VERBAL MORPHOLOGY OF AMDO TIBETAN

by

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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This dissertation describes the functional and structural properties of the Amdo Tibetan verb system. Amdo Tibetan (Tibetic, Trans-Himalayan) is a verb-final language, characterized by an elaborate system of post-verbal morphology that are limited to finite clauses and which encode information about the nature of the assertion.

Aside from imperative mood, which is expressed by a different series of constructions, the finite verb constructions of Amdo Tibetan form a morphological paradigm expressing functions associated with the semantic domains of tense, aspect, (epistemic) modality, evidentiality and egophoricity.

The data included in this study comes from three kinds of sources. The majority of examples are from my own field recordings, which include elicitations as well as spontaneous speech. I also make use of data from other linguistic publications, including two second language textbooks. My own data as well as these other sources reflect a high degree of dialectal (and register) variation which is characteristic of Amdo Tibetan. As will be apparent, my data shows a diversity of phonologies, morphosyntax, lexical items and even some functional categories. Consequently, this dissertation also serves as a cross-dialectal comparative study.

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For my mother and sister.
For Lise, who inspired me.
For Weiming, who put up with me.
For Dbyang.grub, who encouraged me.
For Dad.

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CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND

Amdo Tibetan[1] is classified as a member of the Tibetic cluster within the Trans-Himalayan language family. It is spoken primarily in the Chinese provinces of Qīnghǎi, Gānsù and Sìchuān, in an area that Tibetans themselves call *A.mdo*[2]. A common autonym for the language is *am.skad* (ཨམ་སྐད), meaning, literally, 'Amdo Language'. However, this term is primarily intended to distinguish Amdo Tibetan from the other major varieties of Tibetan, in particular Lhasa/Standard Tibetan[3]. Speakers are more likely to refer to their language simply as *bod.skad* (བོད་སྐད), 'Tibetan Language'. This is true regardless of speakers' ethnic identity.

1.1   Overview of Dissertation

This dissertation has as its aim a description and analysis of the Amdo Tibetan verb system. Tibetic verbal categories, especially the phenomena variously discussed in

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1 Recently, the term 'Amdolese' has appeared in popular accounts of the language and even as the official name provided on the Website of Ethnologue (2019). I am not sure where this name originated. I see no reason to use it in favor of Amdo Tibetan.

2 This is the English transliteration of the Written Tibetan (WT), as based on the system devised by Wylie (1959). The WT is ཨ་མདོ. The period in the middle of transliterated words is meant to reflect the WT punctuation mark, called tsheg, used to separate syllables.

3 Depending on the context, the term 'Lhasa Tibetan' refers either to the local dialect spoken by the native Tibetan population of Lhasa City, or to a greater topolect which includes the standardized speech of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) and the Tibetan diaspora outside of China. This latter speech variety is also sometimes referred to as 'Standard Tibetan' (c.f., Vorkuková 2008; Gawne 2013). Caplow (2017: 226) further differentiates the speech of the diaspora community by employing the term 'Diasporic Common Tibetan'.

the literature under the rubrics "conjunct/disjunct", "evidential", and "egophoric", are notoriously complex and unusual, and are the subject of an extensive literature. I hope to present here an account of how these categories are manifested in the grammar of Amdo Tibetan, as a contribution both to the descriptive and comparative study of Tibetic varieties, and to the more general study of the typology of TAME categories in the world's languages.

In this chapter, I introduce the history of how Tibetic varieties have historically been talked about in linguistics, as well as introduce the sociolinguistic and historical background of Amdo Tibetan and the A.mdo region. In chapter 2 I introduce aspects of the typology of Amdo Tibetan. Chapter 3 briefly describes the functional/cognitive framework in which my work will be presented. Chapter 4 gives some background on previous work by scholars of Tibetan on the functional domain currently referred to in the literature as "egophoricity". Chapter 5 presents an analysis of the constituency and syntax of clauses. This chapter includes analyses of the functions and morphosyntax of serial verbs and nominalization, both of which are important in the grammaticalization of TAME morphology. Chapter 6 outlines the grammar of the Amdo Tibetan verb. Chapter 7 examines the copular verb system. Chapter 8 examines the grammar of verbal predicates. Chapter 9 introduces auxiliary verbs. Chapter 10 examines the Quotative Construction. Chapter 11 closes this dissertation with a brief introduction to the functions and morphosyntax of Sentence Final Particles.

1.2   On 'Sino-Tibetan', 'Tibeto-Burman' and 'Trans-Himalayan'

The label 'Trans-Himalayan', first proposed by George van Driem in 2004 (van Driem 2007), references a new paradigm of phylogenetic classification for the genetic grouping of languages previously referred to as Sino-Tibetan or Tibeto-Burman, among other frameworks. These older labels are problematic for many reasons, as van Driem enumerates in his 2014 paper. In brief, Sino-Tibetan is to be disfavored because it implies a bi-partite branching structure consisting of a Sinitic clade that is genetically distinct from a second clade comprising all other members of the family.

For illustrative purposes, a tree diagram for Sino-Tibetan is given in Figure 1, on the next page. The third tier of the tree, representing the daughter languages of Sinitic and Tibeto-Burman, is necessarily truncated.
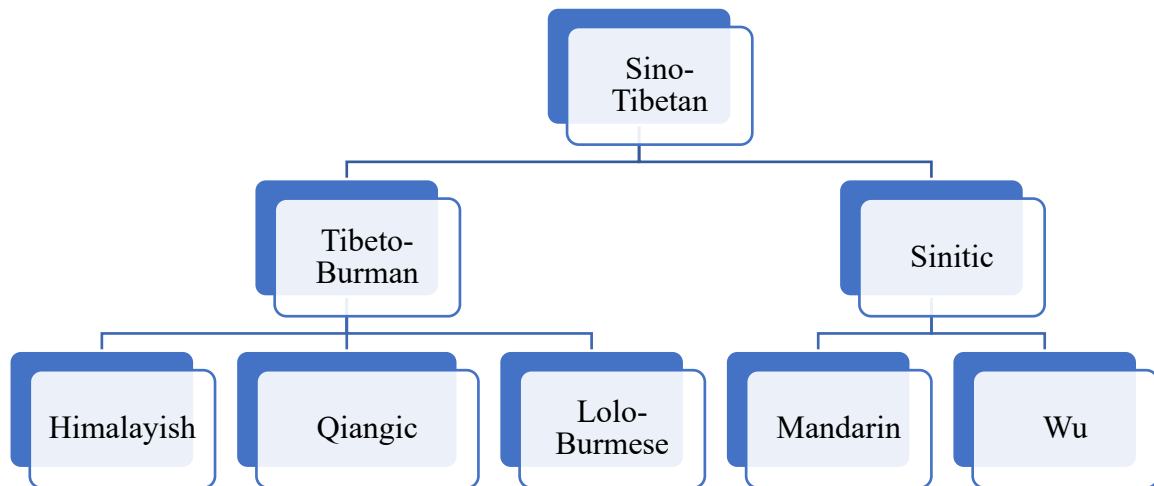
Figure 1. Sino-Tibetan phylogenetic model

The bifurcated tree presented in Fig. 1 is primarily based on typological properties, rather than any solid evidence of actual genetic distance, such as regular

sound changes. Languages in the Sinitic branch (in addition to being clearly genetically related on the basis of inherited vocabulary, etc.) are typologically similar, sharing phonological and morphosyntactic features that differentiate them from the non-Sinitic (i.e., Tibeto-Burman) branch of Sino-Tibetan. These features include segmentally-reduced syllable structures, highly analytic morphology, and, perhaps most famously, phonemic tone systems. The languages of the Tibeto-Burman branch are consequently grouped together by default, because they lack most or all of these Sinitic features.

According to the monophyletic theory behind Sino-Tibetan, the structures characterizing Sinitic typology represent shared innovations. As pointed out by van Driem (2014: 16), the absence of said innovations does not constitute evidence of the genetic unity of the remaining Tibeto-Burman languages. However, there is another possible explanation. Some scholars (e.g., Acuo 2005, 2007; van Driem 2005a) argue for a "polyphyletic" status for Sinitic, in which genetic stock from Proto-Tibeto-Burman (or whatever we decide to call this proto-language) was influenced by languages of Austroasiatic stock (and probably other, unidentified language families), resulting in structural changes that produced the Sinitic type.

It should also be noted that the typological division represented in the Sino-Tibetan model also corresponds to a geographic division: Tibeto-Burman languages are spoken in the western half of the family's geographic range, with the greatest density of genetic diversity concentrated in the eastern Himalayas. The Sinitic languages are spoken in the eastern half. I believe that, currently, the most easterly non-Sinitic language is a

variety of Tǔjiā[4] (土家), spoken by a few members of the Tǔjiā ethnic group who live, surrounded by a veritable sea of Sinitic and Hmong-Mien, in the provinces of Húnán and Húběi.

It is clear, then, that the term 'Sino-Tibetan' is inappropriate. 'Tibeto-Burman' is also problematic because, among other issues, it has been used by different authors at different times to refer to different things. It is commonly used as the name for the non-Sinitic subgrouping of Sino-Tibetan. Matisoff (2004: 4) uses it to refer to a subgrouping of Sino-Tibetan that excludes Karen, as well as Chinese. Others have used it to refer to a higher-level genetic order, for language family models that both include and exclude Sinitic.

According to van Driem (2005b: 291-293), 'Tibeto-Burman' was first adopted by von Klaproth (1823) to refer to the genetic grouping of Burmese, Tibetan and Chinese in a model that deliberately made no assumptions about the genetic relationship of these languages beyond their inclusion in a single family. Thanks to this cautious conservatism, von Klaproth's theory has withstood the test of time, allowing both for an increasing number of individual subgroupings, as well as new theories on the relative status of these subgroupings. The "agnosticism", as van Driem puts it (2005b p. 293), of von Klaproth's theory means that it is compatible with more tree-like models of the language family, as well as van Driem's (2014) own "falling leaves" model, in which confirmed language subgroupings are organized "phylogeographically" (p. 17), that is, according to where

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4 The Tǔjiā ethnic group also includes a southern branch, located in south Guìzhōu Province. Using a list of 300 core Tibeto-Burman vocabulary developed by Huang (1997), He (2003) concluded that the language of at least the communities in Húnán and Húběi is closely related to Qiangic.

they are found, until higher genetic orders can be determined[5]. Van Driem's falling

leaves model, circa van Driem (2012), is given in Fig. 2 on the next page.
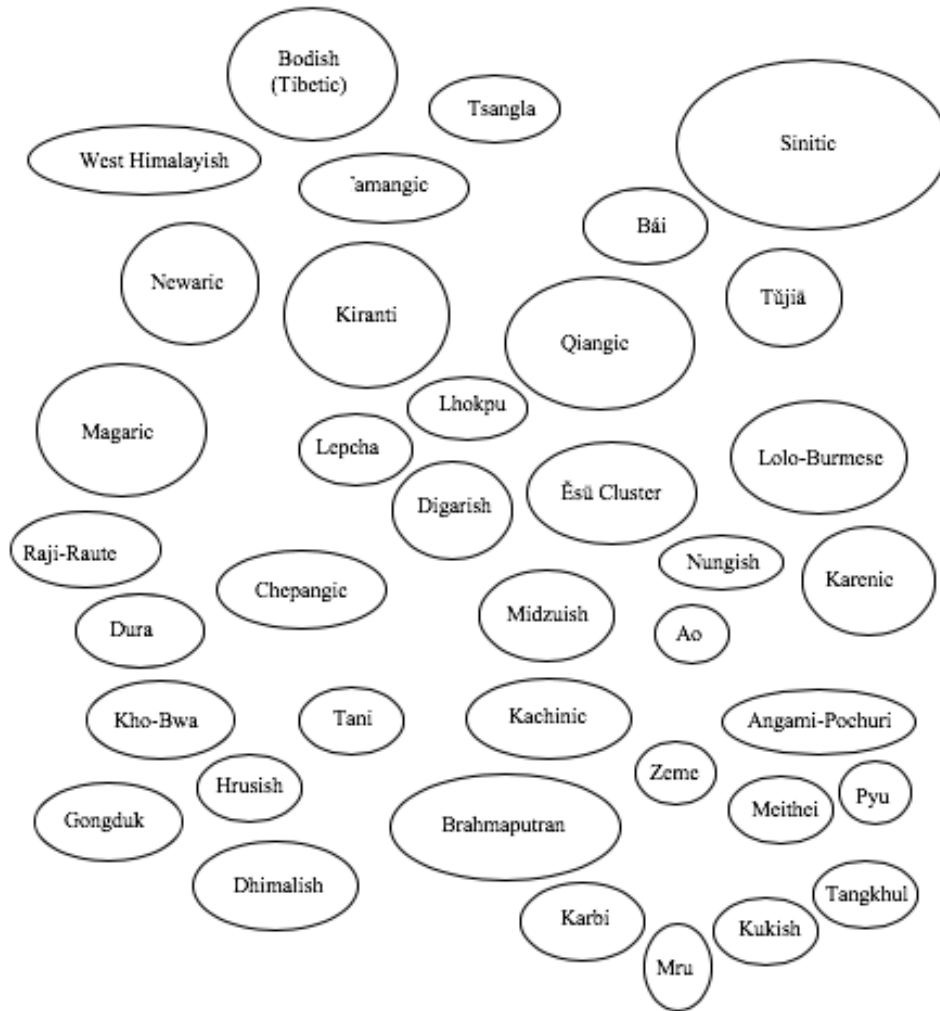
Figure 2. Trans-Himalayan "Falling Leaf" model

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5 Or not. It may prove to be the case that the "leaves" of Trans-Himalayan remain that—independent clusters of genetic groupings whose relationships to one another comes down to structural convergence and intensive lexical borrowing between neighbors (e.g., Zeisler 2016: 40).

I have modified the model to reflect the status of Tibetic as part of the "Bodish" leaf in van Driem's original model. Unfortunately, the term "Bodish" has also been used by different authors to mean different things[6], but was originally used by Shafer (c.f., 1955) as a name for a proposed branch of Sino-Tibetan which grouped Tibetan together with Tshangla, Tamangic and other languages and clusters. Other authors (e.g., Bradley 1997a,b) also included West-Himalayish as part of Bodish. This is clearly not the meaning van Driem ascribes to the name in his model that provided the basis for my Fig. 2. However, other than including Tibetic, I'm not clear on what van Driem's "Bodish" means, so I have left the sub-group as is.

Of course, the usefulness of von Klaproth's model is obscured when the name applied to it is used for other models. 'Trans-Himalayan' avoids the pitfalls of either of these older labels, while also referencing the geographic heartland of the family. To date, both 'Tibeto-Burman' and 'Sino-Tibetan' continue to appear in new publications in all languages, but this is more a matter of familiarity, rather than an expression of any particular theoretical commitment. It seems likely that the use of 'Trans-Himalayan' will soon replace these other labels in the literature.

The Falling Leaves model is not intended to be the final word on the internal structure of Trans-Himalayan phylogeny. Rather, it groups languages into closely related clusters without committing to higher level branches until there is better evidence to support such claims. In recent months there has been more work advancing our understanding of the higher-level genetics of Trans-Himalayan that reinforces a more

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6 For more detailed views on the Bodish hypothesis and competing meanings of the term, see Bielmeier (2011), Hyslop (2013), Owen-Smith and Hill (2014: 6-7), and Tournadre (2014).

traditional Stammbaum model. In particular Sagart et al. (2019) conducted an extensive comparative study of 180 basic vocabulary concepts for 50 languages using Bayesian computational methods. Aside from Sinitic, their results provide plausible evidence for eight additional sub-groupings—six clades (Tibeto-Gyalrongic, Kiranti, West-Himalayish, Tani-Yidu, Kuki-Tangkhul) and two isolates, Tshangla and Chepang. Some of these groupings contradict previous sub-groupings (p. 10318), including some reflected in the Falling Leaves model presented in Fig. 2, on page 6.

Because Sagart et al. is a very recent study, I have not had time to include a proper evaluation of it in this dissertation.

1.3 Relationship between Amdo Tibetan and other varieties of Tibetan

Throughout this dissertation I make reference to 'Tibetan'. In some instances, I am referencing Amdo Tibetan, but in other instances I am referencing the greater socially-defined linguistic entity to which Amdo Tibetan belongs, i.e., the Tibetan language. In the current section, I hope to clarify the relationship between Amdo Tibetan and 'Tibetan', as well as the other spoken and written varieties that make up 'Tibetan'.

It is an unfortunate reality that this topic is controversial in ways that extend beyond the interests of linguists, but given the fact that there are people and communities for whom this is a high stakes matter, I will attempt to be as neutral and sensitive in my discussion here as is possible, even though doing so entails a more verbose and murky explanation of the situation than I would wish. Nevertheless, I feel that no discussion of any Tibetic language can truly avoid addressing the question, what is 'Tibetan'?

1.3.1 Tibetic versus Tibetan

Both 'Tibetic' and 'Tibetan' are used in the linguistic literature, sometimes to refer to the same thing. They are also used somewhat ambiguously. In the current section, I will attempt to explain the different senses and applications of these two terms, as well as provide definitions for my own uses of 'Tibetic' versus 'Tibetan' in this dissertation.

In this dissertation, I use the name 'Tibetic' very specifically, to refer to a genetic clade within Trans-Himalayan that include Amdo Tibetan and other varieties of Tibetan, as well as language varieties like Dzongkha and Sherpa, spoken by non-Tibetans. As mentioned above, I included "Tibetic" as part of a Bodish group in Figure 2 in part because, since the term is used to mean different things by different people, I am unsure what van Driem means by "Bodish" beyond the fact that it includes Tibetic[7]. I follow Tournadre (2014: 105) in questioning the validity of Bodish as a genetic group, but note that other authors find the label useful (e.g., Gawne 2016). For the purposes of this dissertation, I am unconcerned with the higher-order position of Tibetic within Trans-Himalayan.

At present, Tibetic is understood to consist of any language variety descended from Old Tibetan —or, more realistically, an immediate predecessor to Old Tibetan[8] (circa 600 CE). To illustrate the utility of this label, consider that according to the

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7 This basic sense of "Bodish" as a higher node above Tibetic in a Sino-Tibetan or Tibeto-Burman tree model also shows up in places like Wikipedia and Ethnologue.

8 Old Tibetan is not a reconstructed language but is attested in the earliest texts produced in the Tibetan orthography (circa 620 CE). By this time, the Tibetan Empire had already been in existence for several decades and the language of its rulers had been introduced to new places. As a result, even at this stage, Old Tibetan was already exhibiting evidence of dialectal divergence.

preceding definition, the following varieties are Tibetic: Classical Literary Tibetan[9],

Amdo Tibetan, Lhasa Tibetan, Sherpa, Dzongkha, and Sikkimese. The first three

varieties are all varieties of 'Tibetan', while the latter three are not. It is unlikely that this

split reflects genetic distance. Rather, it is indicative of social and cultural meanings

behind the word 'Tibetan'.

Prior to the early 2000's, the label 'Tibetan' was used almost exclusively to refer

to any written or spoken language variety belonging to any self-identified Tibetan

community. More than likely, this convention followed the custom of the speakers,

themselves. At the same time, languages that are structurally and lexically similar to

Tibetan, but which are spoken by communities that do not self-identify as ethnic Tibetan,

may be labeled something else.

Sherpa is a good example of this. Spoken by ethnic Sherpas who live around Mt.

Everest in Nepal and China. Sherpas trace their ancestry to southeast Tibet and only

arrived in Mt. Everest around the year 1553 (Oppitz 1974: 121). In terms of lexicon and

structure, it is also grammatically and lexically close to Tibetan varieties spoken in the

Tibet Autonomous Region (Sun 1993: 948 f4). Yet, except for some Chinese linguists,

Sherpa isn't described as Tibetan because Sherpas are generally seen by themselves and

others as a distinct ethnic group.

The value of 'Tibetic' therefore lies in separating notions of ethnolinguistic

identity from discussions of genetic classification, without (hopefully) overshadowing or

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9 This is frequently called Classical Tibetan. I follow Tournadre (2014) in preferring the term Classical
Literary Tibetan on the grounds that this variety is primarily written and, when spoken, is often combined
with features and expressions from oral varieties.

replacing other ways of thinking about language. However, given the intimate and multiplex connections that exist between language and identity in this part of the world, it is impossible for any terminology or classification system to be completely neutral[10].

Of course, Tibetans, themselves are well aware of the internal diversity of Tibetan, as well as the similarities between Tibetan dialects and nominally non-Tibetan varieties, like Sherpa. In particular, there is a long-established tradition of referring to the modern spoken languages of Tibet in terms of three dialects (more accurately, 'topolects'[11]) corresponding to the three traditional Tibetan regions of Khams (ཁམས) in the south, Dbu.tsang (དབུ་ཚང་) in the west, and A.mdo (ཨ་མདོ) in the east.

Thus, Tibetans commonly speak of there being a *khams.skad* (ཁམས་སྐད) 'Khams language[12]', a *dbu.skad* (དབུ་སྐད) 'Dbu language', and an *am.skad* (ཨམ་སྐད) 'Amdo language'. Tibetans also recognize and differences between formal and informal genres of speech and writing have names for these, such as *zhe.sa* (ཞེ་ས), which refers to the system of honorific vocabulary closely associated with the speech of educated Lhasa City residents, and *chos.skad* (ཆོས་སྐད) 'Dharma language', which is more or less coterminous with what linguists call Classical Literary Tibetan and which continues to be used orally in the Buddhist dialectic tradition, as well as in written texts on all topics.

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10 Chirkova (2007) presents an invaluable description of the complicated ways identity (both self-defined and imposed) interacts with systems of language classification in the Tibetosphere, especially under the influence of Stalinist definitions of ethnicity.

11 The English term 'topolect' was coined by Mair (1991) as a translation for the Chinese term *fāngyán* (方言), which expresses a level of linguistic diversity that falls between dialect and language. 'Topolect' is most useful when talking about the internal diversity of 'languages' like Chinese or Tibetan.

12 I use 'language' literally, here, as a direct translation for the Tibetan word *skad.cha* (སྐད་ཆ), which encompasses both speech and writing—but the intention is closer to 'topolect'.

Where the traditional Tibetan view intersects with the objectives of linguists is the in the way the traditional system of dividing spoken Tibetan into three topolects has carried over into linguists' efforts to classify 'Tibetan dialects'. This way of describing the internal variation of Tibetan has several drawbacks. Most notably, as Tournadre (2014) puts it, "the notion of 'Tibetan dialects' implies the existence of a *single* 'Tibetan language'(p. 106).[13]"

By providing an alternative nomenclature, 'Tibetic' discourages the tendency to separate closely related varieties like Ladhaki from 'Tibetan' proper on the basis of national borders or ethnic identity while still respecting such considerations. Tibetic is a specialized linguistic term that need not replace other systems of ethnolinguistic categorization outside the contexts of genetic linguistics. In this sense, 'Tibetic' replaces the notion of 'Tibetan dialect' while also expanding the number of language varieties that can be included within the category.

'Tibetic' also allows for us to consider a more complicated internal classification that is not restricted to the traditional three topolects. Elsewhere in this dissertation I have referred to Tibetic as a clade of Trans-Himalayan. The term 'clade' suggests a tree-like structure representing a linear pattern of descent from Old Tibetan. This may in fact turn out to be the case, although according to our current understanding of Tibetic languages, it seems unlikely[14]. efforts to delineate sub-groupings within Tibetic are still in their infancy, so it is perhaps more accurate to speak of Tibetic as a genetic cluster of as-yet partially undefined sub-groupings. A "falling leaf" model of this cluster is presented in

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13 Again, for many Tibetans, this is the point, as Tournadre (2014) takes pains to mention.

14 See Zeisler (2016) and Tournadre (2014).

Figure 3, below, following Tournadre (2014), which is the most recent, higher level

internal classification yet proposed for Tibetic. Note that each individual leaf reflects

what Tournadre terms a 'geolinguistic continuum'—sub-groupings that are primarily

genetic with additional input from geography, language contact and migration history (p.

120). I have also included the hypothesized geographic origin of Old Tibetan.

Owing to constraints on space, not all described varieties are represented in

Figure 4. Nonetheless, it should be apparent that some sections include a larger number

of individual varieties than others. In particular, the South-Western section is highly

diverse, contrasting with the North-Eastern section, which includes just three varieties,

including Amdo Tibetan. Of course, we expect the regions surrounding the homeland of

Tibetic to be more diverse than the regions lying at the outskirts. Nonetheless, the

extreme disparity in the level of diversity between the South-Western section and the

North-Eastern section calls for additional explanation. As for the size of South-Western,

it may be that this section should be broken up into smaller clusters.
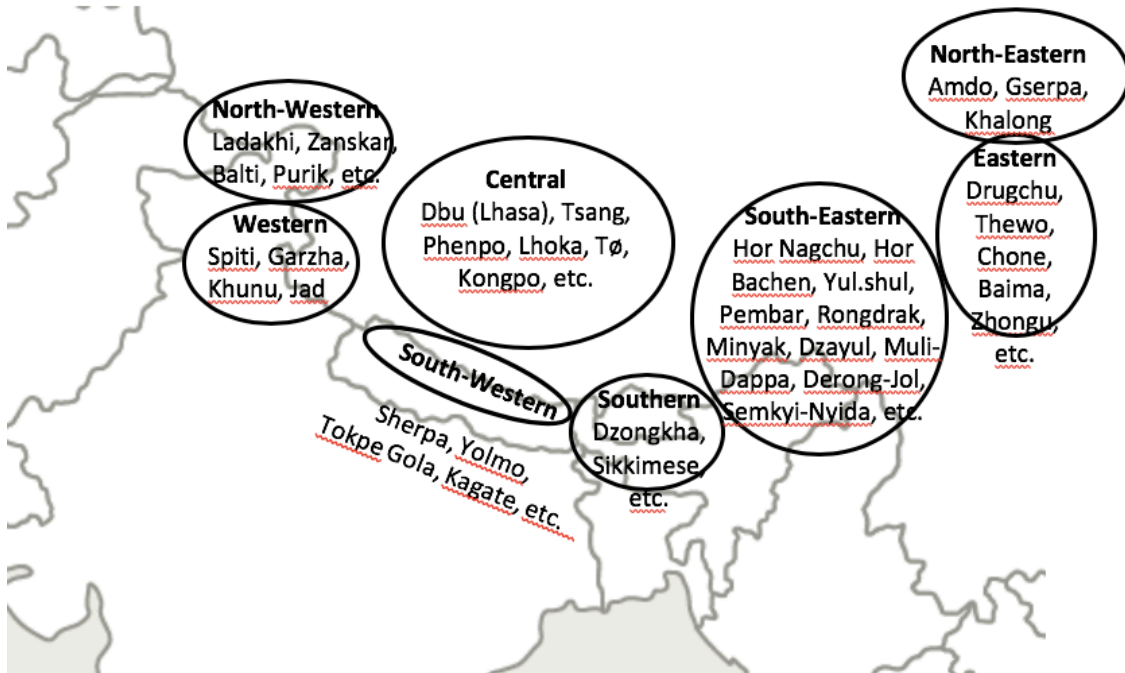
Figure 3. Map of Tibetic 'Sections'

As for North-Eastern, Gserpa and Khalong represent tiny (relatively speaking) language varieties. According to Sun (2006), Gserpa[15] is spoken by just two small pastoral communities in Gser.pa (གསེར་པ) County, in north Rnga.ba Prefecture, Sìchuān. Khalong, first described by Sun (2002), who originally classified it as a Khams dialect, is spoken in 'Dzam.thang (འཛམ་ཐང) County, in west Rnga.ba Prefecture. In terms of number of speakers and geographic distribution, the bulk of the North-Eastern section is taken up by a single language, Amdo Tibetan. In fact, after Dbu Tibetan (which includes the closely related varieties of Standard Tibetan, Diasporic Common Tibetan and Lhasa

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15 Tournadre (2005) and Sun (2006) spell the name of this language gSerpa, with the so-called 'root' initial of the Written Tibetan spelling for the word capitalized.

Tibetan[16]), Amdo Tibetan has the largest number of speakers and the greatest geographic of any Tibetic language. Possible reasons for this will be discussed in Sec. I.4.1, below.

In is clear from comparing Figure 3 and Figure 4 that the terms 'Tibetic' and 'Tibetan' come with very different views. It should also be clear that 'Tibetic' is most appropriate for the objectives of descriptive and comparative linguistics. This does not negate the usefulness or appropriateness of 'Tibetan'. As stated, Tibetans and neighboring communities have long had their own systems for identifying what is and is not Tibetan. Moreover, this division between the 'Tibetan' varieties of Tibetic and the varieties has an impact on the lexical and grammatical structure of the former, as Tibetans of all regions have been exposed to the language standardization efforts of a common culture and educational system.

There is also the very real psychological effect of communities that see themselves as speakers of Tibetan dialects versus speakers of Tibetan-like languages. It is understandable that Tibetans may be upset by research perceived as ignoring or denying this older system, the logic behind it, and by extension, the psychosocial realities it reflects.

1.3.2 'Dialect' versus 'language'

Before moving on to discuss different views on the internal classification of Amdo Tibetan in Sec. I.3.3, I wish to address the question of 'dialect' versus 'language'. Another troublesome difference in viewpoint that comes with the use of 'Tibetic' versus

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16 For discussions on the definitions of these slightly overlapping varieties, as well as explanations of the labels and why they are different, see Caplow (2017) Gawne and Hill (2017), and Gawne (2016).

'Tibetan' is a tendency to describe the internal variation of 'Tibetan' in terms of dialects, and the internal variation of 'Tibetic' in terms of languages. The language "varieties" given in Figure 4 are referred to as 'languages' by most of the authors who originally described them. Tournadre (2014), however, uses 'dialect' and 'language' interchangeably—presumably because these are politically loaded terms, at least among Tibetans and their neighbors.

In the previous section I mentioned 'topolect' as a useful notion, especially for western-trained linguists who are inclined to rely on things like mutual intelligibility to determine the difference between a dialect and a language. I don't make use of the term much in this dissertation, but Mair's intention in coining and promoting 'topolect' is one that I appreciate. Thinking of Amdo Tibetan and Dbu Tibetan as topolects, as opposed to languages, allows us to discuss them in the same terms as, say, German and English, whose status as languages is less controversial, without denying the view of Tibetans that these are two varieties of a single language.

The fact is that the criteria for intelligibility is poorly defined and, in practice, seems to come down to either the linguist's own impressions of how 'intelligible' a given set of varieties should be, or else is determined by asking individual speakers. Even disregarding the lack of scientifically-established criteria, the notion of mutual intelligibility ignores the effect that social and political realities have on what constitutes an intelligible language variety for a given individual[17].

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17 As research such as Rickford and King (2016) demonstrate, assumptions about mutual intelligibility are problematic even for languages like English: speakers of so-called vernacular English varieties tend to understand so-called standard varieties, but it is often the case that the reverse is not true.

Even in cases where mutual (un-)intelligibility is reliably demonstrated, it strikes me as an arbitrary yardstick for dividing dialects from languages.

Many of my Tibetan colleagues over the years have expressed their frustration, even anger, with what they see as a cavalier and overly simplistic approach to language classification from people who do not identify as Tibetan and who are not native speakers of any variety of Tibetan. My use of "language" when discussing Amdo Tibetan is likely an affront to some, and I apologize to them. It is, indeed, too easy for someone like me, who is not Tibetan and whose functional knowledge of any Tibetan variety is sorely lacking, to come in and make broad, simplistic statements. I use the term language in preference to dialect only because I wish to make clear that, first, there are at least two levels of variation under consideration here: that distinction between Amdo Tibetan and other Tibetan varieties, and there is also variation within Amdo Tibetan; second, Amdo Tibetan dialects can be grouped together (and apart from other Tibetan varieties) on the basis of several features, which together occur in Amdo Tibetan but not other Tibetan varieties.

No doubt much of why this discussion of genetic distinctiveness and the division of traditionally defined dialects into languages is alarming to Tibetans is because the discussion itself is often carried out in academic and political contexts in which linguistic distinctiveness equals ethnic distinctiveness. Hence, telling a speaker of the Qiangic language, Heishui Tibetan[18], that what they speak is not Tibetan can be received by that

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18 Hēishuǐ Tibetan is spoken by ethnic Tibetans in Hēishuǐ and Mào Counties, Rnga.ba Prefecture, Sìchuān Province (Sims 2013). The language has been classified as a Qiangic language (Sun 1981: 177-178; LaPolla 2017: 773), but as Tibetans, speakers reject the notion that their language is not a "Tibetan" language (Sims 2016 p.c.).

person to mean that they are not Tibetan, but Qiang. Such an assertion is not only surprising to them, but somewhat insulting and possibly even threatening.

But Tibetans are the descendants of an old and very large empire. The development of this empire included expansion into already-inhabited lands. Much of the territories where modern Tibetans live transverse high altitudes and treacherous geographic features that for other peoples served as barriers. Under such circumstances, of course the language and customs of this empire varied considerably. Moreover, while competence in Written Tibetan was an important cultural trait and necessary political tool, the authorities of Tibetan government throughout history have not exercised the same demands of linguistic homogeneity that have been such prominent features of other comparable, geographically-dispersed powers. Communities that felt no external pressure to switch over to the speech of the central power seem often to have not done so, even as they participated fully in the economic, political and cultural life of the dominant linguistic group. This flexibile attitude toward linguistic practice carried over as other linguistic groups came into political and economic power over the course of history.

Especially in the eastern stretches of the Tibetic range (eastern A.mdo and Khams), many of these communities are dealing with not one, but two or, sometimes even more[19], dominant languages and cultures. It seems that in this kind of multi-central sociocultural context, the importance of language as a marker of identity is particularly pronounced, both for the communities themselves, but also for Tibetans, elsewhere. This

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19 One community that comes to mind is the village of Lāmù (拉木村) in Huàlóng County, Gānsù. The community is ethnic Tibetan, but converted to Islam after the arrival of an Imam from a Salar (Turkic) community in neighboring Xúnhuà County that continues to have a strong influence on Lāmù. Consequently, almost all of the Tibetans of Lāmù speak their local dialect of Amdo Tibetan, Salar and Qīnghǎi Chinese.

means that the question of how a particular language variety should be classified can be quite controversial, sometimes even among the speakers, themselves.

Nor do all communities react the same way. Speakers of Hēishǔi Tibetan that I have asked the question of, all seem to feel quite strongly that their language is Tibetan. In contrast, the one speaker of Khroskyabs[20] with whom I am acquainted identifies as an ethnic Tibetan but does not think of Khroskyabs as a Tibetan language[21].

The adoption of 'Tibetic' does not cause any of the above issues to disappear. Instead, the best approach may be to acknowledge that there are two ways of thinking about the languages of Tibetan areas. It is right to acknowledge the traditional classificatory viewpoint of 'Tibetan', not just because it is established and ignoring it may result in confusion. It must also be said that many of the more direct stakeholders— the speakers of these languages and their neighbors—prefer their own system. Their reasons are understandable and logical—and also deeply personal. Rather than promoting one way of looking at the linguistic diversity of the Tibetan region, let us acknowledge and respect that our systems of classification and the labels we use reflect different purposes and different priorities.

The relationship of Amdo Tibetan to other varieties of Tibetan and the designation of "language" versus "dialect" are interconnected and controversial topics. As a linguist, I consider Amdo Tibetan to be a distinct language variety. I do not rely on mutual intelligibility, mostly because I know of no reliable way to define and

20 Khroskyabs is classified as a Rgyalrongic language spoken in the counties of Jīnchuān (金川), 'Dzam.thang and Mbar.kham in Rnga.ba Prefecture, Sìchuān. See Huang (2007), Yi Na (2012), Yi Na and Lai (2015), and Lai (2017).

[21] This would be G.yu Lha, a linguist who publishes under the name Yi Na.

consequently measure such a notion with regard to any variety of Tibetan. Anecdotal experience leads me to believe that intelligibility is itself highly variable among individuals, strongly influenced by factors like level of education, exposure to mass media, travel experience, and sociolinguistic attitude.

I use the term "dialect" to refer to geographically-defined varieties that share most or all of the definitive traits I have identified for all of Amdo Tibetan. Thus, according to the criteria I have laid out here, Amdo Tibetan is a language while Gcig.sgril Mgolog and Grotsang are dialects of Amdo Tibetan. Both of these dialects have all, or almost all, of the definable traits for the Amdo Tibetan language, the most important of which (to me) is a morphological paradigm of assertion marking that is largely identical in both form and function. Other Tibetan varieties may have cognate elements that show up in their own assertion-marking paradigms with slightly different functions, and most varieties of Tibetan seem to express the same broad grammatical categories, but Amdo Tibetan's verbal system has structural and functional properties that distinguish it from the rest of Tibetic.

1.3.3 Linguistic data considered in this study

Based on the above description, it should be clear that I see Amdo Tibetan as a language that is characterized, as we would expect for any language of its size and history, by a high degree of dialectal variation. Other author's have published morphosyntactic descriptions of individual dialects, most notably Sun's (1993) description of Mdzo.dge, Haller's (2004) description of Them.chen, and Shao's (2014) description of A.rig. There are also detailed phonological descriptions of individual

dialects, like Xu's (2012) description of Gro.tsang. However, partly under the influence of my teachers and colleagues publishing in Chinese (e.g., Hua 2002; Wang 2012) and Tibetan (Lhun.grub 2009) who have done brilliant work on comparative phonetics of Amdo Tibetan dialects, I have chosen to write a description at the level of the language. This has necessitated incorporating data from multiple dialects in order to present a more comprehensive portrait of the language with all of internal diversity. Time and space constraints have enforced an artificial limit on the number of dialects presented here. Nonetheless, I believe I have done an adequate job of capturing a typologically and geographically-representative sample of the variety of Amdo Tibetan dialects.

1.3.4   Sources of data

The data examined in this dissertation comes from three different types of source. The majority of the examples are from my own collection of field recordings, made between 2010 and 2018. Where appropriate, I also include data from the previously published research of other linguistic scholars. In particular, Haller's (2004) grammar of the Them.chen dialect and Shao's (2014) analysis of evidential marking in the A.rig dialects, while providing excellent insights that have guided my own research, have also allowed me to expand the geographic range of this description by supplementing my own field work in eastern and southern A.mdo with data from dialects spoken in the north, around Qīnghǎi Lake. I also make abundant use of Sun's (1993) seminal work on the Mdzo.dge dialect.

Finally, I have included examples from language primers, specifically Min & Di (2005) and Sung & Rgya (2009), the latter of which also includes useful linguistic

analysis. I have chosen to use these sources when certain constructions have been missing from my own data collection.

1.3.5   Dialects examined

Data from previously published sources includes a normative, or standard variety presented in the two language primers by Min & Di (2005), and Sung & Rgya (2009). This variety is primarily based on the dialects of Reb.gong and Bla.brang. Both places are major cultural and economic centers for the A.mdo region. I am told that while this variety is not technically "nomad language" (*'brog.skad*), it is close in terms of phonology and other features to "nomad language". It has been no doubt shaped by speakers coming from many different dialects spoken at home and is also influenced by the pedantic standards of Written Tibetan as taught in A.mdo with some minor influence from Standard Tibetan in the Tibet Autonomous Region. This variety fits the definition of what Dede (2006) calls an "interdialect"[22].The language presented in Min & Di, and Sung & Rgya is similar, but not identical to what Green (2012) calls Standard Media Amdo, which is a formalized language with restricted domains, most notably television and radio news.

In contrast, the data from my own field work, as well as other linguistic publications represents varieties spoken in specific localities. Bearing in mind the social realities that have given rise to an Amdo Tibetan interdialect in the first place, I have

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22 Dede (2006) is describing the speech variety emerging as young Chinese speakers in Xīníng attempt to maintain the Xīníng dialect of Chinese, which is either the language of their parents or else a language they wish to acquire as immigrants to the area, under the influence of an educational and professional environments that favor Standard Chinese. I believe a similar situation is unfolding for Amdo Tibetan.

sought to present representations of individual dialects that are as "authentic" as possible, but I have relied on the intuitions of my consultants to determine what constitutes an authentic representation of their dialect.

I collected recorded data over the course of numerous field trips conducted between 2010 and 2018. On the following page, Table 1 provides a summary of the dialects represented in my personal collection of original data that are included in this study.

With the exception of Yǎqǔtān, because I don't know it—I include the Written Tibetan names for the locations of these communities. Because Tibetans themselves classify dialects according to whether a particular variety is spoken by traditional 'nomads' or traditional 'farmers', I include this information, as well.

As Wang (2012) points out, while the binary division between 'nomad' dialects and 'farmer' dialects is an oversimplification, it is not entirely without merit. Although there are no defining characteristics for either variety, there are certain of properties more strongly associated with one and not the other. A comprehensive picture of Amdo Tibetan necessarily includes data from both types of dialect and both types are represented in Table 1, on the following page.

Table 1. Dialects represented in original data for this dissertation

Dialect	Location	Type and time of data collection
Rdo.spis "Farmer"	Rdo.spis Village རྡོ་སྤྱིས Xúnhuà Salar Autonomous County, Qīnghǎi Province	Elicited words and sentences, recorded in 2014
Gro.tsang "Farmer"	Lèdū District, Qinghai Province	Elicited words and sentences, recorded in 2010 and 2012
Yăqūtān (ɣjɛɖʐə tʰɑŋ) "Farmer"	Yăqūtān Village 亚曲坛村 Huàlóng Tibetan Autonomous County, Qīnghǎi Province	Elicited words and sentences, recorded in 2016
Chu.ma (Reb.gong) "Farmer"	Chu.ma Village ཆུ་མ Tóngrén County, Qīnghǎi Province	Elicited words and sentences, recorded in 2017 (in New York)
Gcig.sgril (Mgo.log) "Nomad"	Gcig.sgril County གཅིག་སྒྲིལ Mgo.log Prefecture མགོ་ལོག Qīnghǎi Province	Elicited words and sentences, spontaneous conversation, recorded in 2012, 2014, and 2016
Rnga.ba (Mgo.log) "Nomad"	Rnga.ba County རྔ་བ Rnga.ba Prefecture, Sìchuān Province	Elicited words and sentences, recorded in 2017 (in Eugene)
Smin.thang (Mgo.log) "Nomad"	Smin.thang County སྨིན་ཐང Mgo.log Prefecture, Qīnghǎi Province	Spontaneous conversation, recorded in 2014
Reb.gong "Farmer"	Reb.gong Town རེབ་གོང Tóngrén County, Qīnghǎi Province	Elicited data, recorded in 2014 and 2015
Kkri.ka "Farmer"	Spoken in and around Kri.kha (ཁྲི་ཀ) Township, Guìdé County, Qīnghaǐ Province	Elicited data, recorded in 2014
A.mchog "Nomad"	Spoken in southern Bsang.chu (Xiàhé County), outside of Bla.brang	Elicited data, recorded in 2012 and 2014

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Dialects represented in data from previously published linguistic descriptions include Them.chen (Haller 2004) and A.rig (Shao 2014), spoken around Qīnghǎi Lake, and Mdzo.dge (Sun 1993), spoken south of Mgo.log, in Sìchuān Province.

I have tried to present a typologically and geographically representative sample of Amdo Tibetan dialects for reasons stated above. Nonetheless, the dialects included in the data were first and foremost selected on the basis of access to consultants. The bulk of my research on Amdo Tibetan over the past ten years or so has centered on Mgo.log because this has been a good place to do field research, by which I mean have been able to spend relatively long periods of time in the area (up to three months) and have been lucky enough to find a number of people who are welcoming and supportive of my work and have been able to either serve as consultants, themselves, or help me find consultants. It also helps that Mgo.log is a large area with a predominantly Tibetan and Tibetan-speaking population: I've had a larger pool from which to find individuals who are interested and capable teachers, consultants and regional guides.

In contrast, my experience with Gro.tsang has been quite different. In spite of having lots of "ins" to the community in the form of friends and colleagues who hail from there or researchers in other fields with established ties and good relationships to people in Gro.tsang, I have sadly been able to collect very little data from Gro.tsang speakers, even less of which is included in this study. This is in spite of the fact that people in the community seemed genuinely welcoming of my presence and supportive of efforts to document their dialect. However, I was not able to actually live in Gro.tsang, nor were any of the people who agreed to work as consultants actually able to spend much time doing the work. In addition, language shift in Gro.tsang is quite advanced and the dialect

is mildly stigmatized among Tibetans from elsewhere. Because, like other Tibetans, speakers of Gro.tsang see themselves as speaking 'Tibetan', much of the time I was "working" with Gro.tsang was spent just trying to identify speakers—and when I found them, persuading them to provide me with their "local, spoken-in-the-home" language and not "correct" Tibetan. I hope in the future to be able to do more work on this dialect. Fortunately, an excellent description of the phonetic and phonological properties of Gro.tsang exists in the form of Xu's (2004) dissertation.

Other dialects were included under similar conditions of happenstance. In particular, four dialects are represented by work with a single speaker for each. The Rdo.spis data was collected entirely from Skal.bzang Nor.bu, who is himself a published co-author of linguistics and who proved to be as near-perfect a language consultant as I have ever encountered with a combination of patience, good humor, but also familiarity with the process of elicitation and understanding of what I wanted. The Chu.ma data was also provided by a Tibetan language instructor at Columbia University who brought a similar background to our elicitation session, but who unfortunately I only got to spend about two hours with. The Rnga.ba data also comes entirely from G.yu Lha, who also happens to be a linguist with a focus on her mother tongue, Khroskyabs (Amdo Tibetan is her "other" mother tongue). Primarily G.yu Lha has been invaluable in helping understand my data. She has transcribed much of the spontaneous conversations I was able to record. The data that I include here for her own dialect of Amdo Tibetan, which also happens to be a form of Mgo.log, was produced in the context of explaining various phenomena from other recordings. The occasional example from other dialects came about through similar interactions with Amdo Tibetan-speaking colleagues who were

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kind enough to agree to sit for short recording sessions, including several wonderful

students from the Sino-Tibetan Workshop, co-hosted by Nankai University and the

Smithsonian in 2016 and 2017.

By far the most unexpected dialect to be included in this study is Yǎqūtān, again

provided by a single consultant. I met Mǎ Biāo (马彪), whose Muslim name is

sʷʊndzɹkʰæ, in 2014 when he was a freshman in engineering at Qīnghǎi University and

introduced himself to me at a coffeeshop in Xīníng. He was interested in knowing more

about why I was in Xīníng and what was the nature of my work, so I shared quite a bit

with him. He made several offers to introduce me to Tibetan friends who could

potentially serve as consultants, but at the time I was already swimming in data and so

declined. Then, in 2016 it somehow came out that Mǎ Biāo was himself a native speaker

of Tibetan. At this point I had met people who identified as ethnic Tibetan and were

Muslim. I had also met a number of ethnic Huí (ethnic Muslims, so to speak) who spoke

Tibetan as a second language, but I had not yet encountered Huí who identified with

Amdo Tibetan as their mother tongue. Knowing that Yǎqūtān was spoken in an area that

had undergone dramatic development to make way for an expanded highway system, and

also knowing that it was spoken in the heart of the most linguistically diverse part of

A.mdo, I was both excited to record Mǎ Biāo and also anticipating a repeat of my

Gro.tsang experience. To my delight, Mǎ Biāo proved to be an ideal consultant, with the

time and inclination to spend time recording with me, as well as highly developed

metalinguistic intuitions and relatively few anxieties or internal pressures about speaking

"proper Tibetan" (possibly because he is Huí). It is only unfortunate that I met Mǎ Biāo

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so late. However, I am hopeful of being able to do future work, either with him or with others in his community if he is able to support me in that way.

1.4   Geography of A.mdo

Amdo Tibetan is spoken in A.mdo (ཨ་མདོ). Hua (2002:1), citing a Tibetan history book written in 1856[23], explains the name A.mdo as a combination of the first morpheme in the names of two mountain ranges, *A.myes.rma.chen* (ཨ་མྱེས་རྨ་ཆེན), which is in Qīnghǎi's Mgo.log Prefecture, and *Mdo.la.ring.mo* (མདོ་ལ་རིང་མོ), which is in Gānsù's Xúnhuà (循化) County. Both are sub-branches of the great Kùnlùn Mountain Range, which extends east to west from Tajikistan to Gānsù Province.

A.mdo is one of the three traditionally-defined Tibetan regions[24]: In contrast, the Tibetan spoken in A.mdo is relatively homogenous: Tibetans living around Qīnghǎi Lake in the north speak the same language (with some dialectal variation) as Tibetans living in Rnga.ba Prefecture, in the south.

Although widely recognized, the three regions of Dbu.tsang, Khams and A.mdo have never been formalized, so it is not always clear where one region ends and another begins. However, roughly speaking, Khams encompasses all the Tibetan areas in Yúnnán

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[23] The book is *Mdo.smad Chos.'byung Deb.ther Rgya.mtsho Zhes.bya.ba*, written by Brag.dgon.pa Mchog.bstan.pa Rab.rgyas. Since I have been unable to get ahold of a copy of this document, I am citing Hua's reference to it.

[24] This is an oversimplification. See, for example, Ryavec (2015) for a more accurate depiction of Tibetan geographic classifications as well as an explanation for the short-hand approach of referring to just these three regions.

Province, the southern half of the Tibetan parts of Sìchuān Province[25], Yul.shul[26] Prefecture in Qīnghǎi, and Chab.mdo[27] (in southwestern Tibet Autonomous Region. With the exception of Chab.mdo, Dbu.tsang encompasses all of the rest of the Tibet Autonomous Region. A.mdo covers the extreme northwest of Sìchuān Province, the west of Gānsù Province, and all of Qīnghǎi Province, except for Yul.shul Prefecture, which is part of Khams. The following map illustrates the approximate locations of Khams, Dbu.tsang and A.mdo and shows the locations of the dialects examined in this study.

A.mdo can be split into a low-elevation sub-region in the northeast and a high-elevation sub-region in the west and south, where the edge of the Qīnghǎi-Tibetan Plateau[28] starts to make its descent. The lowest elevation (2,800 meters) in A.mdo is Lèdū District (乐都区) in Qīnghǎi Province, which is a few kilometers east of the city of Xīníng and is more or less coterminous with the Tibetan area Gro.tsang (གྲོ་ཚང་). Other low elevation areas include Yāqūtān and Reb.gong, both of which lie in Huángshǔi[29] Valley

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[25] The borders of Sìchuān Province have been radically altered multiple times over the past century. In particular, the western border used to be located to the east of the Tibetan towns of Sòngpān (松潘) in the north (now in modern-day Rnga.ba Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture), and Kāngdìng (康定) in the south. The Qing government designated the territory westward of Kāngdìng, as the Province of Xīkāng (西康), 'West Khams'. The present-day western border of Sìchuān was formalized in the 1950's.

[26] WT: Yul.shul ཡུལ་ཤུལ་.

[27] WT: Chab.mdo ཆབ་མདོ་.

[28] A Tibetan colleague has asked me to point out that the name 'Qīnghǎi-Tibetan Plateau' reinforces the misperception that 'Tibet' is coterminous with Tibet Autonomous Region, and Qīnghǎi and other places are outside of 'Tibet'.

[29] The Huángshǔi (湟水), or Tsong Chu (ཙོང་ཆུ) is a major tributary of the Yellow River (Rma Chu) that flows through Gro.tsang County from the northwest foothills of Xīníng before connecting with Rma Chu outside of the city of Lánzhōu. The Tibetan word Tsong, meaning 'onion', also lends its name to the historical Tibetan name for the Huángshǔi Valley, Tsong.kha (ཙོང་ཁ). Because of the low elevation and the irrigation and transportation potential of the juncture of two large rivers, Tsong.ka was an important economic, cultural and military center to every political power to sweep through A.mdo since ancient times. Most famously, Tsong.kha was the birthplace in 1357 of Blo.bzang Grags.pa (བློ་བཟང་གྲགས་པ), more

along the Rma Chu right before it flows through the canyons of Gānsù into the provincial capital, Lánzhōu.

       The Rma Chu has its headwaters in a part of the Kùnlùn Mountain Range in southern Yul.shul Prefecture, but I have been told that the waters do not really form a recognizable river until it has been fed by the snow melt from A.myis Rma.chen (ཨ་མྱེས་རྨ་ ཆེན), the holy mountain western Mgo.log Prefecture, so *a.mdo.wa* (ཨ་མདོ་བ)—Amdo Tibetans—sometimes refer to Mgo.log as the location of the Rma Chu headwaters. In any case, much of the population of Amdo Tibetans and other ethnic groups in the region is concentrated along the banks of this river. By the time of its first bend, in Rma.chu County, Gānsù Province, the Rma Chu is already wide enough that it functions as a barrier around which minor isoglosses are formed, perhaps the most amusing of which is the pronunciation of the name Padma (པདྨ). In the Huángshǔi Valley, many Tibetan communities on the south bank of the river pronounce the name as /wama/; along the north bank it is pronounced as /pama/ or /padma/ (Padma Lhun.'grub, P.C., 2010).

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commonly known as Tsong.kha.pa (ཙོང་ཁ་པ), the founder of the Gelug School of Vajrayana Buddhism (Thupten Jinpa 2013: 60-62).
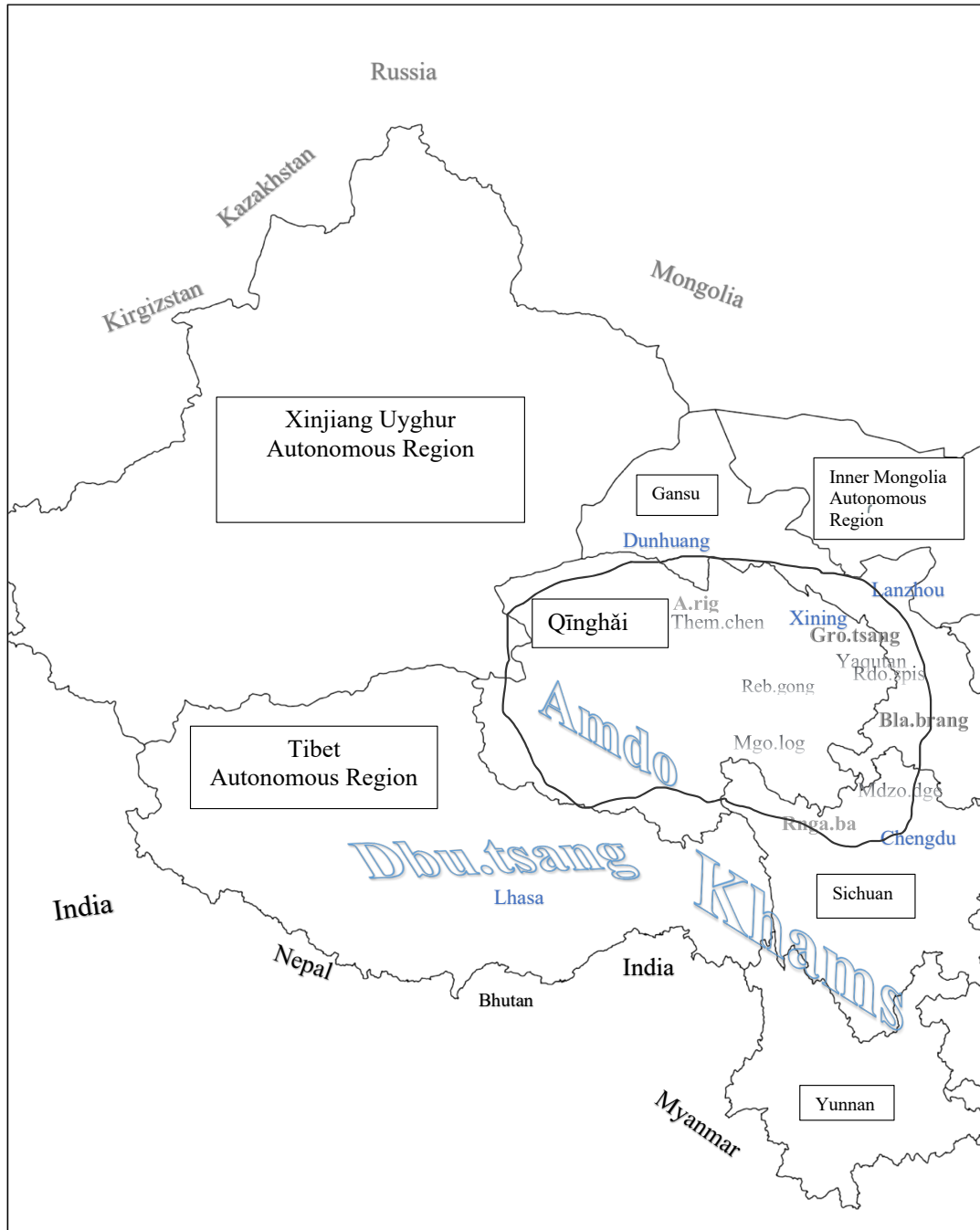
Figure 4. Regional map of dialects considered in this study

In fact, the northern and western boundaries of A.mdo are essentially natural, while the southern and eastern boundaries are primarily legacies of historical political contexts. Its most densely populated areas are distributed along the upper reaches of the

Rma Chu (རྨ་ཆུ), or Yellow River[30]. In the north, the Kùnlùn Mountain Range divides the

nomadic grasslands of A.mdo from the deserts of Xīnjiăng Uyghur Autonomous Region.

