proposed of the ultimate proto-language of the Hmong-Mien (Miao-Yao) language family (Wang and Mao 1995; Chen 2001; Ratliff 2010; Li 2018). The aim of this presentation is to present a new proposal for the proto-language in order to solve many problems that previous proposals failed to resolve. The major features of this proposal include the following:

1. This reconstruction proposal drastically reduces the complexity of rhymes in the proto-language posited in previous reconstructions by rejecting loan forms from comparison, which lead to complex correspondences.

2. This proposed reconstruction explains the unbalanced distribution of functional load observed between velar and uvular consonants in Hmongic languages by positing that uvular consonants are the result of a secondary development in those languages, which includes two phonological changes: *kr > k (k represents a velar plosive) and *k > q (q represents a uvular plosive).

3. This reconstruction explains the skewed distribution of nasal consonant initials observed in previous reconstructions of Proto-Hmongic (Wang 1994, Ratliff 2010) by positing a process of nasal transfer to coda (NTC) in Proto-Hmongic. NTC is a change in which open syllable rhymes assume a nasal coda if the initial consonant of the syllable is a nasal. Recognition of this change makes it possible to systematically reconstruct open syllable forms for those etyma whose modern reflexes in Mienic indicate an open syllable, and the corresponding reflexes in Hmongic indicate a nasal coda.

The proposal of this paper also differs from its predecessors in the method of reconstruction: This reconstruction was based on a hypothesis of the phylogeny of the language family. To conduct reconstruction in a node-by-node manner, the author constructed a phylogenetic tree based solely on lexical information, which is necessary to avoid over-reconstruction and to understand a fuller picture of the phonological changes in the family.

References


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Old Tibetan and Proto-Tibetan

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Old Tibetan, whose vocabulary and phonology is relatively well-understood (Hill 2010), is generally treated as the proto-language from which all attested Tibetic languages originate.

Indeed, the forms of most Tibetic languages can be predicted mechanically from Old Tibetan or a ‘Common Tibetan’ only trivially distinct from it (modulo borrowings between Tibetic languages and analogical levelling, Jacques 2014) by the application of regular sound laws. Shafer (1941) did propose that Western Tibetic languages preserved a contrast between *e and *ia lost in Old Tibetan (merging as e), but this idea was due to misanalysis of the data (Jacques 2009).

There is however growing evidence from various Tibetic languages showing lexical, morphological and phonological features that cannot be accounted for if one assumes that Old Tibetan is the Tibetic Ursprache: the non-application of Li-Fang-Kuei’s law in the numerals of the Bayan dialect (Gong 2016), the uvular vs velar uvular contrast (Sun 2003, Suzuki 2009), the preservation of archaic meanings in some innovative words (for instance, ‘milk’ in Chochangachakha, Tournadre & Rigzin 2015), and most impressively, a trace of the past b- Past prefix in labial-initial stems in Thebo (Sangsrgyas Tshering 2020), exactly in the context predicted in Coblin’s (1976) internal reconstruction.

These data support the idea that Tibetan may not have been completely uniform already during the Imperial period, and that pre-Imperial dialectal features have been preserved by some outlier dialects.

References


The present research describes the tail-head linkage (THL), also known as bridging repetition or bridging construction (e.g. Aikhenvald 2015, Guérin 2019), in Liangshan Yi, or Nuosu/Niesu, spoken in Sichuan, southwest China, such as the underlined parts in example 1 (Niesu data).

1. a. ₐ₄₄ₙie₃₃, tsʰ₂¹ nj²¹=na₃₃, after one day=FRM
   ñe²¹bi₅₅ m₃₃ se₄₄ₙie₃₃ na₃₃bi₄⁴ ma₃₃
   blind CLF and hare-lipped CLF
   'Well, one day, a blind man and a hare-lipped man went to steal other people(’s belongings).’

   b. tsʰ₄⁴ kʰu₃₃ gui₃₃ a₄₄ₙie₃₃, tsʰ₃₃ i₅₅ njᵉ₃₃ku₃₃ sa₅₅ o₃₃.
   people steal go after people steal go all PFV
   ‘(They) went to steal other people(’s belongings), and (they discovered that) all people slept.’

   c. tsʰ₄⁴ nj₃₃ kʰu₄₄=a₃₃=dzo₃₃=₀₃₃.
   people also place=NEG=EXIST=PFV
   ‘There was also no one there.’

   d. tsʰ₄⁴ tʰu₄₄=a₃₃=dzo₃₃ =₀₃₃
   people place=NEG=EXIST after
   ‘After there was no one there, ….’

THL is a narrative phenomenon beyond the level of the clause and a discourse pattern of high frequency (e.g. Van Kleef 1988, de Vries 2005, Guillaume 2011). The related phenomena include multi-verb construction, clause-chaining, and subordination. The present study describes its morphosyntactic markers and proposes four defining features of THL in Liangshan Yi. The core requirement is for the bridging clause to repeat the complete or partial predicate of the reference clause, including the verb(s) of semantic head and its arguments. After examining the folk stories, four methods of repetition are identified. They can act, either individually or interactively, to produce three kinds of repetition results. Typologically, the present study also examines THL in areal Tibeto-Burman languages, such as Qiang, Ersu and Prinmi, for comparative purpose.
The main functions of the bridging repetition are to maintain the discourse cohesion, carry forward the event line, and reduce the workload of information processing for both narrators and hearers under the changing oral context. As a prevalent construction in languages of the world, such as Papuan languages and Tibeto-Burman languages, the common feature shared by those speech communities is that they have either no writing writings at all, or a highly confined writing system which has not been mastered by the ordinary ethnic speakers. Finally, the present research presents the different distributions of bridging repetition in written stories and oral stories of Liangshan Yi.

References:
Sun Hongkai (1990 [1983]) recognized that Qiangic, Pumi, rGyalrongic, and Ersuic along with other languages found in the West Sichuan Ethnic Corridor (WSEC) were a subgroup, which he termed Qiangic, basing it on the similarities among these languages. Chirkova (2012, 2014) noted that Sun’s analysis needed to distinguish between similarities due to contact and those due to inheritance from a common source. The analysis is implicit in Table 1 (Thurgood 2017:16.).

Table 1: Directional verb prefixes in Qiangic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>‘up’</th>
<th>‘down’</th>
<th>‘away’</th>
<th>‘inward; upstream’</th>
<th>‘outwards, downstream’</th>
<th>‘toward center’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qiang: Yadu</td>
<td>ta (RH)</td>
<td>fiä (RH)</td>
<td>a-</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mawo</td>
<td>fiä</td>
<td>fiä</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ronghong</td>
<td>fiä-</td>
<td>fiä-</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Longshi</td>
<td>fiå-</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Taoping</td>
<td>ta⁵⁵-</td>
<td>fiå-</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mianchi</td>
<td>tè-</td>
<td>fiå-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pumi: Qinghua</td>
<td>tå-</td>
<td>no-</td>
<td>th3-</td>
<td>kh3-</td>
<td>h3-</td>
<td>d3-</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Taoba</td>
<td>tå⁻⁵⁵</td>
<td>no³⁻⁵⁵</td>
<td>th³⁻⁵⁵</td>
<td>kh³⁻⁵⁵</td>
<td>d³⁻⁵⁵</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Prinmi Niuwozi</td>
<td>tå⁻⁵⁵</td>
<td>n3-</td>
<td>th-</td>
<td>kh-</td>
<td>d-</td>
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<td>Muya</td>
<td>tu⁵⁻⁵⁵</td>
<td>nu⁵⁻⁵⁵</td>
<td>thur³⁻⁵⁵</td>
<td>kh³⁻⁵⁵</td>
<td>fi³⁻⁵⁵</td>
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<td>Proto-Ersuic</td>
<td>*de-</td>
<td>*ne-</td>
<td>*tʰe-</td>
<td>*kʰe-</td>
<td>*ŋe-</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Kala Lizu</td>
<td>de-</td>
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<td>Kala Lizu</td>
<td>dø-</td>
<td>no-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Naiqu Lizu</td>
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<td>no-</td>
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<td>Qingshui</td>
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<td>Zeluo Ersu</td>
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<td>no-</td>
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<td>Tangut [Xixia]</td>
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<td>nja¹-</td>
<td>kh³¹-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Queya, nDraba</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>a-</td>
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<tr>
<td>rGyalrong: Stau [Ergong]</td>
<td>rø-</td>
<td>no-</td>
<td>the-</td>
<td>the-</td>
<td>le-</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Tshobdun</td>
<td>ta-</td>
<td>pjuw; nu-</td>
<td>the-</td>
<td>the-</td>
<td>le-</td>
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<td>rGyalrong</td>
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</table>
Ngawn (ISO 639-3: cnw) is an underdescribed South Central Tibeto-Burman language. Its speakers are native to Falam Township, Chin State, Myanmar (Burma) and there are X estimated speakers. To date, the only documented classification of Ngawn is that of Fr. André Bareigts, as discussed in VanBik (2009:18–19). While some of Bareigts’ classifications have stood the test of time, such as his classification of Lushai (Mizo) as Central and Khumi (cnk) as Southern, his classification of “Northern” conflates languages such as Sizang (csy) with Hmar (hmr) (a member of the “Old Kuki” subgroup).

I made a rudimentary analysis of Ngawn’s phonology using preliminary dataset of over 300 etyma collected from one male Ngawn speaker. I compared the etyma to analyses of Falam (cfm) (Khar Thuan 2008), Sizang (my own, unpublished) and Tedim (ctd) (Khoi Lam Thang 2001) to determine which languages had more innovations in common with Ngawn.