In the west, the A.mye.rma.chen[31] sub-range of Kùnlùn divides A.mdo from Dbu.tsang.

The eastern limits of A.mdo, running from modern-day Sòngpān (松潘) City in Sìchuān

up through the southern Gānsù Province, have receded only a little from where they were

in the 640's, when the Tang Dynasty finally put a stop to the eastward expansion of the

Tibetan Empire under Songtsen Gampo[32].

      While I have read no accounts of this, it seems plausible to me that the Tibetan

language was introduced into the land that became A.mdo during and immediately

following the period of imperial expansion eastward. Prior to this time, there is an

abundant archeological record of human habitation for the area, but limited evidence of

the linguistic prehistory. However, we know from Tibetan, Chinese, and Mongolian (and

other states') historical records that the Tibetan state first moved into the area around

Qīnghǎi Lake in the early 600's, and then continued to move east and south. The Tibetan

population of the region gradually increased, monasteries were built, and trading centers

turned into towns and then cities. There were also army forts, especially concentrated

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[30] The area around the western bank of the upper Yellow River is sometimes referred to as Héxī (河西), meaning 'west of the (Yellow) River', and the cultural zone is sometimes referred to as the Héxī Corridor. Part of the Héxī Corridor falls within the commonly accepted boundary of A.mdo, but much of it extends further east, beyond A.mdo.

[31] ཨ་མྱེ་རྨ་ཆེན.

[32] Songtsen Gampo is the common anglicization of Srong.tsan.gam.po སྲོང་བཙན་སྒམ་པོ. Under his rule Tibet expanded from a kingdom confined to the Yarlung Valley around the city of Lha.sa to an empire covering more than 4,500,000 km², stretching from Mount Kailash in the east to a few hundred kilometers from the Tang capital of Cháng'ān (now Xī'ān). Depending on when one believes the man to have been born, this feat took between 30 and 50 years, ending with his death in 648.

along important waterways in the east. During the height of the Tibetan Empire, lasting until the late 800s, there were occasional periods of militarization in which the Tibetan government in Lhasa would send over hundreds of troops, many of whom brought their families and ended up permanently settling the valleys around the hilltop forts they were stationed at. The spread of Tibetan political power in A.mdo coincided with the adoption of Buddhism as the state religion, although immigrants from Tibetan areas outside of A.mdo also brought the autochthonous spiritual practices of their home communities, creating pockets of Bon.po (བོན་པོ) religious practice.

The present section provides a geographic overview of the places where Amdo Tibetan is spoken and introduces the specific dialects represented in this study.

I also briefly introduce the cultural and linguistic history of the region where Amdo Tibetan is spoken in order to provide a context for better understanding how Amdo Tibetan came to be spoken there with such a relatively low level of heterogeneity, as well as provide insight into its relationship other languages spoken in the area.

1.4.1 Languages of A.mdo

Once the Tibetans appear in the historical record for this area, other states do, too, leaving lasting cultural and linguistic imprints on the region. These include, of course, the influence of Hàn Chinese, but also the Muslim culture of the linguistically Chinese Huíhuí[33] (回回, later, just Huí). Both Hàn and Huí expanded into A.mdo from the east. Like the Tibetan state, the Chinese state also engaged in acts of largescale relocation of

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[33] Culturally Chinese (which usually means Sinitic-speaking) Muslims are also sometimes called Dzungars (e.g., Perdue 2005).

populations from one part of their territory to troubled or disputed border areas. Such patterns of settlement no doubt had a major determining effect on the region's linguistic and cultural development[34].

The growth of Huí and Hàn communities into eastern A.mdo spread Sinitic into the area. At the same time, the rise of the Mongol Empire[35], introduced Mongolic into the area. Eastern A.mdo is, in fact, home to eight different languages representing three different branches of Mongolic, South-Central, Southeastern and Southwestern Mongolic (Janhunen 2007). These languages are spoken in just a handful of communities in eastern A.mdo and are highly endangered. Just west of Qīnghǎi Lake, in Haǐxī Prefecture, varieties of Oirat Mongolian are spoken by ethnic Mongols and ethnic Tibetans (Wallenböck 2016).

Finally, A.mdo is home to at least three Turkic languages: Sarygh Yugur, Salar, and Kazakh (Janhunen 2012). The first two are spoken in eastern A.mdo by populations that claim descent from immigrants from what is now Xīnjiāng who settled into the area a few hundred years ago. The latter is spoken in northwest A.mdo, in Haǐxī Prefecture, Qīnghǎi. Both Salar and Saryg Yugur are spoken only in a handful of villages in Gānsù Province and Qīnghǎi Province. I have been told that the Kazakh spoken in A.mdo is very similar to that spoken by ethnic Kazakhs in Xīnjiāng.

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[34] In fact, it is not unusual for certain villages to have preserved records of these ancestral immigration events. This is the case with people named Xú (徐) whom I met from Lèdū County (now District), Qīnghǎi. This surname apparently originated outside of Nánjīng, in Jiāngsū Province near the Pacific Coast, ending up in Lèdū as a result of a Míng Dynasty relocation program during the 15th or 16th century.

[35] Even after Mongolian power in China had effectively ended, fractured Mongolian tribal authorities continued to exert economic, and sometimes political, control over parts of what are now western China. So, the Khoshut branch of the Oirat Mongols remained influential in northern A.mdo until WWII (Wallenböck 2016).

In particular, the Sinitic and Mongolic languages spoken on the north eastern frontier have been subject to a considerable degree of cross-linguistic interaction, producing one well-known creole languages, Wǔtùn (五屯), spoken in in and around the Reb.gong area in Tóngrén County, Qīnghǎi (Sandman 2016), and possibly others. Moreover, many communities with their own non-Tibetic languages have some degree of bilingualism with Tibetan. Consequently, the non-Tibetic languages of this part of A.mdo exhibit structural convergence with Amdo Tibetan (c.f., Dwyer 1995; Janhunen 2012; Sandman 2016) and possibly phonological convergence with Sinitic (c.f., Wang 2010). As a result, this part of A.mdo has been termed a Sprachbund (Dwyer 1995).

All of these language families . Along the southern frontier of A.mdo, intersecting with the Tibetan region of Khams, we find a few languages whose presence in the area predates the Tibetan Empire and recorded history. These are non-Tibetic, Trans-Himalayan languages such as Khroskyabs (Huang 2007; Lai 2017), which is spoken by ethnic Tibetans, many of whom also natively speak a dialect of Mgo.log Tibetan close to that spoken in Gcig.sgril (G.yu Lha[36] 2017, p.c.)

When considering archeological evidence of A.mdo's prehistory, of particular note is the geographically extensive influence of the Mǎjiāyáo (马家窑) Pottery Culture (ca. 5300-4000 BP), a Neolithic culture that grew several varieties of millet and raised goats, pigs and dogs, but also depended heavily on hunting and gathering (Dong et al. 2013). While the most extensive deposits of Mǎjiāyáo pottery were found along the Huángshuǐ Valley in modern-day Lèdū District (Qīnghǎi) and Líntáo (临洮) County

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[36] G.yu Lha is published under her Chinese name, Na Yi.

(Gānsù), there is archeological evidence of settlements as far away as northern Sìchuān and central Qīnghǎi (Jia et al. 2013). The painted pottery and agricultural practices of Mǎjiāyáo were likely influenced by the older, better-known Yǎngsháo (仰韶) Culture who flourished further east, in the Central Plains (Chinese Zhōngyuán 中原), a region through which runs the middle stretch of the Yellow River. Consequently, many scholars have speculated that the makers of Mǎjiāyáo ceramics were actually immigrants to the area. On the other hand, the oldest bronze artifact in all of China—a single knife—was found at the Mǎjiāyáo site (ca. 3000 BP), as well as numerous slightly younger (ca. 2135 BP) bronze pieces found in other parts of Gānsù Province. These archeological finds predate China's late Bronze Age culture—the Yīn Shāng (殷商) (ca. 1400 BP) who, again, lived in the Central Plains—by several hundred years (Sun et al. 1985). This has raised questions as to the nature and direction of cultural exchange between the upper and lower reaches of the Yellow River, as well as the identity of prehistoric populations in the upper Yellow River region[37] (Sun et al. 2016).

As for the linguistic pre-history of A.mdo, the earliest evidence of any language in the area is of Tangut[38], the spoken and written language of the Tangut Empire, which lasted from 1032 AD until 1227 AD, when it met complete destruction at the hands of

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[37] According to Sun et al. (2016), no sources of tin have ever been identified for the Mǎjiāyáo bronzeware, leading researchers to conclude that the pieces may actually have been imported from elsewhere. Not, however, from Yīn Shāng, as the isotopic compositions of the bronzes from the two areas are different.

[38] *Tangut* is the Mongolian word for this culture and the ancient state that is also sometimes referred to as Western Xià (following the Chinese name Xī Xià 西夏). Interestingly, colleagues from Inner Mongolia report that this is still a common way for people in their communities to refer to all Tibetans. The Tibetan word for Tangut *mi.nyag* (ཨྱི་ནྱག), a name that continues to be used for descendent of the Tangut Empire who resettled in central western Sìchuān.

Mongolian forces after refusing to submit to the authority of Chinggis Khan (Kepping 1994: 357). Tangut is a Trans-Himalayan language that has more recently been classified as Qiangic (Matisoff 2004).

'Tangut' is the Mongolian word for this culture and the ancient state that is also sometimes referred to as Western Xià (following the Chinese name Xī Xià 西夏). Interestingly, colleagues from Inner Mongolia report that this is still a common way for people in their communities to refer to all Tibetans. Meanwhile, the Tibetan word for 'Tangut' is *mi.nyag* (མི་ཉག), a name that continues to be used for descendent of the Tangut Empire who resettled in central western Sìchuān.

We know that Tangut was spoken in the area before Tibetan because Tibetan and Mongolian historical accounts are clear on this. Tangut speakers themselves also kept records in a writing system of their own devising (Kwanten 1977). The Tangut language also played a translational in introducing Buddhist texts to the emerging Tibetan Empire (Kychanov 1984). We also see traces of the Tangut language in many place names, most famously the word *rma*, which shows up in the Tibetan name for the Yellow River, Rma Chu, and in the name of one of the most iconic and sacred mountain ranges in A.mdo, A.mye Rma.chen. But it appears that aside from these traces, Tangut speakers left little else in the way of a tangible imprint on the lexicon, phonology or structure of the languages of the people who moved into A.mdo in their wake. It is possible that the remarkable homogeneity of Tibetophonic A.mdo, relative to its size respective to other Tibetan regions, is due to historical circumstances that depopulated the area in a rather short period of time, creating a the conditions for settlers from a few places in western Tibet to come in and take over, spreading their language.

1.5 Number of speakers and language vitality

Estimates of the number of speakers ranges from 1.5 to 2 million[39]. The number of speakers is poorly defined because one way—the most common way—of understanding what Amdo Tibetan is, is to think of it as the language of Tibetans living in A.mdo. Many speakers of Amdo Tibetan think of their language this way, which is reflected in the preferred autonym for their language, *bod.skad*, 'Tibetan language'.

However, as it turns out, there are other Tibetic languages besides Amdo Tibetan that are spoken in the Amdo region. Tournadre (2005:283) lists at least five Tibetic languages that are spoken in localities that fall within the slightly ambiguous geographic boundaries of A.mdo. He names the following varieties: Gserpa (Rnga.ba Prefecture, Sìchuān), Zhongu (Sìchuān), Baima (Sìchuān and Gānsù Provinces), Drugchu (Kan.lho Prefecture, Gānsù), Chone (Kan.lho Prefecture, Gānsù) and Thewo (Kan.lho Prefecture, Gānsù). The latter two varieties, Chone and Thewu, are mentioned by Bradley (1997b) as potentially distinct languages. On the southern border with Khams, there are several non-Amdo varieties, such as Shar Tibetan, spoken in Sòngpān County, Rnga.ba Prefecture (Suzuki and Dkon.mchog Tshe.ring 2009). In addition, it seems likely to me that a variety of Tibetan spoken in Padma County, Mgo.log, might also be considered a non-Amdo variety[40]. (Padma County is also home to a dialect of Amdo Tibetan that is very similar to

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[39] Padma Lhun.grub (2009), whose estimate has been adopted by Ethnologue, gives a number of 1.8 million. This is probably the most accurate source on the matter.

[40] I am largely basing this assertion on a conversation with Padma Lhun.grub (March, 2016) concerning a few of the more noteworthy features he had observed in the speech of Pad.ma nomads. These include the form of IMPERFECTIVE NEGATIVE prefix, which elsewhere in Amdo Tibetan has a bilabial nasal onset as in Gcig.sgril *mi-*. In Pad.ma Tibetan, the form is *ni-*, which is cognate with varieties spoken in southern Khams.

the Rnga.ba and Gcig.sgril (Mgo.log) dialects described in this dissertation. Confusingly, both varieties are referred to as 'Pad.ma Mgo.log' dialect by speakers and neighbors, alike).

Almost certainly speakers of these non-Amdo varieties have been included in official counts of Amdo Tibetan speakers on the basis of the fact that they are Tibetans living in A.mdo. Of course, many Tibetans who speak a non-Amdo variety at home also speak Amdo Tibetan at school or in the wider society.

It seems highly likely that the reported number of speakers attributed to Amdo Tibetan has been inflated with speakers of other varieties. On the other hand, it is also the case that Tibetan speakers are conflated with ethnic Tibetans, and so speakers who belong to other officially-recognized ethnic groups, like Han or Hui, are excluded from the tally while ethnic Tibetans who are mother tongue speakers of Chinese or Mongolic languages are included[41]. I will not pretend to attempt a refinement of the number given at the top of this paragraph. It is sufficient to say that Amdo Tibetan is a relatively large minority language, both in terms of the number of speakers as well as its geographic distribution. Nonetheless, as many of its speakers have reminded me over the years, in spite of its apparent size, the future status of Amdo Tibetan is still uncertain.

1.5.1   Indicators of vitality

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[41] For some Tibetans, a mother-tongue language of a Tibetan person is a Tibetan language. Across Tibet (including the regions of Dbu.tsang and Khams which lie in the Chinese administrative areas of the Tibet Autonomous Region, Qīnghǎi Province, Sìchuān Province, Gānsù Province and Yúnnán Province), an estimated 2,300,000 out of 6.2 million ethnic Tibetans speak a mother tongue that is not part of the Tibetic genetic classification (Roche 2014). In addition to speaking the Tibetan dialect or language of their local community, many speakers also speak the variety of Tibetan that is dominant in their region (pp. 28-29).

There are several factors that complicate efforts to assess the long-term vitality of Amdo Tibetan. These include the status of Amdo Tibetan as a topolect of another languageAccording to Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS), which is based off of Fishman's (1991) Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale, the vitality of Amdo Tibetan ranges from a 7 (shifting) to a 6a (vigorous), depending on the community.

It continues to be transmitted intergenerationally in many communities. In addition, as many areas in Amdo are linguistically diverse, in many of these places, Amdo Tibetan is a prestige language with many second or third language speakers. Particularly in western Amdo, at the higher elevations leading up into the spine of the Himalayan Mountain Range, there are regions that are almost entirely Tibetan-speaking. In some of these places, particularly the Mgo.log region, monolingualism is still quite common among people of all ages. Culturally, Amdo Tibetan benefits from being a recognizable variety of a larger Tibetan language, with which it shares a common orthography. There is therefore a large audience for Tibetan-language publications and there is a thriving commercial and academic publishing industry in Amdo. There are also options for Tibetan-medium education all the way up to the PhD level. Finally, Amdo Tibetan speakers have access to a wide variety of oral media in their language, including radio programs, television stations and original and dubbed films. Much of this activity is funded or otherwise enabled by government policies designed to promote linguistic equality. With the presence of official support, Amdo Tibetan appears to meet the threat level of 'Stable yet threatened' according to the external assessment guidelines of UNESCO (2003). However, many speakers share a more pessimistic view of their

language's prospects. Before discussing this, I will first introduce the social conditions in which Amdo Tibetan is spoken.

The prestigious status of Amdo Tibetan in a multilingual, multiethnic region is not entirely the result of historical patterns of numerical dominance of Tibetans in the area. After the end of the Tibetan Empire-era, The Amdo region has a long, continuous history of habitation by Tibetans and is home to many important cultural, historical and religious sites. For example, the second most important monastery in all of Vajrayana Buddhism, *Sku 'bum Byams pa Gling*, is located in central Amdo[42]. The region is also home to several economically important industries: Mtsho Sngon.po (Qīnghǎi Lake) is one of the largest in-land salt water bodies in the world and the land around it is a highly productive source of salt. The Rma.chu grasslands, located at the first major bend of Rma Chu (the Yellow River), has a near-legendary reputation for producing some of the finest horses for all of Tibet and beyond. Both the nomad-dominated highlands and the sedentary farm-dominated valleys produce much of the mutton and goat meat consumed throughout China. There is also a burgeoning market for meat, dairy and fiber products of yaks that has resulted in a reverse-trend of increasing herd sizes in nomad areas. In particular, yak herding is dominated by ethnic Tibetans (Shang et al. 2014). But perhaps the most iconic is the wild-harvesting of *Orphiocordyceps sinensis*, the caterpillar fungus. Prized as a medicine in both Tibetan and Chinese traditional medicine systems, this species of fungus is found only on the Tibetan plateau and has so-far resisted extensive efforts at propagation in laboratory conditions. The caterpillar fungus harvest,

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[42] 'Amdo' is a widely recognized name in English, compared to many of the other Tibetan place names mentioned here. For this reason, I will dispense with the convention of marking the *tsheg* (ཚེག) or syllable boundary punctuation, in this word for the rest of the dissertation.

supplemented by the harvesting of other wild medicines and wild foods, is a major source of income for many communities across Amdo (Saxer 2013).

Amdo Tibetans have also played major roles in terms of politics, philosophy and art. Several of the most influential and famous Buddhist masters were born in Amdo and trained in Amdo monasteries (Nietupski 2011). The city of Reb.gong[43] is known for the production of high-quality *Thang.kha*, or scripturally-based religious paintings, with several schools devoted entirely to training painters in the genre (Stevenson 1999; Wang 2011).

Amdo Tibetans are a dominant cultural and political force in the region (Nietupski 2011). Within the greater Tibetosphere, A.mdo has also had considerable political and cultural impact. The Dge.lugs school of Vajrayana Buddhism, for example, emerged in A.mdo. More secular contributions include major works of art and literature, both of which were combined in the creative output of the modern-era author, illustrator and translator, Gendun Chopel[44].

In keeping with their cultural and political significance in this part of the world, the speech varieties associated with Amdo Tibetans are highly regarded[45]. Among Amdo

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[43] In the present day, Reb.gong (རེབ་གོང་) is used to refer to slightly different entities. It is often used as the Tibetan version of Tóngrén (同仁) County. It is also used to refer to a smaller area within Tóngrén County that is localized around the Rong.bo Monastery.

[44] This is the common anglicization of the name of Dge.'dun Chos.'phel (དགེ་འདུན་ཆོས་འཕེལ་ 1903-1951), a native son of Reb.gong.

[45] As Reynolds (2014: 139-142) points out, within Amdo Tibetan the degree to which a speech variety is valued as a marker of Tibetan identity correlates to the degree in which it displays certain (primarily phonological) features associated with nomadic areas. In my observation, this holds true outside of A.mdo: Tibetan speakers of non-Amdo varieties tend to characterize Amdo Tibetan as *'brog.skad*, 'nomad language', and certain aspects of Amdo Tibetan that are exaggerated or idealized in the popular imagination, for example the retention of a voicing distinction in spirant onsets, are often only found in Amdo Tibetan dialects spoken in herding communities. Even so, I have heard numerous complaints from Amdo associates spending time in Lhasa or abroad that their Amdo accents are looked down upon.

Tibetans, the general atmosphere is that one should be proud to be a speaker of Tibetan. Moreover, there are many parts of Amdo where Amdo Tibetan remains, as much by necessity as by intent, the primary language of education, governance and daily life.

1.6 Language attitudes

In spite of meeting most of UNESCO conditions for positive language vitality, the future of Amdo Tibetan is far from certain. This perception of endangerment is based primarily on speakers' own assessment of their language's status. Since the late 1940's, Standard Chinese and, to a lesser extent, Qīnghǎi Chinese, have steadily replaced Amdo Tibetan as the dominant language of the region. This shift is manifested in the form of overt policies encouraging bilingualism in native speakers of Amdo Tibetan as well as heavy immigration to the region from other parts of China. As of 1982, the Chinese constitution protects minority language rights and there is considerable governmental infrastructure dedicated to minority language concerns (Zhou 2004; 2009). As concerns Amdo Tibetan, there are dedicated government agencies in Beijing and also the provinces of Qīnghǎi and Gānsù that deal with the production of Tibetan-language materials and translations. The government sponsors translation services covering everything from road signs to the national university entrance exam. Tibetan-language publishers and media companies are effectively subsidized by province-level and national-level bureaus.

Nonetheless, the services that are provided frequently fall short of the needs of the community. Depending on the political climate, Tibetans themselves are able to supplement gaps in educational materials and other areas by producing privately-

sponsored materials and services. However, the considerable legal infrastructure that surrounds all minority-language services in the country sometimes throw up considerable roadblocks to Tibetans' meeting their own needs in independent ways.

In reality, for most Amdo Tibetan speakers living in their homeland, access to decent education all but entails foregoing an education in their native language. Thus, while it seems safe to say that the majority of Tibetans living in Amdo are still speakers of a Tibetan variety, literacy rates in the language have reportedly declined in recent decades even as literacy rates overall have increased in the region in step with the rapid increase in literacy rates for the country as a whole[46]. In particular, nomad communities seem to have had, traditionally, relatively high literacy rates in Tibetan. Nomad communities, in addition to being mobile, are also quite isolated. Unlike sedentary farmers, nomadic pastoralists usually do not have daily or even regular access to a monastery or a religious teacher[47]. For Tibetan Buddhists, the recitation of mantras and lines of scripture is a central practice. Lay people with easy access to a teacher may simply learn to memorize certain passages under the teacher's guidance. If they wish to receive more in-depth instruction or to hear longer passages of scripture, they will attend public teachings or enlist a monk, nun or other learned individual to perform a ceremony for them. For nomads, however, access to Buddhist teachers is not so easy and basic competence in at least the phonetics of Written Tibetan is perceived as a minimal requirement for religious practice. Beyond this, many nomads are interested in achieving

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[46] According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2015), the literacy rate for Chinese adults was 99.7% in 2010.

[47] Many Amdo Tibetans identify as Buddhist, but there are sizeable minorities of Bonpo practitioners and Muslims. Bonpo also has scriptures that are in Written Tibetan, but Islam apparently does not.

full literacy. This is especially true for those who are engaged in herding, an activity that tends to be solitary, and therefore somewhat boring, and also provides opportunities throughout the day for reading. This appears to be as true for men as for women. As universal 1-9 education becomes better enforced in rural places, literacy in Tibetan is waning, however. Many areas do not have access to Tibetan medium education, so as children are encouraged to begin schooling at younger and younger ages, where they might have once been taught to read and write Tibetan by older family members, they now lose this opportunity. Even in places that have Tibetan medium schools, some families are hesitant to send their kids to such schools for various reasons including concerns about the quality of textbooks and teachers.

Language retention is seen as an uphill struggle by many Amdo Tibetan speakers. Though Amdo Tibetan is still the language of the home for most Tibetan families in the region, the greater community seems to hold in common a belief that Amdo Tibetan is threatened by Chinese. There is a strong grass roots movement to encourage literacy, seen as a cornerstone of language competence, and promote language use in all domains. It is common to see graffiti, bumper stickers, posters and other forms of public communication reminding "Children of the Snow to speak their fathers' language", and so on. Nomad families is some places, like Mgo.log, cite fear of their children growing up without full competence in their native language as a main reason not to send their kids to government-run schools.

Local and national-level government agencies have heard and are responding to the concerns of Tibetans for their language. Sometimes the actions taken are counterproductive or even contradictory. Language can be a political issue in this part of

the world, so much care is taken to publicly and officially affirm the status of Tibetan, including regional varieties, like Amdo Tibetan.

At the same time, even as considerable resources have been dedicated to supporting minority languages, the quality of education in so-called "minority-medium" schools is universally worse than for Chinese-medium schools in all parts of the country. Because the first and most important goal of a nationalized educational system is providing the best education to the largest number of students, possible, the government has backed off prioritizing minority language policy in education. Starting in 2004, Beijing dictated that minority language education be adjusted so that instruction in "core" subjects, like science and math, be taught in Chinese (Zhou 2004). In Amdo, particularly, this change was met with considerable alarm so that the adjustments have been curtailed to some extent and changes are being implemented slowly. Even so, the damage was already done and there is a lasting suspicion on the part of Tibetans toward their government that it is policy-makers' ultimate goal to do away with Tibetan medium education and, by extension, reduce Tibetan to nothing more than a symbolic, performative expression of ethnic identity.

The prospect of losing their language fills many of my Tibetan acquaintences with sadness and anger. Others, of course, see it as an inevitable consequence of development, but this seems to be the minority viewpoint. What might be termed language activism by western scholars is often part and parcel of such diverse efforts as local conservation projects, religious revival, and the creation of projects targeting economic self-

sufficiency. A vital Tibetan language, complete with advanced literacy[48] and a vibrant

publishing, blogging and mass media scene, is part of the default definition of a vibrant

Tibetan society for many. Not a few Tibetans also feel strongly that their language is part

of the global community's intangible heritage and has value for all humans, whether they

are Tibetan or not. The presence of foreign and Chinese scholars researching and

documenting Tibetan languages is therefore seen overwhelmingly as a positive thing.

1.7   Standardization and the loss of regional varieties

The strong sense of pride in and attachment to language is especially prominent in

the current climate of change and uncertainty. The greater Tibetan community, which

includes a sizeable diaspora, has undergone major cultural, political and economic

transitions. In the face of instability brought on by globalization, migration and other

changes, language has come particular ideological functions for a community striving to

redefine itself and not disintegrate. Tibetans are highly concerned about language

retention, standardization and modernization of Written Tibetan, and resistance to

language shift at all levels. The perception of language endangerment may be said to be a

recent phenomenon. With it, has emerged a strong sense that standardization and

homogenization of both Written Tibetan and spoken Tibetan is a necessary tool for

combatting language loss. The push within the Tibetan community for a standard, official

form of Tibetan to be taught in schools and learned by all Tibetans began at least as far

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[48] The strong attachment to literacy as a benchmark of language strength is common among Tibetan speakers, but it is certainly not universal. In particular, during my time in A.mdo I have met many Tibetan-speaking Muslims, both ethnic Tibetan and ethnic Huí, who express great pride and attachment to spoken Tibetan as their mother tongue, but who see Written Tibetan as either non-essential to their way of life, or, in some cases, as being so connected with Buddhism that they'd rather not study it at all.

back as the 1950s. The Chinese government, itself, has sponsored conferences and workshops to create standard versions of regional Tibetan varieties, including Amdo Tibetan, which are promoted over mass media.

Until recently, the promotion of homogenous, conventional varieties of Tibetan (with the more distant goal of eventually creating one standard form) were not seen as undermining the vitality of regional language varieties. Rather, standardization was seen as part of the process of modernizing and expanding education and establishing a thriving and vital culture of mass media. Over the past decade, however, there has been growing concern among Tibetans and outside linguists and educators that an approach to combating the shift towards Chinese that entails promoting a single variety of Tibetan at the expense of all other varieties is also damaging. In particular, there is concern that standardization is especially damaging when the regional variety in question is not a dialect of a larger Tibetic language (e.g., the Gro.tsang dialect of Amdo Tibetan), but appears to be a distinct language in its own right, as with Khroskyabs or Hēishuǐ Tibetan, both of which are spoken in Rnga.ba Prefecture, Sìchuān. Nonetheless, many people still see standardization as the only way forward for the greater Tibetan community. The current debate now is whether or not the development of a single common language necessarily entails the loss of diversity. Given the close association Tibetans feel exists between their own ethnic and cultural identity and language, this is a very serious debate for many.

1.8   Orthography, transliteration conventions and transcriptions

The data reproduced in this dissertation comes from diverse origins. This diversity is reflected in the written presentation.

Data which I myself have collected is presented in IPA, according to my own phonological analysis. Because different dialects within Amdo Tibetan sometimes differ in terms of their phonology, there are some words and morphemes common across dialects that are here presented with slightly different IPA transcriptions as a reflection of the phonetic forms in different dialects. Data cited from publications by other authors or, more rarely, transcriptions from unpublished sources, is presented here as originally transcribed. Finally, a considerable amount of data was either originally, or at some stage before I got my hands on it, written in the Sanskrit-based Tibetan orthography. I present such data transliterated according to the Wylie (1959) scheme, which I will describe in detail below. IPA transcriptions appear in standard text; Wylie transliterations of Written Tibetan appear in italicized text. Place names follow the Wylie convention and are not italicized (e.g., Mgo.log, Gro.tsang, etc.). When following Wylie, I use a space to divide syllables, even within words.

1.8.1 Written Tibetan

"Tibetan" is used in the broader, original sense, covering multiple Tibetic language varieties, including non-modern varieties, like Old Tibetan. The *Sum cu pa*, usually translated into English as "Thirty Letters", and later, more refined grammars like *Rtag.kyi.'jug.pa*, which is also attributed to Thonmi Sambhota, on down to the modern *Dag.yig* dictionary, which is regularly revised every decade or so, continue to provide the basis for teaching literacy in Tibetan. Students in government-run, Chinese medium

schools in China; in weekend-based Tibetan language schools overseas; and traditionally-operated monastic schools alike are frequently called on to memorize excerpts from these various ancient grammars as a primary method for learning how to read and write (Tournadre, 2010).

The Tibetan orthography was originally developed sometime around 650 AD, during the reign of Emperor Songtsen Gampo. In order to meet the demands of administering a large territory, encompassing several previously independent kingdoms, as well as the regime's commitment to promoting Buddhism throughout the empire necessitated the development of a writing system. There are no existent contemporaneous sources describing the creation of the orthographic system, but it is commonly believed that the emperor sent a minister, Thonmi Sambhota (Wylie: Thon.mi Sam.bho.Ta), to India, where he studied the grammatical system of Sanskrit. Upon his return to the Yarlung Valley, Thonmi Sambhota then devised a system using the principles of the Brahmi script, but adapting it to be better suited to the phonology of Tibetan as it was spoken at that time and place.

Whether or not the Thonmi Sambhota story is historically accurate, the system was already in place by 655 AD, the date of the earliest documents found in the Dūnhuáng caves in Gānsù Province. The orthography was largely codified by this date. As Wang (2012: 12) notes, there were at least three large-scale revisions made to spelling conventions (namely, which letters appear where and in what concatenations) up to the 11th century, when the system was finalized[49]. This means that many words today are

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[49] This is true of Written Tibetan as it is used by Tibetans, but Tibetan orthography as used by other linguistic/cultural groups has continued to undergo revisions, such as Dzongkha.

spelled identically to how they were spelled a thousand years ago. Needless to say, the exact pronunciation of such words as they are spoken today has changed. Nonetheless, the spelling system itself remains largely phonemic in that spellings, while they do not reflect modern phonetic productions, do provide accurate phonemic guidelines to how such words are pronounced now. It is a testament to the genius and linguistic intuition of the creator or creators, that the system has continued to be so reliable and intuitive over the intervening centuries. The grammatical conventions of Written Tibetan have continued to evolve and can be quite different in the different regions of Tibet, but spelling conventions have remained unchanged since the 11th century.

Tibetan orthography consists of 30 letters, which have a default reading of a consonant plus the vowel /a/ when they occur alone without modification. The table below gives the order of the 30 letters as they are arranged in the Tibetan alphabet. Followed by the Wylie transcription for each letter's "name". The name is also a letter's default pronunciation, although of course the actual pronunciation differs depending on the region and variety of Tibetan. The 30-letter Written Tibetan Syllabary is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Written Tibetan Syllabary

Velar	ཀ	ka	ཁ	kha	ག	ga	ང	nga
Palatal	ཙ	ca	ཚ	cha	ཇ	ja	ཉ	nya
Alveolar	ཏ	ta	ཐ	tha	ད	da	ན	na
Labial	པ	pa	ཕ	pha	བ	ba	མ	ma
Alveolo-dental	ཙ	tsa	ཚ	tsha	ཛ	·dza	ཝ	wa
Continuant I	ཞ	zha	ཟ	za	འ	'a	ཡ	ya
Continuant II	ར	ra	ལ	la	ཤ	sha	ས	sa
Back	ཧ	ha	ཨ	a				

The letters are arranged according to place of articulation for the oral and nasal stop series, as well as the affricates, then loosely by voicing (for the dialect of Tibetan spoken at the time and place) for the two continuant series, and the ha and a letters occur at the end. The difference between *a* and *'a* (referred to by Tibetan philologists as *A* and *A chung*, or A and "Little A") is somewhat ambiguous, but has been reconstructed by Hill and others as being a voiced /ɦ/ onset for *'a* and a glottal stop or 0 onset for *a*. Based on its location next to *ha*, it is plausible to imagine that the creator of the orthography analyzed *a* as a glottal stop consonant and ordered it next to *ha* on the basis of place of articulation, as is the case for other sets within the system.

When any of these thirty letters occur alone, they are syllabic, with a pronunciation identical or close to the way their name is pronounced in the dialect of a given speaker. Many words and morphemes are thus simply represented with a single letter. However, letters can also be combined to produce more complicated syllables. Syllables are divided by a dot or *tsheg* (WT: ཚེག). Thus, two or more letters concatenated without a *tsheg* form a single syllable for which the phonemic value of the comprising letters is determined by the order in which they occur.

(1) གནམ Wylie: *gnam* 'sky'

(2) ལག Wylie: *lag* 'hand'

The structure of syllables with multiple letters is described in terms of a "root" initial, which all syllables have and which represents the phonetic value of an onset plus vowel, and then optional "prefix" and "postfix" initials, which are letters that represent either features of the onset consonant or additional consonant segments in a complex onset, depending on the analysis.

In addition to occurring in horizontal arrangements, letters may also be stacked, as below. There are rules constraining which letters may be stacked and in what order, etc.

(3) ལྷ་ས *lha.sa* 'Lhasa City'

(4) སྨན *sman* 'medicine'

Other than the default /a/, Written Tibetan has diacritic markings that represent four vowels, represented below over the letter *a*, followed by the name, transliterated in Wylie, and also the Wylie value the vowel is given when it occurs in a word. See Table 3.

Table 3. Vowel names and transliteration value for Written Tibetan

Written Tibetan	Tibetan name	Wylie transliteration value
ཨི	གི་གུ *gi.gu*	*i*
ཨུ	ཞབས་ཀྱུ *shabs.kyu*	*u*
ཨེ	འགྲེང་བུ *'greng.bu*	*e*
ཨོ	ན་རོ *na.ro*	*o*

The letter ཨ *a* only occurs as a simplex onset of a syllable, meaning other letters may follow it, representing codas, but none may occur before it or stacked above or below it. The letter འ *·a.chung'* (*'a*) regularly occurs as a non-phonemic marker to make clear that a horizontal arrangement of two letters represents an onset to an open syllable. This is the case with the word in (5), below. Without the addition of the *a.chung*, the word would be *dag*, as in (6) and mean something different.

(5) དགའ dga' 'enjoy'

(6) དག dag 'pure'

To sum up, Written Tibetan is a unifying force across Tibet and beyond. It provides a rare and useful aid for reconstructing ancestral forms of Tibetan, which are then useful in comparing with other non-Tibetan languages to reconstruct proto-Tibeto-Burman forms. It is also useful for comparing modern Tibetan varieties with one another. Because Written Tibetan is so old, it is relatively easy to trace etymological origins for many words and morphemes in the modern varieties. Thus, I make frequent reference to Written Tibetan in this dissertation, as well as using Written Tibetan data in some of my examples.

When referring to forms in a generalized, abstract sense (i.e., across dialects of Amdo Tibetan or even forms which occur in other Tibetic languages, as well), I resort to using the Wylie transcription of Written Tibetan. Such forms appear in italics.

1.8.2 Sources of Classical Literary Tibetan and Written Tibetan

I have largely relied on contemporary publications for information on Classical Literary Tibetan, Written Tibetan and traditional grammarian analyses. These include *Bod.kyi.skad.brda'i.grub.lugs* (*Structural Processes of Tibetan*) by 'Jigs.byed.skyabs (2015); An especially invaluable examination of the grammarian tradition is *Brda.sprod.rig.pa'i.don.'grel.phyogs.sgrigs* (*Treatises on Tibetan Grammar*) by A.lags Dor.zhi Gdong.drung Snyems.blos (cited elsewhere in this dissertation as Dor.zhi), first published in 1987 and reprinted in 1990.

An authority on lexical items, including standardized spelling conventions and alternative forms and usages, is _Dag.yig.gsar.bsgrigs_ (དག་ཡིག་གསར་བསྒྲིགས). As Hausmann (1989: 2548) notes, there have been a series of _dag.yig_, sometimes translated as 'spelling dictionaries', dating back to the time of Gsod.nams Rgya.mtsho, the Third Dalai Lama (1543-1588). The version I have relied on, which is a new edition (_gsar.bsgrigs_), was published in 1998 by _Mtso.sngon.mi.rigs.dpe.skrun.khang_ (Qīnghǎi Nationalities Press).

As Vollman (2008) and Tournadre (2010) point out, the Tibetan linguists of centuries past also seem to have wrestled with how to explain the morphology of case marking and the relationships between case markers to certain types of verbs. This is especially true for the isomorphic ergative and instrumental cases, which are treated as one case by most Tibetan sources and labeled _byed sgra_, or 'active marker'. Traditional Tibetan grammar dating more or less back to _sum.cu.pa_, attributed to Thonmi Sambhota (ca. 622 AD), makes use of the Sanskrit framework, exemplified by Panini's _Astadhyayi_, to analyze Tibetan case. Thus, _Sum.cu.pa_ and later works identify eight cases more or less corresponding to categories identified for the Sanskrit system. This inventory includes a vocative case, called _bod.pa_ , which, according to Vollman (p. 338) does not actually even occur in the variety of Tibetan represented in these early works.

Such inadequacies may well be due to a desire on the part of early grammarians to present unifying descriptions for the distributional patterns they observed for forms which occur in multiple constructions with different functions., As Vollman (2008: 12-15), Tournadre (2010), and others have pointed out, the authors of these early treatises were also more concerned with providing prescriptive rules of thumb for Tibetan speakers learning to read and write in their own language.

1.9   Methods of data collection

As stated, the descriptions in this dissertation are based on many different kinds—and sources—of data. In addition to the data that I have collected myself, I have chosen to use examples cited from other published sources for three reasons. The first is that the research presented in this dissertation builds upon the work of other scholars. I apply novel parameters of research to previously-studied phenomenon, which entails making use of data from these earlier studies. The second reason is that I may lack sufficient examples of a phenomenon in my own dataset that is well-illustrated by someone else's data. The third reason is that I strive to present a description of Amdo Tibetan that is as comprehensive as possible. Other studies include data from dialects I did not have access to, in the course of collecting my own data, and some studies represent earlier time periods of the language. Previous studies of Amdo Tibetan have focused exclusively on the speech of a single community or location, often of a small number of individuals. I would consider these studies to be of dialects of Amdo Tibetan, so it makes sense to incorporate them into this wider study.

Concerning the types of data, my own dataset includes both so-called "natural" data and elicited data. For the most part, examples from other data sources are either elicited or produced under elicitation-like conditions, as for example, in publications that include data provided by an author who is also a native speaker. Natural data from my collection is largely in the form of conversations between native speakers, with some individual narrations. I am fortunate to have had access to people who were comfortable being recorded while they went about their lives and also in having many of these same

people be willing to then sit down and listen to recordings of themselves and help me understand what was going on. Much of the elicited data I have collected has proceeded from these post-recording sessions: as I encounter a phenomenon that interests or perplexes me, I have relied on elicitation, conducted primarily through the medium of Chinese (at least, on my part), to confirm and explore interesting structures, test hypotheses and generate examples that are sometimes more suitable for illustrating individual constructions than the natural speech examples that may have alerted me to a construction's existence in the first place.

Of course, elicited data should be handled with care, and ideally used as a supplement to data collected from naturally produced speech. However, I do think that a researcher's approach toward elicitation should reflect the specific conditions of the language, as well as the goals and circumstances of the research. For various reasons, I have found elicitation to be invaluable in the work leading up to this dissertation.

One common criticism of elicitation is that consultants may produce examples that are somehow "unnatural", which is to say are infelicitous, or simply don't occur outside of the elicitation context. I can attest to having encountered this problem myself on numerous occasions. I have learned to deal with this, by running examples that seem "unusual" to me (based on my developing, but admittedly far-from perfect intuition) by more than one consultant. I also ask consultants to explain the logic of phenomena to me, a process that often includes elaborating hypothetical situations in which they could imagine an example being used. These kinds of discussions with speakers often yield unexpected insights for both participants, as well as serve as a kind of filter for the data— examples of marginally grammatical or comprehensible structures that might have been

produced solely in response to the unique conditions of an elicitation session tend to be revealed as such.

In addition to encouraging active participation in the analysis of the elicited examples they produce and double-checking questionable examples with other consultants, I also rely on the experience, understanding and skill level of the people from whom I elicit data. Because I am fortunate enough to work with a robust language, spoken by many, and to have fairly easy access to speakers, over time I have come to work almost exclusively with people who are interested in what I'm doing, or at least see value in helping me do it, and who are also aware of what constitutes "good" data for me. Reaching this point has taken years, during which I and the people with whom I work have learned together how to pay attention to data, what kinds of questions to ask, and how to think in ways that build off of the insights we have already developed. In short, the luxury of time and the willingness of native speakers to engage deeply with me in this process lead me to feel confident in the quality of my elicited data.

CHAPTER II

TYPOLOGICAL OVERVIEW

This chapter presents a cursory overview of the phonological and morphosyntactic typology of Amdo Tibetan dialects.

2.1   Phonology

The basic phonological structure is the syllable. With the exception of borrowings, most content words and grammatical morphemes alike are either monosyllabic, or else transparently derived from monosyllabic compounds. There are very few multisyllabic words which do not have clear etymological origins in more than one monosyllabic word. Such examples seem invariably to be loan words from other languages, such as /araχ/, 'alcohol', which ultimately derives from Arabic, borrowed by way of Mongolian.

Syllable structure is asymmetrical, with a larger range of phonemic contrasts marked in the onset position than in the rime. Consequently, it is typical for descriptions of Amdo Tibetan dialects to divide consonants into an onset and a coda inventory. There is considerable variation in the phonemic inventories of different dialects, both in terms of the phonetic value of the phonemes included as well as the number of the phonemes. Moreover, a handful of dialects have reportedly developed contrastive tone on a restricted number of syllable types[50].

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[50] Most notably, the dialect spoken in Rma.stod (Chinese: Māduō 玛多) County in northern Mgo.log Prefecture has developed a phonemic contrast between high and low tones, resulting in minimal pairs such as [na^{13}] 'sick' and [na^{53}] 'ear' (Wang 2012: 336-352).

Generally, the phonological structure of dialects can be divided into two types, "conservative" and "innovative". The conservative type of dialect generally consists of a larger number of onsets, including a large number of complex onsets; a smaller number of vowels, which are also quite centralized; and a larger number of codas. In contrast, the innovative type of dialect has fewer onsets, including far fewer complex onsets; a larger inventory of vowels, including in some dialects a set of nasalized vowels; and a greatly reduced coda inventory. Representing conservative and innovative dialects, respectively, are Gcig.sgril and Gro.tsang, whose inventories are presented below. These two dialects represent the two phonological extremes of Amdo Tibetan.

Table 4. Gcig.sgril onsets (88)

Simplex onsets (26)
pʰ   w   m
t tʰ   ɫ l   n
ts tsʰ   s z
ʂ   r (ʐ)
tɕ tɕʰ   ɕ (ç) ʑ j   ɳ
k(ɣ)   kʰ   ŋ
h
ʁʷ   0

Complex onsets (64)
ʂp   mpʰ   ʈb   mb   ɻm ʂm ɣm
pt wt ʂt xt ntʰ ɻd ɣd md nd wl ɦl ɻn ʂn ɣn
ʂts xts xtsʰ mtsʰ ntsʰ ɻdz ɣdz ndz   ps xs ms wz ɦz
ɕc xc ɕcʰ mcʰ ɳcʰ ɣɟ ɳɟ
ptɕ   xtɕʰ mtɕʰ ɳtɕʰ ndʑ   pɕ wɕ xɕ wz ɦʑ ɦj   ɻɳ ʂɳ ɣɳ
mɳ
pk ʂk mkʰ ŋkʰ wg ɻg mg ŋg

Table 5. Gcig.sgril codas (8)

p			m
t(d)(ʔ)		r l	n
k(ç)(x)(ɣ)(χ)(ʔ)			ŋ

Table 6 Gcig.sgril rimes (37)

i, ɨ, ə, o, u, ui, a
ip, ɛp, əp, op, ap
im, ɛm, əm, om, ɑm
it, ɛt, ət, ot, at
in, en, ən, on, an
ix, ɨɣ, ək, ok, aχ, ɔχ
əŋ, oŋ, ɔŋ, ɑŋ

Table 7. Gcig.sgril vowels

i		ɨ	u	
	e	ɛ		o
ə				
			a(ɑ)(ɔ)	

diphthong: ui

Table 8. Gro.tsang onsets (58) (Xu 2014)

p	ʰp	pʰ	ɦb	ⁿb	f					m	ɦm		
t	ʰt	tʰ	ɦd	ⁿd	ɬ			l	ɦl	n	ɦn		
ts	ʰts	tsʰ	ɦdz	ⁿdz	s	sʰ	z	ɦz					
tʂ	tʂʰ	ʰtʂ	ɦdʐ	ⁿdʐ	ʂ		ʐ	ɦʐ					
tɕ	ʰtɕ	tɕʰ	ⁿtɕʰ	ɦdʑ	ⁿdʑ	ɕ	ɕʰ	ʑ	ɦʑ	j		ɲ	
k	ʰk	kʰ	ɦg	ⁿg						ŋ	ɦŋ		
	h												
	ʁ	ɦʁ											0

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Table 9. Gro.tsang vowels (22)

i,ĩ	y	ɿ	ʮ	ʅ		ʊ u
	ø	e			o	
	ə			ɔ, ɔ̃		
		æ, æ̃				

Dipthongs: ie, ui, ue, uɔ̃, ua, uæ̃

Table 10. Gro.tsang codas

p	
	ɹ(ɭ)
k (x)	

Gcig.sgril, which is a dialect spoken in southern Mgo.log Prefecture, Qīnghǎi Province, close to the borders of Rnga.ba Prefecture, in Sìchuān, and Rma.chu County in Gānsù, displays a syllable structure that is asymmetric to the extreme. Possible CV structures include CCVC, CVC, CCV, CV, VC, and V. Syllable-final /ɹ/ is typically realized as rhotic quality to the vowel. Rather than analyzing an entire set of rhotic vowels, I'm analyzing this as a coda consonant, because such an analysis is theoretically simpler. Xu (2014) also presents a phonological analysis of rhoticity as a segment, represented as /r/ (i.e. p. 94).

Counting zero, there are 88 contrastive onsets. The onsets are separated into simplex and complex onsets for the sake of clarity. Otherwise, in truth the complex onsets do not much exhibit the phonological features of true segmental clusters; not all of

the consonants of the simplex set occur in the complex set and the latter also contains phones that do not appear in the former. Nonetheless, the phonetic complexity and the etymology of such forms motivate an analysis of phonological complexity. This is also how Tibetans themselves typically view such forms: generally speaking, Gcig.sgril complex onsets are orthographically represented as consonant clusters, and most (but not all) of the simplex onsets are represented as single consonants.

While there are 88 contrastive onsets, Gcig.sgril has considerably fewer rimes. Ten codas and nine vowels, including one diphthong, produce a set of 37 rimes. In fact, the number of contrastive rimes is a slightly less because some rimes only occur with certain onsets and may thus be considered allophones.

In Gro.tsang, the syllable structure, while still asymmetric, is notably more balanced than that of Gcig.sgril. Gro.tsang is a highly endangered dialect, spoken by Tibetans from Lèdū District, Qīnghǎi Province. According to my consultants, there are only three villages where the dialect is still widely spoken, although large numbers of older people (60 and above) from elsewhere in the county still speak it. Even though Gro.tsang is threatened by rapid language shift, there is no reason to suspect that the phonology or any other area of the dialect is affected by language attrition as there are still monolinguals (all older adults, perhaps over 60) and children learning it as their first language.

In contrast to Gcig.sgril's 88 onsets, Gro.tsang has a 58, which I have not bothered to divide into simplex and complex sets because such an analysis would be based almost entirely on etymology and thus seems rather artificial. Moreover, whereas Gcig.sgril has onsets that are phonetically complex, involving separate articulatory

gestures suggestive of a string of phones or phonemes, in Gro.tsang, many of the contrasts in onsets are produces by differences in manner, such as aspiration, pre-aspiration, pre-voiced-aspiration and pre-nasalization. There is no reason to analyze such forms as segmentally complex. As a caveat, speakers of Gro.tsang who are literate are likely to analyze some onsets complexly.

Gro.tsang's rime structure also differs dramatically from that of Gcig.sgril. Three codas combine with 22 vowels to create approximately 58 contrastive rimes. As with Gcig.sgril, in Gro.tsang not all rimes occur with all onsets, but the majority do. Therefore, we see a much stronger tendency toward symmetry in the syllable structure of Gro.tsang than in Gcig.sgril. The CVC structure of Gro.tsang can be analyzed as displaying the following types: CVC, CV, CVV, VV, V and VN. Note that the VV structure entails non-identical vowel segments, and so should not be analyzed as a vowel length contrast.

Impressionistically, the lexical inventory of Gro.tsang content words seems to have a higher proportion of monosyllables than that of Gcig.sgril. This is because many disyllables have fused into monosyllables, typically—but not always—resulting in diphthongs.

Neither Gro.tsang nor Gcig.sgril have contrastive tone. In my own recorded data, Gro.tsang has a predictable intonation pattern of LH pitch for true disyllabic words, such as *sama* 'food'. Otherwise, content words, which are largely monosyllabic, have a default H pitch, which is realized as a L pitch in certain clause positions. Disyllables in Gcig.sgril also display a LH pattern in citation form, but in actual utterances, more often than not display other pitch values which seem to be unpredictable beyond pragmatic context.

Gcig.sgril and Gro.tsang represent perhaps the two greatest typological extremes of Amdo Tibetan phonology.

2.2   Morphology

Amdo Tibetan is an agglutinative language. There are two portmanteau morphemes that might be considered fusional—the negative egophoric equative copula *min* and the negative existential copula *med*. These two morphemes were inherited from proto-Tibetic or an earlier ancestor, as they are ubiquitous across the branch. *min* appears to be a fusion of the negative imperfective prefix *mi-* and the affirmative egophoric equative copula *yin*; *med* is a fusion of the perfective negative prefix ma- with the affirmative egophoric existential copula *yod.* In addition, there are a few other examples of morphological fusion. For example, in some dialects ergative and genitive case marking is sometimes expressed by a change in vowel quality on an open syllable, rather than by a separate syllable suffix (see Sec. 2.4).

The language's morphology leans overwhelmingly towards suffixes or post-positions. There are just three prefixes: the interrogation marker *e-*, which in all the recordings I have done a phonetic analysis of is pronounced with a high pitch relative to the form it is affixed to; and the two negation markers, *mi-*, which occurs in non-perfective contexts, and *ma-*, which occurs in perfective and imperative contexts. This is illustrated with examples on the following page, all of which are taken from the dialect spoken by residents of Gcig.sgril Mgo.log.

(7) cʰu   zama   ə- zu-Ø

    2S.ERG   food   Q-eat.PFV-EGO

    'Did you eat?/Have you eaten?'

(8) ta   ŋi   ma-zu-Ø

    now   1S.ERG   NEG.PFV-eat.PFV-EGO

    'I haven't eaten yet.'

(9) ma-ⁿʝo

    NEG.PFV-go. IPF

    'Don't go.' (Parent ordering child.)

(10) kʰərgi   çʲa   mɨ-za-kɨ̥

    3S.ERG   meat   NEG.IPF-eat.IPF-DE.IPF

    'He doesn't eat meat. (I know from talking to him or observing him.)'

    While I analyze these markers as prefixes, rather than clitics, they cannot be phonologically reduced. They also attract phonetic stress. In the case of the interrogative prefix, a high pitch is produced, and in the case of the two negation markers, the phonetic expression of stress varies from a higher pitch to greater amplitude. I analyze them as prefixes based on syntactic properties, as they cannot occur independently.

    The interrogative prefix may co-occur with either of the negative prefixes. I have few examples of this in my data, but in all cases, the interrogative prefix directly precedes the negative prefix, as in (11), below.

(11) *cʰu*   *ŋa*   *ŋo*   *ə́-mi-ɕi*

    2S.ERG   1S   face   Q-NEG.IPF-know

    'Don't you recognize me?'   (Gcig.sgril)[51]

The interrogative prefix *ə-* generally occurs before the final verb stem of a finite clause. Note that "final verb stem" is not synonymous with semantic main verb, as in the case of VPs which contain verbal auxiliaries (Sec. 6.5), the interrogative marker will occur after the semantic main verb and before the auxiliary. This distributional property of the interrogative marker is illustrated in (12), below.

(12) *cʰo*   *ŋa*   *ə́-jo*

    2S   sleep   Q-PERF.EGO

    'Are you sleeping?' ('Have you fallen asleep yet?')   (Gcig.sgril)

The interrogative marker also occurs in the middle of some assertion-marking suffixes, such as the factual allophoric suffix illustrated in the following example. This particular distributional property of *ə-* is an artifact of its developmental history, as explained in Sec. 3.1.1.

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[51] Another way to say this, which might be more "natural" in some contexts, would be (a), below:
(a)   *cʰu*   *ŋa*   *ŋo*   *mi-ɕi-a*
       2S.ERG   1S   face   NEG.IPF-know-SFP.?
'What—don't you recognize me?!'

(13) *o-ki*   *χekɕa   tɕʰa-ni.ə.re*

Tibetan-ERG   pork   eat-FACT.?.ALLO

'Do Tibetans eat pork?'   (Yǎqūtān)

The two negative prefixes display the same distributional properties as the interrogative prefix with the exception that in serial verb chains they may display some flexibility as to which verb they occur before, depending on the intended semantic scope, as illustrated in the examples (14) and (15) from Gcig.sgril Mgo.log, below.

(14) *kʰərgi*   *ma-nɖo*   *wit-tʰa*

3S.ERG   NEG.PFV-go.IPF   depart-DE.PFV

'He didn't go.'

(15) *kʰərgə*   *nɖo*   **ma-*wit-tʰa***

3S   go.IPF   **NEG.PFV-**depart-DE.PFV

'He didn't go, yet.'

.

As the preceding examples make clear, grammatical inflection is marked by both the addition of suffixes or function words following a syntactic 'host' verb, which may either be the lexical verb stem of the VP, but only if the VP does not contain finitizing constructions comprised of elements that were previously matrix verbs of a historical source construction that was either a clause chain or a copular clause.

2.3   Syntax

Based off of the dominant pattern of elicited transitive clauses[52], Tibetan,
including Amdo Tibetan, can be characterized as having a canonical word order of SOV,
but under a number of discourse-pragmatic conditions, an OAV order may also occur, as
in example (16), below.

(16) *ŋa*   *ami*   *n̥tsaŋ-tʰa*

    1S.DAT   Mother.ERG   scold-DE.PST

    'I got yelled at by my mother.'   (Gcig.sgril)

It is clear that the non-canonical order of ergative-marked agents and unmarked or
dative-marked patients in transitive sentences such as (14), above, sometimes serves the
same function as a passive voice construction in a language like English—'promoting'
the patient to a more pragmatically prominent position—but this is not consistently the
case. According to Ebihara (2010: 67-68), Amdo Tibetan, like other described varieties
of Tibetan[53], does not have grammatical voice.

With minor exceptions, Amdo Tibetan clauses are strictly verb-final, whether they
are finite or non-finite. This is almost always the sentence structure one encounters in
direct elicitations. However, in my spontaneous speech data, there are some exceptions in

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[52] In Sec. 5.3.2 I explain why the conditions of elicitation may favor an SOV order without it being
necessary for such an order to actually be canonical, or pragmatically unmarked.
[53] Many scholars have noted this feature in Tibetan, generally (c.f., Agha 1993; Tournadre 1996: 87ff;
Vollman 2008 :27; Sun 1993) have noted it as a feature of Amdo Tibetan, specifically.

which a noun occurs at the end of a sentence. Examples of such exceptional order are given in (17) and (18).