Most centrally, Ngawn should be classified as Northern South Central, rather than Central South Central, as PKC *r- has innovated to /ŋ/ in Ngawn. This innovation is clear evidence of “Shafer’s Law,” as coined by Hill (2014:24). Peterson (2017:196) also agrees that Shafer’s Law is “the essential piece of evidence for a Center/Periphery subgrouping,” with central languages retaining /r-/ and peripheral (Southern/Northern) languages innovating usually to a /g/. In Ngawn, like in Sizang—a language strongly attested in Tibeto-Burman literature as Northern South Central—the *r-innovates to /ŋ/ rather than to /g/. Some examples are listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Correspondences of *r- in Ngawn

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ngawn</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Proto Lexeme</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ṭua²¹</td>
<td>‘rain’</td>
<td>*rua?</td>
<td>VB 964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thin³⁴.ṭa²¹(ˌmu³⁴)</td>
<td>‘fruit (tree)’</td>
<td>*ra?</td>
<td>VB [941]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ṭua³³</td>
<td>‘bamboo plant (large)’</td>
<td>*rua</td>
<td>VB [919]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ṭam³³.sa³⁴</td>
<td>‘(wild) animal’</td>
<td>*ram</td>
<td>VB [953]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ṭul³³</td>
<td>‘snake’</td>
<td>*ruul</td>
<td>VB [975]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ngawn also exhibits innovations not seen in either North or Central South Central TB languages, such as *khl- > h-, as shown in Table 2.
Table 2: Correspondences of *khl- in Ngawn

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ngawn</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Proto Lexeme</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ha²¹.de³³</td>
<td>‘moon’</td>
<td>*klaa</td>
<td>VB [1295]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a³⁴.)ha²¹</td>
<td>‘wing’</td>
<td>*klaa</td>
<td>VB [1309]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>huak³³</td>
<td>‘brain’</td>
<td>*klua</td>
<td>VB [1279]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other sound changes are typical of Northern languages, such as PKC *khr- > PNC *kh- (see VanBik 2009:310), the simplification of PKC *pl- > PNC *tl- > t- (see VanBik 2009:29), and the loss of devoiced nasals (see VanBik 2009:197). Therefore, the retention of these common innovations with other Northern languages along with the realization of Shafer’s Law demonstrates that Ngawn should be classified as a Northern South Central Tibeto-Burman language.


Internal Language Affiliation of Mondzish in
Sino-Vietnamese Borderland

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There are about 20,000 Lolo people living in the borderland between northern Vietnam and southeastern Yunnan province, China. The Lolo of China is a member of Yi ethnic minority while they are an independent ethnicity in Vietnam. Traditionally, the Lolo people in the area have been called Red Lolo, White Lolo, Black Lolo, Flowery Lolo, white-flowery Lolo, and High-white Lolo according to their wearing attires.

Linguistically, the Lolo people speak a group of mutually unintelligible lects, which are quite distant from the languages spoken by the rest of Yi people in China. Lama (2012) proposes a new clade called Mondzish for these Lolo lects; later, Hsiu (2014) expands the members of it. To the date, there over 20 Lolo lects have been discovered and documented by various scholars from as early as Wu (1993, 1994) to Edmonson (2003) and Iwasa (2003) later, and Hsiu and Lama recently. As plenty of Lolo data are available now, it is time to do a deep investigation of language relationship among Mondzish.

In this study, we will carry out Mondzish language subgrouping from a perspective of phylogenetic linguistics view. A presumed phylogenetic database will be composed of 22 taxa (20 Mondzish languages plus Nuosu Yi and Burmese as a contrast) and 30 characters (glosses), which end with about 500 character-states. Bayesian inference and Neighbor-Net will be used to estimate the evolution of the Mondzish descent, and they will be implemented with MrBayes 3.2.6 and SplitsTree 5 to compute the binary codes converted from this database.

We hope this study can find a clear member affiliation of Mondzish languages and will shed light on the subgrouping of Tibeto-Burman family.

Key Words: Lolo; Yi; Mondzish; Niso-Burmese
Bibliography:


The paper investigates the unergatives and unaccusatives in Mongsen, a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in the state of Nagaland in the North-Eastern region of India. The common understanding is that the intransitive (unergatives and unaccusatives) subjects in ergative languages are marked absolutive. Thus, the ‘Unaccusative Hypothesis’ propounded by Perlmutter (1978) is adopted for this study. His categorisation of unaccusatives and unergatives which supposedly holds across all languages is used to investigate Mongsen intransitive verbs.

The study based on Perlmutter’s categorization of intransitives, shows that the conventional understanding of transitivity is not the defining criteria for an NP (external argument) to be marked ergative. It presents and addresses examples from Mongsen, exhibiting ergative case on intransitive sentences.\(^1\) See example (1), (2) and (3). Unergative verbs inherently take agentive subjects. All the verbs classified under the unergative verbs, can take ergative case. Example (5) shows Mongsen unergatives as transitives.\(^2\) Examples (4) and (6) exhibits the ability of Mongsen unergatives to take implicit and cognate objects. Only exceptions are the verbs khu ‘knock’, ‘hammer’, tsek ‘bang’, ashiyuk ‘cheat’ which require an ergative case to be an agent, when an overt object is missing. Without the ergative case they behave like patient/theme, exhibiting unaccusative properties. Coupe (2007, 163) has also made observations that in Mongsen, intransitive verbs that express activities or states which are normally not controlled but can be controlled in certain situations e.g. nhaktsi ‘sneeze’, hwamsha ‘yawn’, tshok ‘collide’ etc. can take agentive (ergative) case.

The observation of ergative case on intransitives itself is not a novel uncovering, with many linguists acknowledging its existence on many unergative verbs (Mohanan 1994; Li 2007; Chandra, Kaur, and Udaar 2014, among others). Many ergative languages make a clear distinction between unergatives and unaccusatives. Ergative marking is clearly restricted within the unergative domain. However, the study shows that in Mongsen, even the putative unaccusative verbs appear to mark its subject ergative.\(^3\) See Examples (7) to (9). If the subject of the assumed unaccusative verbs are truly derived subjects, this also goes against Marantz’s much accepted ‘ergative generalization’.

It is proposed that two primary factors contribute towards the manifestation of ergative case in Mongsen: volition and focus. The verb ‘pray’ can appear with and without an ergative marker, see (10) and (11). The subject is an agent both with and without the ergative marker. The ergative marker in (11) is not motivated by volition, but is indicative of focus on the subject. Similarly, it is observed that in the unaccusatives (8) to (10), it is the focus which motivates ergative marking.

The paper also postulates that this binary division of intransitive verbs is not really able to capture the intransitives in Mongsen.

Data (Examples)

(1) \(pa\text{-}nə\ athə\)
   3sg-erg fall-pst
   ‘He fell.’

(2) \(anu\text{-}luŋ\text{-}nə\ apa\ ζə\ə\text{-}ə\ u\)
   child-pl-erg fast grow-pres. dec
   ‘Children grows fast.’

---

\(^{1}\) The language being an ergative-absolutive language is expected to mark its intransitive Subject absolutive and not ergative

\(^{2}\) Also similar to the transitive constructions, taking an ergative argument in the present tense will give a habitual or generic reading

\(^{3}\) An instance of ergative case in applicative unaccusatives construction in Nez Perce can be observed in Deal (2016)
(3)  naŋ-na asay
   2.sg-erg shout-imp.
   ‘You shout.’ (Imperative. Requesting or Ordering)

(4)  pa-na chuwaar coli coli
   3.sg-erg stupid/silly walk walk.pst
   ‘S/He walked a silly walk.’

(5)  akumba-na ṭochipai a akhɔt
   akumba-erg scary cough-pst.
   ‘Akumba coughed a scary cough.’

(6)  akumba-na chuə mənɨ mənɨ
deba akh
   akumba-erg stupid smile smile-pst.
   ‘Akumba smiled a stupid smile.’

(7)  alun maruk-na mələ chaksha-i u
   clay cups-erg easily break-fut. dec.
   ‘Clay cups will break easily.’

(8)  maruk pi-nə ya mela chaksh-ɔr u
   cup def-erg very easily break-pres. dec.
   ‘This cup breaks easily.’

(9)  light-na ṭambhi
   light-erg flicker-pst.
   ‘The lights flickered.’

(10)  pa sarasadem-ɔr
    3.sg pray-pres.
    ‘S/He is praying.’

(11)  pa-nə sarasadem-ɔr
    3.sg-erg pray-pres.
    ‘S/He is praying.’

References:


Syntactic patterning of double object constructions in some Kuki-Chin languages

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The aim of this paper is to examine a set of data in some Kuki-Chin languages with respect to double object constructions (DOCs) in the light of conclusions drawn in Miyagwa (1997), Miyagwa and Tsujiioka (2004) and Bhattacharya and Simpson (2011).

There are two relevant hypotheses in the domain of DOCs that are contrary to each other. One is that there is a single base structure with respect to the arrangement of the double objects, i.e. Goal is hierarchically superior to the Theme (G>T), from which different surface orders are derived by the movement of T over G. The other hypothesis is that there are more than one underlying structures, and they permit the movement of the hierarchically lower argument over the hierarchically superior argument (Miyagwa:1997).

Like most of the South Asian languages, Kuki-Chin languages are also head-final and allow variation in the ordering of the arguments, especially the direct object arguments in DOCs. The ordering of Theme and Goal are not rigid as evident in the languages discussed below. In the (a) examples 1-2 the ordering is such that Goal is followed by the Theme (G>T), and in (b) examples the ordering is such that Theme is followed by the Goal (T>G). Both of these variants are equally acceptable to the respective native speakers.

Mara: [fieldwork]
1. a) rɑpʰɑ-tə lʏnɑ nɑɰtə pʰisi ə-pʲe  
   Rapha-ERG Lyuna to pencil 3-give  
   [G>T]  
   ‘RaphɑgavepenciltoLyuna.’
   b) rɑpʰɑ-tə pʰisi lʏnɑ nɑɰtə ə-pʲe  
   Rapha-ERG pencil Lyuna to 3-give  
   [T>G]

Thadou: [Haokip:2019]
2. a) ki=n nɑŋ ɑmɑ-ho ka=peh na=hi  
   1=ERG 2.SG 3-PL 1=give 2=be  
   [G>T]  
   ‘Igavethemtoyou.’
   b) ki=n ɑmɑ-ho nɑŋ ka=peh na=hi  
   1=ERG 3-PL 2.SG 1=give 2=be  
   [T>G]

The derivation of the (b) sentences from the (a) versions by moving the T argument over the G argument as suggested in the single-base hypothesis, seems to work perfectly for the KC languages as well.