(17) *ta   tɕʰi   je-ko-Ø   cʰo?*

     now   what   do-PROG-EGO   2S

     'What are you doing, you?'   (Gcig.sgril)

(18) *ɲən.tsɨɕ=zɨɕ-a   mɖoʁa=zɨɕ   timi   tsʰoŋkʰəŋ=zɨɕ-kə-nəŋæ*

     date=INDEF-LOC herder=INDEF like.this   store=INDEF-GEN-LOC

     *ʂəv   ɲu-ni   soŋ-zɨɕ   **tæ***

     halter   buy-NMZ.ALL   went-IE.PST   now

     'So, then, one day a nomad went into a shop to buy a horse halter.'   (Gcig.sgril)

In (15), the deleted second-person agent of the sentence occurs at the end as a nominative pronoun. In (16), the temporal adverb *ta ,* meaning 'then' or 'now', occurs at the end of the sentence, following a morphologically finite VP. The position of both nouns appear to be instances of the same discourse-pragmatic construction. However, the function of this construction is beyond the scope of this paper.

Amdo Tibetan exhibits anaphoric NP deletion. Established referents in the discourse do not have to be overtly expressed in a clause. Any participant of a proposition may be deleted. In fact, it is common for clauses to have no overt arguments. This means that the only obligatory constituent of a clause is the verb. Examples of clauses with and without overt arguments are given below.

(19)

A. *tə   keʰkɛn   ə=ʐe*

    DEF   teacher   ?=EQ.ALLO

'Is that (person) a teacher?'

B. *ʐe*

    EQ.ALLO

    '(She) is.'   (Chu.ma Reb.gong)

(20)

A. *mɪpʰam   ə́=jokı̥̈*

    Mipham ?=EQ.ALLO

    'Is Mipham here/there?'

B. *mekı̥̈*

    NEG.EQ.ALLO

    '(He) is not (here).'   (Gcig.sgril)

(21) *ə-wɨt-tʰa*

    Q-go. PFV-DE.PST

    'Did (he) leave (yet)?'   (Gcig.sgril)

(22) *tɕʰi   je-ko*

    what   do-PROG.EGO

    'What are (you) doing?'   (Gcig.sgril)

(23) *mi-çʲi-Ø*

NEG.IPF-know-EGO

'(I) don't know (it).'   (Gcig.sgril)

     Examples (19-23) demonstrate that NP deletion occurs in both declarative and interrogative clauses, regardless of an argument's person or semantic role. I examine the conditions under which NP deletion occurs and the implications of this property for our understanding of the structure of Amdo Tibetan clauses in Sec. 5.3.1.

     The order in which an adverbial phrase occurs in a clause depends on its function. Broadly speaking, adverbials of time or place tend to occur after an overt subject and before any other constituent. Adverbs of frequency and manner immediately precede the verb. Example (24), below, is of a clause with a temporal adverb and a frequency adverb. It is excerpted from Sung & Rgya (2009: 372). Because the original text was in Written Tibetan, I reproduce it here in the Wylie transliteration system, un-italicized.

(24) *nga*   ***dgong.ma***   ***gcig-ga***   *spyod.khang-nga*

     1s   last.night   one-LOC   restroom-LOC

     thengs.ma   \   *lnga* *drug -zig-ga* *song-nga.*

     time   five   six-INDEF-LOC went-EGO

'Last night I went to the bathroom five or six times.'

     Another feature of Amdo Tibetan morphosyntax that has important typological implications is the case system, which is examined in the next section.

2.4   The case system

With minor exceptions, arguments and propositional adjuncts must be marked for semantic role. This is accomplished by a case system that closely, but not exactly, resembles that of other Tibetic languages, including Old Tibetan. It appears, then, that case is relatively stable part of Tibetic morphosyntax[54].

Recent works include Agha (1993), DeLancey (2003), Hill (2004;), Tournadre (2010), and Vollman (2008). However, given the prominence of case in the morphology of noun phrases, as well as the fact that most in-depth descriptions have focused on the case systems of Lhasa/Standard Tibetan, or Classical Standard Tibetan, it is worthwhile to provide a brief summary of the system as it appears in Amdo Tibetan.

In Sec. 2.4.1, I present an overview of the case system and briefly discuss issues of allomorphy in case-marking. In Sec. 2.4.4, I examine instances of isomorphism of case marking for different semantic roles. In Sec. 2.4.5, I discuss the distributional patterns of ergative case and dative case and compare these patterns with those of Standard Tibetan.

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[54] As consistent as the morphology and general categories of case are across Tibetic, it seems unlikely that the Tibetic case system was inherited from Proto-Tibeto-Burman (c.f., LaPolla 1995).

2.4.1   Case morphology

Amdo Tibetan case markers express the following semantic roles: transitive agent, instrument, recipient, dative experiencer, location, source. The same morphological paradigm also includes an associative marker and a topic marker.

Along with the un-marked nominative form, used for patients and subjects of intransitive actions and states, these semantic roles and the cases that mark them are presented in Table 11, below. In order to demonstrate some of the more common instances of morphophonologically determined allomorphism, each case is illustrated using two different words—the first-person singular pronoun *ŋa* and the name Btan.'dzin (WT: བཏན་འཛིན), pronounced /ptanzɪn/. All examples are based on the Gcig.sgril dialect.

Table 11. Case system in Gcig.sgril

Semantic Role	First Person Singular	Btan.'dzin form
Nominative	*ŋa (ŋə)*	*ptanzɪn*
Ergative	*ŋɨ*	*ptanzɪn -kə*
Instrumental	*ŋɨ*	*ptanzɪn -kə*
Genitive	*ŋi*	*ptanzɪn -kə*
Locative	*ŋa (ŋi naŋa)*	*ptanzɪn -a*
Dative	*ŋa*	*ptanzɪn -a*
Ablative	*ŋa -ni*	*ptanzɪn -ni*
Associative	*ŋa -ta*	*ptanzɪn -ta*
Topic*	*ŋa -nə*	*ptanzɪn -nə*

With few exceptions (see Sec. 2.4.3), case is obligatory in Amdo Tibetan. If a particular semantic role is overtly expressed, then it must be marked with the appropriate case. In particular, semantic agents are consistently marked as ergative and intransitive subjects are never so marked.

I include the topic marker *-nə* in Table 11 even though the function of topic-marking[55] is not included in the typological definition of case-marking or in other descriptions of Tibetan case (c.f., DeLancey 2003; Hill 2011). Topic-marking is determined by a referent's discourse-pragmatic status, as opposed to the semantic role. It is also associated with first-position order, meaning that in a clause with more than one NP, *-nə* can only appear on the first NP. None of the other markers in Table 11 display the same restriction. However, on first-position NPs *-nə* occurs in paradigmatic opposition to the other markers[56]. This is shown in the following example.

(25) *ŋa-nə*   *tɕʰi*   *jɪn-nə*[57]   *mɨ-ɕi*

    1S-TOP   what   EQ-NMZ   NEG.IPF-know

    'I didn't know what was up.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Because 'know' is a transitive verb, the first-person pronoun in (25) would otherwise be in the ergative form. However, the ergative case cannot co-occur with the topic marker.

In terms of allomorphy, the forms of genitive, instrumental and ergative case vary depending on the CV structure of the final syllable of the host word. In open syllables,

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[55] Some authors (e.g.) describe *-nə* as a focus marker. However, there is stronger evidence that Amdo Tibetan speakers employ prosodic strategies, such as adjustments to pitch and duration, to express word- and phrase-level focus (Wang et al. 2012)

[56] In his analysis of Lhasa Tibetan, Agha (1993: 84-85), describes the topic marker as co-occuring with ergative case. This is not the case in Amdo Tibetan.

[57] The nominalizer *-nə* is cognate with the topic marker and serves as an intermediate developmental stage in the grammaticalization of the factual verbal suffixes (Sec. 8.7) and the factual copula forms (see Sec. 7.5).

these three cases are realized by a raising of the vowel, as Table 11 shows for the first-person pronoun. If the word ends with a closed syllable or—in dialects such as Gro.tsang and Yǎqūtān—that have lost their nasal codas, genitive, instrumental and ergative case are all realied with a suffix -*kə*, or -*ki*. These two allomorphs are further illustrated with examples on the following page.

The sentence in (26) presents nominative forms of the indefinite pronoun and the first-person singular pronoun in the Yǎqūtān dialect. The sentence in (27) demonstrates both allopmorphs of the genitive case for the same two words. A similar pattern of allomorphy is illustrated for ergative case with the sentences in (28) and (29).

Nominative

(26) *kæ̃*   *ŋa*   *ʰtwɛna m̥tʰo-ki*

    3.INDEF 1S   comparing   be.tall DE.IPF

    'They are taller than me.'   (Yǎqūtān)

Genitive case

(27) *kæ̃-ki*   *ʰkɣ-no*   *nĩtsa*

    3.INDEF-GEN boil-NMZ   supper

    ŋe   *ʰkɣ-no*   *nĩtsa* *ʰtwɛna*   *ɕumbo*   *re*

    3.GEN   boil-NMZ   supper comparing   delicious   EQ.ALLO

    'Their cooking is more delicious than my cooking.'   (Yǎqūtān)

Ergative -*kə*

(28) *kæ̃-ki*   *kʰatsʰaŋ*   *ŋa-la*   *tɛr-gi*

     3.INDEF-ERG   yesterday   1S-DAT   give-DE.IPF

     'He gave it me yesterday.'   (Yǎqūtān)

Ergative vowel raising

(29) *ŋe*   *kʰatsʰaŋ*   *kæ̃-a*   *ɕĩ[58]-ta-Ø*

     1S.ERG   yesterday 3.INDEF-DAT   give.PFV-TR.PFV-EGO

     'I gave it to him yesterday.'   (Yǎqūtān)

This morphophonological alternation is not always consistent. Speakers of all dialects frequently generalize the use of the -*kə* allomorphs to all contexts.

In addition to allomorphy in the genitive, ergative and instrumental cases, there is also considerable phonological variation in the expression of dative and locative case, although overwhelmingly both cases are expressed with a suffixing -*a*. However, Yǎqūtān speakers tend to use the form -*la* when the previous syllable is open, as in (28), above. The use of -*a* on closed and nasalized syllables is illustrated in (29).

The -*la* form is not universal to all dialects. In my personally collected dataset of elcitied and spontaneous speech, it only occurs consistently in my data of Yǎqūtān. Elsewhere, the alternation is between -*na* and -*a*. This is the case for Sun's (1993) description of Mdzo.dge, Haller's (2004) description of Them.chen, and Shao's (2014)

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[58] The Yǎqūtān verbs *ɕĩ* and *ʰtɛr* are both translated as 'give'—and both have cognates in other dialects of Amdo Tibetan and also other Tibetic languages. I am not sure that these words are close synonyms, but they may be, at least in this language. The WT of *ɕĩ* is འབྱིན ('*byin*), and the WT of *ʰtɛr* is སྟེར (*ster*). The root *ster* is etymologically a verb, but in WT it shows up most commonly, I believe, in morphological nouns, like ster.ma 'treasure', or *ster.ston*, "Treasure Revealer", which is someone who reveals hidden religious scriptures.

description of A.rig. The dialectal division between *-na* and *-la* forms is interesting when we consider that in previous stages of the language, the two forms expressed slightly different functions. This is discussed in the next section.

In addition to illustrating the variable forms of some case markers, Table 11 also demonstrates the homophony of the ergative, gentive and instrumental case forms, as well as of the locative and dative case forms. This homophony and likely case syncretism is discussed in the next section.

2.4.2 Isomorphic case-marking

One notable feature of the case system is the high degree of homophony. Most notably, there is clear syncretism of the ergative and instrumental cases and of the dative and locative cases.

The isomorphism of ergative and instrumental cases is illustrated, below, with examples from the language textbook, *Colloquial Amdo Tibetan*, by Sung & Rgya. The original sentences were in Written Tibetan, and so are presented here in the Wylie transliteration system without italicization.

Ergative

(30) *nga-s   yul   dren-gi*

    1S-ERG   home   miss-DE.IPF

    'I miss home.'   (I.e., 'I am homesick.')   (Sung & Bla: 126)

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Instrumental

(31) *mgo-gi*   *rgyan.cha='di*   *spos.shel -ra* *byu.ru-**s***   *las-no-gi*

    head-GEN   ornament=PROX   amber-ASS   coral-**INST**   make-NMZ-GEN

    zhe.gi   *dka'-gi*

    very   difficult-DE.IPF

   'The headpiece is made of amber and coral, so it's expensive.'(Sung & Bla: 314)

Because examples (30) and (31) are in Written Tibetan, it is especially apparent that ergative and instrumental case are expressed by identical structures, since both are marked with a the addition of an orthographic coda *s* to the final open syllable of the case-marked noun. This spelling dates back to the earliest period of Written Tibetan in the 7th century.

The homophony of ergative and instrumental case appears to be an example of true isomorphism. For one, in Tibetan grammarian tradition one label is applied to both— *byed.sgra* (WT: བྱེད་སྒྲ) 'action marker'—and the role of words that occur with the 'action marker' is referred to as *byed.pa.bo* (WT: བྱེད་པ་བོ) 'actor'[59]. Thus, Dor.zhi (1987: 40) explains that the *byed.pa.bo* can be either a "sentient" (i.e., animate) or "non-sentient" actor[60]. Furthermore, in every dialect of spoken Amdo Tibetan with which I am familiar,

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[59] The label *byed.sgra*, in which *byed* is the imperfective stem for the verb 'do, act', and *sgra* means 'sound' used here with a sense closer to that of 'marker' or 'morpheme', first appears in the second surviving grammatical treatise attributed to Thonmi Sambhota, the *Rdag kyi 'jug pa*. In the later *Sum.cu.pa*, Thonmi uses the label *byed.pa.po* to refer to the class of nouns that the *byed.sgra* marks. Both terms are in common use today and are part of most curricula for teaching literacy in Written Tibetan (Tournadre 2010)

[60] The original text is, "བྱ་བ་བྱེད་པའི་ཀུན་སློང་དང་། ཚུལ་བ་བྱེད་པའི་སེམས་ཅན་དང་། སེམས་ལྡན་གྱི་བྱེད་པ་བོར་སྒྲ་ བཏགས་པའི་སེམས་མེད་ཀྱི་དངོས་པོ་གང་རུང་གིས། བྱ་བ་བྱེད་པར་སྟོན་པའི་ཚིག་སྟེ།" ("(It) is a marker the majority of

there is no evidence of any phonological distinction between instrumental and ergative case.

One implication of this definition is that the case is associated with volitional participants and non-volitional participants alike. This observation has implications for understanding why, in some Tibetic languages, there exist differences in distributional properties of this case on animate versus inanimate referents, as will be discussed in the next section.

Of course, no modern spoken varieties of Tibetan pronounce this *s*[61]. In the equivalent phonological environment, ergative/instrumental case is realized by raising the value of the vowel in the open syllable, as we saw with the first-person pronoun in Table 11, above. This also happens to be the form for genitive case in most open syllables. The result is that, in Amdo Tibetan, not only are ergative and instrumental case homophonous with each other, but they are also homophonous with genitive case. The following examples illustrate homophony in the various allomorphs of ergative and genitive case in Gcig.sgril. In sentences (32) and (33), the relevant case is expressed with a suffix *-kə*. In sentences (34) and (35), it is expressed by raising the vowel of the noun's syllable.

Genitive *-kə*

(32) *titsʰo   rŋa -kə   tʰoχ -ni lam-a   wɨt=rgo-nəre*

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actions for which it occurs can either have arguments that are sentient and intentionally engaged (in the action), or else are unintentional actors who have unwittingly engaged (in the action).")

[61] There are, however, Tibetic languages spoken outside Tibet that do preserve the historical *s phoneme. For example, Zemp (2018: 250) describes Purik, spoken on the Indian border with Pakistan, as having the form *–(V)s*. Bielmeier (1985: 90) describes Balti, spoken north of Purik, as having the forms *-si* for open syllables and *-isi* following closed syllables. Interestingly, in both languages different forms are used for instrumental case.

| | o'clock | five-**GEN** | top-ABlroad-LOC | depart=DEON-FACT.ALLO |

'(We) have to be on the road by five.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Ergative -*kə*

(33) *rʝajaŋtsʰo-kə*   *tɕʰə=zɨç*   *li-ko-nəre*

      Rgyal.dbying.mtsho-ERG   what=INDEF   do-PROG-FACT.ALLO

      'What is Rgyal.dbying.mtsho doing?'   (Gcig.sgril)

Genitive *o →u*

(34) *tə*   ***cʰu***   *kʰapar ə-re*

      DEF   **2S.GEN**   phone Q- EQ.ALLO

      'Is that your phone?'   (Gcig.sgril)

Ergative *o →u*

(35) ***cʰu***   *taŋwo çcik   pɕɛ-na   ə-wa-kə*

      2S.ERG   again   one   say-COND   Q- ok-DE.IPF

      'Could you say (it) again?'   (Gcig.sgril)

While it is certainly true that the genitive case is homophonous with ergative-instrumental case, I'm not sure that this falls within the range of isomorphism. Unlike the distinction between ergative and instrumental case, speakers seem to differentiate the genitive marker, spelling it differently than the ergative/instrumental case. Of course, the functional contexts in which genitive case occurs are quite distinct from those of ergative/instrumental case: genitive marking is prototypically associated with nominal modification (see Sec. 5.5) and ergative/instrumental marking is prototypically associated

with propositional participants, be they arguments or adjuncts. The fact that it is not always easy to distinguish an agent from an adverbial instrument is what makes the forms expressing these two functions isomorphic (see Sec. 5.2.2). In contrast, even though the genitive and ergative/instrumental cases are homophonous, because they occur in different environments, they are not isomorphic.

Another important instance of case syncretism is the homophony of locative and dative case. This is illustrated in the following examples. In (36), -*a* marks the NP as a dative possessor, which is a core argument. In (37), -*a* marks the NP as a location.

Dative

(36) *ɣla-na*   *ʂta=zɨç-**a***   *tɨ*   *re*

     rent-COND   horse=INDEF-**DAT**   how.much   EQ.ALLO

     'How much to rent a horse?'   (Gcig.sgril)

Locative

(37) *ta*   *m̥tsʰo*   *maŋa=zɨç-**a***   *soŋ-a-jatɨ*   *tɨ*   *re*

     then   lake   many=INDEF-**LOC**   went-EGO-SFP   how.much   EQ.ALLO

     '(We) went to many lakes.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Similar to ergative/instrumental case, the overlapping distributions of the various allomorphs of the locative and dative cases was already a feature of Old Tibetan and was well-known to the earliest grammarian and linguistic scholars. Along with ablative case, early grammarian descriptions grouped these various forms together under the term *la.don* (WT: ལ་དོན), sometimes translated as '*la* equivalents' (Hill 2012: 5), in which the form *la* is used as a cover term for all the other (presumed) allomorphs. The respective

distributions of these various allomorphs are traditionally explained in morphophonemic terms.

In fact, many of these forms are not allomorphs, even in Old Tibetan. As Beyer (1992: 267-269) notes, two of the forms -*la* and -*na* express slightly different senses of locative or dative functions. The latter is used to specify an enclosed or containing space (p. 268). In a similar vein, A.lags Dor.zhi (1987: 14-15), speaking of Written Tibetan, generally, notes that a narrower range of supposed *la.don* allomorphs are used for locations than for recipients or other semantic roles.

Like Written Tibetan, spoken Amdo Tibetan also exhibits a similar weak tendency to differentiate locative and dative roles. However, in the majority of instances, the two cases seem to be homophonous and if these roles were historically marked by two distinct forms, they have since merged in the modern language.

Case syncretism is an interesting structural feature of Amdo Tibetan. It also has implications for a cross-linguistic typology of the grammatical expression of semantic roles.

Other interesting structural features of Amdo Tibetan are the distributional properties of ergative case and dative case. Like Standard Tibetan, Amdo Tibetan speakers may omit dative case under certain conditions. In contrast, ergative case is obligatory for all overtly encoded transitive agents. These two issues will be briefly discussed in the next section.

2.4.3   Distributional patterns of ergative and dative case

In this section I examine two issues of typological interest. The first is the restriction of ergative case to transitive agents and its obligatory expression. Both of these features represent departures from the behavior of ergative marking as described for other Tibetan varieties. The second issue is the flexible marking of dative case on semantic experiencers and possessors, which phenomenon is also reported for Standard Tibetan.

DeLancey (1984) first identified conditions in which ergative case marking appears on intransitive subjects and is omitted on transitive agents in Lhasa Tibetan. Briefly, ergative marking has a strong correlation with perfective aspect and volitionality (see Sec. 0). When both conditions are met, intransitive subjects may be marked as ergative.

Tournadre (1991) demonstrated that, for certain transitive verbs and for certain temporal/aspectual contexts, ergative marking is compulsory for overt agents[62], in other contexts it can be left off of even volitional transitive agents if the agent in question is not in focus, or prominent in the discourse, thus establishing a pragmatic, as well as semantic, function for ergative case. Numerous other publications exist providing ample documentation that the opposition between ergative and nominative in Standard Tibetan does not exist to disambiguate transitive from intransitive clauses (DeLancey 2005: 7), although, as Agha (1993: 73-81) demonstrates, speakers are inclined to produce ergative case-marking when the identity of a transitive agent is unclear owing to multiple animate participants or NP deletion.

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[62] Since ergative and instrumental case are isomorphic, it bears mentioning that case marking is compulsory for instruments in Standard Tibetan, as well as Amdo Tibetan.

Recall that Dor.zhi's (1987) description of ergative/absolutive quoted in Sec.2.4.2 makes it clear that intentionality or volitionality of the referent is less important to the distribution of this case than the notion of causation. In fact, our definition of 'instrument' could well be 'non-volitional ergative-marked referent'. If causation was once the dominant value of this case, volitionality must have also been a secondary value. In Standard Tibetan, this secondary sense became the dominant function in contexts where a distinction between voluntary and involuntary causation is possible, namely when the referent is a sentient, or animate, actor. Perhaps in certain predicates for which causation is part of the inherent semantics of the verb, such as prototypical transitive events, the opposition between marked and un-marked actor became a contrast of volitionality, not causation. The volitional value of the case marker could then be extended to the arguments of other verbs, besides transitive actions when the speaker, for pragmatic reasons, found the expression of participant volitionality pragmatically useful. At the same time, for referents that have a default non-volitional interpretation, such as inanimate things, causation necessarily remains the dominant sense of this case marker. The marking of instruments is therefore non-optional because otherwise there is no way of recovering a causal relationship between the instrument and the action.

If the above scenario is a probable grammaticalization pathway for pragmatically-conditioned distribution of ergative case in Lhasa Tibetan, it seems likely that speakers followed a different pathway in Amdo Tibetan.

If the distribution of ergative case in Lhasa Tibetan has more to do with volitionality and pragmatic focus, then the distribution of Amdo Tibetan is much more like the ergative-absolutive systems for which the primary function, as characterized by

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Givón (2001: 208), is to mark a syntactic distintiction between transitive and intransitive clauses. Ergative marking is only permitted on transitive agents and instruments. It never occurs on intransitive subjects.

However, valency alone is not enough to trigger ergative marking. As Haller (2004: 74-5) describes, not all transitive verbs are associated with ergative agents. Semantic possessors and experiencers of bivalent clauses are marked with dative case, not ergative case, as illustrated in the following examples.

Dative possessor

(38) *ŋa-la   milγ   karkər   jo*

    1S-DAT   cat   white.REDUP   EXIST.EGO

    'I have a white cat.'   (Yǎqūtān)

Dative experiencer

(39) ***tonɖip-a***   *cʰo   mɨ-rga-ze*

    Don.grub-DAT   2S   NEG.IPF-like -QUOT

    Don.grub_i says (he_i) doesn't like you.'   (Gcig.sgril)

In Amdo Tibetan, ergative marking does not highlight transitivity, *per se*, but rather highlights a relationship between an agentive causee of an action and the effected patient. Since possessors and experiencers are not agents, they are incompatible with ergative marking. We can attribute this distributional property of ergative marking to a rigid association between the case and causation. Because the causative relationship between an instrument and an action is only clearly articulated with the presence of a

case marker, an association emerged between instrumental case and causation that was eventually extended to regular marking of causation. Transitive agents then became formalized causes, similar to instruments, with the same compulsory case marking. This association with causation is more important than transitivity. Or, rather, it is more important than the function of disambiguating arguments of a transitive predicate, which is why ergative case does not occur in all transitive clauses.

Ergative case is as compulsory for semantic agents as it is for instruments (with the exception of Yăqūtān). In clauses with agents, it appears to be conditioned by the lexical semantics of the verb, so that regardless of whether the absence of an overt direct object in an instance of anaphoric deletion or a reflection of the absence of such a participant from the conceptual representation of the proposition, if there is an overt agent, it must be marked as ergative. This property is especially apparent in clauses with the verbs 'know', 'understand' and 'hear', which most frequently occur in my natural speech data without an overt direct object, as in example (40), below.

(40) *ŋi*　　　　　*mɨ-ko-Ø*

　　1S.ERG　　　　　NEG.IPF-understand-EGO

　　'I didn't understand.'　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(Gcig.sgril)

In contrast, ergative case is missing from the Standard Tibetan equivalent of (41), elicited from a friend.

(41) *ŋa*　　*ko*　　　　　*ma-soŋ*

| 1S | understand | NEG.IPF-EGO |

'I didn't hear.' (Standard Tibetan)

The speaker who produced (40) explained that, in fact, the ergative form *ŋje* could be used, but that the resulting sentence would be highly unusual, expressing a sense that the subject willfully doesn't hear or understand what is being said, which could be said better in other ways. It is clear, then, that volitionality plays a greater role in the distribution of ergative case in Standard Tibetan than Amdo Tibetan, for which the transitivity of the verb is more important.

In both serial verb and converb constructions, case-marking is determined by the first verb in the chain, not the last. This is illustrated with the sentence, below, in which the converb-marked V_1 is transitive and the final verb is intransitive.

(42) *tə-tɕʰa-**ki*** *ʂta* *ʐon-ni* *soŋ-nəre*

DEF-PL-**ERG** horse ride-CNV go.PFV-FACT.ALLO

'They went by riding horses.' (Gcig.sgril)

A similar pattern to that of Standard Tibetan is reported for Old Tibetan (DeLancey 2003: 258-259; 2011:12), as well other other Tibetic languages, such as Bunan (Widmer 2014: 743-744) and Ladkhi (Zeisler 2012). It therefore seems likely that the distributional pattern of ergative case-marking in Amdo Tibetan is a recent innovation.

A notable exception to the obligatory encoding of ergative case is the Yăqūtān

dialect, for which I have several examples of transitive agents produced with and without

case marking. Sentences (43) and (44), below, demonstrate the optional use of ergative

case with a first-person agent in clauses with a second-person recipient. The sentences in

(45) and (46) illustrate the same for clauses with a second-person agent and an inanimate

direct object.

(43) *ŋa*   *tɕʰo-la*   *rɨk=soŋ-Ø*

　　1S   2S-DAT   see=PFV-EGO

　　'I saw you.'   (Yăqūtān)

(44) *ŋa-ki*   *tɕʰo-la*   *rɨk=soŋ-Ø*

　　1S-ERG   2S-DAT   see =PFV-EGO

　　'I saw you.'   (Yăqūtān)

(45) *tɕʰo-ki*   *dʑaki*   *ɛ-ʰtsix-Ø-a*

　　2S-ERG   Chinese   Q- speak-EGO-SFP

　　'Do you speak Chinese?'   (Yăqūtān)

(46) *tɕʰo*   *dʑaki*   *ɛ-ʰtsix-Ø-a*

　　2S   Chinese   Q-speak-EGO-SFP

　　'Do you speak Chinese?'   (Yăqūtān)

The consultant who produced examples (42)-(45) produced them in order to show

me that ergative marking is variable. At the time, he could see no difference in meaning

between those sentences with ergative *-ki* and their equivalents without. However, I

would expect that with further research we likely reveal that there is a systematic difference in meaning. At present, I simply don't know enough about this dialect to explain the variation.

2.4.3.1 Optional dative marking

As stated above, recipients, possessors and experiencers are all marked with dative case. Dative case is also isomorphic to locative case. However, unlike egrative case, dative marking of core arguments is optional in some conditions in all dialects[63]. .

In Gcig.sgril, dative marking is optional for experiencers but obligatory for possessors and recipients. We see this in the examples, below. The sentences in (47) and (48) illustrate optional dative marking of intransitive experiences. The sentences in (49) and (50) do the same for transitive experiencers. The examples in (51) and (52) show that dative marking is compulsory for possessors.

Un-marked experiencer

(47) *cʰo*   *ə-rga?*

    2s   Q-be.pleased

    'Are you having a good time?'   (Gcig.sgril)

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[63] My Standard Tibetan consultant informs me that the same is true for Standard Tibetan.

Dative experiencer

(48) *cʰo-a*   *ə-rga?*

     2S-DAT   Q-like

'Are you having a good time?'   (Gcig.sgril)

Un-marked transitive experiencer

(49) *kʰərgə*   *ʁoma*   *mɨ-rga=zer*

     3S   milk   NEG.IPF-like= QUOT

'He doesn't like milk (I heard say).'   (Gcig.sgril)

Dative transitive experiencer

(50) *kʰərga*   *ʁoma*   *mɨ-rga=zer*

     3S.DAT   milk   NEG.IPF-like= QUOT

'He likes milk (I heard say).'   (Gcig.sgril)

Dative possessor

(51) *ŋa*   *χwɛtɕʰa=zɨç*   *jo*

     1S.DAT   book=INDEF   EXIST.EGO

'I have a book.'   (Gcig.sgril)

(52) **ŋə*   *χwɛtɕʰa=zɨç*   *jo*

     1S   book=INDEF   EXIST.EGO

(Intended: 'I have a book.')   (Gcig.sgril)

In contrast, in Yăqūtān dative case appears to always be optional for personal pronouns, regardless of semantic role. This is illustrated with the following elicited sentences.

Un-marked possessor

(53) *ŋa*   *toŋtsi*   *jo*

     1S   money   EXIST.EGO

     'I have money.'   (Yǎqūtān)

Dative possessor

(54) *ŋa-la*   *toŋtsi*   *jo*

     1S-DAT   money   EXIST.EGO

     'I have money.'   (Yǎqūtān)

Un-marked object

(55) *tɕʰo*   *ŋa*   *ə-rɪk-a*

     2S   1S   Q-see-EGO

     'Do/did you see me?'   (Yǎqūtān)

Dative recipient

(56) *kʰapu*   *itsɹmumu*   *tɕʰo-ki*   *ŋa-la*   *ɕẽ*

     bag   small.INTS   2S-ERG   1S-DAT   give.IMP

     'The small bag, give it to me.'   (Yǎqūtān)

     I am unaware of any research on the conditions that determine when dative case may be omitted from core arguments in any Tibetan variety. However, I am sure that this variation, as with the apparent flexibility of ergative case marking in Standard Tibetan, has interesting implications for our understanding of the pragmatic, semantic and syntactic motivations for case marking.

CHAPTER III

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

My goal for this dissertation is to describe aspects of the structures and functions of Amdo Tibetan in as much detail as possible. This compels me to adopt a practical and therefore flexible approach in my implementation of any formal theory of syntax. Nonetheless, I hope to produce a description that contains observations which are comprehensible to as wide an audience as possible and useful to advancing theories of Language structure and Language use. Toward this end I think it is helpful to articulate the theoretical framework that has informed my analysis.

I have found the approach of Construction Grammar , as advanced by Goldberg (1995) especially useful in my attempts to account for certain phenomena in the Amdo Tibetan verbal system that seem to defy tidy morphosyntactic or semantic categorization. In particular, I have been drawn to the Radical Construction Grammar Framework as proposed by Croft (2001).

In this Chapter, I will attempt to explain what aspects of these theories I am adopting as my own framework. I will also, in Sec. 3.1.1, explain why I believe a constructionalist approach is appropriate for Amdo Tibetan.

In addition to identifying and explaining the theoretical background of my research, I also think it is useful to articulate what Croft (1999: 92-96) refers to as the **representative commitments** that are necessarily associated with any analytical framework. These include descriptive conventions and formal terminology. The current

section presents an overview of the theories that have informed my work while also identifying the representative commitments—particularly the concepts and labels—that I use throughout this dissertation.

3.1   Construction Grammar as a usage-based theory

One way that Construction Grammar has shaped this dissertation is by influencing the scope of my analysis, including the phenomena examined and the type of data used. This is because the kinds of questions I ask and the expectations I have for where and how answers to these questions might be found are rooted in a particular view of the nature of the human language faculty. This view is not unique to Construction Grammar, but it is essential to it, and it stems from a usage-based theory of language structure

All usage-based theories, of which CxG is but one, have in common the understanding that synchronic linguistic structure is shaped by continuous processes of language change which are driven by on-going patterns of language use. Rather than viewing *in vivo* production of language as being governed by an overarching system of linguistic rules and principles—the grammar—to which an individual utterance conforms more or less faithfully, usage-based theories instead see the relationship between grammar and language use as a two-way street: the production and comprehension of individual utterances is informed by the language users' understanding of linguistic structure but this understanding emerges from the users' own experience producing and

comprehending utterances[64]. A speaker's understanding of how their language works is basically a statistical analysis (subject to biases, such as a bias toward the most recent or frequent experiences[65]) of previous exposure to language use. Scaffolded by such intuitions of grammar, actual language use is motivated by a confluence of cognitive processes and communicative purposes. Consequently, the structure of an individual utterance is a product of both language-dependent and language-independent factors. Recurring structures coalesce with into larger patterns over the course of the collective, interactive and repetitive linguistic behaviors of the individual members of a language community. Individual instances of language use are therefore both unique and familiar. When taken as a collective whole, these patterns form the conventions that we come to think of as grammatical rules or principles. These "rules" only exist in the mind of a speaker who has had experience with them, and that speaker's on-going innovative use of language has the effect of strengthening, weakening or changing them. The practical effect of the above view is that CxG assumes that certain properties of Language, manifested with however much variability in individual languages, are linked to non-linguistic aspects of human cognition.

On a practical level, one consequence of this way of viewing the relationship between language structure and language use is that examining *in vivo* language performance in all of its mess and complication is now essential to the task of explaining

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[64] Crucially, usage-based theories hold that these experiences are in a quantity sufficient for acquisition to take place. This assumption is at odds with some alternative theories, most notably conservative Generative Linguistics.

[65] Christianson and Ferreira (2005), and MacDonald (2013) refer to the tendency for producers to adopt word-order and other syntactic patterns (i.e., lexically-independent patterns) that they have recently heard and/or been exposed to at a high frequency as 'plan reuse'.

language structure, as opposed to being extraneous or even counterproductive to this endeavor, as is the view of certain schools of formal syntax. At the same time, because language use is tied to other aspects of human behavior and thought, such factors are also now seen as indivisible from the task and objectives of linguistic analysis. These two aspects—the prioritization of spontaneously-produced linguistic data and considerations of language-external factors—have major implications for the practical work of describing languages.

There are other practical effects. In terms of defining and analyzing individual structures within languages, usage-based theories have two important implications: the first is that structural change is constant but not invariable, such that a particular grammatical pattern may not be uniform across all areas of the language. This is so for the simple reason that speakers' use of a given structure is likely to be asymmetrical—a particular structure may be used more in some contexts than in others. The second implication, which is tied to the first, is that what may seem to be important syntactic categories, such as patterns of argument alignment or word classes, are not (as they may seem) higher-level principles around which the structure of a particular language is organized. Rather, such categories emerge as generalized properties of related structures, whose distributions and other properties are, again, tied to the usage processes mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

We should not expect syntactic categories to be exceptionless in their behaviors across all areas of a language. Furthermore, when such categories seem universal within a given language and nearly universal across languages, we should be careful about concluding that such uniformity automatically amounts to an underlying rule or principle.

To avoid the mistaken appearance of uniformity, syntactic descriptions undertaken in accordance with usage-based theory should include lots of exceptions, as well as idiosyncratic structures and "minor" categories. Beyond this concern, because linguistic descriptions that are informed by usage-based theory are necessarily concerned with language use, it follows that the general structural and functional patterns that seem to be behind near-universals like word classes, etc., are not inherently more interesting or important to such a description than other parts of linguistic structure, especially when less easily-generalizable constructions may in fact occur commonly in day to day language use.

Of course, Construction Grammar is not the only usage-based theory out there. Indeed, the view of language structure as being informed by language use or function, is compatible with many different theories of linguistic structure, including those which maintain a division between semantics and syntax, such as the traditional lexicosemantic approach that has been practiced since the days of Saussure.

A constructional approach to language description differs from a lexicosemantic approach in two important ways (among others): First, the model of the connection between meaning and form is different. Functions are not confined to atomistic elements (e.g., words or morphemes) but can be distributed across multiple elements, or even just associated with the configurations in which the elements occur. In other words, as conventionalized form-function pairings, constructions exist along a continuum, ranging from single words and morphemes (i.e., lexical items) at one extreme to, at the other extreme, the orders in which words and morphemes are arranged in meaningful linguistic

acts. Croft (2005: 2) characterizes this range as variation between constructions that are more **substantive** and those that are more **schematic**.

A substantive construction is one in which a certain function is only expressed by a certain component. So, the Amdo Tibetan word *mbar*[66], means something like 'for a fuel (i.e., material intended to combust) to ignite so that it will burn in a self-sustaining manner as intended by a human actor'. This function is more or less uniquely associated with this form and is preserved across the various contexts in which this form occurs. Lexical items, particularly words, are highly substantive constructions. An example of a highly schematic construction is something like Amdo Tibetan's Simple-Clause Construction, which is essentially a template, or schema, in which there are syntactic slots that are associated with certain **constructional roles**, or component functions that come together to contribute to an overarching meaning for the construction as a whole.

An example of a schematic construction in Amdo Tibetan is the Simple-Clause Construction, which is comprised of an obligatory Verb Phrase constituent (which itself is a schematic construction) and non-obligatory Noun Phrase constituents. Constructions can also be partially substantive and partially schematic, as is the case with the English plural marker -*s*, which is substantive in that the meaning of 'more than one' is expressed by a combination of the form, -*s* (the substantive element), with another constituent (the schematic slot) that can be occupied by a large class of components.

All of this is to say that constructionist theories of linguistic structure assume a model of form-function pairing that essentially collapses traditional notions of lexical

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[66] This particular phonemic transcription is based on the dialect of Amdo Tibetan spoken by native-born residents of Gcig.sgril County.

semantics and syntactic function into one level or process of linguistic encoding of meaning.

The second way that constructionist approaches differ from lexicosemantic approaches is a consequence of the first: the diversity of functions and syntactic behaviors (distributional patterns, morphological configurations, etc.) observed for a particular lexical item in all the contexts in which it occurs do not need to be accounted for by a single semantic structure. If we do not hold that linguistic meaning is ultimately localized in lexical items, then we no longer require a set of abstract rules by which such structures must be organized and we lose the division between the lexicon and grammar. If lexicon and syntax are not separate modes, there is no need to account for apparent leakage between the two levels or to explain the inevitable existence of idiosyncrasies and inconsistencies to grammatical "rules". It also means that syntax, understood here to mean "syntactically complex constructions", is language-specific in the way that traditionally classified lexical items, or words, are because the schematic constructions and substantive constructions are merely taxonomic extremes of the same essential thing.

As the formal side of the form-function pairing is expanded to include abstract schema and more concrete substantive forms, collapsing the distinction between syntax and lexical semantics, there is a similar collapse on the function side of the equation, as constructions express pragmatic and discourse-related functions as well as semantic or grammatical functions. This model of linguistic structure has consequences both for how I analyze the linguistic structures described in this dissertation, as well as how I represent this analysis in my description.

3.1.1 On the appropriateness of CxG for Amdo Tibetan

A constructionist approach is preferred for Amdo Tibetan grammar because compositional approaches miss out on the nuances of some semantic distinctions if we examine certain forms as semantically and structurally compositional concatenations of morphemes, rather than as semantically non-compositional constructions. An excellent illustration of this are the FACTUAL EGOPHORIC suffix *-nəjɪn* and its interrogative counterpart, *-nə.əjɪn*. Both suffixes mark a clause as expressing a factual assertion in which the assertor is a volitional participant (see Sec. 7.5.4.3).

First, let us consider the affirmative form *-nəjɪn*. Etymologically, this form is comprised of the following elements: **ni*, which is likely cognate with the topic marker *-nə*[67], and **yin*. A compositional analysis of this forms might look like the following.

Factual egophoric   *-nə=jɪn*

                            -FACT=EGO

Considering that the element *jɪn* is isomorphic with the EGOPHORIC equative copula (see Sec. 7.5.1.1), such an analysis is not without insight. It seems even more insightful when we consider that *-nə* is not only a topic marker (Sec. 2.4), but also functions as a nominalizer, as in the following sentence.

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[67] See Denwood (1999:103-104) for a description of the topic marker in Lhasa Tibetan. It's syntactic and functional properties in Amdo Tibetan are similar.

(57) *cʰu*   *za-ko -nə*   *tɕʰɨ=zɨç*   *re*

      2S.ERG   eat.IPF-PROG-NMZ   what=INDEF   EQ.ALLO

    'What is it that you are eating?'   (Gcig.sgril)

It is highly likely that the configuration of *-nə* and *yin* started out as an equational clause with a nominalized clause complement. In a compositional analysis wherein each syllable of *-nəjɪn* is treated as a separate morpheme, we would consider *-nə* to have grammaticalized from a marker of nominalization to a marker expressing factual assertion. We would then also consider *jɪn* to still be a copula. According to this kind of compositional analysis, then, the final clause in the following sentence in (58), below, is a non-verbal predicate.

(58) *rtət*   *jo-na*   *mɲam.kʰər*   *ʂcʰɨt*   *jo-na*

      together   EXIST-COND   experience   joy   EXIST-COND

      mɲam.kʰər   *ji*   *soŋ-nəjɪn*

      experience   bad   went-FACT.EGO

      '(We) spent good times and bad times together.'

Analyzing (58) as an equational sentence with a nominalized complement clause isn't a problem, except for the fact that this structure is so common, that it does not appear to be pragmatically marked as we would expect to be the case for a nominalization of a verbal predicate clause. Another more serious problem, though, has to do with the difference in egophoric scope between copular clauses and verbal clauses.

Egophoricity and egophoric scope are discussed in Sec. 4.3, but, briefly, egophoricity is the grammatical expression of assertor-involvement in a proposition. Typically, assertor-involvement (egophoric marking) in verbal clauses is restricted to volitional participants in the clause that are assertors. In copular clauses, however, the egophoric scope is often wider, expanding to propositions in which the assertor is not a participant but is involved in other ways. This wider egophoric scope is illustrated in the clause, below.

(59) çɕɨə   rgergan   bzaŋ-po=zɨç   jɪn
     very   teacher   be.good-NMZ=INDEF   EQ.EGO
     '(Teacher Wang) is a great teacher.'   (Gcig.sgril)

In (59), the speaker chooses to mark the assertion as involving her in some way, even though she is not the subject. By doing so, she expresses that the assertion is a subjective judgment, based on her experience or perspective of the situation. Egophoric scope in non-verbal predicates can therefore be expanded to include situations that the speaker is highly familiar with, if not directly a part of. The same is not true of verbal predicates.

Because of this, the distribution of the egophoric equative copula *jɪn* is not the same as the factual-egophoric suffix *-nəjɪn*. If we wanted to analyze the later as a semantically compositional concatenation of a factual marker *-nə*, plus the egophoric copula, we have to then account for why the egophoric scope of *jɪn* is narrower when it occurs after *-nə* than when it doesn't.

Of course, it is still possible to analyze *-nəjɪn* as a suffix following a compositional approach. Further support for the constructional approach is provided when we consider the interrogative form of the factual-evidential, *-nə.əjɪn*, which is pronounced with three syllables, or else contracted to one syllable, *-ni*, in high frequency questions.

Etymologically, the interrogative form consists of the prefix *ə-*, which occurs as the second syllable. The historical explanation for its position is that, again, *-nəjɪn* was once a semantically compositional form expressing a nominalized complement clause ending in -nə and the egophric copula. The interrogative prefix was attached to the copula, as we would expect if *-nə* and *jɪn* are two separate units. And we see that, at least in the context of a question, they syntactically still are. However, given the semantic distinctions between clauses with the egophoric equative copula and clauses marked as factual-egophoric, the non-interrogative parts of *-nə.ə́jɪn* may be syntactically compositional, but they are semantically a unit.

There are numerous similar issues elsewhere in the Amdo Tibetan grammar in which forms seems morphologically complex, but are semantically non-compositional. Considering such cases, a constructional approach is more informative to describing Amdo Tibetan than a compositional approach.

3.2   Terminology

Adopting a theoretical framework entails adopting an affiliated repertoire of representative commitments. Most conspicuously, this includes the use of special terminology such as CONSTRUCTION, CONSTITUENT, COMPONENT and PROPOSITION, which I will define below in the process of explaining my approach.

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Following Fillmore (1988: 36), I use the term GRAMMATICAL CONSTRUCTION, or CONSTRUCTION, to refer to a syntactic pattern associated with a conventionalized function. To be considered a construction, the meaning or interpretation of a given instantiation of such a pattern cannot be predicted solely on the basis of the independent semantic properties of its internal components—words, morphemes or phrases. Constructions can be syntactically complex, with multiple syntactic units, or they may be as simple as a single word or morpheme (Goldberg 2003).

One benefit to the constructional approach is that it is a logical extension of Fillmore's frame semantics (1976), in which semantic space is organized according to 'frames' of related concepts. Frames can be expanded as a person acquires new concepts, or extended to connect with concepts in other frames. Informed by Gestalt psychological theory, frame semantics, in turn, is in line with more general theories of human cognition. Semantic frames emerge from patterns extracted from experiences, memories and shaped by concepts that already exist in the semantic space.

If we regard linguistic codes, maybe not as an extension of this cognitive process, but as being shaped by it, then we assume that the meaning of linguistic codes operates along similar principles as meaning, generally. The central challenge of communication is to ensure that a message has the same meaning for the recipient as it does for the sender. The structures of language are the tools with which we confront this challenge. Constructions, then, can be thought of as the conventionalization of context.

Constructions are linguistic structures and so express linguistic functions. I find it useful to differentiate between linguistic function—the information encoded in language—from the ideas, concepts and experiences that are represented, implied or

construed by the code. With regards to how these areas of human behavior are connected, I adopt the principles associated with Cognitive Linguistics as advanced by Langacker, Givón and others. Construction Grammar is a theoretical offshoot of Cognitive Linguistics. Givón (1985: 197) points out that the coding relationship isn't between language and our experiences, but rather between language and "…some *abstract mental process*." Or, as Langacker (2000: 26), in puts it, "The meanings of linguistic expressions cannot be reduced to truth conditions, nor to direct correspondences between linguistic elements and entities out there in the world." Rather, linguistic structure expresses speakers' *conceptions* of these so-called real-world entities.

Langacker refers to this cognitive stage between experience and language as *conceptualization*. Concepts, used with this sense, correspond to the meaningful elements I alluded to in the paragraph above which have the systematicity and organization we see in language. Distinct linguistic structures correspond to distinct conceptual structures. Conceptualization produces constructs that can map onto linguistic functions, but concepts are not the same as linguistic functions. To maintain this distinction, I use terms like PARTICIPANT to refer to a concept and labels like ARGUMENT to refer to the corresponding function as it is encoded in linguistic structure.

I employ the term COMPONENT with a slightly different sense than that defined by Croft (2001: 3), who uses it to mean parts of the semantic structure of a construction. I use the term to refer to any structurally divisible element with an associated function that may appear in a construction, so as a form-function pairing that is associated with a specific element or word, independently of any constructional meaning. Components are the things that instantiate a construction, which they do by occurring as its

CONSTITUENTS. Components independently contribute semantic and pragmatic information to the utterance. The meanings associated with them are largely substantial and stable across different contexts. A component is an individual instantiation of a lexical item, such as a word or morpheme.

I employ the term CONSTITUENT to refer to a syntactic unit (slot or position) in a construction. Constituents, regardless of the component fulfilling them, are associated with certain functions, or constructional roles[68]. While components are unique instantiations of lexical items, constituents are specific slots in a schematic construction. As stated, the functions of constituents are independent of, but not completely unrelated to, the semantic content of the components that fulfill them. Components bring inherent semantics into an utterance that supersede the layers of constructional meaning that are also present. I illustrate this with two examples of the *bʐaχ* construction, below. The sentences are both from the Gcig.sgril dialect spoken in Mgo.log.

(60) *lika   je -bʐaχ-tʰa*

     task   do-CMPL.PFV-DE.PFV

     '(They) finished the job (and I saw it).'   (Gcig.sgril)

(61) *ɣnam   wap -bʐaχ-tʰa*

     sky   descend.PFV-CMPL.PFV-DE.PFV

     'It started to rain (and I saw it).' (It may be raining now, or not.)   (Gcig.sgril)

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[68] This is true of schematic constructions, but not true of substantive constructions, the constituents of which are restricted to specific components, i.e., morphemes.

In Gcig.sgril and other dialects which have the Completive Construction, comprised of the post-clitic -*bʐaχ* (Sec.9.2), the general purpose is to characterize a proposition as reaching a telic point. The nature of that telicity, and by extension the proposition's temporal or aspectual interpretation, is determined by other things, including the tense-aspect value of the predicate (note that both sentences are marked perfective in multiple positions). More importantly for my purpose here, the components of this construction have dramatic effect on the final interpretation of the utterance. So, both the sentence in (60) and the sentence in (61) are understood to represent an aspect of a situation that took place prior to the time of speaking (because of the perfective marking), but the event represented in (60) is completely over and done with—the job is finished—while the sentence in (61) only makes it clear that the event in question started prior to the time of speech without indicating whether it also finished or is still on-going. So, the *bʐaχ* construction can mean 'finish' or 'begin', depending upon the certain inherent semantic features of the component occupying the verb slot.

CONSTITUENT and COMPONENT are both relational notions: they are labels for elements that exist as sub-units of superordinate entities. So, CONSTITUENT entails the existence of a specific construction and COMPONENT entails the existence of an utterance or other unit of language to which the component contributes meaning. A constituent is a position in a construction. A component, on the other hand, is not confined to a particular construction.

Differentiating component from constituent makes it easier to articulate the distinction between substantive and schematic form-function structures and describe the

interaction between without resorting to the use of labels like 'noun' and 'verb', etc.,
which come with theoretical baggage. I illustrate this process with example (62), below.

(62) *ná*   *[aⁿzá̄ŋ ɟìvá]*   *ⁿdʒù-ɖɪ*   *ná?*

  Q   [1P   home]ₙₚ   go.IPF–FUT.EGO   Q

  'Will (you) come to our home?'   (Yăqūtān)

In (62), the word 'home' is both a component and a constituent of the complex
NP construction, but it is only a component of the clause. As a constituent, the
constructional role it expresses is 'noun', or semantic and syntactic head of the NP, by
which I mean that 'home' provides the primary meaning of the NP and is also an
obligatory constituent, since nominal modifiers like the genitive pronoun in this example
do not occur alone.

The term COMPONENT is especially useful for discussing elements in and of
themselves, without having to refer to a specific construction. It is also useful in cases
where the constructional identity of a given component is not immediately apparent. For
example, should *ɣnam*, 'sky', in example (61), above, be analyzed as part of a complex
Verb Phrase construction, or should it be analyzed as a clausal constituent outside of the
Verb Phrase? By referring to 'sky' as a component of the clause, rather than a
constituent, it is possible to describe the clause in (61) without having to commit to an
analysis.

CHAPTER IV

THEORETICAL ISSUES SPECIFIC TO VERBAL GRAMMAR OF TIBETIC

AND RELATED LANGUAGES

In Chapter 4 I present an overview of key theoretical issues (and related terminological issues) that have been recurrent in descriptions of the verbal systems of Tibetic languages. My particular focus in this chapter will be on the terms 'conjunct/disjunct', 'evidentiality', and 'egophoricity' because these three terms, and the notions they represent, have formed the basis of what Tournadre (2008: 290) characterizes as "alternative analys(e)s of the same phenomenon."

This phenomenon is the complex system of complementary structural oppositions that are a characteristic feature of the morphosyntax of a sub-set of finite VPs in Tibetan and certain other Trans-Himalayan languages. Specifically, when Tibetan speakers make an assertion, certain information about the nature of the assertion is encoded in the verbal morphology. The result is a typologically interesting system of structural and functional oppositions that encompass many of the temporal, aspectual, modal and evidential categories non-Tibetan linguists are familiar with from the verbal morphology of other languages of the world, while also expressing functions that are more rarely associated with the grammatical categories of verbs in other languages. In an effort to describe and account for the functional and structural behaviors of assertion-marking constructions, linguists have proposed new syntactic theories ('conjunct/disjunct'), new semantic

categories ('egophoricity') and made adjustments to definitions of previously-existing terms ('evidentiality').

In order to understand the ways linguists have applied the above-listed notions to the task of describing Tibetan verbal systems and the ways in which these notions supersede or build off of one another, it is useful to first present a broad summary of the phenomenon in question. For this reason, Chapter 4 also includes a brief introduction to the morphosyntactic paradigm that has alternately been described as a 'conjunct/disjunct', 'evidential' or 'egophoric' system.

I also examine the notion of 'factuality', by which I mean an evidentially and epistemically neutral category of assertion, which I believe represents a distinct grammatical category within these paradigms. This term has been used for years by various authors to describe certain verbal constructions in Tibetan. Both Sun (1993) and Haller (2004) mention factual (or 'unmodalized declarative' in Sun's (p. 951) wording) verb forms in Amdo Tibetan. Even so, the factual has received less attention than evidentiality or egophoricity in the literature, which is surprising to me because, taken together, the two factual suffixes are more prevalent in my dataset of spontaneous speech than any other finite verb form.

Briefly, the notion 'conjunct/disjunct' as applied to Trans-Himalayan refers to a morphosyntactic pattern whereby the verbal morphology of declarative clauses is the same for 2nd and 3rd person (disjunct marking) and different for 1st person (conjunct marking). In interrogative clauses, 1st person and 3rd person are treated the same (disjunct) and 2nd person is different (conjunct). In reported speech clauses, 1st and 2nd person occur with disjunct verbal marking, and 3rd person occurs with conjunct marking.

The notion 'evidentiality' refers to the grammaticalized expression of an assertion's information source. 'Egophoricity' refers to a grammatical contrast between conscious knowledge about oneself and other types of knowledge, as determined by information access. 'Factuality', as stated, is the marking of an assertion as an objective fact. Where factuality contrasts with egophoric (self-knowledge) and evidential categories is in presenting a neutral—or objective—perspective on the information being asserted, while the other two categories express a subjective perspective. However, because egophoricity is also connected to notions of volitionality and control (see Sec.0), we see that even factual assertions can be marked for egophoricity, albeit with a slightly different sense.

Before delving into the meaning and theoretical implications of each of these terms, I will first briefly introduce the paradigm of postverbal morphology to which they are applied. Copular verbs, of which there are two sets—an existential set and an equative set—express many of the same functions, but constitute a separate system, as discussed in Chapter 7. For the sake of simplicity, here we consider only the verbal paradigm.

Altogether, egophoricity, evidentiality and factuality are functions associated with *realis* mood. However, assertions may also be expressed with *irrealis* mood. Speakers use this mood to talk about events that haven't happened because they will take place in the future, or that may not have happened because the speaker isn't sure about the veracity of the information, or that are hypothetical or otherwise unreal. While there are no dedicated *realis* or *irrealis* constructions, the opposition between these two moods is useful in understanding the categories for which there are dedicated constructions. I have therefore organized the assertional functions of finite Amdo Tibetan verbs according to mood in Table 12.

Table 12. Functional categories of Amdo Tibetan assertion marking system

Realis (Factual)	Egophoric	Direct evidence past	Factual allophoric
		Direct evidence imperfective	Factual egophoric
		Indirect evidence past	
Irrealis	Epistemic modality		Future allophoric
			Future egophoric

The *realis* assertional categories are illustrated, below, for the Gcig.sgril dialect.

Egophoric assertion

(63) *ŋɨ   zama   teni   zu =tsʰar-Ø*

   1S.ERG   food   right.now   eat.PFV=TERM-EGO

   'Now I'm finished eating.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Direct evidential (past) assertion

(64) *ti   ɕcix   ʐ̩ki-tʰa*

   DEF.ERG one   steal.PFV-DE.PFV

   'That guy stole something!' (Speaker saw him.)   (Gcig.sgril)

Direct evidential (imperfective) assertion

(65) *kʰərgi   mdaŋ   kaŋlə rtse-ko-kə*

   3S.ERG   yesterday   ball   play-PROG-DE

   'He was playing ball yesterday.'   (Speaker watched him)   (Gcig.sgril)

Indirect evidential (past) assertion

(66) *ʂkɨmɨ*   *zɨç*   *ʂki-soŋ-zɨç*

      theif.ERG   INDEF   steal.PFV-TRAN.PFV-IE.PST

      'A thief stole something.'   (Speaker now realizes)   (Gcig.sgril)

Factual egophoric assertion

(67) *təɣə*   *tə-tɛʰœ*   *vlaŋ-ne*   *soŋ-nəjɪn*

      then   DEF-PL   get-CNV   go.PFV-FACT.EGO

      'Then I went to get them (but I couldn't find them)   (Gcig.sgril)

Factual allophoric assertion

(68) *ŋi*   *jɨɣɛ*   *bɖi-ko-nəre*

      1S.ERG   letter   write-PROG-FACT.ALLO

      'I'm writing (as you can see).'   (Gcig.sgril)

      The **irrealis** assertional categories are illustrated below, also for Gcig.sgril.

Epistemic modal (speculative) assertion

(69) *ti*   *ʂki-sare*

      DEF.ERG steal.PFV-SPEC

      'Maybe that guy stole it.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Future egophoric assertion

(70) *ja*   nà   *cʰu*   *ʂŋana sɨ*   *ɸɛat -rʝəjɪn*

      yeah   then[Chinese] 2S.ERG first   who   say-FUT.EGO

      'Ok, so, who are you going to talk about first?'   (Gcig.sgril)

Future allophoric assertion

(71) *kʰərgə   samŋoŋ   ŋʲo-rʲəre*

      3s   tomorrow   go.IPF-FUT.ALLO

      'He will go tomorrow.'   (Gcig.sgril)

I will describe the functions and forms of these verbal categories in Chapters 7 and 8 of this dissertation. For the remainder of Chapter 4, I will present an overview on the theoretical concepts introduced above.

Because the notions of 'conjunct/disjunct', 'evidentiality' and 'egophoricity' have emerged in successive waves, one may have the impression that they essentially represent improved replacements over one another and in a minority of instances, it appears that these three terms have been used by different authors at different time to refer to essentially the same set of phenomena. However, as Tournadre (2017: 116) points out, not only do these terms represent significantly different analyses that have been shaped by different theoretical approaches, they serve as cover terms for what are essentially different phenomena. Most significantly, conjunct-disjunct refers to a syntactic pattern—or constellation of similar patterns—while evidentiality and egophoricity both refer to functional domains that have grammaticalized into "major" morphosyntactic categories in some languages. Because my own work has been informed by authors who make use of all three terms, I think it is useful to briefly explain these notions, how they do and don't overlap, and explain what I see as their uses and insufficiencies.

4.1   Conjunct/disjunct

Of the three terminologies, **conjunct-disjunct** is the oldest in its use to describe a Tibeto-Burman (Trans-Himalayan) language, dating to an unpublished but widely circulated monograph on Newar by Austin Hale in 1971 that was later re-written and published in 1980[69]. In the past ten years or so, the term has fallen out of favor, but not entirely. It's persistence in the face of such overwhelming discontent may be attributed to the fact that there is no other cover term for what is, essentially, an entire verbal system, superseding individual contrasts and morphological paradigms. Especially in the "Tibeto-Burman" field, by which I mean those languages which, according to an outdated taxonomy of Trans-Himalayan, are not Sinitic, "conjunct/disjunct" is a hard term to abandon because it is a useful signifier of languages that do NOT have person agreement, but which have verbal morphological systems that do more than just express tense-aspect and epistemic modality.

Hale adopted the notion of conjunct-disjunct to provide a unified account of three different syntactic patterns: declarative main clauses exhibit one pattern in which first person subjects "normally" occur with the first verbal form and all other persons "normally" occur with a second verbal form. A second pattern is found in non-rhetorical questions, so that the first verbal form now "normally" occurs with second person subjects and the second form with first and third person subjects. In the third pattern, the

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[69] Austin Hale did not coin the terms "conjunct" and "disjunct"—among other uses, the terms were already established in descriptions of Athabaskan verb paradigms—but he was the first to apply them to what he referred to as "person markers" in Newar. He is also not the first western-trained linguist to notice this sentence type-based syntactic pattern in Trans-Himalayan languages. In the notes of a later published version of his oft-cited 1971 conference paper, Hale (1980:103-4) mentions a paper 'Person Markers in Sherpa' by Burkhard Schötteldreyer published in the same volume.

first verbal form now occurs with third person subjects (as well as first and second persons) in embedded clauses that function as verbal complements of a matrix performative verb like 'say'—but only when the subject of the (declarative) embedded clause is co-referential with the subject of the main clause. All three patterns are manifest in the finitizing verb morphology. These three syntactic patterns are illustrated with examples excerpted from Hale (1980) in Tables 13-15, below.

Table 13. Declarative main clauses in Newar

wanā 'went (conjunct)'		*wana* 'went (disjunct)'	
Ji ana wanā.	'I went there.'	*Cha ana wana.*	'You went there.'
		Wa ana wana.	'He went there.'

Table 14. Interrogative clauses in Newar

wanā 'went (conjunct)'	*wana* 'went (disjunct)'
Cha ana wanā lā? 'Did you go there?'	*Ji ugu ilae ana wana?* 'Did I go there at that time? (I don't recall).'

Table 15. Embedded declarative clauses in reported speech

wanā 'went (conjunct)'	*wana* 'went (disjunct)'
Jįį "Ji ana wanā" dhakāā dhayā. 'I said, "I went there."'	*Wąąᵢ "waᵢᵢ ana wana" dhakāā dhāla.* 'Heᵢ said that heᵢᵢ went there.'
Wąąᵢ "waᵢ ana wanā" dhakāā dhāla. 'Heᵢ said that heᵢ went there.'	

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Hale's problem that the term "conjunct-disjunct" solved was how to account for the same morphological paradigm (which seemed to have something to do with person agreement, if not behaving exactly like the agreement systems of Indo-European languages) displaying three different distributions in three different sentence types. He was not unaware of or disinterested in the semantic or discourse pragmatic factors of individual markers[70], but he wanted to account for the seemingly incongruous shifts in distributional patterns that he observed between declarative main clauses, questions and embedded reported speech clauses. Hale's approach was to seek a unified account of the paradigm's behavior in all contexts.

For Hale, the solution to this problem lay in the co-referential subjects of the third pattern, embedded clauses of reported speech acts. Reported speech acts contain 'quote frames', which is the proposition expressed in the finite embedded sentence. When the actor within the quote frame is the same person as the actor of the quote, then the finite morphology of the embedded sentence will be the conjunct form. When the two actors are not the same, then the embedded sentence will be marked with a disjunct form. Hale then goes on to analyze all three different surface morphosyntactic patterns as a single underlying paradigm that marks a distinction between co-reference (conjunct) and non-coreference (disjunct). This solution entailed a somewhat bizarre analysis of so-called "conjunct"-marked declarative main clauses as "abstract performatives"[71] (p. 97)—underlying speech acts in which first person statements are implicitly framed as

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[70] In fact, descriptions of the semantic contrasts of the different verb forms occupies much of the 1980 monograph.

[71] Hale references Sadock's (1974) definition of performative speech acts.

quotations, i.e. embedded clauses, thus triggering a co-referential agreement with the unexpressed matrix speech clause.

Hale then went on to posit that the appearance of "conjunct" in non-embedded clauses could be accounted for by explaining that such sentences represent "abstract performatives" in which the assertions are presented as embedded clauses in an un-stated "quote frame". In other words, Hale explains the occurrence of conjunct forms in first person declarative statements by analyzing such statements as subordinate clauses with subjects that are co-referential to a main clause that isn't actually uttered. He illustrates this analysis by presenting example (73) as the "implicit quote frame" for the sentence in (72), reproduced below (p. 97).

(72) *Ji ana wanā*

      "I went there."

(73)   *[Jįį chita] "Ji ana wanā" [dhayā]*

      [I say to you] "I went there."

The analysis presented in (73) is the basis for using the terms "conjunct" and "disjunct", which started off as being specific to embedded speech sentence structures, to describe a pattern that shows up in other contexts. Hale identifies a satisfactory (to him) syntactic explanation in logophoric co-referential contexts that is still compatible with the

view that the system is related to person marking somehow, albeit as a typologically anomalous binary opposition[72].

By positing a pragmatic category of "performative focus", which corresponds to the speaker of declarative sentences and the hearer of non-rhetorical questions, Hale was able to provide an account of the fact that the same combination of verb and person has different markings in declarative, interrogative and quoted speech contexts. He was immediately concerned with identifying a syntactic explanation of syntactic patterns and did so. He did not, however, do so at the cost of neglecting the semantic and pragmatic motivations for the syntax, as he has sometimes been accused by later authors of doing. For one, he certainly recognized that certain verbs, which he termed 'impersonal verbs', seemed to never occur with conjunct marking (pp. 96-97). He also notes that in some contexts, speakers can felicitously choose between conjunct and disjunct forms for certain verbs, the latter of which implies that the actor participated in the event involuntarily[73]. To account for these variations in the conjunct/disjunct pattern otherwise described, Hale introduces the notion of a cognitive role of 'true instigator' for the (implicit or explicit) quote frame actor. We might question Hale's priorities in

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[72] Interestingly, DeLancey (1992:59) notes that the conjunct-disjunct pattern in Sunwar and Dolakha Newar, which seems limited to co-referential arguments of embedded reported speech clauses, appears to be just such a binary person agreement system, contrasting 'same person' co-reference with 'other person' co-reference.

[73] On p. 99, Hale gives two contrasting examples, reproduced below, of an alternation of conjunct and disjunct forms in intransitive declarative sentences with first person subjects.

Conjunct
(d) *Ji danā.* 'I got up (*voluntarily*).'

Disjunct
(e) *Ji dana.* 'I got up (*involuntarily*).'

emphasizing a unified syntactic account above a more functionally-aligned semantico-cognitive account, but there is much about his analysis that has stood the test of time.

Of course, Hale himself understood that while this system has certain structural parallels to person agreement systems[74], it is actually motivated by different semantic contrasts. He observes that verbs have two forms, one of which "normally" occurs with "first person actors" while the other "normally" occurs with other kinds of actors, but that this fairly strong correlation between verb form and person breaks down under certain conditions.

Considering both the age and the foundational nature of this work, it is unsurprising that both the terms and the analysis from which they emerged have been subject to a great deal of revision in later decades. One common criticism has to do with the terms, themselves—the meanings of "conjunct" and "disjunct" are not transparent, beyond appearing to be opposites of one another, and, as such, provide little indication to the uninitiated reader of the nature of the phenomenon they are meant to identify. Or, as Creissels (2008: 1) put it, "references to the etymology of such terms is generally of very limited help in understanding their uses.[75]" Another complaint is that the notion of conjunct-disjunct systems, as applied to the verbal morphology of Tibeto-Burman languages, is an attempt to devise a syntactic account of what is primarily a semantics and discourse pragmatics-driven contrast. "Conjunct" and "disjunct" are not semantic

[74] An observation that is unfortunately emphasized in Hale's 1980 monograph by repeated references to "person" when first introducing the different verb forms of Newar.

[75] Creissels' (2008) criticism also includes the fact that "conjunct/disjunct" and similar-looking terms such as "conjoint/disjoint" have also been applied to linguistic phenomena, including phonological oppositions.

categories, but structural patterns, but sometimes the labels are used as if they were functions.

Finally, others see a problem with the bipartite form of the name, itself—conjunct/disjunct—because it suggests a binary opposition, which is manifestly insufficient for Tibetic languages, especially, but is even insufficient for Newar. Nonetheless, there is much about Hale's analysis that continues to be informative and useful for many Trans-Himalayan languages, including Tibetic. In particular, Hale's observations of three different syntactic patterns for the verbal paradigm, regardless of the number of oppositions or the specific functions that are expressed across the paradigm, are still applicable for Tibetic languages.

The inherent focus on syntactic co-reference is a major reason why later authors have struggled with or outright rejected Hale's terminology, even as "conjunct/disjunct" continues to live on in Tibeto-Burman/Trans-Himalayan descriptions. Hale's terminology and the analysis behind it is "essentially a syntactic approach", in the words of Tournadre (2017: 117), that is insufficient for understanding the full range of semantic and pragmatic contrasts such verbal paradigms are capable of expressing. But Hale sought to account for syntactic patterns in terms of a syntactic rule that made sense according to a structuralist view of language. Although he recognized that this system was not simply marking person agreement, Hale seems to have held onto the idea that the system has some syntactic function to it. But there is more to Hale's analysis than just devising an explanation that allows for a unified syntactic account of three different distributional patterns of his conjunct and disjunct forms. He never claims automatic or obligatory use of conjunct/disjunct forms and he certainly does not ignore the semantic or cognitive

factors motivating their use, as he has sometimes been claimed to do. Among his observations on the semantic and pragmatic functions of these forms, are the following:

"Finite conjunct forms are appropriate only where the actor of the clause is portrayed as a true instigator, one responsible for an intentional act." (96)

"…[O]ne might say that the conjunct-disjunct form of a true question anticipates that of its answer." (99)

In other words, Hale recognized that the Newar system expresses two points of contrast: a contrast in the kind of participant ("true instigators"—in his words—and non-instigators), and a contrast of what he calls the "performative focus" of the asserted proposition. He also recognized the phenomenon that Sun (1993:959) calls the "conversational principle of cooperation" and what Tournadre & Dorje (2003:94) call the "rule of anticipation", namely that the morphosyntax of non-rhetorical questions anticipates that of the expected answer.

No doubt it is the inclusion of these non-syntactic explanations for the distribution of conjunct-disjunct forms that is partly responsible for the longevity of Hale's terminology. Another reason is probably the syntactic patterns, themselves. Hale uses conjunct-disjunct to describe a system that does far more than track co-reference in complex clauses, setting the precedent for others to use the same terminology to label systems that display syntactic properties that are different from those observed in the verbal agreement systems of languages like English or Latin, particularly those which

display special behaviors in logophoric versus non-logophoric contexts. Because they are described using the same terminology, the impression is given that the conjunct-disjunct systems of different languages possess the same properties and functions.

Thus, for all its short-comings, Hale's conjunct/disjunct lives on. One usefulness of a syntax-first analysis is to highlight the degree to which certain collocations of verb form and person are conventionalized. Others (c.f., Tounadre (2008); Creissels (2008)) are right to point out the semantic and pragmatic fluidity of such systems that is overlooked in the conjunct/disjunct approach, as well as the misleading impression the label gives of a binary semantic contrast. Nonetheless, at least in Lhasa Tibetan and Amdo Tibetan, the distribution of conjunct versus disjunct forms remains highly predictable and the distributional patterns recognized for declarative statements, reported speech and interrogative questions are highly conventionalized. The fact that this system has stopped short of developing into true person-agreement should provide us with some insight as to the functional nature of verb agreement systems.

4.2   Evidentiality

If the notion of 'conjunct/disjunct' represents an emphasis on syntactic (e.g. obligatory and semantically non-transparent) explanations for the distribution of verbal contrasts, the introduction of 'evidentiality' to the discussion represents a shift to functional explanations. As Tournadre (2008) notes, this change in approach has enabled a more nuanced understanding of the motivations behind the 'conjunct/disjunct' opposition. The 'conjunct/disjunct' pattern of Amdo Tibetan is partly determined by the

grammatical encoding of information [76] source. Specifically, the assertion-marking morphological paradigm distinguishes two kinds of evidence: DIRECT EVIDENCE and INDIRECT EVIDENCE. The expression of these two evidential categories also involves the expression of temporal-aspectual senses. In addition to the two evidential categories that are marked with assertional morphology, Amdo Tibetan also has a semi-grammaticalized category of HEARSAY evidence, which is not part of the same morphological paradigm as the other two.

In recent years there have been many publications in recent years discussing the theoretical debate about issues such as the categorial status of evidentiality as a grammatical domain, including at least two dedicated volumes published just in the last year (Gawne & Hill 2017; Aikhenvald 2018). Source of information is a narrower definition of evidentiality than that adopted by other authors working in Tibetic (e.g., Tournadre (2018); Sun (2018); Zemp (2017). It excludes any sense related to information access, which forms part of the definition put forth by Tournadre & LaPolla (2014: 241). Because information access is part of the functional description for egophoricity (see below), excluding information access from my definition of evidentiality necessarily means that egophoricity is not included.

Likewise, this narrower definition excludes the notion of epistemic modality, which . Consequently, the majority of the categories in the finite verbal paradigm presented in Sec. 4, above, are excluded from this definition. I therefore do not refer to the system of assertion-marking as an evidential system in this dissertation.

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[76] Some authors use the phrase 'knowledge source' (e.g., Gawne 2013).

Other authors do analyze the system as fundamentally evidential (e.g., Garrett 2001), with egophoricity and epistemic modality fitting in as sub-categories. Another point of view is that the system is fundamentally epistemic. Of these two analyses, the epistemic analysis, articulated in greatest detail by Caplow (2017), seems the most persuasive. The argument in favor of a fundamental evidential system hinges on analyzing egophoricity as a sub-domain within evidentiality (c.f., Zemp 2017), but the main problem as I see it is that constructions which unambiguously express epistemic modality, and which also clearly belong to the same morphosyntactic paradigm as evidential and egophoricity markers tend to be overlooked or treated as somehow existing outside the system.

Caplow's argument, also shared by Garrett 2001, explicitly characterizes both evidential and egophoricity markers as part of a greater epistemic system, although Garrett characterizes this system as evidential. I find their argument persuasive but, like Vokurková and Tournadre, I am agnostic on what to call the greater system.

The linguistic notion of evidentiality is credited to Boas (1911), who noted the existence of grammatical expressions of information source in Kwakwiutl.

According to the narrow definition of evidentiality given above, Amdo Tibetan has grammaticalized three categories of evidence: DIRECT EVIDENCE, INDIRECT EVIDENCE and HEARSAY. All three categories can be considered as expressing type of information source. Also, the use of any category expresses the existence of a source of evidence for the information, which is also part of Aikhenveld's definition (2004: 1). As such, the verbal morphology of amdo Tibetan expresses a privative contrast between evidential and non-evidential assertions. If we proceed from this definition of evidentiality, then it

follows that the only evidential constructions in Amdo Tibetan are those which explicitly identify information source.

The notions information source and information access have in common the fact that both are determined by the assertor's perspective on a situation. Again, the assertor is typically the speaker for declarative clauses, the addressee for interrogative clauses, and a third person source for reported speech. In terms of the semantic distinction between egophoricity and evidential categories, the latter is only relevant for propositions that do not have assertor involvement. If the assertor is not a participant in a situation or otherwise involved, then they must still have a source for the information.

My decision to not treat egophoricity as a sub-category of evidentiality is also based on the different distributional behaviors of evidential markers as opposed to egophoricity. As such, I have identified three broad categories of evidentiality that are systematically marked by the inflectional morphology of Amdo Tibetan verbs: DIRECT EVIDENCE, INDIRECT EVIDENCE and HEARSAY. I say "broad" categories, because in some instances, the same evidential category is expressed by different constructions which contrast for other semantic domains, like tense-aspect. This will be discussed in the following section, but first, examples of clauses for each of these three evidential categories are given for three typologically extreme dialects of Amdo Tibetan.

Direct evidence

(74) *sʰatɛʰa ndɪ psorkə.*

   sʰatɛʰa=ndɨ   *psor-kə*

   place=PROX   be.comfortable-DE.IPF

   'This place is nice.'

   (Speaker has been to the place and remembers it, or is there now.)   (Gro.tsang)

   Indirect evidence

(75) *kã̀ vu ˈsoŋ zɨç.*

   kan   *wɨ=soŋ-zɨç*

   INDEF.PRN   went=PFV-IE.PST

   'They (singular) left.' (Speaker knows this because speaker sees that the person is

   not around, or they have some other evidence for asserting this information, but the

   speaker did not actually see or hear the person leave.)   (Yǎqūtān)

   Hearsay (Quotative Construction)

(76) *ʂmatɛʰɨɣə ʂta jakə zer.*

   rmatɛʰɨ-kə   *rta*   *jak-kə=zer*

   Rma.chu-GEN   horse   be.beautiful-DE=QUOT

   'Rma.chu supposedly has excellent horses.'   (Gcig.sgril)

   I will discuss the nuanced meanings of the three constructions illustrated above in.

For now, it suffices to point out that in terms of morphosyntax, the categories of direct

evidence and indirect evidence are expressed by markers of the same paradigm and the

hearsay marker, expressed by the Quotative Construction (76), does not fit into this paradigm, both in terms of its morphosyntactic properties (such as being able to co-occur with other evidential markers) and in terms of its functions. It should also be noted that the use of the direct evidence marker in (76) entails that the quoted source—not the speaker—had been to the place at some point and remembers the experience. The direct evidence value of the assertion is therefore based on the quoted source's perspective on the event, not the speaker's.

One key functional difference between the Quotative Construction (QC) and the other grammatical evidence categories is that QC overlaps with epistemicity. QC is sometimes used, not to express a source of the asserted information, but to express the speaker's attitude toward the epistemic status of the assertion. Similar uses of reported speech verbs have been reported in other languages, such as Romance languages (e.g., Hassler 2002).

The default sense of sentences like (76) are that there is no identifiable source of the quote, with an implicature that many people have told the speaker about Rma.chu's horses. Because no individual person is the source, how this amalgamation of many sources has come to know the information is irrelevant. What is important is that the person who uttered (76) is not the source. A more detailed discussion of the use of QC in epistemic distancing is given in Sec. 10.1.

If the grammatical expression of HEARSAY evidence is sometimes used to express functions associated with epistemic modality, the same is not true of the INDIRECT EVIDENCE or DIRECT EVIDENCE categories. Here I wish to point out some important points as to the use of the indirect evidential in (75).

First of all, there are a number of scenarios where the utterance of this sentence is equally felicitous. First, the speaker may have been in the house with the subject at the time the subject left, but if the speaker was asleep, they would have to use the IE marker, instead of the DE marker. In this kind of scenario, the speaker may either have been previously aware of the fact that the subject planned on going out or they may have been made aware of the fact only upon discovering the subject's absence. If they expected the subject to go out, equally applicable scenarios are, one, that the speaker asked the subject to go out and get groceries for dinner that night, intending for the subject to leave shortly, or, two, that the subject habitually leaves for work at the same time every day, and the speaker woke up to find them gone, and assumes that that's where the subject went. A different set of scenarios are that the speaker did not expect the subject to be gone. Perhaps the speaker and subject live in different houses and the speaker went to the subject's house to look for them, expecting them to be home, but find that the subject is not home. In this scenario, the use of IE is still felicitous. The point is that the use of *-ziç* in (75), above, is not sensitive to whether the event is expected or surprising. All that matters is that the speaker did not directly experience the event.

Nor is the use of *-ziç* a form of epistemic hedging. This is because it is a solidly realis category, while epistemic modality (and also future tense) crosses over into irrealis. Consultant after consultant, regardless of the dialect, explain that IE-marked utterances like (75) convey the same sense of certainty, as DE-marked utterances, like (74) (or EGOPHORIC-marked utterances, for that matter). Translations into English or Chinese with epistemic phrasing like 'seems' (好像), and 'must have' (应该) are accepted when proposed, but not implicitly associated with *-ziç*, and in my experience are never

volunteered by speakers, either in helping to translate previously-recorded data, or in explaining contrasts between sentences in on-going elicitation sessions. In fact, when presented with English or Chinese sentences containing these phrases, speakers always produce an epistemic modal verb form, never IE.

INDIRECT EVIDENCE and DIRECT EVIDENCE therefore seem to have identical epistemic force: both represent asserted information, differing only in how the speaker knows the information. They express what the speaker knows, not how confident they feel that their knowledge is accurate. For this reason, I have opted not to use the term 'inference' for IE. This is because 'infer' connotes that the knowledge state has been achieved through a process of logical inference, highlighting the internal intellectual process of deduction. While speakers sometimes describe inference as one type of information source that they are likely to mark as indirect evidence, they also report using IE to mark information that they read in the news or via other means that don't seem to have much to do with inference. However, my primary reason for avoiding the label 'inference' is that speakers consistently report that IE-marked assertions express the same epistemic attitude or degree of certainty as DE, FACT-, or EGO-marked assertions. Because the term 'inference' can have epistemic connotations in English, it is best avoided for a grammatical category the primary function of which is to express information source, not epistemic stance.

The absence of any implicature of inference is highlighted by the use of -ziç in fictional narratives, as in the following example, excerpted from a spontaneously told joke:

(77) *nɖoʁa ziɣ ʐŋava soŋe ʌvæʂfə ŋene soŋ ziɣ.*

nɖoʁa =ziɕ	*ʂŋawa*	*soŋ -ne*	*rbaʂpʰɨ*	*ŋe-ne*
nomad=INDEF	Rnga.ba.DAT	went-NF	stick	buy.PFV-NMZ

soŋ-ziɕ

went-IE.PST

'A nomad went to Rnga.ba to go buy a *rbaʂpʰɨ*[77].' (Gcig.sgril)

As far as the speaker and her audience are aware, the nomad in (77) does not exist and the event encoded in the proposition never took place, but the speaker's intent is for the utterance to be received as a factual account, and not as a hypothetical scenario.

The use of IE and DE markers is also highly associated with 'new information', either from the perspective of the speaker or of the addressee—information source is less relevant when the information in question is already familiar.

For these reasons IE marking is rarely used in retellings of well-known legends (factual marking is preferred—see Sec. 7.5.3.3), but is common in the telling of anecdotes which the speaker intends for the audience to interpret as being true, so it shows up in a lot of jokes, which might lose a bit of their comedic effect were they to be presented as possibly not true. The sentence in (77) is the start of a joke, and the speaker has just announced in the preceding sentence that she will tell a joke, so I doubt either she or her audience intend for the things she says next to be received as a faithful account of true events. Nonetheless, the use of the INDIRECT EVIDENCE marker implies that this is a true story. At the same time, it allows the speaker to reduce some of her responsibility for

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[77] A *rbaʂpʰɨ* is a bent stick used for knocking the snow off of tents.

the truthfulness of what she's saying by making it clear that she did not witness the event, nor was she a participant in the event. In her use of -*zɨç*, she bypasses all of that, by simply indicating that the situation happened in the past and that she knows of it indirectly.

How might she know about the event, then? When questioned about the use of -*zɨç* for describing anecdotes involving unknown participants, consultants tend to use relatively simple explanations, along the lines of, the event happened for sure, but the speaker didn't see it. As to what might be possible forms of "indirect evidence", common responses include, reading something on-line, or watching or hearing a news report. Thus, at least when it comes to these kind of anecdotes, -*zɨç* seems to cover semantic territory within the hearsay category of evidence. Indeed, in some cases, speakers accept either *zer* or -*zɨç*, but they do not readily do so for the sentence in (77).

I believe this is because the joke is based on a fictional event. The speaker may have heard the joke from someone else, but she may also have invented it herself and be telling it for the first time in this recording. Either way, a fictional event does not require a source. Using a hearsay marker strongly implies that there is a source, which would change the tongue-in-cheek sincerity of the joke by changing the situation into a report of an event that the hearsay source experienced in some. Instead, with the use IE, the addressee is simply called upon to assume the story is true, but is not something that the speaker witnessed first-hand. Because everyone involved in the speech act knows to suspend their disbelief and take the information with a grain of salt, using the indirect evidence marker is the least pragmatically-marked option in this context. Again, inference is not part of the meaning of -*zɨç*.

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In other languages, indirect evidence or inferential markers can be a strategy for hedging the speaker's commitment to the truthfulness of the assertion. The implementation of such a strategy also implicitly suggests the opposite, that the assertion might not be true. This is not true of the evidential system in Amdo Tibetan.

At any rate, Hale (1980) does not mention the notions of evidence or information source. Looking at the data presented in his 1980 article, it seems unlikely that Hale had simply not encountered any evidential-like functions. He seems to have just ignored them. Interestingly, we find something similar with de Roerich's (1958) monograph on Amdo Tibetan: he not only mentions two finite verb markers -t^ha and -$zïç$ which I believe all later descriptions of Amdo analyze as evidential, he analyzes them as past-tense ("passé") and even identifies their etymological sources. Of -t^ha, he writes that it is "…base du passé du verbe *thal-ba*, *'thal-ba* = passer, etre terminé…(p. 46)". He writes that -$zïç$ is "…base du passé de 'voir, regarder'. (p. 45)". Yet he makes no mention at all of a semantic contrast between the two, nor does he discuss information source. Like Hale, he refers to these and other post-verbal morphemes as though they functioned as person agreement markers which also express tense. Unlike Hale, de Roerich's analysis ends there. He does not discuss any aspects concerning the distribution of multiple forms corresponding with the same tense categories and occurring with the same person.

This is a significant gap in the original conjunct/disjunct theory considering that evidentiality, however defined, is an important feature of the finite verbal morphosyntax of the Newar language described by Hale, along with Tibetic and many other languages of Trans-Himalayan. Even so, contemporary descriptions of Tibetan were already appearing to remedy the shortfall.

Among the functions of the finite verbal morphology that display conjunct/disjunct syntactic patterns are those which explicate how the information expressed in the sentence came to be known, whether it be by the speaker of a declarative statement, or the addressee of a question, etc. Even assuming the narrow definition of evidentiality provided above, most varieties of Tibetan (and many other Tibetic, Bodic, etc. languages) express more than two contrasts of information source. Moreover, most of these expressions are in the form of dedicated inflectional morphemes, occurring as obligatory syntactic constituents of finite clauses in the semantic contexts in which they are felicitous. In other words, evidentiality is a highly developed grammatical domain in Tibetan. It is therefore unsurprising that it has come to be a dominant topic of inquiry for any linguist working in Tibetan. There is also another reason for this, namely that even if some finite morphemes have unambiguously (to one seeking to conform to a typology of universal semantic domains) evidential meanings, other finite morphemes express senses that are more removed from prototypical evidentiality. If these markers do not all neatly fit into a single semantic category, on the basis of syntactic behavior and contrastive distributions they do very clearly fit into a single morphosyntactic paradigm. Thus, it has often times by simpler to refer to the paradigm itself by the cover term of 'evidential system', even as not all authors have made an argument for all contrasts within the paradigm belonging to a unitary semantic category that is evidentiality.

4.2.1   Evidential grammar versus evidential strategy

The first relevant issue that I wish to consider is the distinction between strategies and morphosyntax, or as Squartini (2018) puts it, 'extra-grammar' and 'grammar' (p.

271). An evidential strategy is simply any means other than a dedicated construction of expressing a meaning associated with the evidential semantic domain. The notion of strategy is important to discussions of grammatical evidentiality because, while fully grammaticalized evidential systems are relatively rare in the world's languages, most languages have paraphrastic, metaphorical or ways of expressing information source (cf., Chafe and Nichols 1986). If we look beyond inflectional morphology, evidentiality appears to be another potentially universal semantic domain. If, however, we confine our discussion to narrow structural definitions of "grammar", then evidentiality is typologically unusual.

Identifying evidential strategies can be difficult, because by definition, a strategy is the extended use of a structure that expresses a function from one domain to express a function from a different domain. Therefore, it is oftentimes the case that a form used strategically to express evidence can felicitously be interpreted as expressing its original meaning, instead. Furthermore, the usage of strategies tends to be inconsistent, with a given evidential strategy implemented when a speaker feels that a particular communicative context merits or would benefit from an indication of information source. Compared to a construction, the distributional behavior of a strategy is determined as much by pragmatic considerations as by semantic requirements and may be highly subject to idiosyncratic habits of individual speakers.

Of course, evidentiality is not unique in this respect. Nichols and Chafe's point was to raise awareness of the possibility that languages may be expressing evidential functions in unexpected places. As others have pointed out, the notion of evidentiality emerged on the western linguistics scene at a time in which the field's focus was

dominated by a small number of languages. Consequently, its theoretical underpinnings were informed by a relatively genetically and typologically homogeneous dataset. That within this dataset grammaticalized expressions of information source were relatively unknown had consequences for the way early discoveries of grammatical evidential systems in newly described languages were received by linguists. As Squartini (2017: 271) puts it, the "historical imprint has permanently marked evidentiality as an 'exotic' category…"

I bring up the issue of strategy versus grammar because I wish to make it clear that whatever strategies Amdo Tibetan speakers may employ for expressing subtle nuances of the different kinds of evidence and respective levels of reliability for that evidence, evidential contrasts are also an unequivocal part of the grammatical paradigm of finite verb forms. Evidentiality is highly grammaticalized in Amdo Tibetan and evidential markers, where contextually appropriate, are obligatory. If it is hard to see in languages for which such functions are expressed via strategies, evidentiality is inescapable in Amdo Tibetan. De Roerich (1958) avoids the matter altogether, but it is highly unlikely that when confronted with, for instance, two different forms *-tʰa* and *-ziç* both expressing, in his analysis, past tense for third person and second person - he did not wonder at the difference in meaning between the two. Unlike evidential strategies, evidential grammatical forms consistently occur in the semantic contexts in which we would expect them to occur and their absence or replacement with a form of another category tends to be highly pragmatically marked for speakers. Moreover, their interpretations are unambiguous because evidence is their primary function—or one of— not a metaphorical extension of some other function.

4.2.1.1 The grammatical ambiguity of the Quotative Construction – evidential strategy or evidential construction?

Of course, since the scope of this dissertation is verbal morphology, I am interested in evidential 'grammar', not evidential 'extra-grammar'. This is not to say that the division between strategy and grammatical marker is clear-cut. Even though the highly grammaticalized nature of most of evidential categories in Tibetan makes it easier to draw a line, there are still semantic and structurally ambiguous cases. This is exemplified by Amdo Tibetan's Quotative Construction, which has cognates in most—if not all—varieties of Tibetan. In terms of morphological status, the element *zer* (WT: ཟེར) in some contexts exhibits properties of an inflectional morpheme in this language; in others, it behaves like an independent word. In all contexts, the element retains the same identity, as it were, for speakers and so should be regarded as a single polysemous form. As a 'concrete' lexeme, it is a verb with the senses of 'call (a name); say'. As an 'abstract' grammatical morpheme QC, it expresses the evidential category of 'hearsay'. The difference between evidential hearsay and 'say' comes down to whether or not 'saying' is construed as part of the propositional content of the utterance (with a participant role 'sayer') or if it is instead an identifier of how the speaker came to know the information represented in the proposition and is not, itself, part of the proposition. This isn't always clear, but the difference can be seen in comparing the two examples, below, in which formally identical (except for minor differences in pronunciation between dialects) elements convey slightly different meanings of 'you/they say' in (78) and 'I hear' in (79). The sentence in (78) is excerpted from a spontaneous conversation.

The sentence in (79) is taken from Sun (1993: 983) (I have changed some of the glosses to match my own system).

Lexical verb

(78) *tə*   *tɕʰɨ*   *ze?*

DEF   what   say

'What do (you) call it?'   (Gcig.sgril)

Evidential construction

(79) *kʰærnəb* *ŋe*   *xor*   *wə =tʰæ*   *se.*

last.night fire   slip   went=PFV.DE QUOT

'I heard (from someone who saw it happen) that a fire broke out last night.

There are thus two possible ways to analyze the Quotative Construction. The first is as a dedicated morpheme that marks a proposition's source of information as hearsay. The second is as an evidential strategy in which speakers use an embedded speech clause for the same purpose. There are structural features supporting both analyses. The functional ambiguity of QC indicates that it is has not completely grammaticalized, but still retains functional and morphosyntactic attributes of its source construction.

A more strategy-like expression of evidential contrasts is speakers' use of the progressive aspect construction in the expression of internal states for non-assertors. Because it is not a morphosyntactic expression of evidence, the evidential overtones of this construction aren't available in every context in which it occurs. Moreover, its use as

a strategy is not uniform across dialects. The progressive construction evidential construction is briefly described in the following section.

4.2.1.2 Progressive aspect as evidential strategy

The Progressive construction (ProgC) is non-evidential in function in the majority of contexts in which it occurs, but it has evidential connotation when it occurs with a subset of stative verbs (a more detailed description of ProgC is presented in Sec.9.1). Typically, stative verbs are incompatible with the progressive aspect marker *-ko*, except for endopathic[78] states with non-assertor subjects. This evidential sense of ProgC is illustrated in (80), on the next page, and contrasted with another evidential construction illustrated in (81) and (82).

(80) *kʰərgə   na-ko-kə*

    3S   be.sick-PROG-DE.IPF

    'He is sick.'   (Lit. 'he is/was being sick')

    (Speaker visited him while subject was home sick.)   (Gcig.sgril)

(81) *ŋa   na-kə*

    1S   be.sick-DE.IPV

     'I am sick.'   (Gcig.sgril)

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[78] Tournadre (1996: 226) coined this term to refer to a sixth "sensory channel" covering bodily and emotional experiences such as pain, sickness, comfort, etc.

(82) *ʔkʰərɣə*   *na*   *-kə*

    3s   be.sick   -DE.IPF

    'He is hurt.'   (Gcig.sgril)

    (Speaker has this level of knowledge only because she punched Subject in the face)

      Amdo Tibetan speakers treat endopathic states as non-volitional[79]. This means

that an assertor only knows of their own endopathic state through their perception of how

they feel. At the same time, the endopathic states of others, being internal, are largely

unknowable except when an interaction occurs that gives the assertor access to the

internal state of the other. This is why the speaker who produced (82) only found the

sentence acceptable if there was a back story in which the assertor caused the subject's

pain: punching someone in the face is the kind of interaction in which an assertor might

have the kind of access to the internal state of another to merit a simple expression of

DIRECT EVIDENCE.

      Sentences like (82), above, are not rare and make sense to speakers even in the

odd communicative context of an elicitation session, but they are pragmatically marked.

In any case, an aspectual distinction has been strategically employed as an evidential

distinction, and with time the evidential distinction has become conventionalized as a

grammatical contrast, albeit one that only is marked in a narrow set of conditions.

      Another way that the notion of strategy is relevant to the subject matter of this

dissertation is that evidential constructions can themselves be used as strategies for

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[79] See Sec. 4.3.1 for an explanation of volitionality as a feature of events that interracts with the grammatical expression of egophoricity.

expressing meanings associated with semantic domains that are conceptually related to evidentiality, most notably epistemic modality. Again, the Quotative Construction, is a useful illustration of this point. As will be described in Chapter 10, it is sometimes employed as a stance-taking strategy, used by speakers to distance themselves from information that they anticipate might be poorly received by an interlocutor.

4.2.2 Interaction with other semantic domains

Another important consideration issue is the relationship between evidentiality and other semantic categories. As we saw in the previous section, in some instances, the aspectual or temporal value of a predicate can influence the evidential value of the clause. In the case of non-volitional stative predicates, this connection is so strong that speakers have conventionalized the use of the Progressive Construction to express a nuanced sense of direct evidence that contrasts with simple IMPERFECTIVE DIRECT EVIDENCE.

In addition to interacting with the semantic domains expressed by other constructions, evidential markers also themselves express senses that belong to other domains. The suffixes -*ziç* and -*tʰa* are past-tense markers. The suffix -*kə* is an imperfective marker. Given that the use of evidence as an information source necessarily entails a time in which the evidence is encountered or existed, this comes as no surprise. In fact, it is probable that these evidential markers first expressed tense-aspect and then came to be evidential markers, as we see happening with the extended evidential use of progressive aspect for endopathic sentences.

Throughout Tibetan, evidential markers are also used strategically to express a MIRATIVE function, meaning that the information is new or surprising. The commonplace

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extension of direct evidence constructions to express mirativity has been well documented for Lhasa Tibetan function (see DeLancey 1997, 2012). However, in Amdo Tibetan the mirative extension of evidential markers is less common. The only clear example I have are limited to copular clauses and only occur in those few dialects which have evidential copular forms.

For those dialects that do makr evidential contrasts in copulas, the relevant contrast seems to be between ALLOPHORIC and DIRECT EVIDENCE, as shown in the examples below.

(83) *tə*   *rgɛrgan*   *re*

     DEF   teacher   EQ.ALLO

     'They are/were a teacher.'   (Gcig.sgril)

(84) *tə*   *rgɛrgan*   *jɪntʰa*

     DEF   teacher   EQ.DE

     'It turns out they are/were a teacher.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Both of the above sentences are not egophoric and so are understood as expressing information that does not count as self-knowledge. The allophoric sentence provides no other meaning beyond this. However, the evidential sentence, because it highlights an information source, implicates that the situation is new or unexpected for the assertor. In other words, it marks the information as mirative. This mirative interpretation is possible because information source is not an obligatory part of non-

verbal predicates, so the speaker must have a reason for including it, the most likely reason being that the speaker previously didn't know this information.

I don't know enough about the use of direct evidence copulas in Amdo Tibetan to make a claim as to whether or not such forms are primarily mirative, the mirative interpretation of the sentence in (84), above, is also compatible with a direct evidence interpretation.

Another important semantic domain that overlaps with evidentiality is egophoricity, which is the grammatical encoding of information access. The relationship between these two domains is discussed in the following section, 4.3.

4.3   Egophoricity

Of these three general terms—'conjunct/disjunct', 'evidentiality', and 'egophoricity'—egophoricity is the most recent. Tournadre (2005) suggested "egophoric" as a label for the grammatical category exemplified by the previously-labeled "conjunct" copula forms, which in WT are *yin* and *yod*. The term 'egophoricity' seems to have then been adopted as a cover term for the greater system in the same way as 'evidential system' before it.

If evidentiality is the grammatical expression of information source, egophoricity is the grammatical expression of information access. The notions of "information access" and "information source" are clearly related,but nonetheless should be separated because Amdo Tibetan grammar expresses both in different ways. Information source is only a relevant category for a sub-set of information access. It is further restricted to *realis* situations.

Roughly speaking, egophoricity is a binary opposition between egophoric knowledge and non-egophoric[80] knowledge (c.f., San Roque et al. 2018). These categories correspond to Sun's (1993) 'self-person' and 'other-person'[81], Denwood's (1999:120-125) 'self-centered' and 'other-centered', Hale's (1971) 'true instigator' and 'non-true instigator', Hargreaves' (1991) 'willful instigator' and 'non-willful instigator', Haller's 'volitional actor' and 'non-volitional actor'; and Sung & Rgya's 'subjective' and 'objective' perspectives. Note that some of these authors are describing Standard Tibetan and other Tibetan varieties. The binary contrast between egophoric and non-egophoric categories, however labeled, functions more or less the same in all varieties.

From this definition, it isn't a stretch to include this distinction within the domain of evidentiality, which other authors (e.g., Zemp (2017)) have done. Even if one follows the narrower definition of evidentiality as information source, it is logical to equate self-knowledge with the notion of self as information source (DeLancey 1990). For various reasons, as will become clear, I analyze the two as distinct, but interconnected, domains.

I differentiate egophoricity from evidentiality in part because the two categories display very different distributional behaviors. Leaving aside questions about the morphological status of the Quotative Construction for now, constructions expressing DIRECT EVIDENCE and INDIRECT EVIDENCE are restricted to *realis* propositions. In contrast, egophoric and allophoric constructions occur on both *realis* and *irrealis* contexts, the latter of which is exemplified by the FUTURE construction (see Sec. 8.8).

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[80] Also termed 'allophoric', etc.

[81] Sun (1993) mentions in Footnote 15 (p.55) that "some Chinese linguists" use the labels *zìchéngjù* (自称句) "(self-voice sentence)" and tāchéngjù (他称句) "(other-voice sentence)".

It makes sense that the question of how an assertor knows the information they are asserting is only relevant if the information is of an event or situation that actually took place or is true at the time of speech. Accordingly, we would not expect to see evidential distinctions marked in *irrealis* contexts. The fact that we see distinctions in egophoricity marked in irrealis contexts suggests that egophoricity is not an evidential category. One way to analyze grammatical evidence in Amdo Tibetan is that 'evidence' is any means of knowing that is external to the speaker. This means that evidential categories are inherently non-egophoric, or allophoric. The semantic organization of information into the categories of self-knowledge and other-knowledge therefore seems to supersede the question of how that information came to be known.

Egophoricity, at least as it occurs in Amdo Tibetan, is a deictic system marking the relationship between a unit of information and the person asserting it. The deictic center of this relationship is the *assertor*, following Creissels (2008), defined as "the speech act participant in charge of the assertion" (p.2).

Creissel (2008: 2) adopted the label 'assertor' to serve as a cover term for the speaker in declarative sentences, the addressee in questions, and the quoted person in reported speech. As such, 'assertor' does not refer to any grammatical or semantic concept. There is no lexical element that corresponds to "assertor", nor is there any "assertor" sense to be expressed by a grammatical construction that contrasts with some other grammatical sense.

Another way to understand the cognitive status of assertor is as the 'epistemic source' to whom the information expressed in an utterance is attributed (Hargreaves 1991: 35). I prefer Creissel's term assertor because the term 'epistemic' is employed in

other ways in this dissertation and I find 'assertor' to be more transparent as to the actual meaning of the notion: contrasts within the TAME paradigm reflect different points of view that are ultimately localized in the mind or experience of a person whose knowledge is being expressed in a given utterance.

I argue that egophoricity is essentially a binary opposition in which the EGOPHORIC category contrasts with various marked non-egophoric categories. Depending on certain propositional and epistemic constraints, there may be multiple such categories, or just a singular, ALLOPHORIC category. This approach is in line with analyses presented in Hargreaves (1991, 2005), Widmer & Zemp (2017), and Zemp (2017), etc.

Egophoric marking is constrained by a condition Creissels (2008) terms "assertor involvement", in which the assertor is involved in a proposition as a volitional participant. Typically, volitionality is a feature of transitive agents and intransitive subjects of controllable verbs, but more important than either the grammatical role of an assertor-participant or the lexical semantics of the verb, is the assertor's perspective on the event in question. Because of this, we see egophoric marking in clauses where we wouldn't expect it, if egophoric-marking merely functioned as a way of marking agreement with an assertor-argument on the verb. This is illustrated with the following example.

(85)　*atɕʰe jɪɖoŋ yugə m̥ɛɪmtsʰona ot.*

atɕʰe	*jɪɖoŋ*	*yu-gə*	*ɸɛɪmtsʰo-na*	*jo*
elder.sister	Ye.Sgrol	up-GEN	'Phyi.mtsho- LOC	EXIST.EGO

'Sister Ye.sgrol is up at 'Phyi.mtsho Lake.'　　　　　　　　(Gcig.sgril)

The proposition in (85) does not include an assertor participant. The only argument is a third-person subject, 'Sister Ye.sgrol'. Even so, the speaker has chosen to express assertor involvement by using the egophoric existential copula jo, instead of the allophoric form, *jokə*. In doing so, they are indicating that the information expressed in this clause is a form of self-knowledge.

We also see examples of the reverse. Sometimes, even when the assertor of a proposition is also a participant with a semantic role in which they might be expected to have egophoric access to information about the event, the speaker may choose to not to express assertor involvement. Such an example is the use of the factual allophoric marker in the sentence, below.

(86) *ŋi   ɲima ɣɲi-kə   lam-a   ʂta   ʐon-nəre*

1S.ERG day   two-GEN   road-LOC   horse ride-FACT.ALLO

'I rode a horse for two days.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Even though the speaker/assertor is the agent of the controllable action verb 'ride', the speaker has chosen to downplay the assertor's role in the event and highlight the factuality of the assertion by marking it as allophoric. In fact, the use of allophoric marking with an action event clause with a volitional assertor participant is unusual. In the case of (86), the factual allophoric marking corresponds to a formal register used in official interviews, but even so, it is likely that the reason allophoric marking has such formal connotations is because of the effect it has of presenting an egophorically neutral perspective.

It is clear, then, that while there are strong associations between egophoricity and the identity and semantic roles of participants, ultimately, information access is determined by factors that are as much outside of the propositional content of an utterance as they are determined by the nature of the event itself.

4.3.1 Volitionality and assertor involvement

As we have seen from previous examples, notions like 'willful', 'intentional' and 'volitional' are clearly important to understanding verbal morphosyntax in Tibetan. Following Haller (2004), I use the term 'volitional', which also happens to be the preferred label of some of my Tibetan teachers. In the present section I will define volitionality and the conditions under which it interacts with assertor involvement to produce egophoric access to information.

As stated in the introduction to Sec. 4.3, volitionality is a semantic property of verbal arguments. However, volitional arguments are primarily (but not exclusively) restricted to a lexical sub-class of verbs—controllable verbs, as defined by Haller (2000). Controllable verbs are a sub-category of action verbs and include intransitive and transitive verbs.

Haller (2000) compares Shigatse Tibetan, a variety that is close to Lhasa Tibetan and is spoken in the southwest of the Tibet Autonomous Region, with the Them.chen dialect of Amd Tibetan. Based on this comparison, it appears that controllability as a lexical semantic feature of verb roots is more or less the same for these two typologically

and geographically distant Tibetan varieties. Even so, the semantic category of volitionality is manifested differently in different varieties.

In Standard Tibetan, under certain conditions the binary contrast between egophoric and non-egophoric extends beyond self-knowledge and other-knowledge to include intentional and unintentional actions on the part of the assertor. The first condition is that the proposition be an event that it is possible for a participant to have control over. The second condition is that the participant which could exert control over the situation be the same as the assertor of the proposition. When these two conditions are met, the grammar of Standard Tibetan sentences then expresses whether or not the assertor-participant in fact exerted control or not. In other words, it is possible to mark a contrast between the assertor intending for the event to happen or not[82]. This is illustrated by the Standard Tibetan examples below.

Volitional sentence

(87)   *ŋʲe tɕaˉpajĩ̃*

      ngas   bcag-pa.jin

      1S.ERG   break.CNT-PST.EGO

      'I broke it (on purpose).'

Non-volitional sentence

(88)   *ŋʲe tɕʰaà soŋ*

      ngas   'chag=song

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[82] My description here suggests a past-tense or perfective proposition. As it turns out, volitionality is most robust in perfective sentences, but it does come into play in other contexts, particularly the expression of future situations.

S.ERG   break.NCNT=PFV.DE

'I broke it (by accident).'

Both sentences were elicited for my own collection and so have been transcribed phonetically. I have also provided the WT transcription, in keeping with the customary presentation for Standard Tibetan in western linguistic descriptions. Sentence (87) is distinguished from sentence (88) in the form of the verb stem and in the post-verbal morphology. In (87), *bcag*[83], which expresses a controllable sense of 'break', is used. In (88), it is the non-control stem, *'chag*. Both sentences—declarative statements—have a first person agent, *ngas*, which means that assertor, or speaker, is also a potentially in-control participant. This sense is expressed by the post-verbal morphology of each sentence. Both =*song* and -*pa.yin* are perfective, indicating that the event transpired prior to the time of speech, but =*song* expresses DIRECT EVIDENCE and -*pa.yin* is EGOPHORIC. The grammar of the sentence in (87) expresses that the speaker was a willing participant of a controllable event, which in this context necessarily implies that they intentionally broke the cup or whatever it was. The grammar of sentence (88) expresses that the speaker was not a willing participant; even though the speaker caused the breakage, as implied by the ergative case marker, the act of breaking was not a controlled event. Sentence (87) implies that the speaker broke the thing by accident.

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[83] In the grammar of Written Tibetan, which is not completely identical to the grammar of spoken Standard Tibetan, the form *bcag.pa* is also perfective, contrasting with a future stem, *gcag.pa*, that is also +control. There is just one non-control stem for the verb 'break'—*'chag.pa* is used in all tense-aspect contexts.

These distinct senses of (87) and (88) are compositional, produced by a combination of post-verbal marker and verb stem form. 'Volitional' does not correspond to verb stem form, because if it did, the following sentence on the next page would be non-sensical.

(89)   *löŋgi tɕǎ soŋ*

   glong-kyis   bcag   song

   wind-INST   break.CNT   PST.EGO

   'The wind broke it.'

The VP in sentence (89) contains the same verb stem as (87) with the post-verbal morphology of (88). According to my consultant, the NON-CONTROL form of 'break' would not be possible with an inanimate agent, such as 'wind'. Only the CONTROL form may be used. Is the sentence in (89) volitional? The presence of the perfective direct evidence post-clitic expresses that the speaker witnessed the event in which the cup blew off the table (or whatever) and broke, but the proposition in (89) can only be expressed with non-egophoric morphology—a contrast of volitional and non-volitional is not possible for sentences that do not have assertor-agents.

We can say that (87) is a volitional sentence and (88) and (89) are both non-volitional, but if we choose to analyze volitionality as a primary function of Tibetan clauses, then we must acknowledge that the vast majority of sentences are non-volitional. We must also narrow our definition of 'volitional' to just assertor-agents or assertor-subjects. If we do this, then we lose the definition of egophoric marking as expressing assertor involvement and therefore must find another explanation to account for the use

of egophoric marking in clauses such as (90), which contrasts in meaning with (91), below.

(90)　*ŋa*　　　　　*ʁotɕa*　　　　*mi-rga-Ø*

　　　1 S.DAT　　　milk.tea　　　NEG.IPF-like-EGO

　　　'I don't like milk tea.'　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(Gcig.sgril)

(91)　*ŋa*　　　　　*ʁotɕa*　　　　*mi-rga-kə*

　　　1S.DAT　　　milk.tea　　　NEG.IPF-like-DE.IPF

　　　'I didn't like (the) milk tea (at that restaurant).'　　　　(Gcig.sgril)

The egophoric marking on (90) implies that the proposition is generally true: the speaker dislikes milk tea in all forms and knows this fact about themselves very well. In contrast, the direct evidence marking on (91) merely expresses that the speaker does not like milk tea at a particular moment in time. They know that they don't like milk tea because of an endopathic experience, which is highlighted by the use of the direct evidence marker. Their dislike is therefore based on a specific experience, as opposed to being some sort of deeper form of self-knowledge. Consequently, the two sentences have slightly different temporal interpretations. I am also told that (90) sounds slightly more adamant than (91). If egophoric marking were restricted to volitional participants, then configuration such as that of (90) would not be possible.

4.3.2　Egophoric scope in verbal vs. copular clauses

The above-described semantic category of volitionality is not relevant to all predicates. It is one condition of egophoricity, not the only determining factor. This is apparent in the difference in egophoric scope exhibited in copular clauses as compared to verbal clauses. Copular clauses can have a wider egophoric scope as compared to verbal clauses. This is illustrated in the following examples, produced as part of a single utterance.

(92)   *təɣə*   *ɸɛam.ʂtse-tɕan=ziç*   *jɪn*

        then   compassion-being=INDEF   EQ.EGO

        'So, (Teacher Wang) is a kind person.'   (Gcig.sgril)

(93)   *ʂlobma-tɛʰa*   *maŋ-a*   *tsʰaŋma*   *çtɕi-nəre*

        student-PL   be.many-NMZ.DAT   all   love-FACT.ALLO

        '(She) loves all the students.'

Neither sentence contains an assertor-participant, yet sentence (92) is egophoric. Sentence (93) is allophoric. The omitted subject of (92) is also the omitted agent of (93), so the contrast between the egophoric marking of the first sentence and the allophoric marking of the second is especially informative.The assertor is not a participant in either sentence, yet the speaker has chosen to express assertor involvement in (92), but not (93). There are number of possible reasons for why she can do this with copular clauses (see Sec. 7.5.1.2), but my main concern here is that she cannot do this for the sentence in (93), and that's because for assertor-involvement to be marked in a verbal predicate, usually the assertor has to have been a volitional participant, as defined, above.

4.3.3 Un-marked egophoric vs. factual and un-marked

In the beginning of this chapter, I presented an overview of the morphological TAME paradigm that occurs on assertions. I also made the claim that the individual constructions which happen to instantiate the contrasting categories of this paradigm represent the inventory of possible finite verb forms in Amdo Tibetan. The reality is more complicated. The tables give the impression that, with the exception of imperative sentences, all finite verbs contain a post-verbal morphological element. However, this is not entirely true. It is mostly untrue for egophoric clauses because, as it turns out, for verbal predicates (excluding copulas), egophoric is sometimes marked with a zero, but in certain discourse contexts, finite sentences are produced that are simply un-marked, with a default interpretation of factual, or assertive information. Sung & Rgya (149-150) refer to this phenomenon as clauses having "an invisible subjective marker", and their analysis extends the function of this invisible marker to non-finite clauses, which is not an opinion I share.

I use 'assertive' in the sense of Takeuchi (2014), not Willett (1988). For Willett, 'assertive' is a type of evidentiality that happens to correspond, more or less, to the category in Amdo Tibetan I have labeled INDIRECT EVIDENCE. this analysis fits the functional reconstructions of the historical verbal system of Tibetan proposed by Zemp (2017)

First, let me explain the conditions in which zero-marking occurs for egophoric predicates. As Sun (1993: 957-959) notes, there is no post-verbal element in negative egophoric sentences or in polar questions. This is shown in the following example from Sun.

(94)   *ŋə*   *ndaŋ*   *tɕʰaŋ* *zəg*   *ma*   *ntʰoŋ (*=nə[84])*

       1S.ERG last.night   liquor INDEF NEG   drink

       'I didn't drink any liquor last night.'   (Mdzo.dge)

As Sun also notes, in addition to never occurring in negative and interrogative sentences, it is also the case that overt marking of EGOPHORIC alternates with zero marking in affirmative statements. I believe the frequency with which egophoric verbal predicates are zero-marked varies from dialect to dialect, being perhaps most common in the Mgo.log dialects, and least common in the dialects spoken around the central valley area of Xīníng Municipality and Reb.gong. In fact, Gcig.sgril speakers tend to use the forms presented below in spontaneous speech at least as much as -*a*. This is shown in the following examples.