However, this hypothesis is challenged by the dual base structure hypothesis where there are two base orders, and both the orders permit the movement of the hierarchically lower object DP to the left of the higher object DP. One of the diagnostics to test this hypothesis is the binding relation between T and G. In 4(a) the anaphoric element nɑjri / nɑɰtʃɑ is contained within the T, which is bounded by the preceding G. This binding is also evident from the argument indexation on tʃɑbu ‘book’ to form possessive DP. 4(b) shows the movement of T over G, however the binding relation remains intact.
Mara:

3.  a) john-tə lyṇa nətə rəpʰə nəʊʔə ə-mə-tʃəbʊ nəjɾi/ nəʊʔə ə-pəɾʰə [G>T]  
    John-ERG Lyuna and Rapha to 3-PL-book eachother 3-send  
    b) john-tə ə-mə tʃəbʊ nəjɾi/ nəʊʔə: lyṇa nətə rəpʰə nəʊʔə ə-pəɾʰə [T>G]  
    John-ERG 3-PL book eachother Lyuna and Rapha to 3-send  
    ‘John gave Lyuna and Rapha eachother’s book.’

In 5(a), the anaphoric element is contained in G, which is preceded by T. The T here binds the anaphor, which is also evident by the argument indexation on nəʊʔ ‘mother’. In 5(b) G is moved over T; the binding relation is maintained in this case as well.

4.  a) (ənəuʔ-tə) hosai təʔ/zyduqə ə-mə-nəuʔ nəʊʔə ə-pʰə [T>G]  
    (3-ERG) child every/all 3-PL-mother to 3-give  
    b) (ənəuʔ-tə) ə-mə-nəuʔ nəʊʔ-tə hosai təʔ/zyduqə ə-pʰə [G>T]  
    (3-ERG) 3-PL-mother to child every/all 3-give  
    ‘He gave every/all babies to his/their mother.’

This makes a strong case for two underlying structures, G>T and T>G, both the structures allowing movement of the hierarchically lower argument over the hierarchically superior argument to the left. We will apply the diagnostics like quantifier floating and scopal interaction of G and T when both of them are quantificational elements, to determine the validity of the dual-base hypothesis.

By way of conclusion, it is highlighted that there is a remarkable correspondence evident in the genetically distinct yet typologically similar languages like Japanese, Bangla and Kuki-Chin languages, since all of them tend to support the dual base structure hypothesis.
Noun Phrase Structure in Menglun Akeu

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[Abstract]
This paper tries to describe the noun phrase structure (henceforth ‘NP structure’) in Menglun Akeu, a Loloish language of Tibeto-Burman linguistic family, which is spoken in Sipsongpanna (Xishuangbanna) state of Yunnan Province, China. Apart from the author’s, there have been no previous descriptive studies on the grammar of this variety. The data in this paper are cited from the author’s fieldnote.

The canonical NP structure of Menglun Akeu is schematized as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slot 1</th>
<th>Slot 2</th>
<th>Slot 3</th>
<th>Slot 4</th>
<th>Slot 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Demonstrative)</td>
<td>Noun</td>
<td>(Adjective)</td>
<td>(Demonstrative-Numeral-Classifier)-Suffix</td>
<td>(=Postposition)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All but Slot 5 can occur independently, and Slot 5 can be viewed as clitic. This paper mainly focuses on the description of Slot 1, 2, 3 and 4.

The examples are seen below.

(1) tsɔ55a21 ni55-ya21 uŋ 55-ŋ 55-ŋ 55-ŋ 55
    people this-two-CLF that-CLF that-CLF that-CLF'
    'these two people’

(2) pe55ko21 a55-ke55
    clothes that-CLF
    'that clothes’

The examples (1) and (2) show that the demonstratives /ni55/ ‘this’ and /a55/ ‘that’ occur with classifiers and follow the head noun. However, if the adjective occurs in the noun phrase, the demonstrative appears at the initial place of the NP structure, as seen in (3).

(3) a55 pe55ko21 a21ŋ55 n21-ke55
    that clothes red two-CLF
    'those two red clothes’

In some cases, the demonstrative can occur doubly in a single noun phrase, as in (4).

(4) ni55 dza55tsya21 ni55-pa21 a21tsy55 ku55i21 tse55-ŋ55
    this dish (food) this-CLF sour why becomes-PRT
    'Why this dish became so sour?’

The linker /=nɛ55/ can mark both nominal possession (5) and relative clauses (6), which precede the head noun (printed in italic).

(5) a55=ne55 pe55ko21 ni55 np55-la21?
    3SG=LINK clothes this COP-Q
    'is his clothes this one?’

(6) tsa55=ja21 tsa55=ne55 tse55=ŋ55
    song sing=LINK person
    ‘the person who sings a song’

When the possessive phrase and relative clauses modify a single head noun, the relative clauses are placed after the head noun (printed in italic), as seen in (7). In (7), the second linker /=xe33/ contains the function of ‘perfective’, which is not able to be replaced by /=ne55/.

(7) tsɔ55a21 a33ya21=ne55 pe55ko21 u55=xe33 i21xe55 a21ja33.
    3SG=LINK clothes buy=LINK.PRT very inexpensive
    ‘The clothes he bought is very cheap.’ [lit. His clothes that he bought is very cheap.]

Though this paper is a kind of preliminary studies, it will present the elaborate data to describe the basic NP structure in Menglun Akeu.
Lisu (Sino-Tibetan, Tibeto-Burman, Burmic, Ngwi, Central) as spoken in China, Burma, Thailand and India has a complex system of post-head modals. Most are one syllable, a few are two syllables. Of the two syllable modals, some are synchronically analyzable, others are not; there are also dialect differences. Some are clearly derived from homophonous verbs, others have no obvious verbal counterparts in modern Lisu.

The syntax of modals has various interesting characteristics. All are directly negated by the preceding marker M: /mo21/; the head verb can sometimes also be negated when it is followed by a few modals, NEG-Verb-NEG-Modal, but it is not possible to have negation on a verb and not the following modal in most dialects. All modals occur quite often in Modal-NEG-Modal polar questions, which are less frequent with verbs. All can occur in their modal meaning as the head verbal element in a clause answering such a question or in context following a clause with that modal after a verb. Some analyzable two-syllable modals with a noun as the first element usually have the negation between the two syllables, before the modal; in some dialects this varies with a possibility of negation preceding the whole. Other two-syllable modals are unitary and can only have negation before the first syllable. While post-head directional forms are extremely frequent after verbs without a following modal, they are much less frequent after a verb plus modal sequence, other than the change-of-state directional (away from its previous condition) LE /le44/.

The semantics of modals is also complex and interesting. For example, modals of ability and permission include the following:

- /do33/ ‘possible’
- /no44/ ‘permitted and possible’
- /ku55/ ‘able to do skillfully’
- /ku33/ ‘possible with difficulty, not well’
- /deʔ21/ ‘fitting/acceptable/suitable’

There are also various modals which encode meanings not always seen within modal systems, such as /pu55/ ‘dare to’, /ni55/ ‘have had one’s fill of’, /k/ ‘do for fun’, /kʰo21/ ‘be usual to’, /tsʰo55/ ‘need to’ and so on. Dialect differences in forms are sometimes considerable; for example Southern Lisu /n K, /no44 ko35/ versus Central and Northern Lisu N T. /no44 ta55/ ‘must’, or Northern and Southern Lisu FO /tso44/, Central Lisu KO, /ko35/ (from Chinese 过 Guó), the experiential ‘have had the experience of’.

Some modals have cognates with similar modal meanings elsewhere in Ngwi languages, notably closely-related Lahu and Katso. These may either be accidental parallel grammaticalizations of cognate verbs or historically related modal forms; for example, /ni44/ ‘try to’, derived from a verb meaning ‘look at’. Other modals have non-cognate forms and may be relatively recent innovations. Modals with unrelated forms representing many of the same semantic packages can be found in various Ngwi languages and in many other unrelated languages of the area.
Like languages in the Sinitic branch of the family, Ngwi (Yi) languages feature a wide variety of sentence-final particles. A subset of these are associated with interrogative constructions – Lisu varieties typically have one (Bradley 2017), Akha has two (Hansson 2017) as does Nuosu (Gerner 2013), Lahu has four (Matisoff 1973). By contrast, Khatso has a relatively elaborate system of twelve particles that are involved in question formation (Author 2015). And atypically for the language, many of them are portmanteau morphemes; that is, they combine more than one meaning or function.

These particles co-exist with two expected syntactic constructions for forming questions. The first is verb reduplication for polar questions. (This is similar to the A-NOT-A construction in related languages, but in Khatso the negator never participates.) Three particles that convey aspect are used with past or future reduplications: perfective \textit{wa}31, perfective irrealis \textit{la}31 and imperfective irrealis \textit{ta}33. In addition, the copula \(n\) is not reduplicated as is, but takes an irregular interrogative form \(n^a\)31. The second construction makes use of interrogative pronouns to form content questions. These constructions take \(n^a\)31 for past and present events, \(p\)^53 \(n^a\)31 for the future. The particle \(s\)31, the interrogative form of \(s^31\) ‘still’, may occur with either type, but cannot appear in a declarative clause.

Some of the particles themselves make clauses interrogative without the need for reduplication or interrogative pronouns. For example, \(n^i\)35 is the interrogative form of the topic marker \(n^i\)31 and provides a meaning of ‘and what about \(X\)?’ In addition, four particles are epistemic; they convey information about either the speaker’s certainty in the underlying premise or in the interlocutor’s ability to reply. \(s^34\) is the most certain; interlocutors are expected to agree. The abovementioned \(la\)31 has less certainty since it marks events that have not yet happened, but interlocutors are expected to affirm more often than not. \(pei\)33 is used to confirm a question about which the speaker is unsure. And \(ta\)31 is used when the interlocutor is not expected to have an authoritative answer, such as with rhetorical questions. Finally, there are several particles that co-occur with the copula to form tag questions, which by definition contain expectations of agreement. As mentioned above, \(n^a\)31 and \(s^34\) indicate a high level of certainty and thus the expectation for confirmation is likewise high. The tag \(n^44\) \(nuo\)31, with tone sandhi on the copula, shows less certainty. Tags with \(wa\)31 convey a reproachful sense when the expected information is not forthcoming.