(95)   *za.*

       '(I) eat (it).'   (Gcig.sgril)

(96)   *zu.*

       '(I) ate.'   (Gcig.sgril)

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[84] Sun (1993) identifies the 'marked' form of the EGOPHORIC category as =*nə*. He describes this form as probably a phonological "filler", which I think is probably true of the -a form I record in my data (and Sung & Rgya record in their textbook), but I suspect that in some cases he may have been presented with a form similar to the -*a* (or -*Ca*) I transcribe in my data and in other cases he was presented with an entirely different form, a contracted version of the category I have labeled factual egophoric. In its un-contracted form, this suffix is produced as -*nəjɪn* in Gcig.sgril, but speakers often produce it as -*nə*. It is still an egophoric form, but it is also factual. For a more detailed description of the FACTUAL EGOPHORIC category.

When presented with sentences such as (95) and (96) out of context, my Gcig.sgril language teachers interpret them as having first person agents. I take this as evidence for a zero allomorph of the egophoric marker.

Particularly in conversational dialogs, zero-marked finite verbs seem to almost always have an egophoric interpretation, but there are in fact restricted contexts where this is not so. So, in narratives about other people (i.e., neither speaker nor addressee), the occasional zero-marked verb form shows up in clauses that cannot be egophoric and also otherwise appear to be finite. Haller (2004) includes transcriptions of three fairly long narratives and such verb forms show up in all three, albeit they are just a handful. Example (97) is excerpted from p. 166, line 9. The transcription and parsing are Haller's, as is the translation, presented in German with an English translation in parentheses, but he does not gloss the narratives, so I have added my own glosses, keeping his original parsing.

(97)   *təni ta {blonpu-ɣə wi} rdʑawu wi çserŋa-tə tɕʰə <u>ŋtʰuŋ-i.tɕʰer-sʰuŋ</u>,*

      ŋəl-a, <u>çor-i.wəs-sʰuŋ</u>.

    'Der Sohn (des) Königs trank dann Wasser und verschluckte unabsichtlich den Fisch aus Gold (?)' 'The son of the king then drank the water and intentionally swallowed the fish.'

təni	*ta*	*{blonpu-ɣə*	*wi}*	*rdʑawu*	*wi*
then	now	{cheif -GEN	son.ERG}	king.GEN	son.ERG

'So now {the chief's son} the king's son…

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çser.ŋa-tə	*tɕʰə*	*n̥tʰuŋ-i*	*tɕʰer-sʰuŋ*
gold.fish-DEF	water	drink-CNV	take-INTR.PST

'…(as for) the golden fish, (the king's son) took and drank the water...'

mŋəl	*-a*
swallow-CNV	

'…(the fish) being swallowed…'

çor-i	*wəs-sʰuŋ*
escape- CNV	went-INTR.PST

'(the fish) got away by escaping.'

On the next page is an example from an excerpt of spontaneous speech recorded in my own data collection:

(98)   *mŋətəŋ ɹaŋva zə-ɣa **tʰəɣ-pzaɣ** təɣə ze-ndəɣ-ɣe, kʰətɕʰaka ɹaŋva na ɹvæʂfə vasəŋ-cə jo? nə əɹe?*

'(He) met a farmer and asked him, 'Do you farmers got ɹvæʐfə[85] to sell?'

mŋə-taŋ	*ɹŋawa=ziç-ka*	**tʰəɣ-pzaɣ**
person-with	Rnga.ba=INDEF-DAT	meet-COMP

'(He) met a person who was a farmer.'

---

[85] A *ɹvæʐfə* is a bent stick used to knock snow off of tents.

təɣə   ze-ndəɣ-ɣe

so   say-CONT-DE

'So, (he) was asking…'

kʰətɕʰo-ka   raŋwa-na   ɹvæʂfə tsʰoŋ-cə   jonə-ə-ɹe

3PL-DAT   farmer-LOC   stick   sell-NMZ   EXIST.FACT-Q-ALLO

'Do those folks who are farmers have *ɹvæʂfə* to sell?'

In (97), there are two zero-marked verb forms, including the final verb in the line, which Haller transcribes as a sentence, ending it with a period, so at least the second such verb seems quite finite-like. In (98), there is just one zero-marked verb, which owing to the relatively short pause following it before the next clause suggests that it may not be the end of a sentence. On the other hand, there is no converb marking or any other morphology indicating that it is non-finite. For both examples, neither the speaker nor the audience are anywhere near the scene of actions for the events being retold, so the absence of TAME marking in these verbs cannot be interpreted as egophoric.

My belief regarding these verb forms is that the absence of finitizing TAME marking means that the functions expressed by the TAME paradigm are not being communicated and they are not communicated because such meaning is superfluous and not felt by the speakers to be necessary to the communicative purpose of the utterances. In other words, these verbs are purely assertive. This kind of structure is common for finite verbs in Classical Literary Tibetan and Old Tibetan such that it represents an original finite verb construction. The absence of post-verbal morphology in Old Tibetan had a default interpretation of assertive, or factual information (Takeuchi 2014). The

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egophoric sense of un-marked verb forms only emerges once a regularized non-egophoric system of contrasts is established. Just as the 'original' copula system became re-analyzed as egophoric, so un-marked verbal predicates followed suit. However, in certain contexts, an egophorically neutral factual sense prevails as a default interpretation for such forms. We see this in the (97) and (98), but it is even more common for utterance verbs (which partly explains the morphological properties of the QC/utterance verb *zer*).

FACTUAL is a grammatical category that corresponds to realis. Unmarked is just factual. FACTUAL-ZERO is the unmarked way that doesn't say anything about information access. The speaker is able to mark these distinctions if its relevant to do so, but they are not required to. However, in many communicative contexts, like conversations, it appears that speakers consistently make these distinctions. In these contexts in Gcig.gril, the -Ø form should be interpreted as egophoric, even though it is likely a formal remnant of the other unmarked factual category.

The nature of the connection between information and access and egophoricity is most apparent in the category of endopathic predicates. When such predicates occur with assertor subjects, the speaker may choose to highlight certain senses, but a "neutral" factual assertion is always allophoric.

This way of tracking and representing the relationship between assertor and assertion treats knowledge is a phenomenological event—the subjective experience of the assertor is rooted in time and influenced by factors like awareness, intent and control.

Zemp (2017: 128-129) hypothesizes that the development of grammatical egophoricity, and with it evidentiality (or however people choose to interpret the nature of the connection between these two semantic domains), emerged to fill a vacuum caused

by the loss of verb agreement. This is an attractive idea partly because, as any speaker of both Tibetan and a language with verb agreement is only too aware, with the exception of the problematic existence of the conjunct/disjunct pattern, egophoricity seems to do all the things that verb agreement does. But then how do we account for the large gap in time between when whatever original system of verb agreement Proto-Tibetan had and the stage at which egophoricity became an obligatory part of the grammar of verbs? Or, even more troublesome, how do we account for the absence of egophoricity and verb agreement in genetically and geographically proximate language varieties like Chinese? Scholars like Wang (2011) have demonstrated cross-linguistic influences between the Sinitic varieties spoken in Amdo and non-Sinitic languages, including Tibetan, and, of course, it is a well-documented historical fact that Chinese-Tibetan bilingualism was (and continues to be) relatively common in many communities, yet no evidence has ever been put forth for any Chinese variety having grammatical egophoricity. Chinese, like Classical Literary Tibetan, continues to be employed as a meaningful communication medium by people who do not resort to verb agreement or egophoricity.

4.4   Factuality

As shown in Table 12, above, *realis* assertions may be marked EGOPHORIC, EVIDENTIAL (either 'direct' or 'indirect'), and FACTUAL (either FACTUAL EGOPHORIC or FACTUAL ALLOPHORIC). The two factual categories are separated from the egophoric and evidential categories because the latter two categories express functions associated with *how* the assertor knows the information being asserted and the two factual categories do not. Their distribution is therefore motivated by slightly different semantic and discourse-

pragmatic factors than are found for the other two categories. The following are examples of the two factual categories are they occur in verbal predicates are given.

Factual allophoric

(99)　*ŋa*　　*raŋ-kə*　　　*χtɕɨko*　　　*zon-e*　　　*soŋ-nəre*

　　　　1S　　self-ERG　　alone　　　ride-CNV　　go.PFV-FACT.ALLO

　　　　'I rode (a horse) by myself.'　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(Gcig.sgril)

Factual egophoric

(100)　*tsʰa-kə*　　　*bdzi-nəjɨn*　　　*ta*

　　　　joke-INST　　say-FACT.ALLO　　now

　　　　'(I) am just kidding.'

　　　　(Gcig.sgril)

　　　From the above examples we can see that one way factuality behaves differently from the other realis categories is assertor involvement is optionally marked. Both clauses are declarative statements about first-person participants. Since the verbs 'ride' (99) and 'say' (100) are both controllable, first-person arguments should be volitional and therefore the non-factual equivalents of both clauses would almost certainly be marked egophoric. Yet, in (99) the speaker has chosen to express a non-privileged assertor perspective on information that they, in fact, do have privileged access to.

　　　As will be discussed for in Sec. **Error! Reference source not found.**, considering copulas, and Sec. **Error! Reference source not found.**, considering verbal predicates, there are a number of reasons why a speaker may choose to do so, but for the

purposes of this summary it suffices to say that for factual assertions the speaker has the option of highlighting assertor involvement or not.

As for the conditions that motivate the use of factual over other *realis* categories, factuals are commonly used as devices for expressing narrative structure. Specifically, there is a correlation between factual forms and background information, and a correlation between egophoric and evidential forms and foregrounded information. This is illustrated with three clauses, produced in sequence as part of the same utterance, in an excerpt from a spontaneous conversation in which the speaker is telling the addressee what they did that day. Example (101) is foreground information—the information is new and advances the narrative. Example (102) is background information, serving to provide context for understanding the foregrounded information in example (103).

Indirect Evidence

(101) *kʰartsaŋ*   *ŋi*   *təni*   *nara*   *rʝa*   *cʰer-te*

        yesterday   1S.ERG   there   just   Han   take-CNV

        joŋ=ti   *təti*   *lu-soŋ-**zɨç***

        come=when   time   leave-PFV-**I.E.PST]**

        'Yesterday, when I was just bringing some Chinese there, I left (my phone charger and boots).'

Factual Egophoric

(102) *təɣə*   *tə-tɕʰa*   *blaŋ-ne*   *soŋ-**nəjɪn***

        then   DEF-PL receive-CNV   went-**FACT.EGO**

        'So I went back to get them.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Direct Evidence

(103) *ta*   *ma-tɕʰət-tʰa*

      now   NEG.PFV-find-**DE.PST**

      'But I didn't find them.'   (Gcig.sgril)

CHAPTER V

THE AMDO TIBETAN CLAUSE

In order to understand the functional and formal properties of Amdo Tibetan verb phrases (VPs), it is useful to understand how VPs fit into the rest of the clause. This includes describing the functions and structures of non-VP clausal constituents.

In this chapter, I present an overview of the Amdo Tibetan clauses, looking at the morphosyntax of the Basic Clause Construction and examining the morphosyntax of clause constituents. Clause constituents include noun phrases, verbs and adverbs, which are a morphological subclass of nouns. Noun Phrases (NPs) function as arguments and display flexible word order and free deletion, suggesting a morphosyntactic independence from the Verb Phrase (VP).

Noun Phrases also occur as internal constituents of VPs, functioning as Verb Objects, and as internal constituents of other NPs, functioning as modifiers either in the form of MP constituents, or as heads of genitive phrases.

VPs can be simple or complex, as in Serial Verb Constructions. VP structure also varies according to predicate type and clause type. Nominal predicates are expressed with copular verbs. Verbal predicates are expressed with verbs, which can be divided in the following lexical classes: stative verbs and active verbs. There are clear morphological differences between finite and non-finite clauses. Most importantly, non-finite clauses do not express functions associated with the domains of egophoricity, epistemic modality, factuality or evidentiality. Non-finite clauses include nominalized clauses and non-final

clauses in clause chains. Both types of non-finite clauses are important sources of TAME morphology, including constructions that express egophoricity, epistemic modality, factuality and evidentiality.

5.1   Overview of This Chapter

In the present chapter, I will provide an overview of clause structure. This includes a brief discussion of the structures and functions of non-verbal constituents. I pay particular attention to the properties of NP constituents. The morphosyntax of Amdo Tibetan clauses displays assymetry, with different properties associated with different parts of speech. For this reason, in Sec. 5.2, I address the theoretical notion of word classes, by which I mean universal semantic classes such as nouns and verbs, and explain why this notion is incompatible with the theoretical framework that informs my description. I also explain why, while my analysis of Amdo Tibetan grammar dos not support the notion of autonomous word classes, it does provide evidence for linguistically-specific parts of speech.

Having defined criteria for certain parts of speech in Amdo Tibetan, in Sec. 5.3 I move on to present an overview of the Basic Clause Construction, which is the structural foundation for all clause-types in the language, finite and non-finite. Then, in Sec. 5.4 I describe the different structural classes of predicates. Then, in the Sec. 5.5, I establish the formal distinctions between finite and non-finite clauses. In 5.6, I describe the morphosyntactic and functional properties of NPs as clause constituents. I also introduce the different clausal behaviors of pronouns versus full nouns. In 5.7 , I discuss the

grammatical expression of number in NPs. In Sec. 5.8, I present an in-depth analysis of the functional properties of pronouns.

5.2   Parts of speech in Amdo Tibetan

As mentioned in Sec. 3.2, terms like 'component' and 'constituent' facilitate descriptions of linguistic structures without having to resort to theoretically-loaded labels like 'verb' or 'noun'. I say these terms are theoretically loaded because they are part of the representational terminology of lexicosemantic approaches in which it is assumed that parts of speech are universal primitives that are part of an autonomous level of syntax.

In Sec. 5.2.1, I explain reasons for rejecting the notion that lexical items can be divided into universal parts of speech. In Sec. 5.2.2, I then explain why it is still useful to speak of Amdo Tibetan as having structurally distinct parts of speech, by which I mean phrase- or clause-level functions that are associated with lexical items that share certain semantic properties. I also present some of the morphosyntactic evidence to support the claim that Amdo Tibetan grammar treats nouns differently from verbs. Finally, I briefly address why I have so far failed to find evidence for the existence of adverbs and adjectives as structurally distinct parts of speech in this language.

5.2.1   A rejection of autonomous syntax and universal parts of speech

The overall distributional patterns observed for a particular lexical item (word or smaller morphological unit) are understood to be epiphenomenal, the result of the item having semantic and pragmatic functions that are compatible with those of some constructions and not with others. It is not necessary for there to be lexically-licensed

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syntactic roles (Goldberg 1995). Consequently, there is no need to posit an overarching argument structure that is licensed by lexical rules embedded in the internal semantics of verbs and which exists independently of any individually-observed sentence pattern. Rather, it is the sentence patterns themselves that are meaningful.

If a language does not possess an autonomous system of argument structure organized into the comprehensive logic of an alignment system, then argument structure is not a syntactic primitive and it does not make sense to analyze the structures and functions of the different patterns of clauses and sentences on the basis of what they tell us about argument structure.

The same is true of semantic classes of lexical items: to the extent that a language's lexical inventory appears to display different parts of speech, such categories only exist to the extent that we observe that some lexical items tend to occur in the same kinds of constructions without any derivational morphology[86]. This means that the criteria for determining the parts of speech a language has are ultimately specific to that language (even if they correspond to general patterns observed cross-linguistically). Because the criteria for identifying a part of speech is ultimately based on constructions, in the absence of clearly defined patterns of structural difference, it is impossible to make a claim that such-and-such part of speech even exists in the language. Thus, as is true of argument structure, word classes are also not a syntactic primitive. This does not mean that the grammatical structure of Amdo Tibetan does display lexical asymmetries,

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[86] Croft (2001:55) uses the term 'morphological verbs' to refer to lexical items that prototypically occur in VPs. I use the term 'parts of speech' here.

however. As I argue in the next section, there are many ways in which the phrase-level and clause-level morphosyntax of Amdo Tibetan differentiates parts of speech.

5.2.2 Structurally-defined parts of speech in Amdo Tibetan

If argument structure is not a universal syntactic primitive, neither are parts of speech, as Croft (2001:63-107) points out. Even so, there is evidence to support an analysis of language-specific parts of speech for Amdo Tibetan. Specifically, I have identified some language-specific criteria for determining nouns and verbs—or, at least, classes of lexical items that closely correspond to such parts of speech identified in other languages.

Since my analysis is based on a model of linguistic structure in which lexical and grammatical meanings form a continuum of a single mode, I want to avoid giving the impression that my description depends on the notion of word classes. Nonetheless, we can see that across many constructions there are emergent patterns which can be associated with generalizable syntactic functions that are in turn associated with certain semantic properties. So, clauses all have a VP slot, and within the VP construction is a verb slot, which tends to be occupied by lexical items that encode actions, conditions and other related senses.

We can refer to type of lexical items that occur in this slot as 'verbs', while bearing in mind that their association with this particular part of speech is a product of the constructions they occur in. The different parts of speech are strongly associated with certain lexical items, which is of course where the impression of word classes comes

from, but that association exists only to the extent that the semantics of the lexeme are compatible with the semantics of the construction in which it occurs.

That said, the phrase-level and clause-level structure of Amdo Tibetan clearly differentiates between two parts of speech—nouns and verbs. However, there is as yet no incontrovertible evidence that the language has morphological adverbs or adjectives.

Amdo Tibetan nouns are readily identified by the following structural properties: they occur as NP constituents of clauses without additional morphology; they take case marking when encoding the arguments of predicates; they can be modified by genitive phrases and modifier phrases. These properties will be described in greater detail in the remaining sections of this chapter.

Amdo Tibetan verbs are readily identified by the structural property of occurring as the verb stem in a VP without any additional morphology. Amdo Tibetan verbs also require additional morphology (e.g., nominalizations) in order to occur as NP constituents.

As for adjectives and adverbs, I have so far failed to identify any diagnostic criteria for establishing the existence of either part of speech in Amdo Tibetan. Property terms, which are the lexical items that we would expect to constitute an adjective part of speech if Amdo Tibetan had one, are grammatically heterogeneous. Of the roots that occur in noun-modifying constructions, most also occur as stative verbs while a minority occur as nouns (most notably, numerals—see Sec. 5.6, below).

But regardless of their part of speech, no root can appear in either a modifier phrase or a genitive phrase without some sort of derivational morphological process. While the absence of evidence is not evidence, the fact remains that no property concept

terms of which I am aware can occur un-marked in any construction expressing modification, which is the prototypical function for adjectives. While I have encountered a few peculiar patterns that seem to suggest at least a tendency toward developing a morphological class of adjectives (in particular, see Sec. 5.10.4), so far none of it adds up to a convincing argument. I will describe in detail the constituency and functions of genitive phrases in Sec. 5.5.1, and modifier phrases in Sec. 5.5.2.

If there is an absence of persuasive evidence supporting adjectives as a part of speech, there is a slightly more convincing, though still weak, case to be made for the existence of morphological adverbs. While their clause-level function is non-referential, adverbs share many of the structural properties of nouns. Most notably, they display a flexible word order relative to other non-VP clausal constituents and they occur with case-marking. Since Amdo Tibetan has pragmatically conditioned NP-deletion, it is sometimes not possible to tell whether an overt NP in a clause is an argument or an adverb. This feature is exasperated by two instances of case syncretism: instrumental case and ergative case are isomorphic, as, in most cases, are locative and dative case (see Sec. 2.4.4). The examples below, reproduced from Sec. 2.4.4, illustrate the isomorphic case-marking of instrumental obliques and transitive agents.

Ergative case

(104) *nga-s yul dren-gi*

     1S-ERG home miss-DE.IPF

     'I miss home.' (I.e., 'I am homesick.')   (Sung & Bla: 126)

Instrumental case

(105) *mgo-gi*   *rgyan.cha='di*   *spos.shel-ra byu.ru-s*   *las-no-gi*

head-GEN   ornament=PROX   amber-ASS   coral-**INST**   make-NMZ-GEN

zhe.gi   *dka'-gi*

very   difficult-DE.IPF

'The headpiece is made of amber and coral, so it's expensive.' (Sung & Bla: 314)

In (104), the case marker *-s* expresses a transitive agent, which is a core argument of the sentence. In (105), the same form *-s* expresses a propositional adjunct, which is not a core argument. We can consider it an adverb. The only way to distinguish the ergative case-marking in (104) from the instrumental case-marking in (105) is to rely on one's experience-informed understanding of the world, according to the logic of which a human argument is probably an agent and an inanimate thing probably an instrument.

From the above examples we can see that there is structural overlap between case-marked core arguments and adverbial uses of the same case forms. However, there is weak evidence to support an analysis of adverbials as a minor, but distinct, part of speech. One such evidence is that in all dialects, under certain conditions dative case can be omitted for dative experiencers (Sec. 2.4). The same is not true for the homophonous locative case marker: locations must always be marked with a locative case marker.

Having established that the morphosyntax of Amdo Tibetan displays structural asymmetries between nouns and verbs, the remainder of this chapter will explore how these asymmetries manifest in the structure of clauses and clausal constituents and examine some of the functions associated with nouns.

5.3 Overview of the Clause

As established in Sec.5.2, the grammar of Amdo Tibetan treats verbs differently from nouns. This asymmetric treatment is most apparent in the morphosyntax of clauses, in which nouns and verbs tend to occur in constructions associated with very different functions. In order to understand the functional and formal properties of Amdo Tibetan verbs, it is therefore useful to first present an overview of clause structure. In this section I introduce the basic structural and functional properties that are common to all clauses. All clauses in the language are formed from a basic schematic construction, the template for which is presented below:

Basic Clause Construction

([NP]) ([NP]) ([NP]) [VP]

As we see from the schematic template, the only obligatory constituent of the Basic Clause Construction (BCC) is the verb phrase. Note also that this template does not differentiate types of NP. This is because BCC does not specify an order for NPs based on semantic role.

In the rest of Sec. 3 I explain these and other properties of BCC. In Sec. 5.3.1, I introduce the conditions under which NP constituents are omitted. In Sec. 5.3.2, I describe the high variability of NP word order and discuss why this variability suggests that syntactic position, either of arguments or of adverbs, is not part of the specification of BCC. In Sec. 5.3.3, I introduce different predicate types, according to which Amdo Tibetan verb phrases display different internal and external morphosyntactic properties.

Sec. 5.3.4 concludes the discussion of this overview of clause structure by showing how BCC is basic to both finite and non-finite clauses, while also briefly introducing some of the structural differences distinguishing finite from non-finite clauses.

5.3.1 NP Deletion

Note that in the preceding section, the BCC template shows that the only obligatory constituent of an AT sentence is the verb. Arguments can be—and frequently are—omitted. In clauses expressing propositions with one or more participants, discursive and pragmatic constraints, rather than formal constraints on argument structure, are what determine argument deletion. As stated above, no particular semantic identity is assigned to the NPs in the BCC schematic because there is also no obligatory order of NP constituents (see Sec.5.3.2, below). Examples (106)-(109), below, demonstrate non-obligatoriness of the NP constituents of the Basic Clause Construction (BCC). All of the sentences contain lexically intransitive verbs.

(106) *ŋa wɨsoŋa*

    [ŋa]$_{NP}$ [wɨt-soŋ-Ø]$_{VP}$

    1S   go.PFV-PST-EGO

    'I left.'   (Gcig.sgril)

(107) *tɕʰwə ʰko ti tata ʰkwənore.*

      [tɕʰu   ʰko=ti]ₙₚ   *[tata]ₙₚ*   *[ʰko-no*   *re]ᵥₚ*

      water boil=DEF   just   boil-NMZ   EQ.ALLO

      'The hot water just started to boil.'   (Yǎqūtān)

(108) *ra ʰkɛgoki.*

      [ra]ₙₚ   *[ʰkɛ-ko-ki]ᵥₚ*

      Spontaneously   laugh-PROG-DE.IPF

      '(They) just started laughing for no reason.'   (Yǎqūtān)

(109) *nɟo masoŋ.*

      [nɟo   ma-soŋ-Ø]ᵥₚ

      go.IPF   NEG.PFV-PST-EGO

      '(I) didn't go.'   (Gcig.sgril)

In the examples above, we see NPs in intransitive clauses can be arguments (intransitive subjects) as in (106) and (107), or adverbs as in (108). We also see that perfectly formed sentences may contain no NP at all, as in (109). Below are examples of transitive clauses.

(110) *kʰərgi tɕæpʰʊ́r tɕáktáŋtʰà.*

      [kʰərgi]ₙₚ   *[tɕapʰor]ₙₚ*   *[tɕák*   *-táŋ*   *-tʰà]ᵥₚ*

      3S.ERG   tea.cup   break.CNTR   -TR   -PST.DE

      'She broke a cup.'   (Gcig.sgril)

(111) *tɕæpʰʊr tɕaktaŋtʰà.*

     [tɕapʰor]NP   *[tɕaɣ-ptaŋ-tʰa]VP*

     cup   break.CNTR-TR-PST.DE

     'A cup was broken.' Or, 'They broke a cup.'   (Gcig.sgril)

(112) *ɹloŋɨ tɕak taŋtʰa.*

     [rloŋ-kə]NP   *[tɕaɣ-ptaŋ-tʰa]VP*

     wind-INST   break.CNTR-TR-PST.DE

     'The wind broke it.' Or, 'it was broken by the wind.'   (Gcig.sgril)

From examples (110)-(112), above, we can see that transitive clauses optionally omit semantic agents (111) as well as semantic patients (112). As with intransitive clauses, it is also possible for there to be no NPs.

Elicited ditransitive clauses tend to be produced with an order of AGENT, RECIPIENT and PATIENT (see Sec. 5.3.2). This order is illustrated with the declarative statement in (113), below. The speaker is the agent, the addressee is the recipient and 'water' is the patient.

(113) *ŋa tɕʰo tɕʰwə ha waʰtuk.*

     [ŋa]NP [tɕʰo]NP   *[tɕʰu]NP*   *[ha   wa-ʰtuk-Ø]VP*

     1s   2s   water   away   pour-CONT-EGO

     'I'm pouring you water.'   (Yǎqūtān)

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As with intransitive and transitive clauses, any or all arguments in a ditransitive clause may be omitted. This is illustrated below, in example (114).

(114)   *ha*   *wa=ʰtuk-Ø*

      away   pour=CONT-EGO

      'I've poured (you water).'   (Yăqūtān)

The sentences in (113) and (114) also contain a relational particle, *ha* (WT: *phar* ཕར). Directional nouns are a closed lexical class. They commonly occur as adverbs and may either function as propositional modifiers or, as in (113)-(114), as lexical modifiers of the verb stem, in which case they are an internal constituent of the VP and cannot be deleted.

In the next section, I discuss the flexible order of NP clausal constituents.

5.3.2   Variable NP order

The order of overt arguments is flexible. By 'flexible', I mean that the variation in NP orders appears to be unrelated to propositional functions like the semantic role of arguments or adverbial modification. This characteristic of Tibetic is important enough to our understanding language typology that I will dedicate a few paragraphs to explaining it.

First, I illustrate the flexibility in order for arguments and other NPs. The simple clauses in (115) and (116) each have two arguments and a clausal adverb—an NP

representing the time of the assumed proposition. In (115) the adverb occurs before the arguments. In (116) it occurs between them.

(115) *tɛraŋ cʰo kɔ̃a soŋ?*

     tɛraŋ   cʰo   kaŋ-na   soŋ-Ø?

     today 2S   where-LOC   go.PST-EGO

     'Where did you go today?'   (Gcig.sgril)

(116) *cʰu tɛraŋ tɕʰi je?*

     cʰu   tɛraŋ   tɕʰi   je-Ø

     2S.ERG   today   what   do-EGO

     'What did you do today?'   (Gcig.sgril)

In addition to a non-fixed word order relative to clausal adverbs, argument NPs also display an un-fixed word order relative to one another. In the examples below, essentially identical propositions are represented by clauses with multiple overt arguments appearing in two different orders.

(117) *kæŋi ŋala ɦziki.*

     kæ̃-ki   ŋa-la   ɦzi-ki

     3.INDEF-ERG   1S-DAT   scold-DE

     'He scolded me.'   (Yăqūtān)

(118) *ŋala kæŋgi ɦziki.*

ŋa-la   kæ̃-ki   ɦzi-ki

1S-DAT   3.INDEF-ERG   scold-DE

'He scolded me.'   (Yǎqūtān)

The two sentences in (117) and (118) are both translated as 'he scolded me', even though the order of the two arguments is different in each. Both consist of an ergative-marked agent and a dative-marked indirect patient, or recipient. The agent is a third person referent and the patient is the first person. We can see, then, that word order can vary regardless of the personal identity or semantic role of the arguments in question. Neither is order constrained by different degrees of animacy, as can be seen in examples (119)-(120).

(119) *ŋa oma məgaki.*

ŋa   oma   mə-ɦga-ki

1S   milk   NEG.IPF-like-DE.IPF

'I don't like milk.'   (Yǎqūtān)

(120) *oma ŋa məgaki.*

oma   ŋa   mə-ɦga-ki

milk   1S   NEG.IPF-like-DE

'I don't like milk.'   (Yǎqūtān)

Again, the sentences in (119) and (120) represent identical propositions and so they are translated the same. Again, we see that argument disambiguation is not a function of word order. In fact, there is no structural disambiguation of arguments at all in these two sentences. Although the participants perform different semantic roles, there is no morphology or syntax to mark the difference in the linguistic representation.

The flexible NP order of Tibetic languages is often described as a tendency toward "pragmatically-conditioned" non-canonical orders contrasting with a canonical, or default, SOV order (c.f., Agha 1993; Denwood 1999). This may well be the case for Standard Tibetan[87] and other varieties, but based on my own observations of Amdo Tibetan over the past decade, I am skeptical of the claim that there is a canonical order[88]. Admittedly, when asked to produce transitive or ditransitive sentences in elicitation sessions, speakers almost always produce SOV sentences, but they also just as readily accept an OSV order of the same sentence, when offered. They also readily accept versions with one or more arguments missing.

Together with the fact that in actual discourse—be it written texts, casual conversations, or elicited translations of extended texts—transitive sentences with SOV order seem to be no more frequent than another order, the justification for claiming a canonical SOV order seems rather weak.

One explanation of why SOV shows up as a seemingly default order in elicitations is that it reflects a convergence between a prototypical association between

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[87] As Agha shows, one argument in support of Standard Tibetan and Lhasa Tibetan having a canonical word order is that ergative case, which is optional in SOV sentences, is obligatory in sentences with OSV order or with a deleted O. For the most part, ergative case is not optional in any Amdo Tibetan clause.

[88] Vollman (2008:19) disagrees that SOV is the syntactic default for Lhasa Tibetan, which is the variety he chooses to represent the greater Tibetan language of his study. He also cites Jäschke (1865:80) as expressing a similar view.

transitive agents and thematic information and thematic information and first position.

Tomlin (1986) proposes that such associations are behind the higher occurrence of SOV

and SVO word orders, cross-linguistically: speakers tend to arrange sentences such that

the theme (or sentence topic) is arranged in a structurally focused position relative to

other components of the sentence. In some languages, the association between certain

semantic roles, such as AGENT and SUBJECT, and the information-structural notion of

thematic information has become conventionalized into a grammatical property of

clauses[89]. When the speakers of such languages wish to express a semantic patient or

object as the theme of a sentence, they must employ specialized morphological processes

to do so.

I see no evidence that Tibetan speakers have grammaticalized the association

between agents and thematic information, which is why other orders are so common in

natural speech and why non-SOV orders do not coincide with special morphology.

Nonetheless, the cross-linguistic associations between agents and thematic information,

and thematic information and first position motivate an SOV order in elcited sentences.

Many elicited sentences are essentially self-contained utterances: their semantic

content does not include any parts that are connected to other utterances. The information

structure of elicited sentences is not tied up with the information structure of other

sentences, so such sentence-external factors do not influence the thematic categorization

of the participants in the propositions encoded in elicited sentences. But their absence in

elicitation does not mean that such sentence-external factors are of secondary importance

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[89] LaPolla (1995) describes a similar phenomenon in the functionality of word order in Chinese, which he
refers to as "Focus Structure", following Lambrecht (1996). I do not believe Amdo Tibetan word order
functions in quite the same way.

in the language, as a whole. It merely means that they are irrelevant in the production of isolated sentences.

The flexible order of NP constituents of Amdo Tibetan clauses is illustrated in (121), below, in which the semantic patient, *kæ̃*, precedes the semantic agent. This is the opposite order from that of (116) and (117), above.

(121)   *kæ̃ nỹgi tɕʰi zigoki.*

    *[kæ̃]*_{NP}   *[nỹ-ki]*_{NP}   *[tɕʰi]*_{NP}   *[zi-ko-ki]*_{VP}

    3.INDEF   person-ERG   what   say-PROG-DE.IPF

    'What did the people say to him?'   (Yǎqūtān)

Similarly, NPs that function as adverbs also display flexible word order relative to other NPs. We see this in the different positions of 'today', *tɛraŋ*, in the two sentences, below.

(122)   *cʰu tɛraŋ tɕʰi je?*

    *[cʰu]*_{NP}   *[tɛraŋ]*_{NP}   *[tɕʰi]*_{NP}   *[je-Ø]*_{VP}

    2S.ERG   today   what   do-EGO

    'What did you do today?'   (Gcig.sgril)

(123)   *tɛraŋ cʰu tɕʰi je?*

    *[tɛraŋ]*_{NP}   *[cʰu]*_{NP}   *[tɕʰi]*_{NP}   *[je-Ø]*_{VP}

    today   2S.ERG   what   do-EGO

    'What did you do today?'   (Gcig.sgril)

From the above examples, we see that the Basic Clause Construction does not specify word order for NPs, regardless of whether they encode arguments or adverbial modification. However, it is not true that all NP components of a clause display the same properties of flexible order and free-deletion. Most notably, the NP complements of equative copulas have a fixed position before the copula, although they can be deleted. We also see both a fixed order and non-deletion for particle complements of verbs, although it is unclear whether or not such particles constitute morphological nouns. These cases will be discussed in Sec. 5.3.3, below, in which I present an overview of the verb phrase

Having presented the properties of flexible NP order and free NP deletion in the clause in Sec. 5.3.1 and Sec. 5.3.2, I will now discuss the implications of these properties for understanding argument structure in Amdo Tibetan.

5.3.3   Argument structure

In this section, I wish to present an overview of the ways in which Amdo Tibetan clauses do and do not encode argument structure. When discussing argument structure, I use the term ARGUMENT to mean an overtly encoded participant of a proposition. As we have seen elsewhere, the difference between arguments and oblique—or adverbial—NPs is not always clear.

It is also not clear that, outside of the noun phrase, the grammar of Amdo Tibetan has any sort of morphosyntactic device for indexing participants. Most notably, there is no indexation of argument roles in the VP construction. This means that when a clause is removed from the communicative context in which it was produced, it is not always

possible to reconstruct the argument structure if there are no overt NPs. Consequently, without looking outside of a given clause to the greater discursive context, it is sometimes impossible to determine whether the absence of an overt argument means that the participant in question is highly salient or that it doesn't exist. This structural ambiguity is illustrated in the finite clauses, below.

(124)   *meka.*

  mekɨ-a

  NEG.EXIST.DE-SFP

  '(He) isn't (here).'   (Gcig.sgril)

  (Alternative interpretations: 'You aren't here'; 'You don't have it', 'He doesn't have it'; 'It doesn't exist')

(125)   *χlæ rgonɖe.*

  ɣla=rgo-nəre

  rent=DEON-FACT.ALLO

  '(We) had to rent (the horses that you just mentioned).' (Gcig.sgril)

  (Alternative interpretations: 'the horses had to be rented out'; 'You should rent (instead of buying or borrowing)'; etc.)

  Both of the above sentences are excerpted from spontaneous conversations. The translations given are based off of the greater discursive contexts in which they occurred. Without this extra-clausal information, however, we see that a number of alternative translations are possible for both. In terms of

its lexical semantics, the negative existential copula *mekə* can also have an intransitive interpretation as a predicate of existence. Otherwise, both VPs are semantically transitive, meaning that they can take two core arguments. However, outside of a real-world knowledge of what renting means, there is nothing about the overt structure of the sentence in (120) to signal that the speaker is thinking of a particular renter or a particular thing being rented. All this information is only available from the greater context of the clause.

It should also be noted that the alternative translations for both (124) and (125) include different persons—it is possible for either clause to have a second person referent, for instance. The ambiguity as to the personal identity of omitted participants is an artifact of the absence of argument agreement in the VP.

From the above examples, we have seen that NP deletion represents a semantically-ambiguous morphological strategy. However, the different functions of NP deletion—altering argument structure and expressing discourse-prominence of a referent—occur under different pragmatic conditions, so instances of NP-deletion are rarely ambiguous to speakers.

Broadly speaking, there are two conditions under which a syntactically permitted argument may be missing from a given clause: the first is when a propositional participant is highly activated in the discourse; the second is when the lexical semantics of a verb root include a semantic role that does not correspond to any participant in the particular proposition being expressed. For example, a syntactically transitive verb is used to express an event that doesn't involve a participant that meets the semantic criteria

of an agent. Such is the case with the clause, below, which is excerpted from a narrative in Haller (2004: 178)[90].

(126)   *çsot-tʰəp-nəre!*

       çsot   *tʰəp-nəre*

       slay.IPF   can-FACT.ALLO

       '(I) can be killed!'   (Them.chen)

       (Alternative interpretations: ''He can be killed'; 'You can be killed', 'You can kill me'; 'He can kill it'; 'He can kill you'; 'He is capable of killing'; 'We can kill it'; 'We can be killed'; 'We can kill you')

Example (126) is excerpted from a dialog as part of a narrative in Haller's (2005: 178) grammar of the Them.chen dialect, spoken in Them.chen County, Hǎixī Mongolian and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qīnghǎi. For various reasons, (126) seems to have an even larger number of acceptable translations than the previous two examples. One reason is that *çsot* (གསོད་ 'to slay' or 'murder') is a semantically transitive verb that commonly has human participants in both the agent and patient roles. It is therefore possible for the clause in (126) to have speech act participants in either semantic role, with the exception of a first-person agent. The factual allophoric marking makes it unlikely—though not impossible (see Sec. 4.3)—that agent is coreferential with the assertor of the clause.

In fact, the allophoric marking of (126) may coerce an interpretation of third-person participants for both semantic roles. This seems to be so because, when presented

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[90] The original German translation is "Man kann (mich) töten!" (Haller 2004: 178, ex. 137).

with the sentence (126) removed from its context , a consultant (not the original producer of this utterance, obviously) came up with the first alternative interpretation, 'he can be killed'. They then offered other possible interpretations, none of which happened to be the interpretation given by Haller. However, when given Haller's interpretation and the context in which the sentence was originally recorded, the consultant found the translation of 'you can't kill me' to be perfectly acceptable. Thus, there is nothing odd or awkward about the structure of this utterance, *per se*, beyond the fact that it expresses an inherently bizarre situation. Nonetheless, in the context of the situation in which it was produced, (126)is a well-formed expression of a proposition in which the speaker is the (hypothetical) patient of the verb 'slay'.

From the above examples, we see that in some instances the VP provides clues to the identity of participants, but not always. In any case, whatever contributions VP constructions might sometimes make toward construing the identity and number of participants in any proposition, it would seem that speakers do not rely on them to provide this information. This lack of formal indexation in the VP means that proficiency in the grammar of Amdo Tibetan alone is not always sufficient to fully understand the intended argument structure of an uttered clause.

There are other theoretical implications to the above observation. Cross-linguistically, systems of verbal argument agreement display coding asymmetries that privilege either certain argument types over others (e.g., subject and agent versus object), or else certain referent types over others (e.g., speech act participants over non-speech act participants). The absence of an argument indexation system in Amdo Tibetan means the absence of morphosyntactic patterns suggesting some kind of grammatical (i.e., abstract)

dominance or centrality of one type of argument over others in the argument-predicate relationship—transitive agents are not morphosyntactically "privileged" over patients or transitive objects.

While the argument structure of (126) is highly ambiguous, there is one way in which it is very clear. Because the sentence is marked 'allophoric factive', a first-person agent interpretation is excluded[91]. This is because the agent of a controllable verb like 'slay' is prototypically volitional and so typically co-occurs with egophoric marking on the clause (see Sec. 4.3 for a description of controllable verbs and volitionality).

Thus, the only participant configurations that are improbable for this sentence are those in which the speaker is the would-be killer. But an allophoric sense does not exclude the speaker from being involved in the event in some other way.

Aside from excluding an assertor identity for the agent, the morphological structure of the clause in (126) tells us nothing about the argument structure of the proposition. Information about the identity and role of any participants has to be assumed or gleaned from elsewhere in the discourse. Argument structure is not encoded in the VP. What is encoded is information about the ontological nature of the knowledge expressed in the assertion. Since the status of the assertion as a verifiable fact is more important

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[91] Note that the first person patient interpretation for (48) is derived from context—(48) is an answer to a question which Haller translates as "Oh! Mutter! Ja! Kann man dich also nun überhaupt nicht töten?" ("Oh! Mother! *Ja*! So you cannot be killed at all?" (p. 179: 136). The Tibetan (Themchen dialect) is below:

(136) *o! ama! ja! ta tina tɕʰo wapkə ҫsodz-dzu, ҫson-{nanɖʐa}-mə-tʰəp-nə.əre?*

ta	*tina*	*tɕʰo*	*wapkə*	*ҫsodz*	*-dzu,*
then	also	2S	at.all	slay	-NOM

ҫson	*-{nanɖʐa}*	*-mə*	*-tʰəp*	*-nə.əre*
slay	-{seemingly}	-NEG.IPF	-can	-FACT.ʔ.ALLO

than either how the speaker has come to know it or the nature of the speaker's relationship to the proposition, the VP is marked as FACTUAL ALLOPHORIC knowledge.

Beyond the overt expression of arguments, themselves, the encoding of argument structure is not a property of the Basic Clause Construction in Amdo Tibetan.

5.3.4   Structural differences between finite vs. non-finite clauses

So far, all of the examples presented in Sec. 5.3 have been finite sentences. However, the same BCC structure is also the basis of non-finite clauses. As in Standard Tibetan, an important structural feature of Amdo Tibetan clauses is the morphological asymmetry between finite and non-finite verb phrases. This is especially true, given that structures associated with non-finite VPs are a major source of the morphology we observe in finite VPs.

The occurrence of BCC in non-finite clauses is illustrated by the following examples, which are of a complement clause (127), a relative clause (128), and an adverbial clause (129). Relative clauses are expressed with the Genitive Phrase Construction, which is described in Sec. 5.5.1.

Complement Clause

(127)   *ŋi tɕʰemi mbəkonə maɕi.*

[ŋi]$_{NP}$	*[[tɕʰimi]*$_{NP}$	*[mbə]*$_{VP}$*=rgo]*$_{CLAUSE}$*-nə]*$_{NP}$	*[ma-ɕi-Ø]*$_{VP}$
1S.ERG	how	light=DEON-NMZ	NEG.PFV-know-EGO

'I didn't know how one should light (a fire).'   (Gcig.sgril)

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Relative clause

(128) *za ᵖɕwɛ siɣə ɻ̊ittɕim.*

　　　[[za]ₙₚ　　　　*[ᵖɕwɛ]ᵥₚ]CLAUSE*　　　*si-ɣə]REL.CLAUSE*　　　*ɻ̊ittɕim]ₙₚ*

　　　lock　　　　　open　　　　　　means-GEN　　　　process

　　　'The process for opening the lock'　　　　　　　　　　　(Gcig.sgril)

Adverbial clause

(129) *tsampa zana, ɻ̊əknə mare.*

　　　[[ʰtsampa]ₙₚ [za]ᵥₚ]CLAUSE-na　　　*ɻ̊ək-nəmare*

　　　tsampa　　　　eat.IPF[92]-COND　　　be.full-NEG.FACT.ALLO

　　　'If one eats tsampa, one will not get full.'　　　　　　(Rnga.ba)

　　　All of the above examples contain non-finite clauses embedded in, or otherwise linked to, a finite main clause. We can see from these examples that non-finite clauses share the same basic internal structure as finite clauses. They are non-finite by virtue of their non-final position relative to the matrix clause and by the absence of assertion-level morphology. In terms of special morphology, however, some non-finite clauses are marked by dedicated morphemes (127), but this is not always so. In the case of (128), for example, the relative clause 'open lock' is made non-finite by occurring in the position before the noun *si*, which translations as something like 'means' or 'method'. Similarly, in (129), the clause 'eat tsampa' is rendered non-finite by the conditional suffix -*na*.

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[92] A feature of this dialect of Mgo.log, spoken in Rnga.ba Prefecture, is the use of the imperfective verb stem in conditional and related clause constructions, where most other dialects use the perfective stem.

These non-finite clauses are embedded within structures that frame them as expressing background or other non-predicating information in relation to another clause.

Now that I have given an overview of the Amdo Tibetan clause, in the next section I will present a slightly more in-depth description of NPs.

5.4   Structural and functional properties of the noun phrase

Noun phrases comprise an important category of clausal constituent, which is to say that NP is a specific slot in the schematic construction of clauses. Prototypically, the role of NPs in a clause is to encode the arguments of a predicate, but NPs also function as modifiers, in which case they can modify NPs, predicates or entire propositions.

As stated in in Sec. 5.2, the grammar of Amdo Tibetan differentiates nouns from verbs. One way this happens is that for a verb root to occur in an NP, it must undergo some sort of derivational morphological process. There are many different morphosyntactic processes by which verbs become noun-like, but in particular, Amdo Tibetan has a large inventory of nominalizing suffixes. As is well known for other Tibetan varieties, many of these nominalizers show up as elements in finite verbal constructions.

It has been demonstrated repeatedly over the preceding decades (c.f., Benedict 1972; Matisoff 1972; Saxena 1997; Noonan 1997; DeLancey 1999, 2002; Huber 2002; Genetti et al. 2008) that nominalizations are a highly productive source for verbal morphology in Trans-Himalayan languages. Consequently, if we wish to have a comprehensive understanding of the structures, but also functional nuances, of verbal expressions in Amdo Tibetan, we must also understand the same for nominal expressions.

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This current chapter is thus dedicated to presenting an overview, with selective details, of Amdo Tibetan Noun Phrases.

The organization of the remainder of Sec. 5.4 will examine these two basic NP functions as outlined, above. In Sec. 5.4.1, I will examine referential NPs. I will also discuss the ways in which referential NP forms vary to express pragmatic, informational and textual-coherence functions in Sec. 5.4.2.

5.4.1   Referential NPs

A referential noun phrase (NP) is that which denotes an entity assumed to exist either in the real world or in the Universe of Discourse. Referential NPs prototypically occur as arguments in a clause. This is shown in the examples below.

(130)   *[me.tog]ₙₚ   bzhad*[93]

flower   open

'**Flowers** bloom.'   (WT: Dor.zhi 1987: 8)

(131)   *ŋala toŋtsi ɦdætsi ʰʈʂ̩.*

[ŋa-la]ₙₚ   [toŋtsi]ₙₚ   *ɦdætsi*   *ʰʈʂ̩*

1S-DAT   money   a.little   borrow.IMP

'Lend me some money.'[94]   (Yǎqūtān)

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[93] This sentence follows the WT convention of requiring no TAME post-verbal morphology for sentences if the assertion is factual.

[94] Both the word for 'money' and the word for 'a little' in this Yǎqūtān sentence are cognate with Lhasa Tibetan forms. Elsewhere in Amdo Tibetan, the word for 'money' is, in WT, *sgor.mo* (སྒོར་མོ), which is a nominalization of the stative verb 'be round'; 'a little' is expressed in most places by some variant of *tsigɛziç* and in Mgo.log by the form *kɪle*. Ethnic Tibetans in Gcan.tsa, which is economically, socially and

(132) *oki xə̄k̄ɕa tɕʰanire.*

       [o]ₙₚ-ki   *[xək.ɕa]ₙₚ*   *tɕʰa-nire*

       Tibetan-ERG   **pig.meat**   eat.IPF-FACT.ALLO

       'Tibetans eat pork.'   (Yăqūtān)

    As we see in the above examples, the morphology of referential NPs varies in accordance with the semantic roles of the arguments they express. Thus, 'flower' in (130) is an unmarked or nominative form because it is the intransitive subject of the verb 'bloom'; 'I' in (131) the is marked with the dative suffix *-la* because it is the semantic recipient of the verb 'borrow/lend'; and 'Tibetans' in (132) is marked with the ergative suffix *-ki* because it is the semantic agent of the transitive verb 'eat'. In both (131) and (132), the second position NP is also unmarked, so both can be categorized as grammatical direct objects.

    Not all referential NPs, however, function as verbal arguments in clauses. Referential NPs can also modify other NPs, as in expressions of possession. This kind of modification is expressed by the genitive construction. Example (133), following, includes a genitive phrase with a referential NP.

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geographically proximate to Yăqūtān, tend to say 'money' and 'a little' in the same way as other parts of A.mdo.

(133) *tɕʰogi kʰɔŋwa étɕʰeja?*

   [[tɕʰo-ki]~NP~ *kʰɔŋwa]*~NP~   *é-tɕʰe-Ø-ja*

   2S-GEN   house   Q-be.big-EGO-SFP

   'Is your house pretty big?' (Speaker assumes house is big.)   (Yăqūtān)

The second-person referent in (133) is not an argument of the stative verb 'be big', but rather functions as a modifier of the NP, 'house'. The resulting complex NP 'your house' is the intransitive subject of the predicate 'be big'. The structural and functional properties of genitive phrases will be discussed more in Sec. 5.5.1.

Referential NPs can function as locative expressions, as in (134), below.

(134) *kʰɔŋ naŋni nỹ joka.*

   [kʰɔŋ-naŋni]~NP~   *[nỹ]*~NP~   *joki-ja*

   house-LOC   people   DE.EXIST-SFP

   'Is somebody inside **the** house?' (Speaker assumes someone is inside.) (Yăqūtān)

In addition to morphological expression of semantic roles, referential NPs formally express different discursive-pragmatic, informational and knowledge status functions. In natural discourse, referents are often encoded pronominally, as in the following examples.

(135) **[ŋa]**_NP_   *[sɨ]*_NP_   *re?*

1S   who   EQ.ALLO

'Who am I?'   (Gcig.sgril)

(136) *tə sɨ re?*

[tə]_NP_ *sɨ*   *re*

DEF   who   EQ.ALLO

'Who is that?'   （Gcig.sgril）

The highlighted argument in (135) is a first-person pronoun; the highlighted argument in (136) is a demonstrative pronoun, which here happens to be the definite determiner. The definite determiner can occur alone as the sole constituent of an NP. Pronouns, whether personal or determiner/demonstrative, are always referential. Both types of pronouns are used to express human referents. The choice of one pronominal form over the other is conditioned by discursive and knowledge status-related functions. The functional and distributional properties of pronouns will be described in detail in Sec.5.4.2, below.

An important structural distinction of referential NPs is the use of determiners. While there are dedicated determiner morphemes, demonstratives and a topic marker, *ta* (which also means 'now'), frequently occur in the determiner position in an NPC and so are part of the determiner paradigm. This is illustrated in example (137), below.

(137) *tsodma ziç zuni…*

      [tsodma-ziç]ₙₚ   *zu-ni*

      vegetable-INDEF   eat.PST-CNV

      'When (one) eats vegetables…'   (Gcig.sgril)

Finally, referents can also be encoded by nominalized clauses, as illustrated by the agent in example (138), below.

(138) *hokʰa mɨʌʂanə ziçɣa ᵐɖɛ zuna, miʂaɣə.*

      [[[hokʰa]ₙₚ   *[mɨ-ʂa]ᵥₚ𝒸ₗₐᵤₛₑ-nə=ziç-kə-jaŋ]ₙₚ*

      stomach   NEG.IPF-be.good-NMZ=INDEF-ERG-also

      ᵐɖɛ   *zu-na*   *mɨ-ʂa-kə*

      rice   eat.PST-COND NEG.IPF-be.good-DE

      'It's not good, either, for someone with a bad stomach to eat rice.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Having discussed in this section the different propositional roles referential NPs occur in, as well as given an overview of the formal variation of referential NPs, in the next section I will elaborate on the properties of NPs that encode verbal arguments. I also demonstrate that outside of the formal properties of NPs, the morphosyntax of Amdo Tibetan clauses does not encode argument structure.

5.4.2 Referential form – pronominal reference and NP deletion

One important property of referential NPs is high degree of formal variation. A single entity can be expressed in more than one way, which means that the use of one form instead of the others cannot be entirely attributed to the semantic value of the represented entity, but rather is a product of the entity's referential status within the discourse. Information structure—the organization of information and management of information flow in the discourse—is therefore another important factor to discuss in understanding the formal and functional properties of NP constructions.

One way that management of referents is accomplished is in varying the form of referring expressions. Amdo Tibetan speakers do this in four ways: by full noun NPs, pronoun NPs, demonstrative NPs, and null expression (referential zero).

Full noun NP

(139) ***dʐɪn.tɕʰa-gi***   *zoŋ-tɔ̃-zɪ̥*

      police-ERG   grab-TR.PFV-IE.PST

      'They were caught by **the police**.'   (Yǎqūtān)

Pronoun NP

(140) ***kʰo-gi***   ***ŋa-la***   *kʰatsaŋ*   *rɪk-soŋ-a*   *pɕi-gi*

      3S-ERG   **1S-DAT**   yesterday   see-PFV-NMZ   say-DE

      '**He said/says** (he) saw **me** yesterday.'   (Yǎqūtān)

Demonstrative NP

(141) *kæ̃-ki*   *kʰapu*

     DEF-GEN   bag

     '**His/her/their** bag'   (Yăqūtān)

(142) **tə**   *tɕʰɨzɨk* *re?*

     DEF   what   EQ.ALLO

     'What is he/she/they/it?'   (Reb.gong)

Referential zero

(143) **[Ø]**   *nɖɪ-dzi*

     1s   write.IPF-FUT.EGO

     'I will write.'   (Yăqūtān)

(144) **dʐɪn.tɕʰa-ki** **[Ø]** *zoŋ-tɔ̃-zɨ̥*

     police-ERG   3   grab-TR.PFV-IE.PST

     '**(That person I mentioned)** was caught by the police.'   (Yăqūtān)

(145) *ŋə*   *kʰatsaŋ*   *a-rɪk-Ø-a*

     1SG.NOM   yesterday   Q-see-EGO-SFP

     'Did you see me yesterday?'   (Yăqūtān)

The distributions of these four constructional types is determined by, or at least sensitive to, information structural categories which I believe can be analyzed into two separate, but interacting, paradigms, based on how they manifest as slightly different lexicogrammatical patterns: textual reference and non-textual reference.

That non-textual reference displays different structural properties than textual reference is illustrated below, by two semantically identical sentences from the Rnga.ba dialect.

(146) *tə*　　*wopa*　　　　*ə-re*

　　　DEF　　Tibetan　　　Q-EQ.ALLO

　　　'Are they Tibetan?'　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(Rnga.ba)

(147) *mŋi*　　　　**ndɨ**　　*wopa*　　　　*ə-re*

　　　person　　　**PROX**　Tibetan　　　Q-EQ.ALLO

　　　'Is this person Tibetan?'　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(Rnga.ba)

The subjects of both equative clauses are definite referents being mentioned for the first time in the text. Both referents refer to real world entities that are visually perceivable to all interlocutors[95]. However, the visible or physical immediacy of the referred object is less important than the referential status, and there are two possible statuses that this referent can have: presupposed in the Universe of Discourse or not. In both cases, the entity does not yet exist as a textual referent.

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[95] These examples were generated through a discussion of hypothetical scenarios with the language authority, G.yu Lha. She and I imagined a scenario where the two of us were in the student union building of an American university and a person talking on their cell phone walks by close enough that we can just barely hear them speaking what sounds like Tibetan. Until this point our conversation has not had anything to do with the person, but their sudden emergence in our physical space is attention-grabbing enough that it is natural for one of us to comment on it. Theoretically, the same exchange could happen around a photo or image on the tv. The point is, that a real-world entity can be part of the Universe of Discourse without actually having been previously introduced in the discourse as long as it can be expected that the interlocutors are both aware of its existence.

The pronominal use of the definite determiner in (146) marks the represented entity as presupposed and therefore already referential in the Universe of Discourse. Because the referent is presupposed, there is no need to explicitly identify its semantic properties 'person', nor is there any need to specify which member of the class 'person' is meant: the speaker assumes that the listener already knows which specific person they are talking about. In contrast, the use of a full noun NP in (147) indicates that the speaker intends to introduce the referent to the Universe of Discourse with this utterance. To do so, and thus make sure that the listener has the same concept of the referent as the speaker, it is necessary to identify the semantic class of the referent and provide specifying information, so that the addressee knows which member of the semantic class is meant. Hence, we get a full noun modified by a proximal demonstrative that both marks the relative spatial or psychological location of the referent and marks it as definite.

There is an explicit spatial sense to example (146) that (147) does not have—when *tə* occurs as a definite pronoun, speakers report that the location of the referent could be anywhere. Otherwise, the two sentences are propositionally identical. How they differ is in the referential intention of the speaker. The use of *tə* in (146) expresses the referent as presupposed. The use of a full noun plus relational post-position in (147) is used to introduce a new referent.

The referent in (146) is part of the shared knowledge of both speaker and listener (so the speaker thinks). In contrast, the referential form of the subject in (147) expresses no such assumptions on the part of the speaker. Conversely, the consultant who produced these two forms feels that the speaker of (147) must assume that the addressee is not

aware of the referent. The referential form of (147) is intended to draw their attention to the referent, so it would be confusing for the addressee if the speaker meant someone that the addressee was already aware of.

Once a referent has been mentioned in the discourse, it is textually established. The form of such referents then varies in accordance with a number of other factors. The first factor is actually a semantic distinction—animacy—which essentially boils down to a distinction between people and everything else.

Non-SAP human referents that have been previously mentioned may be expressed three different ways: as full noun NPs, as pronouns, and unexpressed (zero reference). Full noun NPs code referents that are textually discontinuous, by which I mean that they haven't occurred in the text for a while. This form may therefore be used as a sort of redundant first mention to re-introduce a referent into the Universe of Discourse. Referents that are textually continuous, meaning they appeared recently enough in the text that their identity should still be recoverable for the hearer, are expressed by person pronouns. In particular, third person pronouns are almost always anaphoric. Referents whose appearance in a particular semantic role in a proposition is predictable are un-marked, which is to say, linguistically represented by a zero constructions. Usually, but not always, such referents are also continuous. When a referent is a non-SAP, then NP-deletion is an anaphoric reference strategy, but SAPs are often zero referenced, as well. In general, formal variation in SAP referents seems to be unaffected by textual status.

Concerning non-SAP referents, the use of full noun NPs corresponds to the first mention of a referent (textual reference) which also serves as the introduction of the referent to the Universe of Discourse.

PNPs have all the same categories of case marking as full noun NPs and occur in all the same semantic roles—or in the case of the topic marker, with the same emphasized topical function.

5.5   Modification of NPs

Amdo Tibetan nouns can be modified to produce complex NPs. There are two primary means of modification: genitive phrases and modifier phrases. The general function of these two types of modification is to express an attribute of a noun.

As stated in Sec. 5.2.2, there is no evidence to support the existence of a morphosyntactically-defined adjective part of speech. For this reason, I prefer the label 'modifier phrase' to 'adjective phrase'. Structurally, genitive phrases (GPs) and modifier phrases (MPs) are very distinct. Most notably, GPs precede the head noun and MPs follow it. This difference is illustrated with the following example, which includes a single head noun that is modified by both a GP and a MP. For clarity, the head noun is bolded.

(148) *[[cʰɨ-tɕʰa-gi]* **rgɛrgan**   *[tɕʰatsɨç]]*   *jokə*

 [[2-PL-GEN]GP**teacher**   [some]MP]NP   EXIST.DE

 'Some of your […] teachers were (there).'   (Gcig.sgril)

In the current section, I describe the properties of these two constructions, first descibing the Gentive Phrase Construction (GPC) in Sec. 5.5.1, and then describing the Modifier Phrase Construction (MPC) in Sec. 5.5.2.

5.5.1 Genitive Phrase Construction

Genitive phrases (GPs) express two primary functions: possession and attribution. Each of these functions modify the semantic content of the head noun. There is little structural difference between GP possessors and GP attributes. However, there are some general patterns in terms of constituency by which the two may possibly be distinguished, as will be shown.

GPs are also used to express events or situations as attributes of a referent. In such cases, the head of the GPC is a nominalized clause, which occurs in the same slot as a noun and with the same external morphosyntax.

As we saw from example (148), above, the GPC consists of a noun followed by a genitive case marker. In some instances, the genitive case can be omitted. In some cases, there is a clear semantic distinction between GPs with overt case marking and those without, but not in all cases.

5.5.1.1 Attributive genitive phrases

The prototypical function of genitive constructions is to express possession or some other relationship between two referents. In Amdo Tibetan, the same construction is also used to express attributes of a referent. GPs can therefore contain either referential or non-referential nouns. The latter is illustrated with the following examples.

(149) *[[o-ki]*_{NP}   *ɣtæ̃]*_{NP}

Tibetan-GEN   carpet

'Tibetan rug(s)'   (Yǎqūtān)

(150) *mamugi ᵖtɕʰura.*

[mamu-ki]_{NP}   *ᵖtɕʰura]*_{NP}

sheep-GEN   cheese

'Sheep's milk cheese'   (Yǎqūtān)

Because the genitive-marked nouns in the above examples are generic, the resulting GP can be interpreted as either attributive or possessive.

In some cases, especially highly frequent expressions, non-referential genitive expressions may leave off the genitive marker. This does not appear to happen with refential GPs, and so may represent the development of a structurally distinct attributive GPC. The omission of the gentive marker in a non-referential GP is illustrated with the alternative expression for 'Tibetan rugs' presented in (151), below.

(151) *[o*   *ɣtæ̃]*_{NP}

Tibetan   carpet

'Tibetan rug(s)'   (Yǎqūtān)

As both (149) and (151) were elicited, I'm not sure which form is more common. Regardless, both forms are acceptable. In contrast, the genitive suffix cannot be omitted in the expression 'sheep's cheese', at least not for this speaker and probably not for others

in his community[96]. On the other hand, when talking about mutton, the genitive marker is not acceptable, and must be omitted, as in (152), below.

(152) *mamu ɕa*

sheep meat

'mutton'   (Yǎqūtān)

While sheep are a common, or at least recognized, source of meat all over Amdo, familiarity with the concept and therefore its presumed frequency of expression are unlikely explanations for the absence of the genitive suffix in (152) when speakers readily produce expressions such as (153)-(154), below.

(153) *mŋɨ   ɕa*

person meat

'Human meat'   (Gcig.sgril)

(154) *nỹ̥   ɕa*

person meat

'human meat'   (Yǎqūtān)

The topic of human meat comes up sometimes in legends and in religious discussions but is otherwise infrequent. Nonetheless, it has been my experience in

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[96] To reiterate, the omission of genitive marking in attributive NPs is based off of custom and is therefore variable across communities and speakers. At least in the parts of Amdo where my consultants live, sheep are not kept for their milk, so the concept of cheese made from sheep's milk is a little unusual.

eliciting this phrase from different people in different places that no one uses the genitive

suffix in expressing a generic human source for meat. So it goes with other types of meat.

This is illustrated using Yăqūtān and Gcig.sgril expressions for 'goat meat', below.

(155) *rama*   *ɕa*

       goat   meat

       'Goat meat'   (Yăqūtān)

(156) *ra*   *ɕa*

       goat   meat

       'Goat meat'   (Gcig.sgril)

Of course, speakers can use the genitive suffix in expressing mutton—or any

other meat—but to do so is to either emphasize the origin of the meat—similar to saying

'the meat of a sheep' in English—or the more immediate interpretation is that the GP has

a referential meaning, as in the meat of a specific animal. This latter sense is readily

apparent in the hilarious reactions of native speakers to a learner producing such forms as

(157), below, when trying to say 'mutton'.

(157) *mamu-ki*   *ɕa*

       sheep-GEN   meat

       'meat from a/the sheep'; 'the sheep's flesh'   (Yăqūtān)

Because ɕa also has the sense of 'living flesh', or 'muscle tissue', the presence of an overt genitive suffix as in (157) can coerce this interpretation, which I believe would not be possible if -kə were not present.

Aside from expressions of different kinds of meat, we also see the genitive-free variant of GC especially frequently in expressions involving certain nationalities or groups of people (e.g., 'Tibetan', 'Chinese'), as was the case in 0, above. Again, there is a generic sense to concepts of cultural or national attribution that is dispelled or at least made ambiguous by the inclusion of the genitive suffix. So, the NP in (158), on the following page, has a sense of being about the language of specific people, rather than a more abstract, theoretical relationship between 'language' and the Tibetan community that is communicated in the following sentence, (159).

(158) *o-ki*   *kɛtɕʰa*

Tibetan-GEN   language

'The language the Tibetans speak'   (Yăqūtān)

(159) *okɛ*

'Tibetan (language).'   (Yăqūtān)

The semantic distinction between (158) and (159) is well-illustrated by the gentleman who produced them: he is Huí, or ethnically (and practicing) Muslim, and he and his family and the other members of his community with whom I have interacted all seem to strongly identify as Huí, but they also equally strongly identify as Tibetan

speakers. In other words, they would use (159) to describe their mother tongue, but (158) to describe the language of ethnic Tibetans.

Another interesting point brought up in the difference between examples (158) and (159) is that the disyllabic word for 'language', *kɛtɕʰa* (WT: *skad.cha*), is reduced to a monosyllable in "shortened" NP, but not the long NP. In fact, we can think of the structure in (159) and all the meat examples as a kind of contraction, but it is not merely a reduction of phonological form—it is a change of structure that corresponds to a change in meaning. This difference is not always meaningful because it depends on there being a context in which the difference between a generic, abstract or theoretical GP concept and a specific or known instantiation of the concept is salient. This is the case with meat, in which we can conceive of the relationship between 'dog' and 'meat' as essentially attributive in nature (what kind of meat is it?), but for which it is equally possible to understand a particular piece of meat as coming from a specific, unique dog. Likewise, for Tibetan speakers who do not themselves identify as Tibetan people, the difference between 'Tibetan', the language, and 'the language of Tibetans', is clear enough, though it may be less clear to others.

There is a potential argument, then, for distinguishing two different genitive constructions: the suffix-less variant is purely attributive, never referential. Meanwhile, the construction with the suffix has a default referential interpretation that may be overrode, or simply rendered non-salient, in certain contexts. Further support for a default referential interpretation of genitive-marked nouns comes from the fact that genitive marking appears to be obligatory in expressions of family relations, as shown in the examples below.

(160) *ŋi*   *apʰa*

1S.GEN   father

'my father'   (Gcig.sgril)

(161) **ŋa   apʰa*

1S   father

(162) *hwarʂcʰit-kə*   *ama*

Dba'.skyid-GEN   mother

'Dba.skyid's mother'   (Gcig.sgril)

(163) **hwarʂcʰit   ama*

Dba'.skyid   mother

If there appears to be a developing split between case-marked GPs and un-marked GPs, it is also clear that in some cases expressions like 'Tibetan language' in (159) are fossilized, having become fixed lexical items. Nonetheless, the fact that speakers will produce apparent neologisms[97] such as 'fox meat', below, with the same structure means that this kind of GP-modified NP is a productive construction.

(164) *ʁa   ɕa*

fox   meat

'fox meat'   (Gcig.sgril)

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[97] To my knowledge, no community in Amdo consumes foxes, even in times of scarcity, so

The absence of a genitive marker in expressions of 'meat' may represent a distinct construction in which expressions of different types of meat are derived by a process of nominal compounding.

5.5.1.2 Possessive genitive phrases

The prototypical function of genitive phrases is to express possession. As stated above, there is not much structural difference between attributive and possessive GPs. However, it appears that the genitive suffix is not optional in possessive GPs. On this basis, the following GPs would all be possessive, since the *-kə* cannot be omitted from any of them.

Generic

(165) *ᵖɕagi kwã*

    [ᵖɕa-ki   kwã]ₙₚ

    bird-GEN   egg

    'the eggs of birds'   (Gro.tsang)

Referential

(166) *ʈutsʰaŋgi βzora*

    [ʈutsʰaŋ-ki   βzora]ₙₚ

    Gro.tsang-GEN forest

    'The forests of Gro.tsang'   (Gro.tsang)

It is not clear that either of the above phrases are expressing possession, as opposed to attribution. However, the fact that the genitive marker is obligatory for both means that structurally they have more in common with GPs that we know are possessive than with the attributive GC that produces phrases like 'mutton', described above.

As described in Sec. 5.4.2, personal pronouns are always referential. Therefore GPs headed by personal pronouns have a possessive interpretation. In such expressions, the genitive marker is obligatory. This is shown below. The GPs in (167) and (169) are acceptable, those in (168) and (170) are not.

(167) *tɕʰogi kʰɔŋwa*

       tɕʰo-ki   *kʰɔŋwa*

       2S-GEN   house

       'Your house'   (Yăqūtān)

(168) **tɕʰo kʰɔŋwa*

       2S   house

(169) *kʰərgi mdzɨɣə*

       3S.GEN finger

       'Her finger/s'   (Gcig.sgril)

(170) ** kʰərgə*   *mdzɨɣə*

       3S   finger

5.5.1.3 Relative clauses

Relative clauses are also formed with the Genitive Construction. This is accomplished by the nominalization of a clause, which then functions as the nominal head of the GP. In relative clauses, genitive case is obligatory. Examples of relative clauses are given below.

(171) *[[mɲɨ za]CLAUSE-ŋkʰan-kə]GP*   *çtak]NP*

person eat.IPF-NMZ.AGT-GEN   tiger

'man-eating tigers'   (Gcig.sgril)

(172) *[[cʰu   ame   pɕɛt]CLAUSE-no-kə]GP ʂama =tə]NP*

2S.GEN   mother.ERG   do.IPF-NMZ-GEN   food   =DEF

'the food your mother makes'   (Chu.ma Reb.gong)

Both of the above GPs contain overt genitive marking. Note that the two different relative clauses have two different nominalizers. The nominalizer *-ŋkʰan* in (172) is specifically used when the modified noun of the relative clause is the semantic agent of the event that is relativized. In contrast, the nominalizer *-no* in (172) is a more general nominalizer with no particular orientation toward any semantic role. In both examples, the relative clause contains a transitive verb. The participant for whom the proposition expressed in the relativize clause is being construed as an attribute is never included as an overt NP within the GP.

Speaking a little bit more about the nominalizer in (172), *-ŋkʰan* is transparently derived from the noun root, *mkhan* (WT མཁན), meaning 'master' or 'expert'. In modern Amdo Tibetan this root does not occur alone as a noun stem. It does occur in numerous compound nouns, such as the word for 'boaster,' *lab.mkhan* (WT ལབ་མཁན), pronounced

labkæn, in the Gro.tsang dialect. It is also the root in the word for abbot, *mkhan.po* (WT མཁན་པོ).

Genitive phrases can occur without an external head. In such cases, the head NP is deleted. However, such "headless" GPs do not behave exactly like NPs, themselves. For example, they may not be pluralized or occur with an article or demonstrative. This is demonstrated in the following elicited sentence from Rdo.spis, in which we see that the indefinite singular article *=zɨç* cannot occur on the headless GP 'of Mgo.log'.

(173) *kʰɪka   ngoloʔ-kɪ*=zɨç   re*

     3S   Mgo.log-GEN=INDEF   EQ.ALLO

     'He is from Mgo.log.'   (Rdo.spis)

5.5.2   Modifier Phrase Construction

NPs may also be modified by modifier phrases. I use the label 'modifier' in preference to 'adjective' because, by and large, the morphosyntax of Amdo Tibetan does not differentiate an adjective part of speech. As stated in Sec. 5.2.2, there may be weak evidence to suggest that Amdo Tibetan has begun to develop towards having an adjective part of speech, such as is the case with Standard Tibetan. Nonetheless, the overwhelming majority of modifying constructions are transparent derivations.

When modifier phrases (MPs) occur as constituents of complex NPs, they always follow the modified noun and precede the determiner. In natural speech, there is a tendency for NPs with MPs to also have determiners, but this is probably due to pragmatic, rather than grammatical, reasons, as speakers have no issue with producing

MP-modified NPs without determiners in elicitation. The following examples are of this kind of elicited complex NP.

(174) *ɕaʐ̩ itsɻmo*

      *[ɕaʐ̩   [itsɻmo]*_{MP}*]*_{NP}

      child   little

      'infant'   (Yǎqūtān)

(175) *wa tɕʰwatɕʰwo*

      *[wa^{98} [tɕʰwatɕʰwo]*_{MP}*]*_{NP}

      child   small.REDUP

      'Small child; toddler'   (Gro.tsang)

As we can see from the above examples, it is easy enough for speakers to produce complex NPs with the internal structure of [noun [MP]] and no determiner. Nevertheless, it seems more common in natural discourse for to have this form: [noun [MP] determiner]. This is illustrated with the proximate demonstrative functioning as determiner in example (176), on the next page.

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[98] It is possible that the lexical item *wa* 'child' is a borrowing from Qīnghǎi Chinese 娃 wā. I am unfamiliar with Qīnghǎi Chinese, but versions of this word are common throughout northern China. Generally, it is used with a narrow sense of a person's offspring, especially for young children still at home. In Gro.tsang, however, the word *wa* is a general term for any child.

(176) *riẓkət xkaro ndə*

　　　[*riẓkət*　　　　[*ẓkar-po*]$_{MP}$=*ndə*]$_{NP}$

　　　thread　　　　be.white-NMZ=PROX

　　　'this white yarn'　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(Gcig.sgril)

　　　As previously stated, MPs are derived from lexical roots that are either
morphological verbs or, for a minority of roots, morphological nouns, by which I mean
that occur as syntactic heads of either VPs or NPs without any additional morphology.
The most common type of noun root to occur in MPs are numerals. As we would expect,
such nominal MPs display a few functional and structural properties that are not
necessarily shared with other MPs. For this reason, numeral modifiers of nouns are
discussed in their own section, Sec. 5.6. While I believe some non-numeral MP roots are
may also be morphological nouns in the synchronic language, such cases are a minority
and need not be discussed here. The remainder of Sec. 5.10 will focus on verb roots that
appear in MPs.

　　　Before continuing, it should be noted that not all stative verbs can occur in MPs.
This fact might count as weak evidence in support of adjectives as a minor part of speech
category. However, the matter will require a systematic study on which stative verbs do
or don't appear as MP constituents before any conclusions can be drawn.

　　　In order to occur as the syntactic head of a MP, a root must undergo some sort of
morphological derivation. There are primarily two constructions by which this is
accomplished: a nominalization construction, such as that described for verbal
complements and relative clauses, and a reduplication construction, which is largely

unique to Modifier Phrases. So, for example, 'small', in (175), above, is reduplicated and 'white', in (176), is nominalized[99].

The nominalized MP construction is described next, in Sec. 5.5.3, followed by the reduplicative construction in 5.5.3, In Sec. 5.5.5, I describe an instance of a stative verb that cannot be nominalized as an MPC constituent and postulate on how this phenomenon may be an indication that the derivational morphology of MPC is moving toward fossilization and the lexicalization of roots that can appear in MPs. In Sec. 5.5.6, I discuss augmentation of MPs using the word ɕɨɣə 'very', which displays variation in terms of its order relative to other constuents in the NP. This variation of ɕɨɣə is likely an artifact of its occurrence as an augmentative in stative verb VPs, which, together with the post-nominal order of MPC, may shed light on the historical origins of MPC in verbal constructions.

5.5.3   Nominalized Modifier Phrase Construction

As stated above, not all stative verbs occur in MPs. For those that do, cross-dialectally the most common derivational process is for the stem to occur with a nominalizing suffix, *-Bo*. This particular suffix is one of the oldest nominalizers in Tibetic. It is also the only nominalizer that I have found in MPs in my dataset.

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[99] The Yăqūtān word *itsɿmo* 'small', which I have not found in any other dialect, also appears to be a nominalization, with a phonologically-conditioned variant of *-Bo*, *-mo*. However, my consultant rejected my production of *itsɿ*, by itself. There is a reduplicated version, *itsɿmumu*, which has an augmentative sense of 'very small'. Note that the syllable *mu* is doubled, which we would not expect if *mo* is a grammatical suffix. This may mean the word is a non-derived adjective, but further research is needed.

This derivational process is illustrated for the lexemes *tɕʰe* 'be big', and *maŋ* 'be many', below. In the first example, the root *tɕʰe* is a nominalized constituent of an MP. In the second example it is a verb stem in a stative VP.

Modifier Phrase

(177) *kʰɔŋwa*   *[tɕʰe-wu]ₐₚ=kan-tsʰo*

house   be.big-NMZ=DIST-PL

'Those big houses (over there)'   (Gcig.sgril)

Verb Phrase

(178) *kʰɔŋwa tə ɕeɣɨ tɕʰeɣɨ*

[kʰɔŋwa=tə]ₙₚ [ɕɨɣɨ   tɕʰe-kə]ᵥₚ

house=DET   very   be.big-DE.IPF

'The house is very big.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Modifier Phrase

(179) *ta   [raroχ=nɖa   [ɕɨɣə   maŋ-o]ₘₚ]ₙₚ   ji=mɲoŋ-a*

now [help=like   [very   be.many-NMZ]ₘₚ]ₙₚ do= PERF.EXP-Ø

'Well, (she) has really given (me) a lot of help.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Verb Phrase

(180) *teraŋ   ɣjɨʂtse   jo-sa   jɨlʂkorwa   ə-maŋ-kə*

today Gyu.rtse   EXIST-LOC   tourists   Q-be.many-DE.IPF -NMZ

'Were there many tourists while you were at Gyu.rtse Lake?'   (Gcig.sgril)

Example (177), above, which is just a NP, also illustrates the external syntactic properties of the Nominalized Modifier Phrase Construction. Note the order of the demonstrative clitic and plural suffix relative to the MP.

This construction appears to be the oldest way to form an MP. It also occurs in Classical Standard Tibetan, as well as in other modern spoken varieties of Tibetic[100]. It is also more common in some Amdo Tibetan dialects than in others. For example, with a few lexically-conditioned exceptions (see Sec. 5.5.4, below), all of my Gcig.sgril consultants only produced nominalized MPs in elicitation sessions.

5.5.4 Reduplicatation Modifier Construction

The second morphological process by which MPs are formed is reduplication. This is illustrated with the following elicited examples from Yăqūtān (181), and Rdo.spis (182), respectively.

(181) *kæni milγ nəɣnəɣ ziç joki.*

    kæ̃-ni   *[milγ*   *[nəɣnəɣ]MP=ziç]NP*   *[joki]VP*

    DIST-LOC   cat   black.REDUP=INDEF   EXIST.DE

    'There is a black cat over there.'   (Yăqūtān)

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[100] In Standard Tibetan, which has mostly transitioned from using stative verbs to express predicate attribution to using copular clauses, the nominalized forms some old stative verb roots have fossilized, creating a new series of morphologically non-compositional adjective words. See Goldstein (2001:xviv).

(182) *komiɛʰi*   *leblep*

bread.pan   flat.REDUP

'a flat *komiɛʰi*[101]'   (Rdo.spis)

Reduplication is a more preferred strategy, especially for color terms, in Grotsang, Rdo.spis, Yăqūtān, and other "farmer" dialects. In contrast, speakers of Gcig.sgril, Themchen, Bla.brang and other "nomad" dialects seem to prefer the nominalization construction more. However, no dialect uses one strategy exclusively. The following are examples of color MPs as elicited from a speaker of Gcig.sgril and a speaker of Rdo.spis.

(183) *lu*   *caca*

cat   gray.REDUP

'gray cat'   (Rdo.spis)

(184) *zɨmi*   *ʂca-po*

cat   gray-NMZ

'gray cat'   (Gcig.sgril)

(185) *ŋɪɣə*   *ŋɔ̃ŋɔ̃=zɪk*

pen   blue.REDUP=INDEF

'a blue pen'   (Rdo.spis)

---

[101] *komiɛʰi* is the Rdo.spis name for a large, flat, round pan with a heavy lid (usually made of iron) found in almost every home in Rdo.spis. It is used to bake the very distinctive round bread that Tibetans elsewhere refer to as 'Amdo Bread' (WT: *a.mdo bag.leb* ཨ་མདོ་བག་ལེབ). For obvious reasons, only those communities that traditionally grow wheat make this bread, so it is not a universal part of Amdo cuisine. It is also made by non-Tibetans.

(186) ʂɳɨɣɨ   ʂŋon-po

pen   blue-NMZ

'blue pen'   (Gcig.sgril)

The preference for speakers to use one construction over the other in elicitations
may indicate more universal tendencies by which the two dialects differ from one
another.

Setting aside apparent preferences for the structure of color MPs, all dialects
make use of reduplication to derive MPs. This is illustrated for the word 'small' in
Gcig.sgril, below. Speakers also produce a nominalized version of 'small', but when
referring to "little kids", the reduplicated construction seems to be preferred, as in (187).
Haller (2004) also has a reduplicated form of 'few ', given in example (188).

(187) ɕazi   tɕʰoɳtɕʰoŋ

child   small.REDUP

'little kid'   (Gcig.sgril)

(188) ŋuŋŋuŋ

'few'

("wenig")   (Them.chen: Haller 2004: 55)

Likewise, while reduplicated MPs appear to be more frequent than
nominalized MPs in Rdo.spis, there are a handful of roots that, for whatever
reason, don't get reduplicated. One such root is the stative verb 'be big',

illustrated in the following two examples. In example (189), below it occurs as a stative verb in an attributive predicate clause. In (190), it occurs as a nominalized head of an MP. Note the absence of nasalization when the lexical item occurs as a verb and its presence when the item occurs as a modifier, a phenomenon that shows up elsewhere in Tibetic.

(189) *tɕʰɪtɕʰe*   *tɕʰi-ɣɪ*

      car   be.big-DE

      'The car is big.'   (Rdo.spis)

(190) *tɕʰɪtɕʰe tɕʰɪn-po*

      car   be.big-NMZ

        'big car'   (Rdo.spis)

5.5.5   Stative verbs that do not occur in Modifier Phrases

As noted above, not all stative verbs can occur in MPs. This is illustrated in the following example from Gcig.sgril, in which the term 'good' is used attributively. When *ṣa* functions as a predicate, it displays no unusual properties that would differentiate it from other stative verbs like 'be big' or 'be many'. Nonetheless, when it functions as a modifier it apparently can only occur in a nominalized genitive construction (i.e., as a relative clause). In order to appear in a GP, it requires nominalizing morphology and the genitive suffix.

(191) *mɨʂaɣə.*

    [mɨ-ʂa-kə]ᵥₚ

    NEG.IPF-be.good-DE.IPF

    '(That) isn't good.' Or, 'that wasn't good.'   (Gcig.sgril)

(192) *[[ʂa-no-ɣɨ]ₐₚ   mŋɨ*

    be.good-NMZ-GEN   people

    'Good person/people'   (Gcig.sgril)

The lexeme *ʂa* is considered a colloquial expression and rarely written. It appears to have originated in central A.mdo, perhaps around the Reb.gong region, but has by now spread to other dialects. It is still relatively uncommon in Gcig.sgril, although two of the people I recorded use it quite a bit. One person is a man in his fifties and the other is a woman in her twenties. Both individuals have spent time traveling and living elsewhere in A.mdo, so their use of this lexeme may reflect an adaption to other dialects.

In the next section, I discuss the implications of the MP-restriction for *ʂa* for understanding how the two Modifier Phrase Constructions originated, as well as contributing to a possible argument that Amdo Tibetan is starting to develop a morphological class of adjectives.

5.5.6   Modifier augmentation and the historical origins of MPC

The unusual morphosyntactic behavior of *ʂa* compared to other stative verbs used as nominal modifiers might be a reflection of the lexeme's more recent origins. As mentioned in the introduction to Sec. 5.10, there are some patterns in the grammar to

suggest that Amdo Tibetan is in the initial stages of grammaticalizing a morphological

class of adjectives, similar to the situation in Standard Tibetan.

If this is the case, we would expect that the inventory of roots that can occur in

MPs to be restricted to this morphological class. According to this logic, since *ʂa* is a new

word, it's introduction into Amdo Tibetan occurred after the this lexical class started to

become closed. The root *ʂa* 'be good' may therefore occur as a stative verb, but because

the nominalization and reduplication MP constructions are ceasing to be derivational

processes and grammaticalizing into adjective phrase constructions, *ʂa* cannot simply be

substituted for other roots in either construction.

Further evidence to support the idea that Amdo Tibetan is moving toward having

an adjective part of speech is the unique distributional behaviors of augmentative phrases,

which in turn can be traced to the predicative origins of MPs.

Briefly, MPs can themselves be modified, most commonly with an augmentative

word *ɕɨɣə*, which precedes the MP root. This is shown in an example from Yǎqūtān

(193), below.

(193) *kæ̃-a*   *[toŋtsi   [ɕɨɣə   mɔŋ-ʁo]*MP*]*NP *ɛ-joki*

 3.INDEF-DAT   [money   [very   be.many-NMZ Q-EXIST.DE

 'Does that person have a whole lot of money?'   (Yǎqūtān)

While I have analyzed the augmentative word *ɕɨɣə* as an internal constituent of

the MP in (193), it is not always clear that this is the case. In my natural speech data, for

example, I have at least two instances in which *ɕiɣə* actually precedes the noun that the MP modifies. One such sentence is presented in (194), below.

(194) *mo=nḍa*   *m̥tsʰon-na*   **ɕiɣə**   *rgɛrgan*   *bzaŋ-o=zɨç*   *jɪn*

  3S.F=resemble   show-COND   **very**   teacher   be.good-NMZ=INDEF   EQ.EGO

  'She is a very nice teacher indeed.'

The varying position of *ɕiɣə* relative to the noun is likely due to a partial retention of syntactic features that *ɕiɣə* has in its source construction, where it functions as an augmentative of predicates. This source construction is illustrated in examples (195) and (196), below.

(195) *cʰo*   *rəʁa*   *ŋa*   **ɕiɣə**   *tɕʰe-nəre*

  2S   compare   1S   **very**   be.big-FACT.ALLO

  'You are much bigger/older than me.'   (Rnga.ba)

(196) *ʰʈa **ɕiɣə** ʂaɣə*

  ʂʈa   *[**ɕiɣə**]NP*   *ʂa-kə*

  sound **very**   be.good-DE.IPF

  '(Her) pronunciation is very good.'   (Gcan.tsa)

In (195) and (196), augmentative *ɕiɣə* precedes the verb stem in the predicative expressions 'are much bigger' and 'is good'.

We know that *ɕiɣə* was first a predicate modifier in part because, while in spoken language it seems to be restrictied to Amdo Tibetan, it cognate with the Written Tibetan word *shig.tu* (ཤིག་ཏུ—frequently pronounced as *ɕɪndə*), which occurs as a predicate modifier with a sense of 'much' or 'completely'. The adverbial function of *shig.tu* is apparent from the old *la.don* marker *-tu*, which expresses locative or dative case[102]. *Shig.tu* is used in Written Tibetan to augment the sense of the predicate. If we interpret *ɕiɣə* as an adverb, then its position in the clause in example (194) suggests that the word 'teacher' is part of the predicate that *ɕiɣə* is modifying.

We can now make the following analysis: in finite clauses, *ɕiɣə* occurs in the first position of a predicative expression, either before the VP in stative predicates, or before the NP in non-verbal predicates. If we analyze MPs as at least having gone through a stage of being nominalized VPs, we can now account for the order of *ɕiɣə* in (194).

Further evidence in support of an origin of MPC in predicative expressions comes from the reduplicative construction. Elsewhere in Tibetan reduplication is not a nominalizing process[103]. Notably, reduplication is a highly productive morphological process in verbal constructions in several non-Tibetic languages spoken in central eastern A.mdo, in and around Rdo.spis. For instance, Dwyer (2008) mentions augmentative reduplication in Monguor. Wang (2008) mentions reduplication as an expression of iterative or augmented action in Qīnghǎi Chinese. Republication in Sinitic and Mongolic

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[102] Bear in mind that the traditional grammarian system does not differentiate locative case from dative case. See Sec. 2.4.

[103] The reduplication of morphological nouns and stative verbs is an expression of iterativity or plurality in some cases (c.f., Ebihara 2010:54-55).

languages in the region may be connected to increased use of repuplication in MP formation in Rdo.spis and other geographically proximate dialects.

It may be that the reduplicative MP construction originated in an expression of augmented attributive predication and from there developed into a modifier construction. The fact that we see reduplication in MPs but not so much in VPs may be further evidence that Amdo Tibetan is developing a adjective part of speech.

5.6 Numerals

In large part, the impression that roots which occur as heads of modifier phrase (MPs) are morphologically heterogeneous comes from the fact that numerals, which are common modifiers of nouns, themselves seem to be a sub-class of morphological nouns. However, numerals have some properties that other nouns do not.

Like some stative verb roots, numerals occur with the nominalization suffix *-Bo* in MPs. Unlike verbal MP heads, however, numerals do not require nominalization. This property is evidence that numerals are a kind of noun. The absence of nominal morphology in numeral MPs is illustrated in examples (197-201), below. Nominalized numeral MPs are illustrated in (200) and (201).

(197)   *tɛraŋ   [tsʰi   [byɹat]ₘₚ]ₙₚ   re*

       today   date   eight   EXIST.ALLO

       'Today is the eighth (of July, 2016).'   (Gcig.sgril)

(198) *[χwɛtɕʰa   [ɣcɨɣ]]*

    book   one

    'one book'   (Gcig.sgril)

(199) *ŋi   [χwɛtɕʰa   [xsɨm]ₘₚ]   ŋi-nəjɪn*

    1S.ERG book   three   buy.PFV-FACT.EGO

    'I bought three books.'   (Rnga.ba)

(200) *[ʂta   [xsɨm -po]ₐₚ₎ₙₚ   ŋi   aki   re*

    horse three-**NMZ**   1S.GEN uncle.GEN   EXIST.ALLO

    '**The** three horses are my uncle's.'   (Rnga.ba)

(201) *ʂta xsɨm tə ŋʈo soŋziç.*

    [ʂta   [xsɨm]ₘₚ=tə]ₙₚ   ŋʈo-soŋ-ziç

    horse three=DEF   flee-PST-IE.PFV

    '**The** three horses ran away.'   (Rnga.ba)

    The numerals in (197)-(199) and (201) are in the cardinal form. There is also an ordinal set, which has been described in detail in (Haller 2004) and elsewhere, so I won't bother with them here. In (197), we see that the cardinal number is used to modify the noun 'date', *tsʰi* (WT: ཚེས *tshes*) to express the eighth day of the month. We also see that the same MP construction is used to express a quantity of one book in (198). But of particular interest is the formal alternation between the nominalized and non-nominalized 'three'. What is the difference in meaning?

    First, let us examine (193) and (194). Strictly speaking, both numeral expressions are attributive in that the quantity 'three' is an attribute of a represented entity. The

difference in meaning therefore lies in how the noun phrase, of which 'three' is just one constituent, is interpreted. For (200), I have translated the presence of the nominalizer with the English definite article 'the', and indeed it does seem that nominalization of numerals corresponds to definite reference. So, we understand that 'three books' in (199) doesn't refer to any particular set of books. The speaker who produced (201), explained the presence of -po as "those horses that we were talking about", although I suspect that it would be sufficient for the interlocutors simply to both be observing the horses in such a way that horses are a natural enough topic to be introduced into the discourse.

Another analysis, that turns out not to be inaccurate, is that 'three' occurs in an NP that is part of the predicate in (199), and in (200) the noun phrase (NP) it occurs in is a subject. We might assume, then, that -po is co-related with the semantic role of the NP, though, in fact, it is perfectly grammatical to produce a nominalized form of 'three' in a direct object. This is illustrated in (202), below.

(202) *ŋi*   *[χwɛtɕʰa   [xsɯm-po]$_{MP}$] ŋi-nəjɪn*

      1S.ERG book   three-NMZ   buy.PFV-FACT.EGO

      'I bought **the** three books.'   (Rnga.ba)

What is the difference between (199) and (202)? The former might be a felicitous response to the question, 'what did you get at the store?'. The latter might be something a student would say to their teacher the day after being told to go out and buy three textbooks—'I bought the three books (you told me to buy).' So, the difference between

(199) and (200) is that the speaker of (200) expects that the listener knows which books they are referencing, while the speaker of (199) expects the opposite.

Additional evidence that *-po* marks the referent as definite is provided in the following sentence. In example (203) we see that the use of the definite determiner in precludes the use the nominalizer *-Bo*.

(203)　**ṣta　xsɯm-po=tə　　n̥o-soŋ-ziç*

　　　　horse　three-NMZ=DEF　　flee-PST-IE.PFV

　　　　Intended: 'The three horses ran away.'　　　　　　　　　　(Rnga.ba)

Example (203) "sounds weird" to the speaker because the determiner is redundant with the form *xsɯmpo*. However, example (204), below, sounds fine, and "similar" in meaning to (202). This suggests that nominalized numeral MPs express the same function as the definite determiner *=tə*.

(204)　*[ṣta　[xsɯm-po]]NP n̥o-soŋ-ziç*

　　　　horse　three-NMZ　　　flee-PST-IE.PFV

　　　　'The three horses ran away.'　　　　　　　　　　　　　(Rnga.ba)

Sung & Bla (2009: 137-138) reach a similar analysis, concluding that *-Bo* is used to mark numerals as definite. They then compare two examples, reproduced below.

(205)   འདི་ན་ལུག་གསུམ་ཡོད།

'di-na   lug   gsum   yod

PROX-LOC   sheep   three   EXIST

'There are three sheep here.'

(206)   ལུག་གསུམ་པོ་འདི་ངི་ཡིན།

lug   gsum-po='di   ngi   yin

sheep   three-NMZ=PROX   1S.GEN EQ.EGO

'These three sheep are mine.'

Sung & Bla also note that nominalized numerals may occur with a

demonstratives, with a degree of flexibility in word order:

> "…speakers of Amdo Tibetan have a rather relaxed attitude towards the word order between the numeral (པོ) and the demonstrative in a noun phrase. *These three sheep* (sic) can be either ལུག་གསུམ་པོ་འདི or ལུག་འདི་གསུམ་པོ, with the latter being more common. (p. 123)"

Haller (2004: 58) has a different analysis of the nominalized numeral

construction. He describes the function as Kollektivzahl—"collective number"—and

presents the following examples in the Themchen dialect.

(207)   ŋə.çsəm-pu

'just the three of us' ("eben wir drei")

(208)   ʈʂəç-ku

'the six'; 'all six' ("die sechs", "alle sechs")

Note that Haller provides a definite interpretation for (208). The sense of a collective is compatible with a definite analysis for this construction, and is related to another sense, that of specific reference. If there is a sense of 'all six' in (208), this necessitates that it be just these six, to the exclusion of any other members of the class of referent. So, the nominalized Modifier Phrase Construction marks the NP as both definite and specific.

Not surprisingly, this construction occurs with pronouns. However, I have been informed that the third person pronoun is rarely used. To my knowledge, numerals are the only MPs that occur as modifiers of pronouns. A further example of a nominalized numeral modifying a pronoun is in (209), below.

(209) *tɕʰo ŋiɣa kàá soŋni?*

   [tɕʰo   [ŋi-ɣa¹⁰⁴]ₐₚ]   ka-la   soŋ-ni]

   2   two-NMZ   where-LOC   go.PFV-FACT.EGO.?

   'Where did you two go?'

With second person referents the singular pronoun form is always used. This, of course, is logical given that the plural suffix is incompatible in full nouns when there is a numeral MP. Curiously, however, there is an interesting variation in the form of first-person plural pronouns in such constructions. Some speakers also accept the construction in (210) in place of that in (207), in which the first-person pronoun is pluralized and the nominalized numeral occurs after the plural marker.

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[104] As Haller (2004:58) notes, *nyis.ka* is an irregular form of the nominalized numeral construction for 'two'.

(210) *ŋə-tɛʰo*   xsum-po   nɖo

1-**PL**   three-NMZ   go.IMP

'The three of us go.'   (Hearer is excluded.)   (Rnga.ba)

As with full nouns, the definite determiner can be used in lieu of the

nominalization suffix in pronominal NPs, as in (211), below.

(211) *ŋə-tɛʰo*   xsum=tə   nɖo

1-**PL**   three=DEF   go.IMP

'The three of us go.'   (Hearer is excluded.)   (Rnga.ba)

Only definite-marked numerals can occur as modifiers of pronouns.

To review, the formal differences in the expression of numeral MPs is as follows.

In the examples, below, the referent 'three' in (212) is indefinite—the speaker is

informing the hearer that their uncle has three horses. The speaker does not presume that

the hearer knows which horses are being talked about and this may well be the first

mention of the uncle's horses.

(212) *ŋi*   aka   [ʂta   **çsum**]AP]NP   jore

1S.GEN uncle.DAT   horse   **three**   EXIST.ALLO

'(My uncle) has three horses.'   (Gcig.sgril)

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In (213), below, the speaker is mentioning a referent that is known to the hearer, either because it has been mentioned before or else because the circumstances under which the exchange takes place entail the existence of the three horses. The first such scenario to come to mind for this elicited example was an occasion in which the interlocutors were making a journey on horseback and had stopped to take a break, letting the horses roam free in the meantime. When the people get ready to resume their journey, one person asks the question in (213), below.

(213) *ṣta çsumpo kaŋna soŋtʰa?*

    [ṣta   *[çsum-po]ₐₚ]ₙₚ*   *kaŋ-na*   *soŋ-tʰa*

    horse   three-NMZ   where-LOC   go.PFV-PST.DE

    'Where did those three horses run off to?'   (Gcig.sgril)

At present, I can detect no difference between the use of the nominalized numeral construction and the use of the definite determiner. So, the expressions below appear to be synonymous. However, it is possible that a more extensive text analysis would reveal either a difference in meaning or a difference in distributional conditions.

(214) *ŋə-tɛʰo xsum=tə*

    1-PL   three=DEF

    'We three'   (Rnga.ba)

(215) *ŋə-tɕʰo xsum-po*

  1-PL   three-NMZ

  'We three'   (Rnga.ba [105])

Personal pronouns are inherently definite, so the occurrence of additional definite marking on numerals can be considered a form of agreement, especially because it is obligatory. Forms that do not have *-po*, like (216)-(217), below, are not acceptable to speakers.

(216) **ŋə-tɕʰo xsum*

  Intended: "We three"

(217) **ŋə xsum*

  Intended: "We three"

Haller (2004:62) also gives an example of a color term being nominalized in the same way as numerals to have a similar meaning as a definite NP marker. This example is cited below.

(218) *χwɛtɕʰa*   *ɣmaru-wu-ndə*

  book   red-PTL-DEF

  'Just the red book' ("eben das rote Buch")   (Them.chen)

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[105] Sometimes the nominalized form of 'three' has a simplified onset—WT sum, instead of gsum. This is seen in the inclusive first person with three in Yăqūtān is: *aktɕʰu sumbu*

I suspect that when used with non-numeral adjectives, this construction does not necessarily have a specific sense. Rather, I think the primary or direct function of the nominalized adjective construction is to express definiteness—the referent is known to both speaker and hearer.

5.7   Adverbial NPs

In addition to encoding referents, NPs also occur as adjuncts expressing adverbial functions. While, as stated in Sec. 5.2, it is not always possible from the morphology or syntactic position, alone, to determine whether a particular NP is an argument or an adverb, there are certain structural features more commonly associated with adverbs than with arguments. The present section briefly introduces some of the features associated with adverbs.

Proposition-modifying adverbs provide information characterizing the entire proposition. Typical examples are expressions of the time, such as when an event transpired or how long it took. The occurrence of such temporal adverbs in spontaneous speech are illustrated below.

Duration of event

(219)   *ŋi*   *[ɲima χɲi-kə   lam-a]*   *ʂta*   *zon-nəre*

1S.ERG   **[day   two-GEN   road-LOC]**_{ADV} horse   ride-FACT.ALLO

'I rode a horse for two days.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Time of event

(220) *rgoṣka titsʰo bdǝngǝ ṣtǝŋæ joŋ rgonḍe.*

[rgorka   titsʰo   bdǝn-gǝ   rtaŋ-a]_{ADV}   *joŋ=rgo-nǝre*

[evening   o'clock   seven-GEN   on-LOC]_{ADV}   come=DEON-FACT.ALLO

'(We) have to come back at 7pm.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Note that both temporal adverbs are marked with locative case. This is not true of all temporal adverbs, such as the words for 'now', 'today', 'yesterday' and so on, as illustrated in the following examples.

(221) *tǝrã ta tsʰikija.*

*[tǝraŋ ta]*_{ADV} *tsʰi-ki-ja*

today   now   be.hot-DE.IPF-SFP

'It is hot today.'   (Yǎqūtān)

(222) *nǝka tsʰiki.*

*[nǝka]*_{ADV}   *tsʰi-ki*

[yesterday]_{ADV}   be.hot-DE.IPF

'It was hot yesterday.'   (Yǎqūtān)

Generally speaking, temporal adverbs occur towards the beginning of the clause, frequently in the first position. Adverbs that modify predicates tend to occur immediately before the VP, following other NP constituents of the clause. This word order is illustrated in the following examples.

(223)   ṣkænko   *[tɕʰoχa]* ᵐbot

ṣkænko   *[tɕʰoχwo-a]*   mbot

shout   **loud-LOC]**   call.IMP

'Yell louder.'   (Gcig.sgril)

(224)   *kængi ra* ʰ*kɛgoki.*

kæ̃-ki   *[ra]ADV*   ʰ*kɛ-ko-ki*

INDEF-ERG   spontaneously laugh-PROG-DE.IPF

'They just started laughing for no reason.'   (Yăqūtān)

In both (223) and (224), the second NP is an adverb modifying the predicate. In (223), 'loud' is preceded by the verb object 'shout' and followed by the verb stem 'call'. In (224), 'spontaneously' is preceded by the agent and followed by the verb 'laugh'.

CHAPTER VI

OVERVIEW OF STRUCTURAL AND FUNCTIONAL

PROPERTIES OF THE VERB PHRASE

The objective of this chapter is to present an overview of the Verb Phrase in order to provide a foundation for discussing specific constructions in detail in Chapters 7, 8 and 9. Toward that end, the organization of this chapter is as follows. First, I briefly describe lexical classes of verbs. Then I introduce the major paradigms the Amdo Tibetan VP. These paradigms are: an archaic and decaying system of suppletive verb stems, which some dialects have actually innovated new forms for; a paradigm of post-verbal morphemes that express assertional functions and which are associated with finiteness; and a system of verbal auxiliaries that are also follow the verb stem, but which do express assertional information and which are not confined to finite VPs.

6.1 Semantic verb classes

The most fundamental division in Tibetan verbs is that of verbal vs. non-verbal predication. The latter is expressed by copulas, which form a morphosyntactically and functionally distinct lexical sub-class of verb, as will be described in detail in Chapter 7. Verbal predicates, which will be described in Chapter 8, are expressed by verbs. Notably, there are slight differences in the assertional categories marked in copular VPs, as well as

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differences in the structure of assertional marking. This is shown in the following examples from Reb.gong.

Copular clause

(225) *cʰu*   *ɕile*   *ta*   *rɪkpa*   *joke-ja*

      2S.GEN   child.DAT   then   intelligence   EXIST.DE-SFP

      'Your child is so smart!'   (Chu.ma Reb.gong)

Verbal clause

(226) *tɛri*   *ŋi*   *jɪndʑi*   *ɕe-taŋ-tʰa*

      at.that.time   1S.ERG   English   know-TR.PFV-DE.PST

      'At that time I came to know English.'   (Chu.ma Reb.gong)

Both the clause in (225) and that in (226) are marked as assertions based on direct evidence. However, the evidential sense of (225) is expressed by the verb stem, while that of (226) is expressed via a suffix. In addition to the evidential suffix, the verbal clause in (226) also consists of an auxiliary suffix, *-taŋ*, which in the Reb.gong dialect is a perfective marker of transitive events. In terms of morphological processes as well as functional categories, copular clauses have a narrower range of constructions.

Verbs, in turn, can be divided into different classes on the basis of inherent semantic properties. Different classes of verbs are associated with different morphosyntactic behaviors. In terms of assertional morphology, perhaps the greatest difference is between activities and states (Jiang 2006). Among other differences, when activities are marked with the evidential suffix *-tʰa*, a past tense interpretation is

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expressed. When -*tʰa* occurs on stative verbs, it has an inchoative present tense interpretation. This is illustrated with the following examples from Gcig.sgril.

Direct evidence past activity

(227) *tɕa*   *tʰaŋ-a*   *hwu*   *taŋ-tʰa*

      tea   groung-LOC   out   put-DE.PST

      'I unintentionally spilled my tea on the ground.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Direct evidence inchoative state

(228) *kʰaŋwa*   *maŋ-tʰa*

      house   be.many-DE.PFV

      'There are more houses (than before).'   (Gcig.sgril)

As we saw in Sec. 2.4 and Sec. 4.3.1, activity verbs are further classified into controllable and non-controllable verbs. Case-marking of core arguments and the distribution of plain egophoric marking are determined by a verb's inherent controllability.

The inherent semantics of verb roots can be altered by the addition of certain auxiliaries. Thus, *tʰon* 'arrive' normally has a achievement sense, as defined by Vendler (1957): it expresses an end-point and has no internal duration, as in (229), following.

(229) *cʰo*   *nam*   *tʰon-ni?*

      2S   when   arrive-FACT.EGO

      'When did you arrive?'   (Gcig.sgril)

However, when *tʰon* occurs with the continuative auxiliary *-ndɨɣ* , *tʰon* has a durative sense of 'arriving and staying', as in (230), below.

(230)　*tə-tɕʰæ-ki*　　*nʲo-rgo*　　*ma-rze*　　*roŋgə təni*　*tʰon-ndɨɣ-jokə*

　　　　DEF-PL-ERG　go-DEON　　NEG.PFV-tell　still　　then　arrive-CONT-PRF.DE

　　　'Even if they didn't tell (you) they were going there, they were there.'

　　　(Gcig.sgril)

An important typological difference between Amdo Tibetan and Standard/Lhasa Tibetan is the morphosyntax of predicate attributes. In Amdo Tibetan, the predication of physical attributes and other characteristics are frequently encoded by stative verbs. In Standard Tibetan, predicate attribution is typically expressed by non-verbal predicates. This is difference is illustrated for 'delicious' in the following examples. Note that while both clauses contain a cognate element, spelled *zhim* in Written Tibetan (WT: ཞིམ), in Standard Tibetan the element does not occur as a verb and so the form *ɕɨmpo*[106], which historically was a nominalized stative verb, is now lexicalized.

Standard Tibetan

(231)　*ámdø*　　　*pálɛ*　*pɛ̄*　*ɕɨm.po*　　　*tùù*

　　　　A.mdo.GEN　bread　very　delicious　　EXIST.DE

　　　'Amdo bread is very delicious.'

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[106] My Yăqūtān consultant says that people in his community usually say 'delicious' as a non-verbal predicate, as well, but they use the equative copula *re*.

Amdo Tibetan

(232) *amdo-kə   kori   ɕɨɣə   ʐɪm-kə*

Amdo-GEN   bread   very   be.delicious-DE

'Amdo bread is very delicious.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Considerable research has been done on the classification of verbs, seeking to find unifying semantic attributes (at least for the historical stages of the language) behind what is a complicated system of different morphophonological patterns of derivation and inflection. Relying primarily on Jäschke's (1881) Tibetan-English dictionary, Coblin (1976) divided Written Tibetan verbs into classes according to number of stem forms (see Sec.6.2, below) and morphophonological inflectional properties of the stems. Reconstruction of these old paradigms is still far from complete. It is clear that even by Old Tibetan, this inflectional system was already quite old and not entirely productive, leading to a large number of partial and 'irregular' paradigms[107].

Efforts to classify active verbs according to syntactic behaviors have been a little more fruitful. While some authors have found it useful to divide verbs into 'transitive' and 'intransitive' classes (c.f. Beyer 1992), others (e.g., Hill 2004) have found this approach insufficient in accounting for the full range of morphosyntactic behaviors exhibited by the Tibetan verbal system. Among other issues, it is far from clear that a distinction between transitive and instransive, *per se*, is made at the level of the lexical verb, as opposed to the clause level. Rather, verbs appear to fall into morphosyntactic

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[107] For a more comprehensive discussion of this subject, see Hill (2010).

classes on the basis of 'control', or 'volition' (DeLancey 1985), as well as the semantic

and case roles of arguments (c.f., Tournadre 1995; Sun 1993; Haller 2000; Tounadre &

Dorje 2003). These paradigms show up in languages throughout the family, most notably

Haller's (2000) comparison of the Them.chen dialect of Amdo Tibetan with Shigatse

Tibetan, spoken on the opposite side of Tibetan's geographic range in Tibet Autonomous

Region, near the border with Nepal.

6.2   Morphosyntactic paradigms of Amdo Tibetan verbs

For the remainder of this chapter, I introduce the important morphosyntactic

paradigms of Amdo Tibetan verbs. For illustrative purposes, I use the lexical verb 'eat'

because it expresses as close to a full range of inflectional and derivational processes as I

have yet to find in the language. The examples are based on the Gcig.sgril dialect, spoken

in the county of the same name located in southern Mgo.log Prefecture, in Qīnghǎi

Province, bordering Rma.chu County in Gānsù Province, and Rnga.ba County in Sìchuān

Province. Because the examples are organized paradigmatically, I label them according

to broad morphosyntactic functions. An important feature of each of these paradigms is

whether or not the paradigm itself is associated with finite verbs or not, so I will be

noting this as well.

6.2.1   Inflectional stem alternation

Amdo Tibetan is characterized as an archaic Tibetan variety because it retains

many features found in Old Tibetan, as documented by contemporary written sources

going back to the mid-7th century. One such feature is a higher (though not complete)

retention of a system of multiple stems in a handful of sub-classes of lexical verbs. For Tibetan Grammarians, the boundary between etymologically-related forms of different lexical verbs and supletive stems of the same verb can be a little blurry, and forms such as 'break' and 'become broken' are listed as the same item in dictionaries, and as two separate items in other dictionaries. Less ambiguous is the alternation of stem forms based on aspect and mood.

Linguists working in the autochthonous grammarian tradition distinguish the imperative stem from stems of 'time', of which there are three in Written Tibetan— 'past', 'present' and 'future'. A.lags Dor.zhi (1983) presents a useful summary of how this system effectively operates in Written Tibetan:

བྱེད་པ་པོ་གཞན་འབྲེལ་གྱི་དུས་གསུམ་བྱ་ཚིག་གི་སྐྲ་གྲུབ་ཚུལ།
'Completed aspects for verbs that have agents and objects in the three tenses.'

བྱེད་པ་པོ་གཞན་འབྲེལ་གྱི་དུས་གསུམ་བྱ་ཚིག་ལ་གཟུགས་འགྱུར་ཡོད་མེད་རིགས་གཉིས་ཡོད་པས།
'There are two types of transitive verbs (verbs that have agents and objects), based on whether (the stems) alternate (for tense).'

གཟུགས་འགྱུར་མེད་པའི་བྱ་ཚིག་ནི། སྒྲ་འབས་ཡིག་གཟུགས་ཀྱི་སྟེང་ནས་དུས་ཀྱི་ཁྱད་པར་མེད་ཅིང་། ཚིག་སྟོང་དུ་འགྱོད་པའི་ཚེ་ དུས་ གསུམ་བདག་གཞན་བྱ་བྱེད་ཀྱི་ཁྱད་པར་ཚིག་གྲོགས་དང་། ཚིག་སྤ་ཕྱིའི་དོན་གྱི་སྟེང་ནས་སྟོན་པ་ཡིན།
'As for the verbs that do not change form, there is no difference to their pronunciation or spelling, so different tenses are indicated by auxiliary words or adverbs that show the time.'

In the spoken dialects of Amdo Tibetan, the above-described system has decayed to the point where many stem forms have been lost. However, this historical change is less advanced in Amdo Tibetan than in other modern varieties of Tibetan (Hua 2001). For

verbs that historically had them, speakers still retain distinct stems for imperfective and perfective aspect[108], and imperative mood. This is illustrated using the verb, 'eat', below.

Imperfective stem

(233) *cʰu*   *ɕa*   *ə̀-za?*

         2S.ERG   meat   Q-eat.IPF

         'Do you eat meat?'

Perfective stem

(234) *zama*   *ə̀-zu[109]?*

         food   Q-eat.PFV

         'Did you eat?'   (Gcig.sgril)

Imperative stem

 (235) *zama*   *zo[110].*

         food   eat.IMP

         'Eat!'   (Gcig.sgril)

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[108] Other scholars (e.g., Zeisler 2005) identify these stem forms as 'past' and 'present' stems.

[109] The form of the imperative stem of 'eat' varies somewhat between dialects within Amdo Tibetan. In Gcig.sgril and elsewhere in Mgo.log (including parts of neighboring Rnga.ba that lie within the historical boundaries of Mgo.log), the form is *zu*. In most other areas, the form is *si*. Yǎqūtān uses the form *tɕʰa*, which has only one stem and doesn't appear to be cognate with 'eat' in other varieties.

[110] The imperative stem of 'eat' is often realized by Gcig.sgril speakers as /zu/, making it homophonouns with the perfective stem. However, because speakers agree that iimperative can also be pronounced /zo/, while the perfective stem cannot, I use this form here because it represents a phonological contrast, even if it is not rigidly maintained in natural speech. The WT spelling of imperative 'eat' is *zo*.