As these particles show, questions do more than request information. In natural discourse, they provide another way for speakers to present and receive information and build relationships through interaction. Since much of the Ngwi family is un- or under-documented, it is unlikely that Khatso is the only language to have a wide variety of particles that serve this purpose. Further research is needed across the family.

\textbf{References}

Evidentiality and engagement in Kua'nsi

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Kua’nsi (Central Ngwi, Sino-Tibetan) has four grammaticalized epistemic categories: modality, mirativity, evidentiality and engagement, with complex interactions between each other. This talk will investigate evidentiality and engagement in Kua’nsi, with a focus on how these two categories interact.

Evidentiality is a grammatical category of information source and access. Kua’nsi speakers can choose one of four types of evidentiality to report the information source: direct, inferred, reported and uncertain memory evidentiality. The evidential markers are functionally aligned with those evidential markers in other languages typologically (Aikhenvald, 2018; Aikhenvald & Dixon, 2003), but the direct evidentiality has additional function of engagement.

Engagement as a grammatical category encodes the relative accessibility of an entity or state of affairs to the speaker and addressee (Evans et al., 2018). In Kua’nsi, there are two engagement markers: a³³nɛ²¹ for speaker asymmetric engagement and a³³nu²¹ for speaker symmetric engagement. The speaker asymmetric engagement marker is originally the direct evidential marker. It encodes that the referred knowledge is directly witnessed by speakers but this knowledge can only be accessed by speakers, not shared with addressee. Thus, this marker is not only an evidential marker but also functions as a speaker asymmetric engagement marker. It also has the function of attention alignment. Speakers can use this morpheme to call for attention from addressee to the reference.

In summary, evidentiality and engagement as two distinct grammatical categories are connected in Kua’nsi by the particle a³³nɛ²¹. This particle encodes the personal knowledge of speaker which is not shared with addressee. Although evidentiality also concerns with information access, it is from the single perspective of speaker. On the other hand, engagement evaluates the access from the perspectives of both speaker and addressee.
Intermediate stages on the pathway from *-ʔ to rising:
Evidence from Ngwi (Loloish)

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Haudricourt’s (1954) model of tonogenesis posits that syllable-final glottal stop may raise pitch at the syllable offset, directly conditioning the emergence of a rising tone. At first glance, tonal development patterns in Ngwi (Loloish, Tibeto-Burman) languages would seem to support this idea. Across the Ngwi branch, rising tone values have often developed in Tone *L* and *H*, whose syllable-final stops merged to *-ʔ*, with attendant tense phonation (Bradley 1979). However, closer inspection of tonal development in individual language clusters suggests that *-ʔ* plays only an indirect role in conditioning a rising tone. This paper presents evidence that suggests a pathway from *-ʔ* to rising with the following intermediate steps: 1) *-ʔ* conditions tense phonation, 2) tense phonation conditions raising of the pitch across the entire syllable, not just at syllable offset, which leads to 3) the tone becoming a high tone (that is, in the upper pitch range), and finally 4) the high tone becomes a rising tone.

In the present study, I investigate the pathways to rising in *L* and *H* by assembling a Ngwi ‘dialect laboratory.’ The term ‘dialect laboratory’ refers to the use of dialects or closely related languages as a testing ground for proposed pathways to sound change, by comparing variants across the spatial dimension (Vogelaer & Seiler 2012). The Ngwi dialect laboratory includes 82 Ngwi languages and dialects, grouped into 14 lower-level clusters. The data consist of the language varieties’ current reflexes of Bradley’s (1979) Proto-Ngwi tone categories arranged in a tone box, adapted from Gedney (1972). Through limiting the scope of the comparative method to one lower-level cluster at a time, it becomes possible to reasonably reconstruct the phonetic tone values for each cluster’s proto-tone system. Once the proto-tone values are established, one can then posit the most parsimonious pathway to an innovative rising tone found within that cluster.

The reconstructed tone values for the Laloid, Nosoid, Nasoid, Sanoid, Lahoid, and Downriver Phula clusters are presented. Individual languages in each of these clusters have rising tones that are most reasonably explained as having evolved along the pathway described above, with tense phonation in *L* and *H* first triggering a leap into the upper pitch range, followed by high > rising. The intermediate stages along the pathway are found in different dialects within the clusters. This finding offers a new understanding of the gradual emergence of rising tones in Ngwi, insight that may also be applicable to tonal development in other Sino-Tibetan languages.

References


This paper briefly retraces what we know about the Tibetic tonogenesis, identifies a pivotal remaining gap in our diachronic account, and attempts to bridge that gap.

The main development of the tonal Tibetic varieties, that is, those varieties in which tone became phonemically distinctive, is well understood (e.g. Sun 2003) and borne out by crosslinguistic phonetic studies such as Hombert et al. (1979): vowels preceded by an originally voiced onset (Ga) have developed a low tone (Ka), whereas vowels preceded by a voiceless onset (Ka) have developed a high tone (Kā).

Another feature found throughout the tonal Tibetic varieties is, however, that the second syllable of disyllabic nouns is always, even if it originally began with a voiced obstruent, higher than the first syllable; that is, we find LH (where L = low and H = high) and HH, but neither LL nor HL. This conundrum was solved by Caplow (2009), whose robust statistical analysis of the acoustic correlates of stress in two non-tonal varieties in the opposite peripheries of the Tibetic language continuum shows that disyllabic non-verbs are consistently stressed there on the second syllable, and that this stress is primarily conveyed by fundamental frequency. Assuming that this was already the case in Proto-Tibetan (PT) explains the absence of LL and HL in the tonal varieties (Caplow 2009: 541–2). Evidence from a third non-tonal variety will be presented to demonstrate how pervasively the LH-pattern marked disyllabic non-verbs in PT.

Which brings us to the pivotal question of how this ‘syntagmatically’ distinctive function of fundamental frequency (restricted to disyllabic non-verbs) developed into the ‘paradigmatically’ distinctive tonal contrast (affecting also monosyllabic words). Here, another widely recognized process (e.g. Sun 2003: 38) may have played a crucial role: whereas syllables beginning with unprefixed nasals or liquids (Na) developed a low tone (Na̱), those beginning with prefixed nasals or liquids (x-Na) developed a high tone (Nā). Given the extreme productivity of the LH-pattern in PT, we may hypothesize that it was applied not only to disyllabic but, at some point, also to sesquisyllabic non-verbs such as gnam [snam] ‘sky’ and gla [sła] ‘salary’, yielding ţnām and ţlā. When prefixes were later dropped, as happened in all of Tibet and Kham, the only feature distinguishing these words from corresponding words without a prefix, such as nam ‘when’ and la ‘(mountain) pass’, was their high tone.

References:


Phonological Conspiracy in Tone

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1 Main Claim

In this talk, I propose an analysis for tonal alternations at the prefix–stem boundary in Tenyidie (Angami), where Mid tones in prefixes and stems dissimilate. I argue that this alternation is driven by the OCP (Obligatory Contour Principle) (Leben 1973) of Mid tones, which results in the epenthesis of a High tone. However, sequences of Mid tones are seen in the stem–suffix domain. I claim that this asymmetry can be solved with recourse to prosodic phonology (Nespor and Vogel 1986). By assuming that stem and suffix form a prosodic word, excluding prefix, I argue that Mid tones fuse within the prosodic constituent to avoid OCP-Mid. The same constraint also triggers dissimilation across the prefix–stem environment, by additionally assuming that tones are prohibited to fuse across prosodic boundaries. This is an example of phonological conspiracy where multiple processes work together to repair or avoid a single marked structure (Kisseberth 2011).

2 Data

Tenyidie has four level-tones: Extra High /ē/, High /é/, Mid /ē/, and Low /è/. Upon the prefixation of the Mid-toned attributive prefix /kē–/, a stem bearing a Mid tone becomes a High tone, as in (1)(c). But there are no tone changes observed otherwise.

(1) Prefixation of the attributive /kē–/: 
   a. nī → kēnī (happy)
   b. vī → kēví (good)
   c. zī → kēzī (early)
   d. sī → kēsī (cold)

However, sequences of Mid tones are seen in mornomorphemic words, eg. kêlē (‘to pinch’), and in stem–suffix environments, eg. zē ciē (‘to sell’ + imperative). Also, it is observed that a resultant High tone is different from an underlying High tone. In (1), (b) and (c) have the same tones in the stem output but they trigger different tones to the definite suffix /–u/.

(2) Difference between derived and non-derived High tones:
   a. /kēví –u/ → [kēvǐ–u]
   b. /kēzī –u/ → [kēzĭ–u]

Data from fieldwork show that prefixes in the language are very limited in number, and the /ke–/ prefix is about the only productive prefix in the language.
3 Proposal

The data support the claim that suffix /–u/ is tonally under-represented and therefore displays different tones depending on the stem it follows. As such, /–u/ should behave like it does in (2)(a); it is never realised as /–ū/ after a High tone, but it does so after a Mid tone, which is the underlying stem tone in (2)(b).

Here, I propose that the difference between [kēví–û] and [kēzí–û] is because the Mid tone in the underlying input /zí/ is pushed to the right and remains floating; while a High tone is epenthesised because of OCP-Mid and is realised by /zi/ in the surface form. The floating Mid tone still remains visible to the suffix /–u/ and therefore triggers a Mid tone to it.

The reason behind sequences of Mid tones elsewhere is due to the fusion of Mid tones, also a result of OCP-Mid. The different reaction to the OCP here is because of the prosodic structure. Assuming the prosodic word (ω) contains the stem and suffix excluding the prefix, I argue that OCP-Mid is avoided within the prosodic word by fusion. At the same time, disallowing fusion of the Mid tones across the prosodic word forces the epenthesis of the High tone, thereby giving rise to a different outcomes for the same constraint.

(3) Tone fusion within a prosodic word:

\[(zé) \text{Mid} \quad (ciē)\text{ω} \quad \rightarrow \quad (zē) \text{Mid} \quad (ciē)\text{ω} \quad \text{Mid}\]

(4) Tone dissimilation across the prosodic boundary:

\[(kē) \text{Mid} \quad (zí)\text{ω} \quad \rightarrow \quad (kē) \text{Mid} \quad (zi)\text{ω} \quad \text{Mid High Mid}\]

References:


Kanashi: Fieldwork pieces for a genealogical and contact-linguistic puzzle

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Kanashi (xns), a ST language of Himachal Pradesh, India, exhibits several layers of IA borrowings – one which reflects more recent borrowing, where the IA loanwords in Kanashi have the same or similar form as in the IA donor language (e.g. maːpʰi ‘apology’, seb ‘apple’), and at least one older layer. The latter shows characteristic linguistic formal adaptation markers (e.g. Kanashi: kasay ‘bronze’ [H. kās, kās; N. kāko ‘bronze, pewter, white metal’]). This older loanword layer is the focus of this presentation. Interestingly, Kinnauri (kfk) shares these adaptation markers with Kanashi, but no other ST languages of this region (e.g. Bunun, Tinani, spoken in the Himachal Pradesh state of India). Even more interestingly, traces of similar adaptation strategies are found in ST languages of Uttarakhand/Nepal (e.g. Raji) and one adaptation marker –(a)s in the Dravidian language Kurux (spoken in Nepal and in the Jharkhand region of India). The distributional pattern of the adaptation markers in Raji and Kurux is similar to those found in Kanashi and Kinnauri. This is one of several shared innovations in Kanashi and Kinnauri, which are not found in other ST languages of Himachal Pradesh, but as mentioned seem to be present in some ST languages of Uttarakhand and western Nepal. This raises questions such as: How? When? What does this say about the older stages of these ST languages?

In this presentation we will examine the following shared phenomena in Kanashi and Kinnauri:

(i) adaptation of IA nouns and adjectives with an adaptive suffix –(a)s
(ii) transitive marker –jaː, intransitive marker –e(d) in borrowed IA verbs
(iii) reduplication as a past/perfective marking strategy

All three strategies are untypical characteristics of ST or IA. The reduplication in this case is reduplication of the final syllable in case of disyllabic stems, and not the first syllable which is noted in some Indo-European languages.

All this requires both that the tentative sub-classification of WH may be in need of revision, and also that there may be closer connections between WH and some basically unclassified ST languages of Nepal, notably Raji. However, we have noted this only for some WH languages, which requires an explanation: are we looking at a radically different genealogical classification or at the outcome of historical language contact?

(By IA loans we mean words which are part of lexicon of many IA languages – most of them are of IA origin, but there are also those which have other origins, e.g. Perso-Arabic (e.g. saːlanj ‘year’ in Kanashi) or Portuguese (baːlːtiŋ ‘bucket’ in Kanashi).)
We present the results of interviews and narrative collections carried out with survivors of the 2015 Nepal earthquakes. This study uses transcribed and translated exchanges from 44 narratives representing a larger corpus of 279 narratives and interviews from six Tibeto-Burman languages spoken in areas of Gorkha, Manang, and Mustang, Nepal: Kutang, Lowa, Manange, Nar-Phu, Nubri, and Tsum. Our contribution expands on a body of literature reporting on community interpretations and responses to natural disasters, and it examines what the cultural values, traditions, practices, and social organizations of Himalayan highland communities can teach us about the impacts of natural disasters, especially when the changes and consequences (changes to infrastructure, distribution of relief aid, recovery decisions) come from forces that are often beyond the control of – or out of touch with – the lives of those who are directly impacted by these events (these are often marginalized communities that exist outside of the realm of big decision making and political or large-scale economic power). After a brief presentation of the methods of data collection, we will turn to an analysis of excerpted speech from our sub-set of our corpus. We see two themes emerging: First, that of a juxtaposition of interpretations of the internal world of the body with the external world of the environment; Second: a contrast between survivor understanding of cycles of decay and destruction vs. those of regeneration and renewal. As noted by Bendix (1990: 333), “personal narratives are ... the primary means at an individual's disposal to regain order out of chaos... Earthquake stories ... illustrate with astounding clarity the interplay between the event, the personal experience thereof, and the structuring of this experience in a meaningful fashion.” Our study further enriches our understanding of the roles that ritual events play in extraordinary times, as encoded through narrative and interview-based approaches.

Bendix, Regina. Reflections on earthquake narratives. Western Folklore 49.4: 331-347.
Window Onto a Forgotten World:  
Lahu Texts from Thailand in the 1960’s

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History
--The Lahu language: 7 tones; closely related to Burmese
--The “Boasian trifecta” and the Berkeley ethos: grammar, dictionary, collection of texts
The Grammar of Lahu (1973)
The Dictionary of Lahu (1988)
Publication of the texts: accepted by Academia Sinica (Taipei), but there remain problems; informal publication date is Fall 2021.

Equipment
Primitive reel-to-reel tape-recorder
Bad recording conditions: rice-pounders, cocks crowing
But everything is relative: my late colleague Murray Emeneau carried out his research on Toda in the Nilgiri Hills using an archaic wire recorder

Consultants
Mostly from Christian villagers in Chiang Mai Province, especially Huey Tat. Enthusiastic cooperation. Once a topic was chosen they even conducted rehearsals, sometimes including sound effects.

Genres
• Discussions of serious topics; village life and customs; subsistence activities
• Free (candid) conversations
• Fables and edifying stories; myths and fairy tales
• Jokes and anecdotes; bilingual humor
• Religious texts: pre-Christian (theo-animism)
• Songs: religious and secular

Transcriptions
• Baptist one is the oldest, dating from late 19th century; good notation for the tones, except that the tonal diacritics appear one space after the vowel; non-phonemic; no indication of word boundaries by hyphens
Equipment
Obviously my texts were recorded decades before the advent of computers. I had to rely on primitive reel-to-reel tape-recorders, and the recording conditions were far from optimal, since village life did not come to a halt when I was there: the rice-pounders kept up a rhythmic background, the cocks crowed all day long, the kids too young to work in the fields ran around shouting at play. But everything is relative: in the 1930’s my late colleague Murray Emeneau had carried out his research on Toda in the Nilgiri Hills of India, using an archaic wire-recorder — and Toda is a language with a fiendishly difficult phonology!

Genres
The texts cover a wide variety of genres, including:
• Discussions of serious topics; village life and customs; subsistence activities
• Free (candid) conversations
• Fables and edifying stories; myths and fairy tales
• Jokes and anecdotes; bilingual humor¹
• Religious texts: pre-Christian (theo-animistic) as well as Christian
• Songs: religious and secular

Transcriptions
No fewer than four different transcriptions have been in use for Lahu: ²
• The one introduced by Baptist missionaries is the oldest, dating from the late 19th century; good notation for the tones, except that the tonal diacritics appear one space after the vowel; non-phonemic; no indication of word boundaries by hyphens.
• The Chinese transcription, based loosely on the pinyin system for transcribing Mandarin. Tones are indicated by arbitrary consonants in syllable-final position (this is possible since Lahu has no final consonants in native words), which makes it relatively easy to type.
• My own system. Phonemic, but rather difficult to use. (I’ve written about my regrets on this score.)

My original idea was to publish the texts in such a way that the users could pick their favorite transcription. But this tripled the size of the MS. The version in my transcription alone comes to about 1200 pages. The new plan is to have three separate electronic versions, allowing the users to choose their favorite one.

¹ This well-defined genre revolves around misunderstandings between a Black and a Yellow Lahu, or between a Lahu and a Shan.
² One of these, developed by Catholic missionaries, is only used by a handful of people.
Computerization
Over the past few years a succession of talented graduate students working on my STEDT project3 have taught me how to use FLEX, a word-by-word glossing program developed by the SIL at UT Austin. Once you get to know it, it’s a fine program, despite some bugs here and there.

Structure of the presentation of the texts
• The original Lahu, in a 3-line format:
  --first the Lahu text in my transcription
  --under this the form-class designation
  --under this the word-by-word gloss
• The free translation
• Notes on difficult and/or interesting points

My form-classes  < See pp. 1-3 of handout 4>
--I have made no effort to follow anybody else’s conventions (e.g. the Lingua system of form-class abbreviations). In my view, one size certainly doesn’t fit all. One needs a more subtle system suited to languages like Lahu or Burmese, to deal with phenomena like pre-head and post-head versatile verbs, the classes of particles (Pn, Pv, Punf, Puf, Pniv), elaborate expressions (4-syllable items with the structures A-B-C-B or A-B-A-C), etc.
--A big complication is the fact that some morphemes fill more than one grammatical role, necessitating manual intervention. The most common particle, ve, functions as a nominalizer, genitivizer, or relativizer. Each of the tens of thousands of its occurrences has had to be marked manually according to the meaning of ve in each particular context.
--Homophony has been another big problem, since many unrelated morphemes have the same phonological shape, including the same tones. These cases must also be glossed manually.

Problems with the free translations
--Eternal problem: how to stay as close to the original as possible without sounding stilted or unnatural in English.
--Often English pronouns have to be supplied where the original lacks them. Sometimes, e.g., it’s hard to determine whether he or she or they is meant.
--There are numbering discrepancies between the Lahu original and the free translations. One reason is my inconsistent treatment of quoted passages which go on for multiple sentences: should each grammatically complete sentence be numbered differently, or should the whole “speech-turn” get a single number? Should very short utterances like “Yes.” get their own number, or be numbered the same as the following sentence?
--How “verbatim” to be? Should one record all the hesitation markers, er’s and um’s and false starts, or should they be lightly edited out?

3 The Sino-Tibetan Etymological Dictionary and Thesaurus project, which ran officially from 1986-2016.
4 There are actually quite a few typos in this list, which has not had a proper proof-reading: e.g. Nsd should be “SPATIAL demonstrative noun”, not “special demonstrative noun”.

3
Notes
In the current version of the MS, footnote numbers only appear in the free translations, not in the Lahu texts. Ideally the numbers should appear in both places, but how to do this has not been figured out yet.

Grammatical points in our sample texts
One could spend several happy hours discussing every detail of these two texts, but we’ll have to content ourselves with a few remarks on each of them.

• The Little Crabs who Walked Zigzag < See pp. 4-6 of handout>
This is a relatively simple short text, undoubtedly derived from an Aesop fable introduced long ago by missionaries. <Read sentence 7.1> [Summarize the fable]
--Note the use of the quotative marker cê in the narrative style (7.1, 7.4, 7.6). Very frequent in stories, setting the atmosphere of something that the narrator is repeating second-hand. But it would be tedious to translate this particle every time it occurs by something like “it is said that…”
--The construction tô Clf pèu tô Clf ‘one Clf after the other’ (7.6). As a main verb, pèu means ‘finish’.
--The causative post-head versatile verb c+ (7.6)
The meaning of c+ as a main verb is ‘send on an errand’, but it has been grammaticalized (or “bleached”) into a causative marker, just like Written Burmese cê and Chinese 使 (Mand. shi [3rd tone]).