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In Amdo Tibetan, imperative forms are the most common type of suppletive verb stem. Not ever lexical verb has a separate imperative stem, but many do, including lexical verbs that don't have distinct imperfective and perfective stems. One such verb is 'drink', which has an imperative stem *tʰoŋ* and a stem *ŋtʰoŋ*, that is used in all other contexts. I have also observed instances of dialects innovating an imperative stem for verbs that historically lacked them.

An example of such an innovation from my dataset is the light verb 'to hit'. In Written Tibetan, this verb has a distinct future stem *rgyags* (རྒྱགས), and then a single stem for present and past, *brgyags*, (བརྒྱགས), but it does not have an imperative stem. However, Rdo.spis speakers have innovated an imperative form for this verb. Examples of the non-imperative and imperative forms of this verb for Rdo.spis are given below.

(236) *cʰɪ*   *na*   *kʰapəɹ*   *ɛ-jjɛ*

       2S.ERG   1S   phone   Q-hit

       'Did you call me?'   (Rdo.spis)

(237) *cʰɪ*   *na*   *kʰapər*   *jjo*

       2S.ERG   1S   phone   hit.IMP

       'Call me.'   (Rdo.spis)

Another example of an imperative stem form that is not documented for Classical Literary Tibetan or Standard Tibetan is the imperative form of the root 'sleep', documented in the speech of a person from Khri.ka (ཁྲི་ཀ). Given that Khri.ka is a high-elevation farming community whose location halfway between Reb.gong and Mgo.log

means that it is an important layover and trading destination for travelers heading two and from these regions , I would be surprised if this imperative stem did not occur in other dialects.

(238)   *ta*   *ŋu-pa*

         now   sleep.IMP-SFP

         'Go to sleep.'   (Khri.ka)

In Gcig.sgril, speakers have innovated an imperative form of the verb 'do' *li* (WT: las ལས), which historically had only one stem. Gcig.sgril speakers report using a form *lui* when making friendly, or pleading, requests, such as in the elicited sentence, below.

(239)   *zama*   *lui*

         food   make.IMP

         '(Please) cook!'   (Gcig.sgril)

Unlike other imperative stems, *lui* implies more of a request than a command. Similarly, Gcig.sgril speakers also have an innovative form for 'eat', *zui*, which is used to politely coax someone to eat in contexts when the use of the imperative stem of this verb would be inappropriate, as when the speaker has already used the imperative form once and been politely declined by the addressee, in which case repeating the imperative stem might be interpreted as an expression of impatience or anger.

The use of imperative stems is largely confined to the expression of commands, a communicative act that is highly constrained by social expectations. Consequently, people often rely on less direct means to tell someone to do something. Moreover, imperative stems are not used for prohibitive situations[111]. Instead, prohibitive commands are expressed by a morphologically complex dedicated construction in which an imperfective verb stem is combined with the perfective negative prefix, *ma-,* as illustrated in example (240), below.

Prohibitive construction

(240) *zama*   *ma-za*

　　　 food   NEG.PFV-eat.IPF

　　　 'Don't eat!'

Given the fact that not all verbs have imperative stems as well as the fact that there is a separate prohibitive construction, we can say that imperative mood is a property of clauses, not verbs. Specifically, it is a property of sentences as I have found no instances of subordinate clauses with imperative verb stems. Imperative verb stems, along with the prohibitive construction, illustrated above, can therefore be considered finite verb forms.

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[111] Zeisler (2001) proposes that imperative stem forms are not use prohibitively because historically they expressed a 'potentialis' function. The morphology of prohibitive construction, which does not contain the imperative stem, therefore predates the modern imperative stem system.

6.3 Assertion Markers

If stem form is not associated with finiteness, there is a paradigm of constructions that are. As stated in Chapter 4, Amdo Tibetan verbal morphology is characterized by a system of post-verbal morphemes that express information about the nature of the assertion. While the oppositions in this paradigm encode more nuanced temporal-aspectual contrasts than is conveyed by the form of the verb stem, their primary function is to express information about the nature of the assertion that a given clause, or series of clauses, encodes. If we assume that a linguistic unit CLAUSE corresponds to a semantic unit PROPOSITION, then we see that a single assertion can contain more than one proposition. One structural consequence of this correlation is that assertion marking is not present on every clause. While certain functional classes of finite clause, such as imperative clauses, do not have assertion marking, there is nonetheless a strong association between finite clauses and assertion marking. The semantic contrasts expressed by this structural paradigm are illustrated in Table 12, reproduced from Chapter 4.

Table 12. Functional categories of Amdo Tibetan assertion marking

Realis (Factual)	Egophoric	Direct evidence past	Factual allophoric
		Direct evidence imperfective	Factual egophoric
		Indirect evidence past	
Irrealis		Epistemic modality	Future allophoric
			Future egophoric

The first, or higher-level, distinction that is made is whether or not the assertion is of a real or un-real event. While there are no constructions that correspond to a *realis* or an *irrealis* category, it is useful to organize the categories that do have dedicated constructions into *realis* and *irrealis* functions. From this, we see that *realis* clauses express a wider range of semantic contrasts. Most notably, they include three evidential categories.

Many individual constructions express functions associated with more than one semantic domain. Some of these constructions are clearly polysemous, as is the case with the suffix *-tʰa*, which expresses a combination of perfective past tense and direct evidence (Sec. 8.4). The temporal-aspectual sense of *-tʰa* happens to contrast with that of another direct evidence suffix, *-kə*, which expresses imperfective aspect. The evidential sense of *-tʰa* contrasts with another past tense suffix, *-zɨç*, which expresses indirect evidence. On the basis of its oppositional behavior, illustrated with the following examples from Rdo.spis, *-tʰa* is a polysemous morpheme.

(241) *kʰɨka   wɨ-tʰa*

      3S   depart-DE.PST

      'He left.' (Speaker saw him go.)   (Rdo.spis)

(242) *kʰɨka wɨ-soŋ-zɨç*

      3S   depart-TRANS.PFV-IE.PST

      'He left.' (Speaker didn't see him leave, but knows he left.)   (Rdo.spis)

(243) *khɪkɪ*   *ʁokɛ*   *çtsaŋma=zɪk* *ɕɛ*   *ɕe-ɣɪ*

3S.ERG   Tibetan.language   all=INDEF   very   know-DE.IPF

'He knows Tibetan very well.' (Speaker has heard him speak.)   (Rdo.spis)

We can therefore consider -*tʰa* to be plurifunctional[112]. However, they all display complementary distributional patterns relative to one another. Furthermore, they are required to make a non-imperative utterance finite. Finally, they possess structural and etymological elements that are similar or held in common to one another.

For all these reasons, it makes sense to analyze these constructions as a unitary paradigm. However, within the paradigm are varying levels of contrast. An important contrast that runs throughout the paradigm is the opposition between egophoric and non-egophoric senses. This is illustrated in Table 16, on the following page.

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[112] Tournadre (2017: 625) makes the point that there are considerable theoretical and descriptive advantages to regarding certain grammatical constructions as having multiple functional values, rather than attempting to identify a single common sense and then assign that as the "monolithic" meaning of the construction in all of its environments.

Table 16. Egophoricity contrasts in *realis* assertions

Egophoric		Non-egophoric	
Egophoric	*za-a* eat.IPF -EGO 'I eat.'	Direct evidence imperfective	*za-kɨ* eat.IPF-DE.IPF 'They eat.' (I've seen them.)
	zu-wa eat.PFV-EGO 'I ate.'	Direct evidence past	*zu-tʰa* eat.PFV-DE.PST 'They ate.' (I saw them.)
		Indirect evidence past	*zu-zɨç* eat.PFV -IE.PST 'They ate.' (I didn't see them.)
Egophoric perfect aspect	*za-jo* eat.IPF-PRF.EGO 'I've eaten.'	Direct evidence perfect	*za-jokə* eat.IPF-PRF.DE 'They've eaten.' (I saw them.)
		Indirect evidence perfect	*za-joziç* eat.IPF = PRF.IE 'They've eaten.' (I didn't see them.)
Factual egophoric	*za-nəjɪn* eat.IPF -FACT.EGO 'I eat.' (Assumed)	Factual allophoric	*za-nəre* eat.IPF-FACT.ALLO 'They eat.' (Assumed knowledge)
	zu-nəjɪn eat.PFV-FACT.EGO (Assumed)		*zu-nəre* eat.PFV-FACT.ALLO 'They ate.' (Assumed knowledge)
Future egophoric	*za-ɟəjɪn* eat.IPF-FUT.EGO 'I will eat.'	Future allophoric	*za-ɟire* eat.IPF-FUT.ALLO 'They will eat.'

Just as the three evidential markers also express temporal-aspectual contrasts, so do we see an opposition between egophoric and non-egophoric in different parts of the paradigm. As defined in Sec. 4.3, egophoricity is a privative contrast between priveleged

information access (i.e., knowledge about one's own volitional participation in an event, or knowledge about a situation in which one is consciously involved) and non-priveleged information[113]. If an assertor knows about a situation through any means other than their own conscious and volitional participation, then the assertion is non-egophoric information, as in the left column of Table 16.

I use the terms 'non-egophoric' and 'allophoric' differently: 'non-egophoric' refers to any category that is not EGOPHORIC, and so includes the evidential categories, as well as factual-allophoric. In contrast, ALLOPHORIC is a marked category. There is a FACTUAL ALLOPHORIC category for both verbal and non-verbal predicates[114]. Verbal predicates also have a future allophoric category, while the cognate form in non-verbal predicates expresses the epistemic modal category of certainty. There is also a plain ALLOPHORIC category for equative copulas (see Sec.7.3.1.4). We see that egophoricity is a category of both *realis* and *irrealis* moods.

In *realis* assertions, egophoricity is associated with assertor involvement, which (as explained in Sec. 4.3.1) is highly correlated to the assertor being a volitional participant of the asserted event, but this is not always the case. Non-verbal predicates, in particular, seem to be volitionally neutral, so the occurrence of egophoric copular forms correlates to a different kind of assertor involvement, however defined. Conversely, in *irrealis* assertions, egophoric marking is restricted to volitional assertor participants and is never extended to any other type of assertor-involvement.

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[113] This view is compatible with that expressed in Shao (2014).
[114] The assertional categories of non-verbal predicates is discussed in Chapter 7.

The verb forms presented in the above tables are syntactically sufficient as sentences without the addition of any other morphological or lexical content. Other clausal constituents, such as arguments, are non-obligatory, but for a clause to be a sentence, meaning acceptable as a complete utterance, there must be a verb that appears in one of the above finite constructions.

The egophoricity opposition is neutralized in irrealis assertions. Or, an alternative analysis is that irrealis assertions are inherently non-egophoric. Regardless, there are no egophoric irrealis constructions. This is shown in Table 17.

Table 17. Egophorically-neutral *irrealis* assertional categories

Purposive	*za=re*
	eat.IPF=PURP
	'(I) will eat (for your benefit).'
Imminent future	*za-sajo*
	'(They) will eat any minute now.'
Speculative (epistemic modal) imperfective	*za-sare*
	eat.IPF-SPEC
	'They probably eat.'
Speculative (epistemic modal) perfective	*zu -sare*
	eat.PFV-SPEC
	'They probably ate.'

We see that, for those lexical verbs which have them, the aspectual form of the verb stem contributes to the TAME interpretation of the finite VP. For the plain egophoric construction, the two factual constructions and the speculative construction, the verb stem is the only constituent that expresses tense-aspect. Otherwise, the form of the verb stem must be concordant with the temporal-aspectual value of the assertional

marker. An example of this kind of concordance is given in the examples below, which are excerpts from the same utterance.

(244) *ŋįɲiɣa soŋ ti ɣnæm mbæʔkə mekə.*

ŋįɲiɣa	*soŋ*	*=ti*	*ɣnæm*	***mbap***	***-kə.me***	***-kə***
2DU	went	=when	sky	fall.IPF	-PROG.NEG	-DE.IPF

'It wasn't raining when the two of us went there.'   (Gcig.sgril)

(245) *təɣə timə ziɣ jɪn ti ʁnæm væv bzəχtʰa.*

təɣə	*timə*	*=ziɣ*	*jɪn=ti*	*ɣnæm*	***wap-bzəχ-tʰa***
then	like.that=INDEF		EQ=when	sky	**fall.PFV-COMP.PFV-DE.PST**

'Then, around that time it started raining.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Both sentences consist of a subordinate first clause and a finite main clause. Both main clauses contain the VP 'to rain', which is expressed by a nominal 'sky' and a verb stem 'to fall'. In (244), the verb stem is imperfective, corresponding to the imperfective senses of the progressive and direct evidence markers that follow it. In (245), the verb stem is perfective, corresponding to the perfect form of the COMPLETIVE aspect auxiliary and the past tense form of the direct evidence marker that follow it.

The aspectual form of the verb stem is not always a matter of concordance, however. Sometimes the verb stem provides additional information that is not expressed elsewhere in the clause. Such is the case with perfective and imperfective factual constructions, illustrated in the following examples.

(246) *soŋ-nire*

go.PFV-FACT.ALLO

'(They) went.'   (Gcig.sgril)

(247) *ɲo-nire*

go.IPF-FACT.ALLO

'(They) go (every year).'   (Gcig.sgril)

Even so, given the fact that many verbs in the language do not have separate

stems for perfective and imperfective aspect, together with the fact that even among those

verbs that do, not all dialects retain all stem forms for every verb, it is apparent that their

functional load in terms of assertional functions is largely reduced compared with earlier

stages of Tibetan.

The terms 'aspect' and 'tense' occur in the labels of several categories presented

in Table 16, above. I have also referred to two possible verb stem alternations as

perfective and imperfective 'aspect', but clearly there is a difference between the aspect

of verb stems and the aspect of finitizing assertion-marking constructions. The former is a

binary opposition sometimes characterized as 'viewpoint aspect' in which an action can

be viewed either as a single whole with an undifferentiated internal structure, or as

having an internal structure consisting of multiple 'phases' (Comrie 1976: 16-17).

Perfectivity in this sense is a property of predicates, not propositions or sentences,

because we see the perfective/imperfective contrast maintained in non-finite as well as

finite clause types.

In contrast, the 'aspect' of PROGRESSIVE ASPECT and PERFECT ASPECT refers to a system of more nuanced semantic distinctions, also grammaticalized, that still have to do with the temporal structure of the predicate independent of its external temporal situation. In terms of 'tense', a 'past tense' sense is clearly expressed by several assertion-marking constructions, all of which express functions related to other domains, like evidentiality. There is also a concept that I have labeled FUTURE tense. I do so on the basis of speakers' own definitions and senses of the forms so-labeled: the default interpretation of utterances such as (248) and (249), reproduced below, is of an action that will occur in the future.

(248)   *za-ɟəjɪn*

      eat.IPF-FUT.EGO

      'I will eat.'   (Gcig.sgril)

(249)   *za-ɟire*

      eat.IPF-FUT.ALLO

      'They will eat.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Even so, both future constructions have extended uses expressing functions more closely associated with epistemic modality or *irrealis* mood than a strict future tense. The future egophoric construction can be used as a deontic modal, conveying a sense of desirability for the event to occur without the implication that it will, in fact, happen. The future allophoric construction has even stronger connotations of epistemic modality, expressing that the assertion is based on epistemic logical inference. As it so happens,

this is one of the functions Oisel (2017: 110) describes for the cognate construction in Standard Tibetan. The temporal and epistemic functions of the future construction are discussed in Sec.8.8.

There is also no present tense, as such, as all clauses that are not morphologically 'past' or 'future' can have either a present-tense or past-tense interpretation. Where context does not constrain the interpretation, the uses of temporal adverbs does.

From Table 16, we also see that, aside from epistemic modality and the purposive construction, it is possible to divide the assertion-marking constructions into egophoric and non-egophoric categories. There is a construction that is just egophoric in function, but there is no simple non-egophoric construction for verbal predicates, but there is for non-verbal predicates with copular verbs. The differences and similarities between copular clauses and verbal clauses will be discussed in Chapter 7.

With a few exceptions, the constructions that comprise the assertion-marking paradigm presented in Tables 16 and 17, above, all developed from copular clauses consisting of nominalized verbs. The exceptions are the two past tense evidential categories, -*zɨç* and -*tʰa*, which developed from serial verb constructions, and the egophoric construction, which is a retention from a stage of the language that precedes the present-day post-verbal paradigm and which likely developed egophoric connotations more recently. The historical origins of individual constructions will be discussed in the individual sections covering them.

If there is any unitary sense to the post-verbal morphological system, it is the overt marking of the phenomenological nature of assertion: the subjective experience of the assertor in relation to the knowledge they are communicating is part of the

information that is required for an utterance to be meaningful as a discrete unit of information and also to have relevance to a greater body of discourse: the domain of the assertional paradigm is therefore not the sentence, but rather a unit of asserted information.

Since subjective experiences of knowing are rooted in time and depend upon physical sensory input as well as mental processes, the assertion-marking system distinguishes senses that otherwise seem to belong to the different semantic domains of tense-aspect, evidentiality, egophoricity, and epistemic modality. Moreover, we see these different domains blending together in the sense of an individual assertion-marking construction. The 'combinatorial senses' of such constructions does not make them portmanteaus, in the sense of combining two otherwise structurally distinct categories, but it does make them plurifunctional in that they express functions that are cross-linguistically associated with separate construction.

The post-verbal morphemes introduced in this section represent the range of forms that we observe for finite verbal clauses that encode assertions. Finitization is not an explicit function of these forms, but they (along with imperative verb stems) do implicitly signal the completion of a sentence. Presumably, the reason for the correlation between assertional marking and finite sentences is that an assertion can entail more than one event, which can be connected to one another in complex ways. Because information about the nature of the assertion is marked just once in such cases, the predicate that is so marked is now a finite NP and all other predicates in the sentence are non-finite. In the next section, I present an overview of the forms and functions of non-finite VPs.

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6.4 Non-Finite VPs

Given the association between finite morphology and assertion-marking, it is not surprising that non-finite clauses are common in Amdo Tibetan, and serve a variety of narrational and contextual purposes, as well as functioning to create complex propositions and complex predicates. Non-finite clauses are constituents of serial verbs, clause chains, and embedded clauses. As we saw in the description of relative clauses in Sec. 0, non-finite VPs also take on the morphology of nouns. In the present section, I will briefly discuss the following functional categories of non-finite VPs. In Sec. 6.4.1, I discuss nominalized complement clauses. In Sec. 6.4.2, I discuss adverbial clauses. In Sec. 6.4.3, I depart from the functional approach to compare two important structural categories: converb constructions and serial verb constructions.

6.4.1 Complement clauses

Complement clauses, defined as clauses which serve as arguments of a predicate, are expressed by a nominalized VP structure, similar to that described for relative clauses. Examples of such clauses are given below. All of the sentences are excerpted from spontaneous conversations.

(250) *əm   ta   mo   ŋətɕʰœ jəɣe   ɸtsæv-no   ɕiɣə   βzəŋ-a*

umm   then   3S.F.LOG[115]   1PL   letter   teach-NMZ   very   be.good-EGO

'Um, well, she was a very good teacher to us.'

(Literally, She was very good teaching us.')   (Gcig.sgri)

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[115] As described in Haller (2004) and Ebihara (2014), some dialects of Amdo Tibetan have a distinct set of logophoric pronouns. Cognates of these forms occur as general personal pronouns in Yǎqūtān.

(251) *oncəŋ*   *məŋo* *sa.mtʰa-ni*   *joŋ-nə-ɣə*   *ta*

furthermore   many place.distance-ABL   come-NMZ-GEN   then

saʁne   *mɨ-ʈʰoʔ-pa*   *timə*

local.place   NEG.IPF-accustom-NMZ   like

tə   *tɕəŋa* *mekə*

DEF   at.all   EXIST.NEG.DE

'Furthermore, she did not have any issue adjusting to this place, like many who come from such far away places.'   (Gcig.sgril)

(252) *ŋa-nə*   *tɕʰɨ* *jɪn-nə*   *mɨ-ɕi-Ø*

1S-TOP   what EQ-NMZ   NEG.IPF-know-EGO

'*I* didn't know what the situation was.'   (Gcig.sgril)

(253) *ta*   *ʁjærʂtsa*   *ɕɨɣ* *btsa=ko-nə*   *ze-kə*   *ta*

then   caterpillar.fungus   very search=DEON-NMZ   say-DE.IPF   then

'Then, (if) (you) say that (you) really want to look for caterpillar fungus.'
(Gcig.sgril)

Complement clauses appear to take all of the same inflectional morphology as nouns. In example (254), below, a negative activity VP with no overt arguments occurs as the agent of a complex transitive clause. In addition to ergative case-marking, it is also marked as plural. Because this example also contains other non-finite constructions, of which more will be said later, the relevant complement clause is bracketed.

(254) **[mi-tɕʰəʔ-nə-tɕʰa-ki]**   *ta*   *vinər*   *ji*   *ta*

       [NEG.IPF-find-NMZ-PL-ERG] then   kneel   do   then

       ɕikə   *sa*   *ɖəʔ-ti*   *vinər*   *ji*

       very   ground   crawl-NF   kneel   do

       btsa   *je*   *nco-nə-ra*   *joʔnəre*

       search   do   go.IPF-NMZ-ASS   EXIST.FACT

       'The ones who cannot find will crawl on their knees. There are ones crawling on

       the ground and searching on their knees.'   (Gcig.sgril)

In addition to encoding arguments, complement clauses frequently occur as predicative nominals in equational clauses, as in the following sentence from Yăqūtān.

(255)   *sama ɕum-bo re*

       food   be.delicious-NMZ   EQ.ALLO

       'The food is delicious.[116]'

To return to the multi-clause construction in example (254), the final clause is an existential copula that takes the preceding clause 'going around searching' as its complement, with the interpretation of 'there are those who go around searching on their knees'. It is possible that the two instances of the verb 'do' consist of a converb -e that has been phonologically assimilated into the similar vowel of 'do', since this verb is often pronounced as *je*, as in the third 'do', not *ji*. However, I can't be sure. They may also be

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[116] This is apparently the preferred way to express this proposition in Yăqūtān. However, since speakers are also familiar with the stative verb version, as shown in example (232), I include this as a nominalization here, instead of a lexicalized form, as is the case with the Standard Tibetan example (231).

instances of the un-marked assertive construction (see Sec. 4.3.3), in which case they are finite VPs.

If the finiteness of the two 'do' clauses is uncertain, that is not the case for the verb stem 'go', which is nominalized with the marker *-nə*, which also happens to be an element in the varbal factual constructions. Nonetheless, in (254) *-nə* is followed by the associative marker -ra and the whole clause serves as the subject of an existence clause.

The difference between the *-nə* marked non-finite VP in (254) is clear from the morphosyntactic context in which it occurs, but it demonstrates the kind of nominalized complement clause source construction that several of the assertional markers grammaticalized from.

6.4.2 Adverbial Clauses

Adverbial clauses are distinguished from complement clauses partly on the basis of morphology. Notably, conditional clauses are nominalized via a dedicated conditional marker, -na. Since this morpheme does not occur in any other context, I analyze it as a conditional marker, not a nominalizer. Example (256), below, contains two conditional clauses.

(256) *cʰu   sɨ   ɸɛʰœʔ-nœ   cʰo   raŋ-kə   sɨ ɸɛʰœʔ-nœ*

2S.ERG who   talk-COND   2s   self-ERG   who   talk-COND

cʰərkə   ʂtu

alone   decide.IMP

'Whoever you want to tell (us) about, you yourself decide which one you want to

talk about.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Another common non-finite marker is *-ti*, meaning 'when', or 'while'. This is illustrated with the following example. Note that all arguments of the transitive verb of the non-finite clause are present.

(257) *cʰu*   *ɣjɛrʂtsa*   *btsa-ti*   *re-ɣo*

      2S.ERG   caterpillar.fungus   search-when   EQ.ALLO-SFP.EMP

'(This) is how (you) are when (you) look for caterpillar fungus, haha!' (Said while miming.)   (Gcig.sgril)

Both complement clauses and adverbial clauses are clearly non-finite and syntactically subordinate. In the case of complement clauses, nominalized clauses take the full range of inflectional morphology for referential nouns. Moreover, semantically, adverbial and complement clauses occur in propositional roles associated with nouns, such as expressing referents and functioning as expressing the time or conditions an event occurred.

There are, however, other non-finite verbs for which there is less evidence of syntactic non-finiteness and even less of semantic non-finiteness: converb constructions and serial verbs constructions are considered in the next section.

6.4.3   Converb constructions and serial verb constructions

Amdo Tibetan has both converb constructions and serial verb constructions. The two constructions are most readily differentiated by the presence of a converb marker, of which there are more than one, on the non-finite verb stem(s) of a clause chain. No such

morphology separates the verb stems in SVCs. Beyond morphosyntactic differences, converbs are used to express either multiple events which are closely connected, via the semantics of causation or some other relationship. Meanwhile, SVCs express single events that are semantically complex. These differences in meaning are demonstrated with the following example, which contains three converbs and one serial verb.

(258) *ŋəɲə-ɣe*   *mtsʰo.kʰæ-ni*   *rdo* *ɣɲi-ɣə*   *var*   *ndɨɣ-e*

       1DU-ERG   lake.mouth-ABL   rock two-GEN   between.LOC sit-CNV

       xamoχ   *zu-je*   *ʂkomtɕʰə*   *n̥tʰoŋ-e*

       meat.bun   eat.PFV-CNV   boiled.water drink-CNV

       ndɨɣ   *te-ɣa-Ø-ja*

       sit   stay-PROG- EGO-SFP

'The two of us sat awhile, sitting between two rocks at the mouth of the lake and ate meat-filled buns and drank boiled water.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Aikhenveld (2006: 4) defines verb serialization as a syntactic process in which a single predicate is expressed by a sequence of verb stems. The resulting predicate may express a series of highly integrated "sub-events", or it may express multiple aspects of the same event. In the last clause in (258), the two verb stem 'sit' and 'stay' express different aspects of the same event: the subjects stayed for a while and, while doing so, were seated, which is to say that they sat for awhile.

Haspelmath (2016: 292) proposes that serial verbs should be further defined as monoclausal constructions in which no argument or "linking" elements occur between

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them. In (258)either criteria is met by the three verbs 'sit' (the first one), 'eat' and 'drink'. Each of these verbs contains its own argument structure, except for the first 'sit', which does not have an overt subject, because its subject is co-referential with the ergative-marked agent of 'eat' and/or 'drink'. Moreover, each verb stem is marked with a suffix *-e* (or *-je* on open, un-rounded syllables). This is a dedicated converb marker—the most frequently occuring one, I believe—and it functions, in effect, to link separate events together.

Cognitively, the converb-marked predicates are discrete events. Eating meat buns and drinking boiled water involve different objects, as well as different modes of consumption, and so are separate events in that respect. They also can't really occur simultaneously, unlike 'sit' and 'stay'. On the other hand, eating and sitting can occur simultaneously, but in terms of the nature of the event or situation, they are quite different.

Bisang (1995) defines converbs as verb forms that cannot occur independently in a sentence and which have a certain degree of syntactic autonomoy relative to other VPs.

In terms of lexical assymetries, as (254) shows, converbs have no lexical restrictions as for the type of verb that can be so marked. Serial verbs show a slight assymetry. Generally speaking, the most common serial verbs are those which encode motion events in which the V_1 encodes manner of motion and the V_2 encodes direction. A common example is the following serial verb from Rdo.spis.

(259) *ɕa   pʰɨr   wɨ-tʰa*

       bird   fly   depart-DE.PST

       'The bird flew away.'   (Rdo.spis)

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This assymetry in SVCs likely plays a role in the development of auxiliary verbs (next section) and also certain assertional markers, most notably the two past tense evidential markers *-tʰa* and *-zɨç*.

6.5   Auxiliary Verbs

The assertion-marking constructions introduced in Sec. 6.3, above, only occur on finite verbs. Finitization is not an explicit function of these forms, but they (along with imperative verb stems) do implicitly signal the completion of a sentence. Presumably, the reason for the correlation between assertional marking and sentences is that sentences encode events[117] which can be situated in time in complex ways according to their own internal temporal structures, and which it is possible for assertors to have perspectives on, to know about and participate in.

In addition to markers of assertion, there is also a class of post-verbal morphemes that I refer to here as the auxiliary verb paradigm. Unlike assertional-marking, can occur in non-finite VPs.Some of these auxiliary constructions express functions that interact with the inherent aspect of the verb stem. Many of them alter the grammatical aspect of the VP.

My treatment of these constructions as a grammatical paradigm is admittedly ad hoc. Some constructions even co-occur. However, I treat them unitarily because, like the perfectivity-marking variation in stem forms described in Sec.6.2.1, these constructions show up in both finite and non-finite contexts. They are also more grammaticalized, in

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[117] Following DeLancey (1991:2) I assume that there is a cognitive unit, EVENT, that corresponds to the linguistic unit, CLAUSE.

terms of expressing non-compositional semantics, compared with SVC. They therefore

seem more aligned, both in their distributions and in the general nature of their functions,

with the assertional paradigm. Having noted these caveats, a selection of these

constructions is presented in Table 18, once more in a frame with the verb 'eat'.

Table 18. Auxiliary verb constructions

DEONTIC modal 'I should eat.'	*za=**rgo***
TERMINATIVE aspect 'I finished eating.'	*zu=**tsʰar***
COMPLETIVE aspect 'I ate it up'	*zu-**bzaχ***
CONTROLLED (TRANSITIVE) PERFECTIVE) aspect 'The food got eaten'[118]	*zu-**ptaŋ**(-tʰa)*
TRANSLOCATIVE (INTRANSITIVE) PAST 'I ate it.'[119]	*zu-**soŋ**-zɨc*
CONTINUATIVE aspect 'I had been eating'	*za-**ndiɣ**=jokə*

One thing that is apparent from Table 18 is that not all verbal auxiliaries belong to

the same morphological class. I analyze the DEONTIC modal and TERMINATIVE aspect

markers as clitics and the COMPLETIVE aspect, TRANSITIVE PERFECTIVE aspect,

TRANSLOCATIVE PAST and CONTINUATIVE aspect markers as suffixes. All of these

auxiliaries follow either the lexical verb stem, or else other auxiliaries. However, the

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[118] In Gcig.sgril, this auxiliary is restricted to transitive verbs expressing actions with effected patients. It is incompatible with intransitive verbs, such as 'depart'. In Rdo.spis, the same auxiliary can occur on transitive and intransitive verbs, as long as the event is a telic action. The perfective sense of *-ptaŋ* is consistent across all dialects.

[119] As with *-ptaŋ*, there are nuanced differences in the function and distribution of *-soŋ* in different dialects. Gcig.sgril speakers report being able to use it with any telic action verb. In Rdo.spis, *-soŋ* is primarily restricted to intransitive motion events. Thus, the example with 'eat' given in Table 18 is not something Rdo.spis speakers would day. However, in Rdo.spis *-soŋ* does co-occur with the terminative auxiliary *=tsʰar* in transitive VPs. The past sense appears to be consistent to both dialects.

post-clitics can occur without a lexical verb when the semantic content of the verb is understood. The auxiliary suffixes require a lexical verb (or auxiliary post-clitic). The distributional patterns of these respective morphological classes of verbal auxiliaries is illustrated with the following examples. Sentences (260) and (261) demonstrate the ability of the terminative post-clitic to occur with and without a lexical verb, with no change of meaning.

(260) *tətɕʰægi ɲɟo rgo maze, roŋgə təni tʰondəɣ jokɨ̠.*

tə-tɕʰa-gi	*ɲɟo=rgo*	*ma-zer*
DEF-PL-ERG	go.IPF=DEON	NEG.PFV-say

roŋkə	təni	tʰon-**ndɨɣ** =jokə
still	then	arrive-**CONT**=PERF.DE

'Even though they didn't say they were going to go (there), (they) still **went**.' (Gcig.sgril)

(261) […] *roŋgə* *təni* *ʔndɨɣ=jokə*

	still	then	CONT=PERF.DE

Intended: '(They) still went.' Actual meaning: '(They) still sat/stayed (there).'

When the element *ndɨɣ* occurs without a lexical verb, it no longer expresses continuative aspect. Instead, it is interpreted as the lexical verb *ndɨɣ*[120], 'sit' (sometimes

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[120] This lexical verb dates back to Old Tibetan and has cognates all over Tibetic. In Written Tibetan it is spelled *'dug* (འདུག). In Standard Tibetan and some varieties spoken in Khams, the cognate form is an existential copula expressing either evidential distinctions, (Standard Tibetan), or, as in some varieties, it expresses animacy (e.g., Nyag.chu.kha—Yǎjiāng County, Sìchuān).

used to mean 'stay'). In fact, all the auxiliary suffixes are transparently derived from

lexical verbs and so lose whatever sense they have as auxiliaries when they occur without

a lexical verb.

The DEONTIC marker *=rgo* also occurs as a lexical verb, with the sense of 'want'

or 'need', as in (262), below. It takes a dative subject.

(262) *ŋa¹²¹*   *mə-ʔko-Ø*

       1S.DAT   NEG.IPF-need-EGO

       'I don't want it.'   (Rdo.spis)

The difference between lexical *rgo* and deontic modal *rgo* is that the latter seems

to always occur with non-egophoric marking.

Even though they cannot occur alone, auxiliary post-clitics retain the

phonological and prosodic properties of their lexical sources, including attracting stress

and being preceded by a pause after the verb stem. In my experience, speaker-transcribers

almost invariably transcribe these auxiliaries as separate words.

If egophoricity constructions predominantly derive from nominalizations, the

verbal auxiliaries all derive from serial verb constructions (SVC) in which the series-final

verb became a grammatical marker of Aktionsart or some other semantically abstract

sense.

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[121] The Rdo.spis first-person singular pronoun is typically pronounced *na*. However, most younger speakers also produce the form *ŋa* because of frequent contact with more socially prominent dialects through school, media and travel. My Rdo.spis dataset includes both pronunciations.

Verbal auxiliary constructions are differentiated from SVCs because—as we saw in example (261), above—when the auxiliary occurs as a semantic verb, it has a different meaning. Verbal auciliary constructions are semantically non-compositional, even if they are morphosyntactically compositional. They therefore represent a stage of grammaticalization between lexical verb and assertional marker. This semi-grammaticalized status is illustrated most clearly with the COMPLETIVE aspect construction, which consists of the suffix *-bʐaχ*, which is etymologically related to the lexical verb 'put', and retains all of the latter's stem variations, but not its semantics.

CHAPTER VII

COPULAR CLAUSES

Amdo Tibetan clauses differentiate verbal and non-verbal predicates. Non-verbal predicates are expressed by copular verbs, which possess morphosyntactic and functional properties that distinguish them from other verbs. Copulas take nominal complements. Like other Tibetan varieties, Amdo Tibetan has two sets of copulas—an equative set and an existential set. The difference between these two sets is illustrated for sentences with identical assertional senses, below. The examples are both of the Rdo.spis dialect, spoken in eastern A.mdo, in Xúnhuà County, Qīnghǎi.

Equative copula

(263) *na wo jɪn.*

na	*wo*	*jɪn*
1s	Tibetan	EQ.EGO

'I am Tibetan.' (Rdo.spis)

Existential copula

(264)

tʃʰɪ-tsʰu	*sʰatɕʰa-ni*	*ʰtsu*	*ɛ-jo*
2-PL.GEN	place-LOC	antelope	Q-EXIST.EGO

'Do you have *gtsos* (Tibetan antelope) in you guys' place (which is called *Gtsos*)?' (Rdo.spis)

Each copula set contains multiple forms which express different assertion-level functions, as will be described in detail in Sec.0, below. The existential set is used in clauses expressing predicates of possession, location and existence. The equative set expresses predicates of proper inclusion and equation. To avoid confusion, I use the terms 'existence', and 'equation' to refer to these specific predicate functions, and 'existential' and 'equative' to refer to the copula sets and their respective clause types.

The remainder of this chapter is organized as follows. In Sec. 7.1, I present an overview of the morphosyntactic properties of copular clauses. This includes an explanation of how the basic construction for existential clauses differs from that of the basic construction for equative clauses. In Sec.7.2, I then present a morphological overview of each copula set with a brief discussion on dialectal diversity. In Sec.7.3, I examine the predicative functions of copular clauses. In Sec. also includes a discussion of the limited assertional functions expressed in non-verbal predicates as compared to verbal predicates. I will conclude the chapter by presenting an overview of theories as to how the modern Tibetic copular verb system came to be.

7.1   Copular Clauses

Copular clauses are helpful in disentangling the effects of tense-aspect from egophoricity. One reason is because, with a couple of exceptions, tense-aspect is not grammatically expressed in copulas. Copulas do, however, express the full range of epistemic and egophoric contrasts. In some dialects, copular clauses also express evidential contrasts, albeit with slightly different senses than those expressed by the evidential categories described for verbal clauses.

A second reason the copular system is helpful for understanding the greater assertion-marking grammatical system is that certain copular forms show up as elements in the assertion-marking constructions of verbal clauses. We can assume, then, that at least some of the contrasts found in the modern-day assertion-marking system first emerged in copular clauses, before spreading to other clause types.

Copular clauses are those which consist of a VP headed by a copular verb. Copular verbs, in turn, comprise a morphologically distinct sub-class of lexical verbs. Like verbal clauses, copular clauses can be finite or non-finite. They are formed following the same Basic Clause Construction as verbal clauses. Nonetheless, there are important structural and functional differences between copular clauses and verbal clauses. As will be shown, these differences have consequences for the grammaticalization of main clause verbal morphosyntax from nominalizations.

There is an existential copula set and an equative copula set. Each set is associated with a different basic construction (elaborating from the Basic Clause Construction described in Sec. 5.3). Templates of the two basic copula constructions are presented below. For comparison's sake, the BCC is reproduced below.

Equative Copular Clause

[([NP]) [([NP])COP]$_{\text{VP}}$]$_{\text{CLAUSE}}$

Existential Copular Clause

[([NP]) ([NP]) [COP]$_{\text{VP}}$]$_{\text{CLAUSE}}$

Basic Copular Clause

([NP]) ([NP]) [VP]

We can see that the Equative Copular Clause (EQCC) is quite different from the Existential Copular Clause (EXCC) and the BCC, the two of which are identical except that the VP constituent of EXCC is specified as a copular verb. There is also the matter of case-marking, which is not reflected in the template for EXCC, but EXCC restricts case-marking on NPs to dative case or locative case, with genitive case occurring in a few rare examples of non-finite existential clauses in my spontaneous speech dataset. Case marking varies according to the different types of predicates existential copulas can express, however, so I do not include it as part of the information contained in the basic construction EXCC. Variable argument order and argument deletion appear to be similar for EXCC as for BCC.

EQCC differs from EXCC in two ways. The first is the status of the second position NP as an internal constituent of the VP. This means that EQCC specifies a complex VP, that is both syntactically and semantically compositional. The predicative NP can be deleted anaphorically. Another way that EQCC differs from BCC and EXCC is that EQCC specifies just one argument NP, unlike BCC and EXCC. As with all clauses, EQCC retains BCC's property of all VP-external constituents being optionally deleted. The formal variability of equative clauses is illustrated below with examples from Chu.ma Village in Reb.gong.

(265)   *ʔkormo=ndə*   *[[sú]*   *[re]*

       money=DEF   [[who.GEN]_{NP} [EQ.ALLO]_{COP}]_{VP}

       'Whose money is this?' (Speaker assumes it isn't theirs.)   (Chu.ma Reb.gong)

(266)   *cʰu*   *[[ə́-re]]?*

       2S.GEN [[Q-EQ.ALLO]_{COP}]_{VP}

       'Is (it) yours?'   (Chu.ma Reb.gong)

(267)   *[[ma-re]]*

       [NEG.PST-EQ.ALLO]_{COP}]_{VP}

       '(It) is not.'   (Chu.ma Reb.gong)

Examples (265)-(267) were elicited. They comprise part of an imaginary dialog in which the speaker of the sentences in (265) and (267) finds money in their coat pocket and wonders where it came from, so they ask a second person, who responds in (267) that the money isn't theirs.

In (265), both the external NP and the predicative NP are present. In (266), the external NP is omitted (because the referent is presupposed and predictable as a participant in this sentence), but the predicative NP, 'yours', is still present. In example (267), both the external NP and the predicative NP are omitted.

The fact that copulas occur alone as fully formed sentences, as in (267), suggests that they are more verb-like than auxiliary-like. Additionally, as will be shown, copulas (not the predicate NP) also inflect for grammatical categories that are also expressed via morphosyntactic variation in other VP types. However, the morphological categories that are available in copula-headed VPs are restricted compared to other verbs.

Both the equative copula clause construction and the existential copula clause construction specify two NPs. However, in the EXCC, both NPs are external to the VP, and so may be considered as arguments of the VP. The question of whether equative copula VPs in Amdo Tibetan consist of an internal nominal constituent is best settled in terms of word order. As we saw with the BCC, the VP is the final constituent of any clause. The order of clausal constituents outside of the VP is flexible, motivated by pragmatic and discourse functions. We would expect the same to be true of VP-external constituents of EQCC, but a VP-internal NP should not occur before any VP-external NPs. In other words, orders like (268), below, should not occur if the VP of EQCC in fact contains an NP. Indeed, this is so. Speakers uniformly reject (268).

(268)   *sú ʔkormo=ndə re?

         Intended: 'Whose money is this?'

In contrast, we do observe some degree of flexibility to the order of multiple NPs in existential clauses. However, as it turns out, there is an association between NP order and predicative function—that does not exclude pragmatic functions, in certain contexts—in existential clauses that is not found in verbal clauses.

In this section, I have presented an overview of the basic constructions for equative copular clauses and existential copular clauses. In the next section, I introduce the assertional paradigms of the two copula sets.

7.2 Copular verbs

By copula sets, I mean that existential clauses and equative clauses are expressed by more than one verb form. Copula forms that occur in existential clauses don't occur in equative clauses, and vis-a-versa. Thus, there are separate sets, or paradigms, of existential and equative copulas. This makes perfect sense knowing as we do that there are in fact two different copular clause constructions.

Within each paradigm, forms vary according to egophoric-existential-epistemic functions. There are also negative and affirmative forms for each egophoric-existential-epistemic function. The following tables illustrate affirmative and negative forms for the equative set of copulas and the existential set. The pronunciation follows that of the Gcig.sgril dialect.

Table 19. Equative Copula Set (Affirmative)

Gloss	Written Tibetan	Wylie	Gcig.sgril
Equative egophoric	ཡིན	yin	*jɪn*
Equative allophoric	རེད	red	*ʐɛ*
Equative speculative	ཡིན་ས་རེད / ཡིན་ཁ་རེད	yin.sa.red / yin.kha.red	*jɪnsare / jɪnkʰare*
Equative future	ཡིན་རྒྱུ་རེད	yin.rgyu.red	*jɪnɟire*
Equative factual	ཡིན་ནི་རེད	yin.ni.red	*jɪnəre*
Equative inferential	ཡིན་ཟིག	yin.zig	*jɪnziç*
Equative (perfective) direct evidence	ཡིན་ཐ	jin.tha	*jɪntʰa*

Table 20. Equative Copula Set (Negative)

Gloss	Written Tibetan	Wylie	Gcig.sgril
Negative equative egophoric	མིན	min	*mɪn*
Negative equative allophoric	མ་རེད	ma.red	*ma-ʐɛ*
Negative equative speculative	ཡིན་ས་མ་རེད / མིན་ཁ་རེད	yin.sa.ma.red / min.kha.red	*jɪnsamaʌe*
Negative equative future	ཡིན་རྒྱུ་མ་རེད	yin.rgyu.ma.red	*jɪɲɟɨmaʌe*
Negative equative factual	ཡིན་ནི་མ་རེད	yin.ni.ma.red	*jɪnəmaʌe*
Negative equative inferential	མིན་ཟྀག	min.zig	*mɪnzɨç*
Negative equative (perfective) direct evidence	མིན་ཐ	min.tha	*mɪntʰa*

Table 21. Existential copula set (Affirmative)

Gloss	Written Tibetan	Wylie	Gcig.sgril
Existential egophoric	ཡོད	yod	*jot*
Existential direct evidence	ཡོད་གི	yod.ki	*jokə*
Existential speculative	ཡོད་ས་རེད	yod.sa.red	*josaʌe*
Existential factual	ཡོད་ནི་རེད	yod.ni.red	*jonəʌe*
Existential future allophoric	ཡོད་རྒྱུ་རེད	yod.rgyu.red	*joɟɨʌe*
Existential future egophoric[122]	ཡོད་རྒྱུ་ཡིན	yod.rgyu.yin	*joɟijɪn*
Existential perfective direct evidence	ཡོད་ཐ	yod.tha	*jotʰa*
Existential (perfective) inferential	ཡོད་ཟྀག	yod.zig	*jozɨç*

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[122] No examples of this form occur in the data I collected, but Haller (2004) documents what appears to be a contraction of this form, *jo-dzi*, in Them.chen (p. 168, Narrative 1, line 34):

(34) … *tə*   *ʈʂʰəçʈʂʰəç*   *tɕʰə*   *jo-dzi?*
        def   certain   what   exist.fut.ego
'Was bist (du dir) dabei (so) sicher?!' ('What are you so sure about?!')

Table 22. Existential copula set (Negative)

Gloss	Written Tibetan	Wylie	Gcig.sgril
Negative existential egophoric	མེད	med	*mɛt*
Negative existential direct evidence	མེད་གི	medd.ki	*mekə*
Negative existential speculative	ཡོད་ས་མ་རེད	yod.sa.ma.red	*josamaɹe*
Negative existential factual	ཡོད་ནི་མ་རེད	yod.ni.ma.red	*jonəmaɹe*
Negative existential future egophoirc	ཡོད་རྒྱུ་མེན	yod.rgyu.min	*joɟimin*
Negative existential future allophoric	ཡོད་རྒྱུ་མ་རེད	yod.rgyu.ma.red	*joɟimaɹe*
Negative existential (perfective) direct evidence	མེད་ཐ	med.tha	*metʰa*
Negative existential (perfective) inferential	མད་ཟེག	med.zig	*meziç*

Before continuing, I wish to call attention to certain problems with the tables.

First, not all of the copulas listed in this table are common to all dialects (or at least, the

speech conventions of all the people who have acted as my consultants). For example,

neither speculative form occurs in Rdo.spis. Instead, speakers use the future forms to

express speculative function, as well as future tense[123]. While I still find the question of

dialectal variation quite messy, I can at least say that the forms expressing two categories

of evidentiality are not used everywhere. Furthermore, this inventory excludes an

epistemic modal form of the equative copula, *jən -natʰaŋ*, that Haller (2004: 151)

identifies as a 'Vermutung zum Ausdruck' ('expression of presumption'). I have

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[123] Kalsang Norbu (2013, p.c.). Nor.bu is also a fluent speaker of Standard Amdo and is well aware of the differences between his home dialect of Rdo.spis and how people speak elsewhere in A.mdo.

encountered only a couple of instances this form in my data and have not had the opportunity to ask my consultants about it, so I have nothing to say about it.

We can see from the above tables that the Amdo Tibetan copular system is quite morphologically complex, with highly nuanced semantic contrasts. Copulas range from single syllables to up to four syllables. Etymologically, many of the longer copulas (and even two of the monosyllable copulas) can be broken down into multiple elements.

Following Haller (2004), I have chosen not to analyze such forms into individual components. This is because all the copulas presented in each set occur in paradigmatic opposition to one another. Moreover, as explained in Sec. 3.1.1 for the factual allophoric suffix, the functions expressed by such forms, including multisyllabic copulas, cannot be understood on the basis of the functions exhibited by the etymological sub-parts in other contexts and are thus semantically non-compositional.

Thus, the form *jotʰa* might contain two recognizable elements—*jo*, the existential copula, and the direct evidence suffix *-tʰa*—but the combination of these elements seems to be used not so much to express that the speaker has direct evidence of some entity's existence, but rather to express that the speaker finds the fact of the entity's existence to be surprising. This mirative connotation, whether or not is the primary meaning of *jotʰa*, is absent from most instances in which *-tʰa* occurs, alone.

There are morphosyntactic reasons for analyzing the direct evidence existential copular forms *jokə* and negative *mekə*. In verbal predicates, an auxiliary can go between the direct evidence suffix *-kə* and the verb stem, as in the following example from Rdo.spis. Note that in Rdo.spis, *-kə* does not have an imperfective sense. The morphosyntactic behavior of *-kə* in the VP is, however, the same as for other dialects.

(269) *khɪka mɛnkhaŋ-ɣɪ   çku-wa   wʉ-taŋ-ɣɪ*

　　　3S   hospital-GEN door-LOC   depart-PFV-DE

　　　'He left the hospital (i.e.,was discharged).'　　　　　　　　　　(Rdo.spis)

　　　No element can go between the two syllables in jokə or mekə. Furthermore, as

can be seen in some of the more phonetically-faithful transcriptions scattered throughout

this dissertation, both copular forms can be shortened to one syllable, *jok* and, less

commonly, *mek*. The same is not true of VERB-*kə* constituents.

　　　Nonetheless, it is still important to note that there is, in reality, a degree of

morphological, if not semantic, compositionality to some of the multisyllabic copulas.

This is apparent in the negative and interrogative forms of these copulas, as we see

interrogative and negative morphemes inserted in between syllables within the copula.

This is illustrated in the following examples.

(270) *ɣŋʉl*   *maŋ-wo*   *joɟɪ-ə́-re*

　　　money   many -NMZ   EXIST.FUT-**Q**-ALLO

　　　'Will they have a lot of money?'　　　　　　　　　　(Gcig.sgril)

(271) *ɣŋʉl*   *maŋ-wo*   *joɟɪ-ma-re*

　　　money   many-NMZ   EXIST.FUT-**NEG**-ALLO

　　　'They will not have a lot of money.'　　　　　　　　　　(Gcig.sgril)

It is clear that multisyllable copulas developed from compositionally complex constructions. These words originated from constructions with multiple morphemes that have now become fused into a single morpheme. However, in the modern language they are treated by speakers as atomistic lexical items. But, even if the individual semantics of the isolated syllables in such constructions can be combined to produce a meaning resembling that of the word, if speakers do not customarily treat the syllables as separate morphemes, then a synchronic analysis of these forms as compounds or multimorphemic is uninformative.

Nonetheless, multisyllabic copular verbs like the existential allophoric future *yod.rgyu.red* maintain certain properties of the morphologically complex constructions they once were in certain conditions. Most notably, the position of negative and interrogative elements has not changed, and so we see infix-like distributions for these morphemes in certain copulas. So, in order to parse the interrogative affix in (270) and the negative affix in (271), I've had to also parse the rest of the copula as two components, each of which can be associated with component meanings.

As shown in

Table *20.* Equative Copula Set (Negative), etc., above, in copular clauses the only obligatory constituent of both the VP-level and the clause-level is the copula. Owing to these behaviors, I analyze copulas as a sub-class of lexical verb. For this reason, I will avoid the label "non-verbal predication"—I use "verb" as both a lexical class and a syntactic unit and copulas meet the qualifications for verbs on both counts. But semantically, it is clear that the event structures that are represented by copular clauses differ in key ways from those of other clause types. These semantic differences have implications for the inflectional categories that are expressed in copula-headed VPs, as well as the constituency and syntax of copular clauses. Copular clauses are thus linguistic representations of a general semantically construed predication type that I will simply call copular predication.

7.2.1 Dialectal diversity

The question of dialectal variation in copular clauses and copular verbs is a difficult one to address for a number of reasons. Aspects of the copular verb system are quite ancient, dating back to a stage far preceding Old Tibetan[124]. The phonology of these copula systems has tended to be rather conservative, meaning that shared retentions are often transparently cognate for speakers of different Tibetic varieties. Cognate copula forms typically retain certain broad semantic properties, so if a cognate form exists in,

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[124] According to Beyer (1992: 253), *yin* in is the only equative copula in Old Tibetan. Clues to the age of *yin* and existential *yod,* as their negative counterparts, *min* and *med*, lies in the widespread proliferation of possible cognates, either inherited or ancient borrowings, across geographically and genetically remote edges of the Trans-Himalayan family. The existential/possessive copula in Standard Chinese, for example, is *yǒu/méi yǒu*.

say, both Lhasa Tibetan and Dongwang[125] expresses predicate possession in Lhasa, it will

do so in Dongwang, but beyond the broad semantics of predicate type, the two cognates

may express different TAME functions. This kind of discrepancy is illustrated with the

following examples. The sentence in (272) is excerpted from Bartee's (2011:156)

description of Dongwang. The sentence in (273) is an elicited Standard Tibetan sentence

from my own data collection. Both sentences contain cognate forms of WT *'dug*, with

minor enough variation in the respective phonologies that speakers of either variety

should have little trouble recognizing the cognate form in their sister dialect as the

"same" existential copula.

Beyond the copular verb, the structures of the two sentences are also transparently

cognate. While I'm not sure about Dongwang speakers, the Standard speaker who

produced (272) had no trouble giving me an English translation of the Dongwang

sentence in (273) that was identical to the one Bartee provides.

(272) *ŋa¹³*   *ɕũ⁵⁵=nə*   *ndo*

  1s   home=LOC   EXIST.ANIMATE.CONJ

  'I am at home.'[126]   (Dongwang Khams Tibetan)

(273) *kʰóráŋ*   *nàŋ-la*   *tùu*

  3s   home-LOC   EXIST.DE

  'They are at home.'   (Standard Tibetan)

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[125] Southern Khams, Dongwang County, Bde.chen Prefecture, Yúnnán Province. (c.f., Bartee 2007)

[126]
  ŋa   *ɕũ⁵⁵*   *=nə*   *ndo*
  1S   home   =LOC   EX.AN.CONJ
'I am at home.'

In spite of their similarities, the two sentence in (272) and (273) illustrate that the element 'dug has grammaticalized to express very different TAME functions in the two varieties. Bartee labels the cognate *ndo* as the 'animate-conjunct' existential copula. As noted in Sec. 5.1, 'conjunct' categories tend to correspond to EGOPHORIC categories. The *'dug* copula occurs in (272) because the subject, or FIGURE participant of a locative predicate, is animate, but also because the subject is a first-person participant and this is a declarative clause. In contrast, 'dug occurs in (273) because the subject is NOT a first person participant of a declarative clause; it is specifically non-egophoric, in this case expressing the non-egophoric category of DIRECT EVIDENCE. In other words, a cognate form has grammaticalized into semantically opposing meanings in these two varieties. Standard Tibetan also does not have grammatical animacy, at least not for copular clauses.

As a further complication, Written Tibetan, again with some amount of geographical as well as genre-based variability, also has its own system, within which exist many forms that not infrequently creep into vernacular varieties, even among speakers who are not particularly psychologically aligned with WT. Sometimes these crossover copulas are identifiable adoptions from Written Tibetan but sometimes cognate spoken forms represent shared inheritances. In the case of the former, the function of the form as it appears in vernacular language is identical to how it is used in WT. In the case of the latter, however, there may again be broad similarities that obscure nuanced differences.

When vernacular forms overlap with written forms, it can be especially difficult to determine whether or not we are dealing with the same form. Similar challenges accompany the effort to pin down dialectal variation within spoken languages. Or at least this is so for Amdo Tibetan, which is the second largest Tibetan topolect in terms of both geographic distribution and number of speakers. Amdo Tibetan speakers are often familiar with multiple dialects, or at least Standard Media Amdo, and are highly likely to have heard both vernacularized WT copulas, as well as copula forms from dialects of neighboring or more culturally dominant regions within Amdo.

Perhaps because of their high frequency, both as the semantic main verb of clauses and as grammatical elements elsewhere, copular verbs seem to be something that speakers notice: even if they themselves don't use a particular form, they are aware of its occurrence in other dialects.

There is, however, at least one theoretically significant difference in the distributional properties of one of the TAME categories: the distribution of egophoric copulas can be very different even between neighboring communities within the same socially-defined dialect area. Because this instance of dialectal divergence is concerned with assertional categories, I will elaborate more on it in that section.

In the next section I will describe the predicate semantics of the equative versus existential copula sets and the morphosyntactic properties of different kinds of predicates. Then, I give a description of the assertional contrasts of copular verbs.

7.3 Predicate semantics of copular clauses

The equative copula set and the existential copula set encode different semantic types of predicate. With one notable exception—predicate attribution—copular clauses in Amdo Tibetan express the same range of predicates as do copular clauses in Standard Tibetan.

7.3.1 Equative copulas

Equative[127] copulas are generally used to express the following semantic types of predication identified in Payne (1997): equation[128] and proper inclusion. Both of these predications take single arguments—the subject—and include a nominal component as part of the compositional VP. This structure is shown in the following template.

Equative Copula Construction

([NP])subject   [([NP])COP]predicate]clause

In Amdo Tibetan, it is not entirely clear that there is a systematic distinction between predicate equation and predicate inclusion. Nonetheless, I have observed that speakers display a few structural tendencies, in both elicited and spontaneous speech, that suggest that both an inclination and ability to distinguish the two predicate types in some cases, even if such distinctions are often weak enough that speakers themselves feel that structural variation in equative copular clauses has less to do with expressing nuanced differences in the predication of situation and more to do with things like prosody, formality, or personal habits.