• How We Came from Burma to Thailand < See pp. 7-13 of handout>
A more complex text, with almost 40 sentences. A few points:

--Lahu equivalents of Eng. from (1.1) “When we were fleeing here to Thailand from where we used to live in Burma”, lit. “We living in Burma fleeing to Thailand”. As explained in Note 1, the directional idea ‘from’ is seldom expressed overtly in Lahu. The ‘place from which’ is usually mentioned without any directional particle, followed immediately by the ‘place to’ plus locative particle. See GL 3.89.

--Much audience participation.
People felt free to break in with reactions or comments to the speaker, e.g. “Laughter!” (1.2), “Think before you speak!” (1.7), “Don’t laugh!” (1.11).

--Many elaborate expressions
g’a-mèu?-g’a-kâ? (1.12) ‘suffer hunger and cold’ (A-B-A-C)
lâw-lèh?-lâw-câ (1.20) ‘beg for food’ (A-B-A-C)
ha_-ve-g’âw-ve (1.28) ‘poor and wretched’ (A-B-C-B)
ha-lèh-ha-qa (1.31) ‘happily; in joy and gladness’ (A-B-A-C)

--Note the differences between literal vs. free translations of (1.34):
“In the midst of our troubles we had been separated from one another”, lit. “In the midst of our troubles one person of us could not even find another person”.

--Note the numbering discrepancies between the Lahu text and the free translation (1.35-1.36). Many of these discrepancies can easily be fixed by using such devices as slashes, e.g. 1.35/1.36.

Well, maybe that’s enough to give you all an idea of the agonies and the ecstasies involved in preparing material of this complexity for publication in a way that’s accessible and enjoyable not only for outside linguists but also for the speakers of the language themselves.
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Window onto a Forgotten World:
Lahu Texts from Thailand in the 1960’s

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Form Class Abbreviations

\( V \) prehead versatile verb
\( V + V_h \) pre-head versatile verb + main verb (pre-head concatenation)

\( Adv \) adverb
\( Adv + V \) adverb + verb
\( Adv_{interrog} \) interrogative adverb
\( Adv_{onomat} \) onomatopoetic
\( AE \) adverbial expression
\( AE_{ext} \) extentive adverbial
\( AE_{stat} \) stative adverbial

\( B_n \) bound nominal morpheme
\( B_v \) bound verbal morpheme

\( C_r \) resultative complement
\( Cl_{ext} \) extentive clause
\( Cl_{nf} \) non-final clause
\( Cl_f \) final clause
\( Conj \) conjunction

\( Dem \) demonstrative
\( Det \) determiner

\( Elab \) elaborate expression (4 syllables; 1st and 3rd, or 2nd and 4th are the same)
\( Elab_{adv} \) adverbial elaborate expression
\( Elab_{adv} + V \) adverbial elaborate expression + verb
\( Elab_n \) nominal elaborate expression
\( Elab_v \) verbal elaborate expression
\( Elab_v + V \) verbal elaborate expression + verb
\( Eth \) ethnonym
\( Ext_{Elab} \) extended elaborate expression (more than 4 syllable)

\( Interj \) interjection

\( M_{pfx} \) prefixable morpheme (may be preceded by 3-)

\( N \) noun
Form Class Abbreviations

N + Pn noun + noun-particle
N\textsubscript{deverb} deverbal noun (derived from a clause containing only a VP)
N\textsubscript{ext} extensive noun
N\textsubscript{ext} extensive noun phrase
N\textsubscript{int} interrogative noun
N\textsubscript{lim} limited noun
N\textsubscript{loc} locative noun
N\textsubscript{pers} personal names
N\textsubscript{place} name of a place
N\textsubscript{poss} + ve genitive modifier
N\textsubscript{prop} proper noun
N\textsubscript{sd} special demonstrative noun
N\textsubscript{sd} + Pn special demonstrative noun + noun particle
N\textsubscript{spec} + V specifying noun + verb
N\textsubscript{spec} + V specifying noun + verb
N\textsubscript{time} temporal noun
NP noun phrase
NP\textsubscript{ext} extensive noun phrase
NP\textsubscript{int} interrogative noun phrase
NP\textsubscript{loc} locative noun phrase
NP\textsubscript{q} quantified noun phrase
NP\textsubscript{time} temporal noun phrase
Num numeral
Num + Clf + Num numeral plus classifier; quantity expression (equivalent to "Q")

Onomat onomatopoeia

OV object plus verb; object-verb construction

P\textsubscript{adv} adverbial particle
Pn nominal particle
P\textsubscript{uf} final unrestricted particle
P\textsubscript{unf} non-final unrestricted particle
P\textsubscript{univ} universal unrestricted particle
P\textsubscript{univ} + P\textsubscript{univ} universal unrestricted particle + universal unrestricted particle
P\textsubscript{v-nom} nominalizing verb particle
P\textsubscript{v} verb particle
Miscellaneous Abbreviations

\( P_v + P_{quot} \) verb particle + quotative particle
\( P_v + P_v \) verb particle + verb particle
\( P_v + V_v \) verb particle + post-head versatile verb
\textit{Pron} pronoun
\textit{Pron}\textsubscript{ing} interrogative pronoun
\textit{Prt} particle
\( P_v \) verb particle \( P_v \)

\( Q \) numeral plus classifier; quantity expression (equivalent to "Num + Clf")
\textit{Qtime} temporal quantity expression
\textit{Quasi-Elab}, quasi-elaborate expression (4 syllables but none repeated)
\textit{QUOT} quotative

\textit{RC} relative clause

\textit{S + VP} sentence + verb phrase
\textit{SV} subject plus verb; subject-verb construction

\textit{Temp Nom} temporal nominal

\( V \) verb
\( V + P_v \) verb + verb particle
\( V + V_v \) verb + post-head versatile verb
\textit{V}\textsubscript{adj} adjectival verb; adjective
\textit{V}\textsubscript{h} \textit{V}\textsubscript{h}
\textit{V}\textsubscript{imp} imperative verb
\textit{V}_{\text{nom}} nominalizing verb particle
\textit{V}_{\text{redup}} reduplicated verb
\textit{V}_v post-head versatile verb
\textit{VP} verb phrase

Miscellaneous Abbreviations

\textbf{AW} Anthony T. Walker
\textbf{A\&B} A and B are allotfams; A and B belong to the same word family
\textbf{BL} Black Lahu

xxix
7.1 The little crabs who walked zig-zag

(7.1) à-šwè thà \ à-ci-ku \ 3-ma-pò

AE \ N \ N \ Bₙ \ Num \ Clf \ V

once upon a time \ crab \ female (of certain animals) \ sthg big \ one \ for animals \ be there

ve \ yò \ cè

Pₜ⁰ \ Pₚ \ Pₚ

nominalizer \ declarative \ quotative

(7.2) yò \ lè \ ̀i \ jà \ ve \ yò

Pron \ Pₜ⁰ \ Vₚ \ V \ Pₜ⁰ \ Pₚ

she \ topic \ large \ very \ nominalizer \ declarative

(7.3) yò \ ve \ 3-yà-è \ tè phà \ kà? \ cè \ mà \ ve \ yò

Nₚ⁰ \ +ve \ N \ Q \ Pₜ⁰ \ V \ Vₚ \ Pₜ⁰ \ Pₚ

her \ baby \ pluralizer \ also \ be there \ much \ nominalizer \ declarative

(7.4) tè \ ni \ thà \ , \ yò \ ve \ 3-yà-è \ tè phà \ thà? \ sì \ le

Num \ Clf \ Pₜ⁰ \ Nₚ⁰ \ +ve \ N \ Q \ Pₚ \ V \ Pₚ

one \ for \ days \ time \ her \ baby \ pluralizer \ accusative \ lead \ along \ suspensive

yàl-qò \ jà \ cè \ ve \ yò \ cè

N \ V \ V \ Pₜ⁰ \ Pₚ \ Pₚ \ Pₚ

road \ walk \ causative \ nominalizer \ declarative \ quotative

(7.5) yò \ lè \ 3-qhò \ nₙ \ phò \ chè \ le \ qha-dè? \ ni \ tà \ ve

Pron \ Pₜ⁰ \ Nₜ \ Mₘ \ V \ Pₜ⁰ \ AE \ V \ Pₚ \ Pₜ⁰

she \ topic \ behind \ side \ stay \ suspensive \ carefully \ watch \ durative \ nominalizer

yò

Pₚ \ declarative

(7.6) 3-yà-è \ tè phà \ tè \ khe \ pò \ tè \ khe \ yàl-qò \ jà \ cè

N \ Q \ N \ Clf \ Bₙ \ Num \ Clf \ N \ V \ V \ V

baby \ pluralizer \ one \ for \ animals \ after \ one \ for \ animals \ road \ walk \ causative

ve \ 3-qhò \ lo \ yò \ ni \ ve \ tè yàn thà \ , \ thè \ le \ qay \ mà

Pₜ⁰ \ Nₜ \ Pₚ \ Pron \ V \ Pₜ⁰ \ NP \ time \ AE \ sstat \ V \ Adv

relativizer \ while \ locative \ she \ look \ at \ relativizer \ when \ straight \ go \ negative

gà \ , \ pè-šì \ pè-šì \ ? \ ? \ qay \ ve \ yò \ cè

V \ V \ Bₙ \ Bₙ \ Pₚ \ Pₜ⁰ \ V \ Pₜ⁰ \ Pₜ⁰ \ Pₚ \ Pₚ \ Pₚ

manage \ to \ sideways \ sideways \ just \ only \ go \ nominalizer \ declarative \ quotative

(7.7) qhe-tye-è \ , \ ò \ yò \ thà? \ qò? \ pò \ ve \ : \ " \ yà

Conj \ N \ N \ Pₚ \ V \ V \ V \ Pₜ⁰ \ N

then \ mother \ children \ accusative \ say \ benefactive (3p) \ nominalizer \ children

tè \ sì \ ò \ , \ n₃-hì \ yàl-qò \ jà \ ve \ chà \ qhe \ mà \ hè?

Q \ Pₚ \ Pron \ N \ V \ Pₜ⁰ \ AE \ ext \ Adv \ +V

plurals \ vocative \ you (pl) \ road \ walk \ nominalizer \ like \ this \ not \ be \ good

(7.8) thè \ le \ qay-? \ , \ " \ tè \ ? \ qò? \ pò \ ve \ yò

AE \ sstat \ V \ iap \ QUOT \ V \ V \ Pₜ⁰ \ Pₚ

straight \ go! \ embedded \ quote \ say \ benefactive (3p) \ nominalizer \ declarative

720
(7.9) qhe-te-le , 3-yā tē phā qō? ve : " nā e ṣ , nō
Conj N Q V P\textsubscript{univ} Pron N P\textsubscript{n} Pron
so children pluralizer say nominalizer my mother vocative you
a-cī te mā lā ṣō? , " tē? qō?
Adv V V P\textsubscript{v} P\textsubscript{v} QUOT V
please do and teach benefactive (non-3p) hortatory embedded quote say
ṽē ve ṣō
V\textsubscript{v} P\textsubscript{univ} P\textsubscript{uf}
benefactive (3p) nominalizer declarative

(7.10) qhe-te-le , 3-e tē pō? qay a-tē? te ve ṣō.
Conj N NP\textsubscript{q} V P\textsubscript{v} + P\textsubscript{quot} V P\textsubscript{univ} P\textsubscript{uf}
so mother this time go try to do nominalizer declarative

(7.11) 3-e qay ve tē yăn thā kā? , 3-yā qha šū-šū pē-šī 5
N V P\textsubscript{univ} N\textsubscript{time} P\textsubscript{unif} N AE B\textsubscript{n} P\textsubscript{n}
mother go relativizer when even children just like sideways locative
pē-šī 5 pē-šī 5 tī qay ve ṽō
B\textsubscript{n} P\textsubscript{n} B\textsubscript{n} P\textsubscript{n} P\textsubscript{univ} V P\textsubscript{univ} P\textsubscript{uf}
sideways locative sideways locative only go nominalizer emphatic declarative

(7.12) qhe-go , 3-yā tē phā qō? ve :": nā e ṣ , nā-hī
Conj N Q V P\textsubscript{univ} Pron N P\textsubscript{n} Pron
so children pluralizer say nominalizer my mother vocative we (pl)
thō pē-šī 5 qay ve qhe , nō kā? pē-šī 5 qay
P\textsubscript{unif} B\textsubscript{n} P\textsubscript{n} V P\textsubscript{univ} N\textsubscript{ext} Pron P\textsubscript{unif} B\textsubscript{n} P\textsubscript{n} V
also sideways locative go nominalizer like you also sideways locative go
ve ṽō
P\textsubscript{univ} P\textsubscript{uf}
nominalizer emphatic declarative

(7.13) qha-šū yō ṽō , " tē? qō? ṽī
AE P\textsubscript{uf} P\textsubscript{uf} QUOT V V\textsubscript{v}
the same declarative emphatic declarative embedded quote say benefactive (3p)
ve yō
P\textsubscript{univ} P\textsubscript{uf}
nominalizer declarative

(7.14) chi ṽī? nā-hī ā-thōʔ-ma cī-kī ǧa tū le ,
Det P\textsubscript{n} Pron N\textsubscript{integ} N V P\textsubscript{v} P\textsubscript{uf}
this accusative we (pl) what meaning get future substantive qst
a-vē-a-nā tē phā ṣ ,
Elab\textsubscript{b} Q P\textsubscript{n}
brothers and sisters pluralizer vocative

Translation
The little crabs who walked zig-zag
The little crabs who walked zig-zag

1. Once upon a time there was a great female crab.
2. She was a very big one.
3. She also had a lot of babies.
4. One day she led all her babies out and made them practice walking.
5. She was staying behind them and watching them carefully.
6. She made all her babies walk, one after the other, and as she looked at them, they couldn’t manage to walk straight, they only went zigzag.
7. Then the mother said to her children, "Children, that’s not the way to walk! Go straight."
8. Then the children said, "Well, Mother, please show us how."
9. So this time it was the mother who went.
10. But even when the mother walked, she could only go zigzag, zigzag, zigzag, just like her children.
11. Whereupon the children said, "But, Mother, you go zigzag too, just as we did! It’s just the same!"
12. What can we learn from this, brethren?
1.5 How we came from Burma to Thailand

(1.1) နတ-ချေ မန်-ဗေ ခေါ ဝ ခွ ထာ သိပီး-ဗေ စ ပု လျ
Pron  N_{place}  V  P_{univ}  N_{ed}  N_{place}  P_{n}  V  P_{v}
we (pl)  Burma  live  nominalizer  here  Thailand  locative  flee  motion towards
ve  ,  ရှ-ဗေ-နာ-ဗေ ပု လျ  ve  သာ ရန်  ,
P_{univ}  N  V  P_{v}  P_{univ}  Q
nominalizer  wayside  flee  motion towards  relativizer  the time that
ပွ-ဗေ က က က က လာ  ve  ,
N  V  V  N  V  V_{v}  V  P_{univ}
pith-root shoot  go and do  eat  fish  dam a stream  V  for a living  come  nominalizer
ခွ က လာ  ve .
N_{ed}  P_{n}  V  P_{v}  P_{univ}
here  locative  reach  motion towards  nominalizer

(1.2) ရဲ က လာ  I  က  ve  ဗေ-ချေ  J
N  P_{unf}  N  bound  nominal  morpheme (B_{n})  V  P_{univ}  N
children  also  group  sth big  laugh  relativizer  sound
မ  ve  ...  သ  ve  ...
V_{adj}  P_{univ}  V  P_{univ}
many  nominalizer  walk  along  nominalizer

(1.3) နတ-ချေ ရှ-ဗေ-ဗေ က ခေါ မာ ယ  .
Pron  N  P_{unf}  V  V  V_{v}  V_{v}
we (pl)  one's route  also  have to  be there  long time  V'ing  very

(1.4) က လာ  ve  ,  ဟ-ပ  သ မ  ပု  
N_{ed}  V  P_{v}  P_{univ}  N  Num  Clf  M_{pdr}
here  reach  motion towards  nominalizer  month  one  general  classifier  more than
က လာ  ve  .  သိ-ရှ-ဗေ  စ  ဟ  လာ
V  P_{v}  P_{univ}  N_{place}  N_{ext}  V  P_{v}
reach  come to  V  nominalizer  village name  up to (a place)  spend the night  come to  V
ve .
P_{univ}
nominalizer

(1.5) ဖျပ်-ချေ  က  ပု  က  ve  ,  လာ-ဗေ
N  Q  V  V_{v}  P_{univ}  N
banana  tree  creeper  pluralizer  look for  V  to  eat  nominalizer  fork in stream
t  က  ve  ,
V  V_{v}  P_{univ}
dam a stream  V  to  eat  nominalizer
ခွ က လာ  ve
special  demonstrative  noun  +  noun  particle (N_{ed} + P_{p})  V  P_{v}  P_{univ}
here
reach  motion towards  nominalizer
(1.6) Thāy mī-gā ṣhā chē la ve .
Nplace V V Pv Puniv
Thailand get to live motion towards nominalizer
(1.7) [ ṭchō tō ṣā]
N specifying noun + verb (Nspec + V) Pinf AE V Pv
friend whisper suspensive properly think perfective
le qōṭ !
Pinf V
suspensive speak
(1.8) ḡa-hī Man-mī-ģi phō la ve chō ḡa-śī chō-pā ᷞ
Pron Nplace V Pv Puniv Nloc Nplace Pn
we (pl) Burma flee motion towards nominalizer here river name this side locative
(1.9) Thā-yā-qwē chē thā ḡa-pa nī mà
Nplace V temporal nominal (Temp Nom) N Num Clf
village name stay the time when month two general classifier
ā-lā-qhe , nī mà chē ve yō .
Adv Num Clf V Puniv Puf
about two general classifier stay nominalizer declarative
(1.10) ḡa-hī chē thā —
Pron V Pinf Pinf
we (pl) stay when when
(1.11) [ ṭō ṣā]
Nspec + V Pinf Adv V
whisper suspensive negative imperative laugh
(1.12) — ḡa-hī ṭō ṣhā le-le ḡa-māʔ-ḡa-kāʔ chē ve .
. Pron Np verbal elaborate expression (Elabv) Vp Pinf
we (pl) everybody suffer hunger and cold continuous nominalizer
(1.13) ṭu Lāhū ge ḡā-cā ca cā ve .
Pron N N V V Pinf
other people Lahu from mustard greens look for V to eat nominalizer
(1.14) ṭ ca cā ve .
N V V Pinf
food look for V to eat nominalizer
(1.15) Thā-yā-qwē chē ve ḡa-pa nī mà ḡā ve
Nplace V Puniv N Num Clf V Pinf
village name stay nominalizer month two general classifier reach nominalizer yō .
Puf declarative

15
(1.16) ɲà-hi  lè  mè-ni-gə̌  chɔ  cā  ve
Pron  P_unf  N  V  V  V_n  P_univ
we (pl) topic rattan (sticky sp.) chop down V to eat nominalizer

(1.17) phò-tu  [ ɡə̌  ve  ɔ-kihə̌ ]  mè-ni-gə̌  chɔ  cā
N  V  P_univ  N  N  V  V_n
pith-root shoot laugh relativizer sound rattan (sticky sp.) chop off V to eat ve
P_univ
nominalizer

(1.18) d̪-pə-čə̌  ca  cā  ve
N  V  V_n  P_univ
banana plant look for V to eat nominalizer

(1.19) ɲa  tɔ̀  cā  ve
N  V  V_n  P_univ
fish dam a stream V to eat nominalizer

(1.20) ɔ-bə-čə̌  là  ve  yə̌
Elab_v  V  P_univ  P_unf
beg for food come nominalizer declarative

(1.21) ɔ  ƙaʔ  tə̌-və̌  qə̌  chə̌̀  ə̌  lc  ɲa-hi
N_un  P_n  N_time  V  V  P_v  P_unf  Pron
over there locative for a long time go on to V stay perfective suspensive we (pl)
Sà-ci-čə̌̀  qə̌̀  ɡa  là  ve  yə̌
N_place  V  V  P_v  P_univ  P_unf
Shajieh (Chinese village) go on to V reach motion towards nominalizer declarative

(1.22) Sà-ci-čə̌̀  qə̌̀  ɡa  là  ve
N_place  V  V  P_v  P_univ
Shajieh (Chinese village) go on to V reach motion towards relativizer
tə̌  yà-n thə̌̀
 temporal noun phrase (NP_time) Pron P_n P_n P_n Q Pron
when we (pl) Chinese with Chinese pluralizer us thə̌̀
ha-lə-hə̌-qa
P_n adverbial elaborate expression (Elab_adv) V P_v
accusative cheerfully welcome warmly benefactive (non-3p)
lc  ɡə̌-hə̌  tə̌  ɡə̌  te  ə̌  là
P_unf  N  Q  V  V  P_v
suspensive Chinese tea things put down give to drink benefactive (non-3p)
ve
P_univ
nominalizer

(1.23) ɔ  tə̌  ƙaʔ  cā  là  ve  yə̌
N  Q  P_unf  V  P_v  P_univ  P_unf
cooked rice pluralizer also feed benefactive (non-3p) nominalizer declarative
Generalities

(1.24) 5 cā á lc q3? pho la ve
     N V P_v P_univ vV V P_v P_univ
food eat perfective suspensive go on to V flee motion towards nominalizer
le , á 5 Pāmū qhā? q3? gā la
P_univ N N P_n N_place N V V P_v
suspensive over there locative village name village V in turn reach motion towards
le , q3? chē
P_univ vV V
suspensive go on to V stay

(1.25) q3? há le , nā-hi Lāhū ge lāy-cā-lāy-yā pa
     vV V P_univ Pron N P_n Elab_v V
go on to V spend the night suspensive we (pl) Lahu with all kinds of things trade
cā ve
V_v P_univ
V to eat nominalizer

(1.26) tē-qhā?-śi kā? q3? pa , lē?-śi thē q3? pa lē?
     N P_univ vV V N P_univ vV V V v
silver button even V also trade bracelet (RL) even V also trade do for eating
ve
P_univ
nominalizer

(1.27) tē?-chī kā? mā cā
     Adv P_univ Adv V
nothing even negative be there

(1.28) hā-ve-g3-ve lā-hi lo , nā-hi lē lā-cā-lā-śē? chē ve
     Elab_v N_time P_n Pron P_univ Elab_v V v P_univ
poor and wretched while locative we (pl) topic beg for food keep on nominalizer
yō
P_v
declarative

(1.29) qhe-te-le nā-hi lā-vē-śē-ni chō 5 Hwē-tā? qhō chē á ve
     Conj Pron Elab_v N_n P_n N_place M_part V P_v P_univ
after that we (pl) brethren here locative Huey Tat in live durative nominalizer
cō q3? sī la ve
vV vV V P_v P_univ
go and do V back lead along motion towards nominalizer

(1.30) q3? sī la ve yō
     vV V P_v P_univ P_v
V back lead along motion towards nominalizer declarative

(1.31) ca q3? sī la lc , ha-lē-ha-qa
     vV vV V P_v P_univ Elab_adv
go and do go on to V lead along motion towards suspensive happily
How we came from Burma to Thailand

Window onto a Vanished World

ha-lè-ha-qa qɔʔ te là le , chò Hwè-tù?
Elab.adv yV verb + verb particle (V + P_v) P_unf N_loc N_place
in joy and gladness go on to V treat (non-3p) suspensive here Huey Tat

(1.32) qɔʔ gà la ve
yV V P_v P_univ
. go on to V reach motion towards nominalizer

(1.33) nà-hi ʔa phɔ la ve tè yân thà tɔʔ-ʔà mà
Pron yV V P_v P_univ NP_time V V_v
we (pl) have to escape motion towards relativizer when suffer very much
ve yɔ
P_univ P_unf
nominalizer declarative

(1.34) tɔʔ-ʔà mà ve ʔa-phɔ la nà-hi tè ʔa thà? tè ʔa kà?
V P_univ N_time P_n Pron Q P_n Q P_unf
suffer relativizer while locative we (pl) one person accusative one person even
mà ʔa mà
Adv pre-head versatile verb + main verb (pre-head concatenation) (vV + V_h)
negative find
dà?
P_v
mutual action

(1.35) qhe-te-le Gà-šà bo àʔ pa-tɔ le , ʔa qɔʔ
Conj N N P_n P_n P_unf yV yV
after that God grace (X'n) object because of suspensive get to V again
mà dà?
V + P_v P_univ N_loc P_n
meet each other nominalizer inasmuch as locative

(1.36) nà-hi chi-hà? lè Gà-šà thà? chi-mu tù lè
Pron N_time P_unf N P_n V P_v-soon P_unf
time we (pl) now topic God accusative praise sthg that is cause for V'ing topic
è-jà-mà-jà
Elab_v P_univ P_unf
very much indeed nominalizer declarative

(1.37) qhe ce tà
Adv universal unrestricted particle + universal unrestricted particle (P_univ + P_univ.)
thus only
yɔ
P_unf
declarative

Translation

How we came from Burma to Thailand
Generalities

1. When we were fleeing here to Thailand from where\(^1\) we used to live in Burma, when we were fleeing here along the roads and byways, we lived off jungle-greens\(^2\) and by damming streams for fish as we came – that’s how we made it here.

2. And there was a big flock of kids along, too – er, walking along –.

3. And we had to stay on the road a very long time, too.

4. Getting here\(^3\), when it had gotten to be over a month, we had come as far as Thayakwei,\(^4\) where we made camp.

5. Looking for banana tree creepers\(^5\) to live off and damming forks in streams, that’s how we got here.

6. We made it to Thailand.

7. [whisper] Think carefully before you speak!\(^6\)

8. Fleeing here from Burma we crossed the Nam-Si river\(^7\) over to this side.

9. The time we stayed at Thayakwei was about two months – we were there for two months.

10. When we were there –

11. [whisper] Don’t laugh\(^8\)

12. – we were all suffering from hunger and cold.

13. We would go and eat the other Lahus’ mustard-greens.\(^9\)

14. We’d go and eat their food.

15. We were at Thayakwei for two months.

16. We would chop down sticky rattan\(^10\) to eat.

17. We’d go eat banana plants.

18. We’d dam for fish to eat.

19. We came here begging for something to eat.\(^11\)

20. After\(^12\) staying there for a long time\(^13\) we continued on to Shajieh.\(^14\)

21. When we arrived at Shajieh we and the Chinese – er, all the Chinese welcomed us gladly and cheerfully, and set down cups of tea\(^15\) for us to drink.

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\(^1\)The directional idea ‘from’ is seldom expressed overtly in Lahu. The ‘place from which’ is usually mentioned without any directional particle, followed immediately by the ‘place to’ plus locative particle. See GL 3.89.

\(^2\)phôh-tu: specifically ‘pith-root shoots’.

\(^3\)kât is here being used elliptically for chô kât ‘here’.

\(^4\)Name of a Christian Lahu village in Shan State, which used to comprise 67 houses. See DL: 675.

\(^5\)Creers with edible leaves growing on banana plants.

\(^6\)A hissed reprimand by a friend of the speaker. The beginning of this account is indeed somewhat diffuse.

\(^7\)A river in Shan State. See DL: 737.

\(^8\)The speaker is a giggly young woman.

\(^9\)They were reduced to living off the Lahu who were already settled in that part of Thailand.

\(^10\)mê-ni-gê: lit. “cat-rattan”, a small sticky kind of rattan only marginally edible at best.


\(^12\)The many occurrences of the word qôh as main verb or prehead versatile verb in this narrative serve as ‘narrative-lubricators’, indicating that the various events took place in an ordered sequence, and giving the speaker extra instants to think.

\(^13\)tô-vê: lit. “all day long” (Shan). Here used imprecisely to mean ‘for a long time.’

\(^14\)A Chinese village.

\(^15\)gê-hê: lit. “hot water”. This is the Lahu word for light-colored Chinese tea. The strong dark-orange variety that the Lahu themselves habitually drink is called lâ-gê. 

19
23. And they fed everybody rice, too.
24. After we ate we took to the road\textsuperscript{16} again, until we got to the village of Pomu\textsuperscript{17} over there, where we stayed and spent the night, and we Lahu traded all sorts of things with them for food.
25. We traded away our silver buttons,\textsuperscript{18} and even our bracelets we traded away to fill our bellies.\textsuperscript{19}
26. We had nothing left.
27. In poverty and distress we kept on begging for our food.
28. Then our brethren who were already living here in Huey Tat\textsuperscript{20} went to lead us back.
29. They came to lead us back.
30. They came to lead us here and they took care of us joyfully and gladly, and so we arrived back here at Huey Tat.
31. Having to flee here was a very distressing time for us.\textsuperscript{21}
32. In the midst of our troubles we had been separated from one another.\textsuperscript{22}
33. So inasmuch\textsuperscript{23} as we have finally, by the grace of God, managed to see each other again, we now have great and abundant reason to praise God.
34. That’s all there is to say.

\textsuperscript{16}q\textsuperscript{32} pha la ve: lit. “again came fleeing”.
\textsuperscript{17}A village near the town of Farang, about 115 km north of Chiang Mai.
\textsuperscript{18}A traditional Black Lahu woman’s costume had some 500 silver buttons sewn on it.
\textsuperscript{19}Fill our bellies’ translates k\textsuperscript{22}, lit. “to lick”, more earthy than k\textipa{a} in the sense of ‘eat.’
\textsuperscript{20}An advance party of Lahu had already settled in Huey Tat. When they got established they sent for their relatives and friends still in Burma.
\textsuperscript{21}Lit: “The time that we had to flee here was very troublesome.”
\textsuperscript{22}Lit: “one person hadn’t even gotten to see the other.”
\textsuperscript{23}Inasmuch as’ is very similar morphologically to Lahu VP + ve s-qho lo, lit. “inside VP.”