While keeping in mind the above qualifications, the two predicate semantic functions of Amdo Tibetan equative copulas—equation and proper inclusion—can sometimes be distinguished from each by the presence or absence of referentiality-

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[127] I do not mean "equative" in the sense of a construction that expresses comparative equality, like "he is as old as me", but in a broader sense.

[128] To avoid confusion, I use the term EQUATIVE as a label for the set of copular verbs, and EQUATION and EQUATIONAL to label one of the predicative functions that equative copulas express.

expressing elements—most typically determiners—that are present in the predicate NP. This difference is illustrated in the examples (274)-(277), below. Example (276) is excerpted from Min & Di (2005: 228) and is in transliterated WT.

Predicate equation clauses

(274) *ta*   *cçʰo*   *rɛt*

now   2S   EQ.ALLO

'It's you now.'   (Now it's your turn to give an elicitation.)   (Gcig.sgril)

(275) *cçʰu*   *ṣŋɨɣɨ*   *kaŋgɨ*   *rɛt*

2S.GEN   pen   which   EQ.ALLO

'Which is your pen?'   (Gcig.sgril)

Proper inclusion clauses

(276) ང་ནང་ལོགས་གི་སྨྱི་རེད།

nga   nang.logs   -gi   mnyi   red

1S   mainland   -GEN   person   EQ.ALLO

'I'm from inner China.'   ("我是内地人.")   (p. 228)

(277) *ti*   *labkæn*   *ʐe*

DEF   boaster[129]   EQ.NEG

'That guy is a boaster.'   (Gro.tsang)

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[129] The etymology of this expression is possibly the verb lab (WT: ལབ) , 'speak' and the noun/agent nominalizer *mkhan* (WT: མཁན), 'expert; one who does'. To my knowledge, lab does not occur as a verb in oral Amdo Tibetan (though literate people or those who regularly attend religious teachings would probably be familiar with it). The couple who provided me with this term translated it as '大嘴巴'—'big mouth'.

Hailing from Inner China and boastfulness are treated as descriptive qualities of the subject, not as identities. The predicate NPs in proper inclusion clauses are non-specific (though they may be referential).

Predicate equation is the identification of the subject as a specific entity or concept. The predicate NPs are referential and specific. For instance, in example (274), above, the subject is unmentioned, but the specific entity that it equates to is the interlocutor, who is referential and specific. In example (275) there are multiple pens that the subject of (276) could be equated to, but speakers expects there to be one (or more) specific pens. Example (265), reproduced below, is also of an equative predicate—the speaker is asking if the referent is the interlocutor's possession.

(265) *ʔkormo=ndə*   *sú*   *re*

      money=DEF   who.GEN   EQ.ALLO

      'Whose money is this?' (Speaker assumes it isn't theirs.)

Predicate equation is the identification of the subject as a specific entity: the verb-external NP is equated with the verb-internal NP. In contrast, proper inclusion is the assignment of the argument as a member or instance of a category of entities. This category membership is a property of the subject. As such, equation is an act of identification; proper inclusion is an act of description. In example (276), above, the speaker is describing themselves as being a person from Inner China. In example (277(, above, the referent is described as being a 'boaster'.

In truth, the semantic distinction between proper inclusion and equation can be murky, as examples (278)-(279) show, below.

(278) *kʰərgə* *ɹɡɛrgan* *re*

   3S   teacher EQ.ALLO

   'She is a teacher.'   (Gcig.sgril)

(279) *kʰərgə* *ɹɡɛrgan=ziç* *re*

   3S   teacher=INDEF EQ.ALLO

   'She is a teacher.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Both sentences are translated with the same English sentence. Moreover, speakers say they feel the sentences are more or less interchangeable. Nonetheless, they have intuitions about at least one difference in use: (279) sounds like a more natural answer to the question, "what does she do?".

In fact, indefinite marking on predicate NPs seems to occur more frequently when there is an Adjective Phrase, as shown in below. In such cases, the presence of indefinite marking is strongly preferred.

(280) *kʰərgə* *[ɹɡɛrgan* *[jakpo]ᴀᴘ =ziç]ɴᴘ* *re*

   3S   teacher good =INDEF EQ.ALLO

   'She is a good teacher.'   (Gcig.sgril)

7.3.2 Existential clauses

Structurally, existential copular clauses follow the Basic Clause Construction, but not the Basic Equative Copular Clause Construction—there is no VP-internal NP constituent, at least according to test of variable word order. This is shown in the following examples.

(281) *kæna toŋtsi ə́joka?*

    kæ̃ -na toŋtsi   *ə́-jokə-a*

    DEF-DAT   money   Q-EXIST.DE-SFP

    'Does he have money?'   (Yăqūtān)

(282) *jokija.*

    jokə-ja

    EXIST.DE-SFP

    'Yes, (he) does.'   (Yăqūtān)

(283) *ɹgormo=tə*   *ŋa*   *jo*

    money =DEF   1S.DAT   EXIST.EGO

    'The money (you are talking about), I have it.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Existential clauses with the word order illustrated in (283) are relatively rare and clearly pragmatically marked. Nonetheless, they do occur. In contrast, transposing the order of NPs in a clause with an equative copula is not permitted. This feature, as well as the presence of case marking (more on that, below) suggest that existential copulas are the sole VP constituent—all NPs are treated as clause-level constituents.

In spite of the ultimately flexible order of NPs, we can still postulate "basic", or pragmatically un-marked, order for existential copular clauses. However, this basic order is dependent on which semantic type of existential function the clause expresses.

Existential copulas in Amdo Tibetan express existence[130], location and possession, which are three sentence types that Lyons (1968) identified as being expressed by related structures. Predications of existence differ from the other two functions in construing a single argument or entity—the thing that exists. Possession and location both predicate a relationship between two entities. Because of NP ellipsis, however, this means that context is important to identifying whether a given clause expresses existence or one of the other two functions.

As mentioned in Sec. 7.1, case marking is important to the predicative functions of existential clauses, though it is not specified in the basic construction EXCC. In finite clauses, two case markers—locative and dative—occur on arguments. As it so happens, the two markers are mostly homophonous. Following Talmy (1972; 1983: 232), we can identify the case-marked argument— whether it be dative or locative—of an existential clause with the Gestalt notion of GROUND and the unmarked argument with the notion of FIGURE.

The following examples illustrate the "basic" word orders for clauses of existence, location and possession, respectively.

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[130] To avoid confusion, I use 'existential' to refer to a lexical verb class (existential copulas) or a structural class (e.g., existential clause), and I use 'existence' to refer to a predicate function.

Predicate existence

(284) *[mɳɨ   za-m̥kʰan-gə   ҫtak]*_{NP}   *jonərɛt*

      person   eat.IPF-NMZ.AGNT-ERG   tiger   EXIST.FACT

      'There are man-eating tigers.' Or, 'man-eating tigers exist.'   (Gcig.sgril)

(285) *[tɕʰy]*_{NP}   *meʰki*

      water   EXIST.ALLO.NEG

      'There is no water.'   (Yăqūtān)

Location

(286) *[kʰəpər]*_{NP}   *[tɕoktsɛ   taŋ-na]*_{NP}   *jokə*

      phone   table.GEN   top-**LOC**   EXIST.DE

      'The phone is on the table.'   (Chu.ma Reb.gong)

Predicate possession

(287) *[mɳɨ=kan-na]*_{NP}   *[cɨ]*_{NP}   *jokə*

      person=DIST-DAT   knife   EXIST.DE

      'That person over there has a knife.'   (Gcig.sgril)

    As far as existence and location are concerned, the only structural difference is whether or not a location is predicated—a semantic distinction that is structurally irrelevant when the location is not overtly expressed because it is predictable. Likewise, in situations in which the speaker wishes to assert that an entity exists in a particular location, the resulting clause is structurally indistinguishable from one which asserts that an entity is in a particular location.

Predicate possession clauses, like locative clauses, posit a relationship between two entities, coded as NPs that are clause-level (as opposed to VP-level) constituents. Also similar to locative clauses, one NP is case-marked. If we hold that this structural generalization is a reflection of the same prototypical figure-ground relationship for both types of predicate, then the case-marked NP would be GROUND and the un-marked NP FIGURE. While I have glossed the case marker in the locative clause in (286) as LOCATIVE, and that of (287) as DATIVE, in these examples, the actual form of the markers is the same. This is because, as explained in Sec.2.4.2, locative case and dative case are isomorphic.

(288) *atɛʰe cçʰɨmna ɔ́jokɨ̰?*

    atɛʰe   *cçʰɨm-**na***   *ɔ́-jokə*

    sister   home-**LOC**   Q-EXIST.DE

    'Is Sister home?'   (Gcig.sgril)

In spite of the homophony of locative and dative case, we see that there is a different basic word order for the NP constituents of a locative clause versus a possessive clause. In locative clauses, such as(288), the basic order is [FIGURE] [GROUND]. In possessive clauses, it is [GROUND] [FIGURE].

The correspondence between this order and the semantic contrast between predicate possession and location is shown below.

(289) *[cʰu*   *ju-**na**]ₙₚ*   *[mɲɨ*   *tɨ]ₙₚ*   *jo?*

     2S.GEN   home-**DAT**   person   how.many   EXIST.EGO

     'How many people does your family/household have?'   (Gcig.sgril)

(290) *[kʰərgə]ₙₚ*   *[cʰu*   *ju-**na**]ₙₚ*   *mɛkɨ̥*

     3S   2S.GEN   home-**LOC**   EXIST.DE.NEG

     'He isn't at your home.'   (Gcig.sgril)

I have been told by at least two speakers that word order feels more fixed for locative clauses than it does for possessive clauses. Apparently speakers find such productions truly acceptable only if the propositional components can be logically construed either as having a possessor-possession relationship, or as asserting the existence of an entity, in which case the location is an adverb rather than an argument and the predication is construed as happening at a specified location. Examples of locationally-specified predicates of existence are presented below.

(291) *kæni melɣ nəɣnəɣ zɨç joki.*

     [kæ̃-ni]ₗₒ𝒸ₐₜᵢₒₙ   *[melɣ*   *nəɣnəɣ=zɨç]𝖥ᵢ𝗀ᵤᵣₑ*   *joki*

     DIST-LOC   cat   black=INDEF   EXIST.DE

     'There's a black cat over there.' (有只黑猫在那边。)   (Yǎqūtān)

(292) *kʰɔŋwaɣi naŋni nɣ me.*

     kʰɔŋwa-ki   *naŋni*   *nɣ̃*   *meki*

     house-GEN   inside   person   EXIST.ALLO.NEG

     'There's nobody inside the house.'   (Yǎqūtān)

The predicate existence sense of (291) is better conveyed by the Chinese translation than the English. At any rate, the most salient information being communicated in (292) is the existence of a black cat, and the location—'over there'—is presupposed (the speaker presumes the hearer will know which "over there" is meant), or at least is additional background information not central to the communicative point of the utterance.

Arguably, the location in (289)—'(my) family's home'—is more salient than the location in (292), yet the point of the utterance isn't to predicate the location of the argument 'people', but to express the spatially-defined existence (or, rather, non-existence) of the argument.

In fact, as far as daily conversation goes, assertions like (284) reproduced below, are relatively infrequent.

(284) *mŋɨ*　　　*za-ŋkʰan-gə*　　　　*çtak*　　　*jonərɛt*

　　person　　　eat.IPF -NMZ.AGNT-ERG　　　tiger　　　EXIST.FACT

　　'There are man-eating tigers.' Or, 'man-eating tigers exist.'　　　(Gcig.sgril)

(293) *ʂta*　　*jokɨ̰*

　　horse　EXIST.DE

　　'There are horses (up ahead).'　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(Gcig.sgril)

The clause in (284) was elicited. The clause in (293) was uttered as a spontaneous speech act and was a non-sequitor produced by a passenger in a car interrupting a

conversation between the driver and another passenger in order to alert the driver to the presence of horses that might cross the road up ahead.

Both clauses predicate an entity's existence, meaning that they have a single argument representing a concept and the predicating act is the assertion of the existence of that concept. Where that existence takes place is irrelevant. So, the situation construals for (284) and (293) are similar, but there are differences in the respective communicative purposes of these utterances. The purpose of a sentence like (284) is to assert that a category of entity—in this case, tigers that eat people—is real, or exists. What matters is that such things are real, and the specifics of where and when they might be found is irrelevant. In contrast, the purpose of sentences like (293) is to assert the existence of a specific instance of an entity. The communicative intent of the speaker is manifested in the rhetorical choice of how to identify the source of information. In the case of (293), I assume that the utterance was motivated by the speaker's concern that the driver was unaware of the horses and therefore at risk of hitting them. The location of the horses is consequential to the real-world situation the interlocutors found themselves in, but it is either not part of the cognitive structure of the situation in the speaker's head, or, if it is, it is information that speaker takes for granted will be obvious to the addressee and so need not be included in the linguistic representation. Regardless, we see that location is not central to the semantics of existence predicates, even if this fact is not apparent from the structure.

Additional comments on (293) versus (284): In (284) the copula is also marked as FACTUAL, meaning the information represented in the clause is general knowledge, a statement of fact that the speaker does not feel the need to indicate how it is that they

know it. In (293), the copula is marked as DIRECT EVIDENCE, meaning that the speaker is reporting information that they know through direct experience. According to the speaker who produced (284), if he had direct experience of man-eating tigers (which, simply living in a place where such tigers live and being exposed to reports of attacks on humans would be sufficient without having to have directly witnessed—or worse, experience— such an attack), then he would have the option of coding the sentence as DIRECT EVIDENCE, too. But, even if circumstances give him the option, he feels that he would be more likely to use the FACTUAL than the DIRECT EVIDENCE. He would use an evidential if he felt like the assertion was going to be met with skepticism.

7.4   Non-verbal predicate attribution in Amdo Tibetan

Unlike many other modern varieties of spoken Tibetan, Amdo Tibetan speakers typically do not express predicate attribution using copular clauses. Instead, they typically use clauses with stative verbs. Even in cases where predicate attribution is expressed non-verbally, an equative copula is used with a nominalized stative verb as the syntactic object; I believe there is no clause construction in Amdo Tibetan in which an adjective is linked to an argument by a copula without undergoing nominalization.

Amdo Tibetan has a stative verb construction, a conservative retention of how predicate attribution was typically expressed in Old Tibetan and continues to occur in certain genres of Classical Literary Tibetan, such as poetry. Nevertheless, for all other modern varieties of spoken Tibetan (to my knowledge) the use of a copula to express an attributive predicate is more common. Of course, for the Stative Verb varieties, examples of copula clauses can also be found, with pragmatically-marked meanings. The reverse

does not seem to be true, however: speakers of Lhasa Tibetan do not use the Stative Verb Construction to express predicate attribution, which is as we would expect if the stative verb construction is the original system and the copula construction is an innovation.

As we saw in Table 18, above, negation in copular clauses is expressed either by a suppletive form, or by the addition of a prefix, the position of which varies within morphologically complex copulas. Both morphological strategies are found in each copula set.

There are two suppletive negative forms, or simply, they are negative copulas: equative *mɪn* (WT: མིན min), and existential *mɛt* (WT: མེད med). There is one negative prefix that occurs in copular verbs, *ma-* (WT: མ ma). Examples (294)-(295) show the suppletive negation form. Example (296)-(297) shows the use of the negative prefix.

Negative equative copula

(294) *ŋə*   *ɫop̄ma*   ***mɪn***

      1S   student   **EQ.EGO.NEG**

      'I'm not a student.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Negative existential copula

(295) *ŋa ta toŋtsi tʃiɣla me.*

ŋa	*ta*	*toŋtsi*	*tɕiχ-la[131]*	***me***
1S	now	money	one-EMPH	**EXIST.EGO.NEG**

'I don't have any more money.' (Yăqūtān)

Negative prefix in equative copula

(296) *ŋa təræŋ ʂcipu mare.*

ŋa	*təræŋ*	*ʂcipu*	***ma-re***
1S	today	happy	**NEG**-EQ.ALLO

'I'm happy today.' (Yăqūtān)

Negative element *ma* in existential copula

(297) *χweχwela χəχ jonɨmare.*

χweχwe-la	*χəχ*	*jonɨ**ma**re*
Muslim-DAT	pig	EXIST.FACT.NEG

'Muslims don't have pigs.'   (General knowledge) (Yăqūtān)

In copular clauses, the two suppletive forms only occur as lexical verbs—equative *min* (ཨིན) and existential (ཨེད). The latter element can also take inflectional morphology,

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[131] The suffix *-la* is not an instance of the dative case, but rather a connective marker. The sentence in (295) does not have a dative-marked argument. The synchronic form of the connective as it occurs in the Yăqūtān dialect has been shaped by the same historical morphophonological processes that shaped the *-la* forms of the dative and locative markers. In fact, one way to analyze this word, *tʃiɣla*, is as a AP construction that has become lexicalized to mean something like 'not even a little bit'. It occurs in other dialects of Amdo Tibetan and also in Lhasa Tibetan and Standard Tibetan with the same meaning. Interestingly, I believe in most dialects of Amdo Tibetan the expression is pronounced as *tɕiχja*, but the use of the *-la* form of the emphatic connective particle in Yăqūtān resembles the Lhasa Tibetan version of this expression: *tɕíʔla*.

specifically -*kə*, to create the non-egophoric negative existential copula, (མེད་ཀི) med.gi, although I analyze the resulting form as semantically non-analytical because there is evidence of lexicalization and the word is no longer semantically decomposable.

In contrast, the prefix ma- occurs in both existential and equative copula VPs. However, its distribution is lexically restricted: it only occurs before the element (རེད) red, which is confined to the Factual Copula Construction, the Speculative Copula Construction, and of course the allophoric copula.

7.5   Assertion marking in copular clauses

With two exceptions for each set, copular clauses do not mark tense or aspect. There are two ways to explain this. The first explanation is diachronic and the second is semantic, relating to event structure. The diachronic explanation is that the source constructions from which the current sets of copulas developed did not express tense or aspect, even as copular constructions have themselves served as diachronic sources for the grammaticalization of temporal-aspectual contrasts in verbal predicates.

The semantic explanation is that, apart from not inheriting grammaticalized expressions of tense or aspect, copular clauses have also not developed such contrasts because the distinctions corresponding to such contrasts are simply not part of the semantic content of the kinds of propositions speakers generally represent with copular clauses. Copular predicates construe different event structures than verbal predicates. To differentiate the two types, I will refer to copular predicates as representing situations. Situations lack internal structural complexity for which it is possible to highlight one phase or part over others. Therefore, the clauses that represent such situations do not have

grammatical aspect because there are no aspectual contrasts to be made. Similarly, the external temporal profile of situations—i.e., their position in time relative to the time of speech or some other reference point—is also not an inherent semantic component in the construal of situations. However, unlike aspectual distinctions which are simply semantically incompatible with situations, time can be relevant information and necessary to correctly understanding the nature of a given situation, but because this is not always the case, again the expression of tense has not been grammaticalized for copular clauses. In instances where the timing of a situation is important enough to be overly encoded in the utterance, it is expressed paraphrastically, with a temporal adverb outside of the VP.

This is not to say that tense and aspect-related senses are never marked in copular clauses. As the above tables made clear, copular clauses can be marked as future and even as perfective. I argue, however, that in both cases the temporal-aspectual senses are secondary and emergent to the primary contrasts being marked, which are related to epistemic certainty in the case of the future and non-egophoric evidentiality in the second.

In the remainder of this chapter, I describe the individual assertion-marking constructions—their form and function and the conditions of their distribution—found in copular clauses.

7.5.1 Egophoricity in copular clauses

For each copula paradigm, there are two "basic" forms—egophoric and a non-egophoric form. These forms are basic in that they occur most frequently in both my

elicited and natural speech data. With the exception of the direct evidence existential copula *jokə*, these basic forms are also phonologically simpler—namely, being monosyllables—than other forms in their respective paradigms and they occur as elements in other, less basic forms.

They are also "basic" in that they are epistemically neutral, by which I mean that in general use, egophoricity-expressing copulas do not express any sense of the speaker's evaluation or attitude regarding the validity of an asserted proposition. They are also neutral for stance—an analysis that comes with a caveat that the epistemic scope EGOPHORIC copulas *jɪn* and *jo* can be extended to cover non-assertor subjects in certain contexts, to be explained. The reverse is not true: the non-egophoric basic copulas *re* and *jokə* are not extended to cover assertor-subjects.

This epistemic neutrality is likely the reason behind the overwhelming occurrence of the basic copulas in elicited (including translated) speech, such that other forms, which do have epistemic connotations or, especially in the case of the two evidential copulas, are inherently grounded to experiences and concerns outside of the information that is contained in the clause itself. Specifically, these experiences and concerns have to do with source of information, knowledge status, and discourse-pragmatic concerns like face-saving.

Elicited sentences are produced in isolation from many of these things, often deliberately so on the part of language teachers and researchers who value unambiguous data. Basically, if one does not care when or how a person learned that a certain subject is

a teacher, and if they also don't care what the reason is for providing this information[132], then they still have to care whether the subject of the clause is the assertor or not.

Egophoric and allophoric copulas are also evidence-neutral, meaning that there is no implied or implicated information source.

7.5.1.1 Egophoric copulas

Both the equative and existential copula sets have egophoric forms, illustrated below.

(298) *ŋɐ*   *ɣdʑɪɣɖɪl-gə*   *jɪn*

       1s   Gcig.sgril-GEN   EQ.EGO

       'I am from Gcig.sgril.'   (Gcig.sgril)

(299) *ta*   *ŋɐ*   *ju-na*   *jo*

       now   1s   home-LOC   EXIST.EGO

       'Right now I'm at home.' (Said over the phone.)   (Gcig.sgril)

Egophoric copulas expresses assertor invovlement, but not necessarily that the assertor is a volitional participant. This is one way in which the assertional paradigm of non-verbal predicates diverges from that of verbal predicates, for which egophoric marking is highly correlated to volitional assertor involvement (see Sec. 4.3.1). An

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[132] In the author's experience, some of my language teachers *do* care about such things, and sometimes I just can't get the sentences I am trying for, only to encounter the construction I was looking for in the spontaneous speech data I have.

example of such a non-volitional, assertor-involved clause is given in example (300), below

(300) *ŋa*   *nɛtpa*   *jɪn*

      1S   invalid   EQ.EGO

      'I'm a sick person.'   (Gcig.sgril)

A person who utters (300) is probably not willingly sick. It is a stretch to argue that the subject is volitional. Even so, generally speaking, using the allophoric copula *re* in this sentence would inspire puzzled reactions or perhaps laughter. The speaker is not highlighting their own volitionality in this instance, but instead coding the mundane fact that being sick is a condition that they know because it is their condition.

In addition to not being sensitive to volitionality, non-verbal predicates also have a wider egophoric scope than verbal predicates, as mentioned in Sec. 4.3.2. The effect this wider scope has on the distribution of egophoric copulas will be discussed in Sec. 7.5.1.2, below.

As stated, both EGOPHORIC copulas are monosyllabic[133]. Historically, they date back to a stage in the language when there was just one equative copula, *yin*, and one existential copula, *yod*. Given their historical status as the "original" copula system, it is unsurprising that it is the cognates of these two forms that occur as elements in those more lately-innovated assertion-marking constructions which we know grammaticalized

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[133] They are therefore structurally different from the egophoric forms of other verbs, because there is no alternative constructional form the *-Ca* suffix that appears to be the emerging egophoric form for verbs.

from copular clause constructions. This includes appearing as elements in newer members of the innovative copular sets. The EGOPHORIC copulas are also the only forms that can occur in subordinate clauses.

As stated, y*in* and *yod* do not contain any semantic information pertaining to tense or aspect. Temporal interpretations are either implicated from the context of the utterance (or general experience), or are explicated by other constituents in the clause, such as with the use of the adverb 'now' in the sentence in (299), above.

Yin and *yod* also occur in sentences with past interpretations, as shown in examples (301)-(302), below.

(301) *ŋɐ*   *lo*   *bʐɨ*   *jɪn*

1S   year   four   EQ.EGO

'I was four years old.' (Speaker is now a young adult).   (Gcig.sgril)

(302) *ŋɐ*   *ʐaji*   *tɕ^uoŋtɕ^hoŋ*   *jɪn-ti*   *c^hɨ*   *me*

1S   child   little   EQ-when   dog   EXIST.EGO.NEG

'I didn't have a dog when I was little.'   (Gcig.sgril)

In (301) the past interpretation is entailed by extra-linguistic knowledge, namely the age of the speaker. In (302), it is implicated by the use of an adverbial clause expressing a reference time prior to the time of speech. Thus, the egophoric copulas are compatible with both present and past tense contexts. They are not, however, compatible with future interpretations. Future expressions require a different copula, as described in Sec. 0, below.

The temporally-neutral semantics of the egophoric copulas is a property shared with many other languages within Tibetic, such as Dzongkha (c.f., Watters 2005), but also in languages of other branches that in other ways seem to be genetically close to Tibetic, such as West Himalayish, including Purik (Zemp 2014), and Bunan (Widmer 2014).

In fact, the absence of tense-aspect contrasts (in languages in which such contrasts exist in other verbs) is a typologically common feature of copular verbs. Nonetheless, at least for Tibetan this is the case because in previous stages of the language grammatical tense-aspect was expressed, if at all, via a system of suppletive verb stems[134]. Many lexical verbs had only one stem form, even at this stage of the language. So, in terms of tense-aspect inflectional morphology, yin and yod were similar to many other verbs in Old Tibetan. How copular verbs came to be their own morphologically distinct sub-class of lexical verbs in the modern languages, including Amdo Tibetan, is explained in part by the fact that yin and yod, the original copulas, grammaticalized into some of the tense-aspect inflectional morphology of other, non-copula verbs. *Yin* and *yod* are source constructions for much of the grammatical categories found elsewhere in the verbal system.

There are no doubt semantic—or event-structural—reasons for why these grammaticalized categories have not been extended back onto copular verbs, but no

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[134] In truth, the stem system of documented historical stages of the language, namely Old Tibetan, is an amalgamation of regular morphophonemic processes, such as an ablaut-like vowel system, and a handful of truly suppletive stem forms for some verbs, but even as early as Old Tibetan, it appears that regular alternations was well on the way to becoming an irregular system of fossilized forms necessitating the creation of grammarian standards (and pedagogical explanations) for the written language.

doubt the absence of precedence also played a role: such distinctions were not marked in copular verbs before, so they are not marked now.

7.5.1.2   Distribution of egophoric copulas

Yin and *yod* (and their negative counterparts *min* and *med*) are associated with first person subjects in declarative statements (as we saw in the above examples), second person subjects in interrogative (as opposed to rhetorical) questions, and third person subjects of main clauses when the occur in embedded reported speech clauses. The occurrence of egophoric copulas in interrogative and reported speech contexts is illustrated with examples (303) and (304), below.

(303)   *cʰo arɪɣə ə́jɪn?*

      cʰo   *arɪ-kə*   *ə-jɪn*

      2s   America-GEN   Q-EQ.EGO

      'Are you American?'   (Gcig.sgril)

(304)   *mərgɨ arɪɣə jɪn zergə.*

      [mərgɨ   *arɪ-kə*   *jɪn]*CLAUSE   *zer-kə*

      3s.F   America-GEN   EQ.EGO   say-DE.IPF

      'She_i says she_i is American.'   (Gcig.sgril)

This is the conjunct pattern of the conjunct/disjunct syntactic paradigm Hale (1971, 1980) first described for Newar (see Sec. 4.1) and DeLancey (1986) described in Lhasa Tibetan. In particular, the collocation of yin with first person in declarative

sentences and second person in interrogative sentences and third person in so-called 'direct' reported speech[135] sentences has such a high frequency that in my personal experience, even native speakers sometimes make the assumption that it is syntactically required and no other form is permissible. This assumption is disproved by perfectly acceptable, if highly infrequent, examples of the allophoric equative copula used for first person arguments in declarative sentences such as in the utterance in (305), below.

(305) .ŋɐ   sɨ   rɛt

       1s   who   EQ.ALLO

       ŋa   aʑaŋ   rɛt

       1s   uncle   EQ.ALLO

       'Who am I? I am Uncle! (Mother's brother).'   (Gcig.sgril)

The communicative context in which (305) was produced is important: it was spoken by an adult playing with his newborn nephew. One communicative purpose of the utterance was to model speech for the still pre-verbal infant. The speaker did this by both asking the question and producing the solicited answer himself. The declarative statement is not marked as reported speech—because it isn't—but its construction is still such as to express the addressee's, rather than the speaker's, perspective on the proposition.

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[135] As opposed to 'indirect' reported speech sentences, according to Evans' (2012) typology of canonical reported speech constructions. Reported speech is speech that is reported from the perspective of the quoted source, rather than the speaker. Indirect speech is that which is reported from the perspective of the speaker, not the quoted source.

There is nothing remarkable or unusual about (305) to Amdo Tibetan speakers. Of the several people with whom I have discussed this example, all have stated that they produce similar utterances themselves when playing with babies and that, on the contrary, it would be strange for one to use the egophoric copula in such contexts.

In some dialects, it not uncommon for speakers to use the egophoric equative copula in disjunct contexts, such as example (306), below, which is a declarative statement with a third person subject.

(306) *tə*   *ŋi*   *nəwu*   *jɪn*

      DEF   1S.GEN   younger.brother   EQ.EGO

      'That is my younger brother.'   (Rnga.ba)

The utterance in (306) is grammatical for speakers in Rnga.ba Prefecture, an area that historically was part of the Mgo.log region, which is the greater area to which Gcig.sgril belongs. The two are neighbors and Tibetans from both places have introduced their native dialects to me as *mgoˢkæt*—Mgo.log Speech. Nonetheless, my esteemed consultants in Gcig.sgril have insisted that forms like (306) are ungrammatical. This is not to say that Gcig.sgril speakers never use egophric *jɪn* with third person subjects, because they do, as I will show shortly, but there are fewer contexts in which such a collocation makes sense to them. This suggests dialectal differences in the scope of assertor involvement for equative clauses, which is quite interesting.

In contrast, the conjunct/disjunct pattern for existential copulas is slightly less rigid, which is to say that more contrasts are possible and so we see instances of egophoric existentials with third-person subjects, as in (307).

(307) *atɕʰe jɪɖoŋ yugə m̥ɛɪmtsʰona ot.*

atɕʰe	*jɪɖoŋ*	*yu-gə*	*ɸɛɪmtsʰo-na*	*jo*
elder.sister	Ye.Sgron	up-GEN	'Phyi.mtsho-LOC	EXIST.EGO

'Sister Ye.sgron is up at 'Phyi.mtsho Lake.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Note that (307) was produced by a speaker from Gcig.sgril, in fact by a person who has actually told me that the sentence in (306) is ungrammatical for them. On the other hand, a first person subject with the allophoric form is not possible.

(308) **ŋɐ ˢŋawa-na jokə*

1S	Rnga.ba-LOC	EXIST.ALL

'I'm in Rnga.ba Prefecture.' (I didn't expect my long distance bus to pass through this place.)

The author, of course, is the source of (308). I was inspired to produce this example after an experience in which I accidentally ended up stranded for a day in a place that was legally off limits to foreigners (at that time—the restriction was lifted a few years prior to the time of writing) and part of the process of persuading a hotel to house me, anyway, involved explaining how my being there was a mistake. While in the

real-life situation, others spoke on my behalf, later on I asked folks back in Gcig.sgril

how I ought to have described the circumstances myself. Given the acceptability of

utterances like (307), I assumed a form like (308) would make sense to people. Instead, I

was told that it would be better to say either (309) or (310), below.

(309) *ŋɐ*   *ˢŋawa-na*   *jozɨç*

     1S   Rnga.ba-LOC   EXIST.IE

     'I'm in Rnga.ba Prefecture.'

(310) *ŋɐ*   *ˢŋawa-na*   *jo-la*

     1S   Rnga.ba-LOC   EXIST.EGO-SFP

     'I'm in Rnga.ba Prefecture!'

I will discuss the particular details of the copular forms in (309) and (310) in Sec.

7.5.1.4 on non-egophoric copulas, and in Sec. 7.5.2 on evidential copulas. For the

moment, it suffices to say that there are very few contexts in which non-egophoric forms

occur in sentences with assertor-involvement for existential copular clauses and even

fewer for equative copular clauses. However, the reverse is not true. Why is this so?

For the same reasons that time is not inherently important to the propositional

semantics of equative and existential predicates, knowledge about what something or

someone is, where they are, what they have, and if they are, is difficult to pinpoint a

source for, since such assertions are more about describing some quality or condition of a

referent, than in describing an event. The quality or condition in question may be

temporary, but its start and end points are irrelevant unless it is the starting (or cessation)

of the quality that matters, in which case, beginnings and endings tend to be construed as events. If copular clauses express predicates that are semantically a-temporal and without internal structure, then the number of different potential informational perspectives on the proposition is reduced because there are fewer points along which observational access can vary if distinctions in time or internal structure are irrelevant. Therefore, declarative statements about first person subjects necessarily represent egophoric information.

The egophoricity of copular clauses is therefore unrelated to the timing or duration of the predicated situation because such situations are not generally conceived of as being dependent on time. In other words, tense and aspect (and their respective related cognitive concepts) are not part of the semantics of the Basic Clause Construction (see Sec. 5.3). Consequently, the egophoricity of such propositions is also unrelated to the circumstances by which the speaker has come to know about the situation, because there is no construal of a temporal relation which can serve as an external reference point from which the situation might come to be known. So, the meaning of egophoric copulas is fairly unnuanced and simple: personal knowledge as contrasted with other forms of knowledge. sentences are removed from the discourse context, speakers rarely have difficulty recovering the identity of the deleted participant. Thus, they are likely to correctly guess that the person who produced the sentence in (311), below, was talking about themselves.

(311) *tǝntonziç tɕiʁa me.*

      tǝnton=ziç   *ɣtɕiɣ-ra*[136]   *me*

      business=INDEF   one-INTENS   EXIST.EGO.NEG

      '(I) didn't have any particular business.'   (Gcig.sgril)

On the other hand, we see the same negative egophoric copula occurring in the following sentence (312).

(312) *kʰɔŋwaɣi naŋni nɣ me.*

      kʰɔŋwa-ki   *naŋni*   *nɣ̃*   *me*

      house-GEN   inside   person   EXIST.EGO.NEG

      'There's nobody inside (my) house.'   (Yǎqūtān)

Again, the form of the copula implies a first person participant, however not a first person subject, at least as that notion is commonly understood. We see, then, that the notion of personal knowledge can extend beyond properties of one's self. For the person who says (312), the sentence is still about themselves, in the same sense that (311) is, which is why the same copula form is used. This sense is what Creissel (2008) terms 'assertor involvement'. Volitionality is not necessarily entailed by assertor involvement.

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[136] The expression *(ɣ)tɕiɣra* is more accurately analyzed as a lexicalized idiom. Etymologically, it is the word for 'one'--*ɣtɪɣ*--with the conjunctive coordinating suffix—*ra* 'and'—which also functions as an intensifier when there is no overt or implied coordinating expression, but the singular number sense of 'one' in this expression is lost, a fact that is underscored by the fact that it occurs here with the indefinite suffix, *-ziç*, which also means 'one' when used for count nouns, such as *tǝnton*.

As stated in Sec. 5.3, egophoricity is the grammaticalized contrast of assertor's involvement vs. non-involvement as determined by the potential information access of a situation. Dialectal differences aside, the scope of assertor involvement is different for copular predicates than it is for verbal predicates: there is generally greater flexibility to extend egophoric scope to third person subjects of copular predicates than to do the same for verbal predicates with similar contexts. Tournadre (2008) refers to this difference as one of "egophoric scope", in which some predicate types have a "wide scope" and others have a "narrow scope".

Also, as with 0, above there are some dialects where the sentence in (312) is ungrammatical, or at least dis-preferred. The explanation for this seems to be that such dialects, including Gcig.sgril, have a narrower egophoric scope: the degree to which an assertor is connected to a proposition and can be considered involved needs to be stronger in order for the proposition to constitute personal knowledge. So where is that line between personal knowledge and non-self knowledge for Gcig.sgril speakers? Why is egophoric acceptable for an utterance about the speaker's sister in (307), but not for (289), an utterance about the speaker's home? Meanwhile, the consultant who produced (312), when asked, said that people also could use the allophoric form for this sentence. Perhaps a better question is, why do Yăqūtān speakers have a choice in deciding to encode propositions such as this as EGOPHORIC or ALLOPHORIC while Gcig.sgril speakers may only encode it as the latter? It's hard to know for sure, but there are a few possibilities.

The first is that (312) predicates the absence of something, while (307) predicates a presence. According to Aikhenvald (2015: 256), in some languages, there are fewer

evidential distinctions for negative clauses than positive clauses. Of course, EGOPHORIC is not an evidential category, but like evidentiality, egophoricity is concerned with information source and nuanced distinctions related to knowledge of an absence are more possible or logical, and therefore frequently made, for positive as opposed to negative information.

Another possibility is that the subject of (307) is a human being, the speaker's own sibling with whom she lives. As her sister, Ye.shes Sgrol.ma is someone with whom Sgrol.ma Bdang.mo, the speaker, strongly identifies. The proposition represented in utterance is therefore personal knowledge. At the same time, Sgrol.bdang's proximity and regular contact with her sister, which included speaking to her in the morning and likely texting or calling her on the way to 'Phi.mtsho, also means that her understanding of Ye.sgrol's whereabouts is not based on any specific point of informational access. It's not that she has an intuition about the situation, but she the information is familiar to her.

In comparison, a house is an inanimate thing. Perhaps, for the Yǎqūtān speaker what matters is the sense of identification that one has for one's own house. The assertion in (290) is of information about the speaker's house, and so it involves the speaker. This is enough of a connection to trigger egophoric marking, should the speaker choose to frame the proposition that way. But for the Gcig.sgril speaker, that may be insufficient. It may be that an assertion of there being no one at home, implying as it does that the speaker is also not home, means that the speaker can only know about the situation through an informational access point. Or, it may be that there is some essential quality to 'house', such as it being an non-human object, that precludes the degree of familiarity with its circumstances necessary to permit an egophoric interpretation.

In addition to dialectal differences in scope of EGOPHORIC, differences in scope are displayed across utterances within the same dialect, varying according to factors like the temporal connotations of the clause, polarity, etc.

Sung & Rgya's (2004) analysis of this system is of a basic binary opposition between 'subjective' and 'objective' knowledge. Given the preponderance of evidence that grammatical contrasts of egophoricity (and evidentiality and factuality and epistemic modality) first appeared in early stages of Tibetan in the copular clauses, we may assume that this distinction between personal knowledge and other-knowledge is the original contrast from which more nuanced meanings, such as volitional assertor involvement[137], developed later as the basic contrast spread to other predicate types with more complex semantics.

For all the above reasons, copular clauses with assertor participants are almost always going to be egophoric, but we also in some instances see egophoric copulas in clauses with non-assertor possessors. We saw this with (312), above, and we see it in (313), below. As with (312), this sentence was rejected by my Gcig.sgril consultants.

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[137] Haller (2004) simply refers to forms that I have labeled egophoric as 'volitional evidential', which suggests that for him volitional assertor involvement is a basic sense of this category. I'm not sure how to conceive of a volitional (as opposed to non-volitional) sibling relationship. I also believe that the system we see in the oldest copular forms, including egophoric, is the original system and so the functions of the egophoric copular are probably original and therefore basic to the greater system, while other senses that might be more common to egophoric forms across the language, if only because copular verbs are greatly outnumbered, are in fact innovations and therefore less basic.

The semantic link between egophoric copular forms and volitionality may be a product of the original use of copulas as finitizing markers for non-copula verbs in Old Tibetan. Takeuchi (1990; 2014: 409-410) postulates that once *yin* started to be used as a post-verbal marker it developed into "an expression to emphasize the writer's will or assertion (p. 410)" in contrast with the terminative sentential marker – *'o*, which Takeuchi speculates had a sense of 'affirmative judgement'.

(313)   *tə cʰu nɨwu ə́jɪn?*

tə	*cʰu*	*nɨwu*	*ə-jɪn*
DEF	2S.GEN	little.brother	Q-EQ.EGO

‘Is that your little brother?’   (Rnga.ba)

The question in (313) presupposes an egophorically-marked answer, even though the participant is a third person. There are two explanations for why this sentence is marked EGOPHORIC. The first is that the solicited information is about the assertor, even if the assertor is not a propositional participant. The second is that, as with an equative predication of oneself, knowledge that the subject is one's brother is a form of personal knowledge in the same way that one's identity as a teacher is.

The same conditions hold for the utterance in (312), even without the overt expression of an assertor possessor—the asserted information is still about the assertor and their understanding and familiarity with their own house is interpreted as a form of personal knowledge (that the assertor cannot know from direct experience, since they themselves are not home, which just goes to show that personal knowledge is not founded upon external evidence).

There are a couple of external considerations to take into account in the use of egophoric copulas for assertor possessors. The first is that for at least a handful of dialects, including Gcig.sgril, the sentences in (312) and (313) are both simply ungrammatical. For both contexts, only non-egophoric copular forms may be used.

Tournadre notes that in Standard Tibetan not all egophoric forms have a wide scope, for example noting that the egophoric perfective marker *-ba.yin*, which occurs on

action verbs, is restricted to assertor participants. This is also true for Rnga.ba (and likely other dialects): the future egophoric form of any verb is restricted to volitional assertor-participants.

7.5.1.3   Rhetorical use of the egophoric equative copula

There is one other context in which egophoric copulas occur, and that is in rhetorical question-and-answer exchanges, by which I mean the form is used to ask for confirmation as to the veracity of an assertion, or used as a call back question—a rhetorical demonstration that they have heard and understood the information. In this kind of exchange, it is common for both the question and the response to be in the form of the egophoric equative copula (existential copulas are never used this way). Consider the following excerpt from one such interaction.

(314)

A. *atɛʰɛ jɪɖoŋi ze, cʰo pɛɪna manɖo ze, cʰo ndɛna jakpo ndoχ ze…*

B. *ə̀jɪn?*

A. *jɪm.*

A: 'Ache Ye.sgrol said not to let you go out, (she) said, you obediently stay at home.'

B: 'Is that so?'

A: 'Yes.'   (Gcig.sgril)

The exchange in (314) took place between two siblings, a brother and sister. Among other things, the brother brought up that he was planning to go out that evening, to which his sister informed him that their older sister, Ye.sgrol, had told her to instruct her brother that he should stay in. She presents all of this information to him using the Quotative Construction, making it clear that the imperative comes from A.che Ye.sgrol, not her. The brother listens politely and then asks, 'is that so?', probably in order to make it clear that he has heard and registered the information. But even if the brother's question is not a sincere request for confirmation, the sister replies with a confirming *jɪm*.

Note the form of the copula in the declarative statement—*jɪm*. This special declarative (or affirmative) form of *yin* is not universal in Amdo. Thus, a speaker from Kri.kha reports that he has only ever heard people say *jɪn*. Nonetheless, declarative *jɪm* occurs frequently in my data from Mgo.log speakers, from both Gcig.sgril and Rnga.ba. I have been told that the form *jɪn* is also acceptable as a response in exchanges like (314), but *jɪm* occurs most frequently in my database of natural speech, at least for Gcig.sgril. The bilabial coda is unique to this particular rhetorical style, never occurring in other contexts. It never occurs with overt arguments.

It has been proposed to me by native speakers familiar with Standard Tibetan and Classical Literary Tibetan that Amdo *jɪm* is cognate with the Standard/WT form *yin.pa.red*. If this is true, it would potentially explain why *jɪm* only occurs in declarative rhetorical expressions, never the interrogative: jɪm is a contraction of yin and pa, with the final syllable, red, elided. In spoken Amdo Tibetan, the interrogative affix *é-*, should occur before that red, but as there is no red, there is nowhere for *ə̀-* to appear. Instead, it

occurs before *jɪn* (corresponding to WT *yin*), in which configuration, there can be no other constituent in the VP after *jɪn*.

However, while the *yin.pa.red* story seems plausible, it warrants clarifying that in Standard Tibetan, yin.pa.red has a distinctly different epistemic connotation than in Written Tibetan, at least for people in Amdo. According to Mandala.com, *yin.pa.red* is a 'self-corrective' form used by a speaker to express that "the speaker has just realized that he was mistaken or that he was hitherto unaware of what he is asserting." A native speaker of Standard Tibetan, however, explained the form as expressing that the speaker is convinced of the truth of their assertion, with a weak implicature of having previously not known about the situation. Amdo speakers who are proficient in Written Tibetan describe yin.pa.red as meaning "affirmative information", in the words of one consultant from Kri.kha County, with no implication as to when the speaker realized that the information is true or any other epistemic sense. Likewise, my Gcig.sgril consultants explain *jɪm* as an affirmative expression—the speaker is providing an affirmative answer to a question. Certainly in (314), the person who says /jɪm/ was well aware of the information they are affirming long before they communicated it to their interlocutor.

If *jɪm* is dialect-specific, the use of *jɪn* as an affirmative expression akin to 'yes' in English is universal throughout Amdo and also Standard Tibetan, as well as other Tibetan varieties.

The allophoric equative copula also is used rhetorically. Unlike *jɪn*, *rɛt* can be used as a rhetorical declaration, in the same way that 'right' is used in American English.

Declarative rhetorical *rɛt* is a common way to express agreement, which is not how *jɪn* is used. The rhetorical use of *jɪn* appears to be restricted to rhetorical questions

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and answers. Allophoric *rɛt* can be used as a rhetorical question, too, as is shown in example (315), below.

(315)   A*: tɛraŋ kʰərgɛ tɕʰæpa χõʁdokə*.   B: *ə́rè?*

A: *tɛraŋ   kʰərgə   tɕʰapa   χoχ-ndɨɣ-jokə*

        today   3S   head.cold   be.sick-CONT-PRF.DE

        'He has/had a cold today (when I visited him).'   (Gcig.sgril)

B: *ə-rɛt*

        Q-EQ.ALLO

        'Oh, really?'

Note that there was no call back response to the question in (315b). This was not a question that conventionally requires an answer. The same does not seem to be true of the egophoric equivalent.

The difference between the use of egophoric *jɪn* versus allophoric *rɛt* in rhetorical questions lies the relationship between the asserted information and one or both interlocutors. In the case of (314), the assertion is personally relevant to one (or both) of the interlocutors, as the information contains imperative instructions. For this reason, the rhetorical question and the confirmation are egophorically marked[138]. In cases in which the asserted information does not directly involve the assertor, then the rhetorical confirmation is marked allophoric.

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[138] Of course, according to the way we know the Cooperative Principle is often manifested in questions paired with responses, the egophoricity value of the question should be "mirrored" in the response, unless the speaker has a reason to violate the expectation.

I also have the sense that the allophoric form also seems to be preferred for rhetorical questions that express surprise or otherwise make it clear that the speaker was previously unaware of the information. Even though the information that triggered the rhetorical question *ə́jɪn* in (314b) was surely news to the speaker, the communicative purpose of the utterance was to make sure that the speaker understood the information, and so was a way to elicit a confirmation. Secondarily, by the act of eliciting this confirmation, the speaker makes clear that they are paying attention and accept what has been said to them. This sense may also incorporate a kind of submission-signaling. In this way, the rhetorical use of the egophoric equative copula is not an expression of assertor involvement, as previously defined, but perhaps serves to express that the information is immediately relevant to the assertor, which in this case is potentially both interlocutors.

The question of assertor involvement is especially murky in (314) because who would be the assertor? Is it possible to have both speaker and addressee in the assertor role? Speaker A is relating information from a reported speech event that they were a part of, but the information is actually an order for Speaker B. So, are both speakers the assertor? Is *jɪn* even actually deictic in this context or, at this level is it more an expression of 'relevance' or 'immediate knowledge'? This isn't a line of thinking that got me anywhere with the people who produced this dialog, but their own analysis of the use of *jɪn* here yielded the insight that for speaker B to use *rɛt* instead would be inappropriate, either coming off as impolite or suggesting that speaker B hadn't actually been paying attention to speaker A. So far I interpret this in one of two ways. First, to say *ə́rɛt* would implicate that the preceding assertion was not "about" speaker B, or was not relevant to them, and this might mean that speaker B has no intention of obeying the order, because

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they don't interpret the order as being for them. A second possible interpretation is that *ə́jɪn* is simply a more formal register. I base this off of my own very shaky intuition that yin is the 'older' copula, and therefore sounds more like Classical Literary Tibetan, and so, in contexts where egophoricity contrasts are neutralized or inconsequential, as in rhetorical questions, the Classical/Written Tibetan-sounding form is preferred. This view is also compatible with an interpretation of Mgo.log *jɪm* as a colloquialized form of Written Tibetan *yin.pa.red*.

In contrast, the rhetorical question *ə́re* uttered in (315b) does not implicate a request for a direct response because it is an act of active listening, and the intent is not for the addressee to stop and give an answer, but to encourage them to continue on their line of thinking.

7.5.1.4 Non-egophoric copulas

Uniquely in the verbal system of Amdo Tibetan, the equative copular paradigm has a dedicated ALLOPHORIC form, *re*. The use of the allophoric equative copula seems to encompass all sources of information that are expressed by evidential markers in verbal predicates. As will be shown, there are evidential equative forms, but they are not used by speakers of all dialects. For those speakers who do use them, their frequency is far lower than is the case for equivalent evidential categories in verbal clauses.

The existential copula set has a direct evidence form, *jokə*. I analyze this form as direct evidence and the equative form *re* as allophoric for the following reasons: when asked why a speaker uses the form *jokə* in a particular sentence instead of egophoric *jo*, my consultants give the same kinds of explanations they do for verbs marked with *-kə*:

the speaker must have seen the situation, or lives with the subject/possessor, or has some other direct experience on which their knowledge of the situation is based. In contrast, when asked to explain the use of *re*, consultants tend to say simply that the subject is not the speaker.

We also see the use of re routinely applied to propositions expressing situations that the speaker/assertor couldn't possibly have directly witnessed, as in the following clause. Tshangs.dbyangs Rgya.mtsho was the 6th Dalai Lama and died in the 18th century.

(316) *tsʰaŋjaŋ*   *rjamtsʰo*   *monpa*   *ʐe*

　　　 Tshangs.dbyangs   Rgya.mtsho   Monpa   EQ.ALLO

　　　 'Tshangs.dbyangs Rgya.mtsho was Monpa.'

　　　 (Gro.tshang)

A description of a historical figure is normally incompatible with evidential markers, so the following sentence is rejected.

(317) *tsʰaŋjaŋ*   *rjamtsʰo*   *lʰasa-na*   *ʔjokə*

　　　 Tshangs.dbyangs   Rgya.mtsho   Lhasa-LOC   EXIST.DE

　　　 Intended: 'Tshangs.dbyangs Rgya.mtsho was in Lhasa.'

On this basis, we can say that *re* has an allophoric value and *jokə* has an evidential value. Nor is *re* factual, since there is a factual equative form *jɪnəre*.

As stated, non-assertor involvement is a primary function of allophoric copulas, and not merely an implication of an evidential source of knowledge. The use of the direct evidence existential form in (318), below, therefore codes the assertion as something the speaker knows from direct experience. The phone in question happens to be the speaker's, but that fact is irrelevant and isn't actually recoverable information from the clause.

(318) *tʃoktsɛ*   *laka-na*   *jokə*

   table.GEN   on.top-LOC   EXIST.DE

   '(My phone) is on the table.'   (Chu.ma Reb.gong)

In contrast, the allophoric equative copula in (318) makes it clear that the assertion is not about the speaker, so it implies (but does not entail[139]) that the card isn't the speaker's. Allophoric copulas are illustrated by the following examples.

(319) *ndə*   *ma-re*

   PROX   NEG-EQ.ALLO

   'That's not it (my card).'   (Gcig.sgril)

The clause in (318) expresses predicate location and contains the allophoric existential copula *jokə*. Because (318) was uttered as a reply to a question, 'where is my

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[139] Given the flexibility of egophoric scope in non-verbal predicates, it is possible that the card is the speaker's, but the speaker is looking for a different card of theirs. In any case, they are marking the proposition as not involving themselves.

phone?', the referent 'interlocutor's phone' is predictable in this context and so is omitted. The clause in (319) expresses predicate equation and contains the allophoric equative copula *re*. It is excerpted from a conversation covering several topics and involving multiple interlocutors, but in which a persistent topic is the whereabouts of the speaker's bank card, which has been missing since the previous evening. For both (318) and (319) the subjects are inanimate items. Even though the item referenced in (319) is possessed by the assertor, we have seen that in Gcig.sgril, inanimacy is one feature that predicts an allophoric, as opposed to egophoric, copula form.

Non-egophoric copulas are used for all situations in which there is a non-assertor subject. As we have seen, in some of these situations for speakers of some dialects, egophoric copulas may also be used if the speaker is employing a wider egophoric scope, but even then, the speaker may optionally use an allophoric copula. Hence, the consultant who produced the sentence in (292), reproduced below, also found the sentence in (320) to be an acceptable alternative, seeing no major semantic difference between the two.

(292) *kʰɔŋwaɣi naŋni nɣ me.*

    kʰɔŋwa -ki   naŋni nỹ̀   me

    house-GEN   inside person EXIST.EGO.NEG

    'There's nobody inside (my) house.'   (Yăqūtān)

(320) *kʰɔŋwa-ki*   *naŋni* *nỹ*   *meki*

house-GEN   inside person EXIST.ALLO.NEG

'There's nobody inside the house.'   (Yăqūtān)

This is not to say that there are no semantic differences between (292) and (320). The egophoric copula in (292) implies that the speaker is involved in the utterance, hence there is an interpretation of 'my house'. No such implication exists for the sentence in (320). It is still possible that the house in question is the speaker's, but it is equally plausible that the house belongs to someone else. In short, we see a degree of flexibility in the egophoricity of assertor possessor clauses for some dialects.

For clauses expressing predicate existence, the allophoric form is preferred, even when the thing or person whose existence is being asserted is intimately connected to the assertor. This phenomenon is illustrated in the following example (320).

(321)

   a.   *ŋi*   *kʰœ*   *mɛkį̊*

       1S.GEN   card   EXIST.NEG.ALLO

       'My bank card is gone.'

   b.   *cʰu*   *kʰœ*   *kaŋna*   *jokį̇?*

       2S.GEN   card   where   EXIST.ALLO

       'Where did your card go?'

   a.   *ŋi kʰœ mɛkį̊.*

       'My card is gone.'   (Gcig.sgril)

In (321), speaker A has lost their card, which situation they construe as a predicate of negative existence, not negative possession. This is reiterated in the response to the question from speaker B, 'where did your card go?', or, 'where was your card?'. Had speaker A used the egophoric existential copula here, then the interpretation would have been, 'I don't have my bank card.' The distinction between allophoric and egophoric coerces an existence interpretation over a possessive interpretation and this alternative construal of the situation is motivated by the pragmatics of the communicative act. Based on consultations with speakers, I believe the motivation is as follows.

An utterance like 'I don't have my bank card', as in (322), below, is probably something one would say if, for example, they were at a restaurant with a friend and when it came time to pay the bill, realized they didn't have enough cash on them, nor did they have their bank card. They might preface their request for a loan by first explaining that they didn't have their bank card on them, but they are aware of the situation and likely have some idea as to where the bank card is.

(322)   *ŋi*   *kʰœ*   *me*

        1S.GEN   card   EXIST.EGO.NEG

        '(I) don't have my bank card.'   (Gcig.sgril)

The speaker of (322) construes the situation as involving themselves, so it is expressed as a predicate possession implying that the speaker is the subject who possesses. In contrast, the speaker of (321a) does not construe the situation as directly involving themselves. The communicative purpose of (321a) is to announce that the card

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has disappeared in order to elicit information as to where it is from someone else. Speaker B obliges, accordingly, although they don't know, either, a fact that they indirectly imply by asking the question, 'where was your card?'[140]. In (321), speaker B is still a possessor, but the allophoric form of the copula excludes their involvement in the situation, which is logical given that they don't know where their card is.

Hence, the use of the allophoric existential copula in (321a) coerces a predicate existence interpretation, whereas the egophoric copula in (328) implies a predicate possession interpretation and therefore also implies a non-overt first-person subject. Of course, neither sense is part of the inherent semantics of these forms, but it is useful in showing how egophoricity interacts with other semantic domains.

7.5.1.5   Rhetorical use of allophoric copulas

As mentioned in Sec. 7.5.1.2, the allophoric equative copula is also used rhetorically, such as a means of demonstrating active listening or as a polite signal to change the topic of conversation, etc. An example of active listening-signaling is presented below.

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[140] I've chosen to interpret this question as being past tense for a couple of reasons. The first is that, at other points in the conversation Speaker B comments that she saw a bank card tucked in the case of someone's phone that morning and asks if that might not be the same card. The second reason is that I assume Speaker B wants to be helpful, and so cannot be expecting a present tense answer to her question after Speaker A has already made it clear that they don't know where their card is. So, I assume she must be trying to prompt him to remember the last time he had his card. Ultimately, however, tense is not part of the semantics of allophoric copulas, and so the interpretation into English is ambiguous on this point.

(323)

A: *cʰu taɹta ɬoptɛuŋ tɕɪzɨkɨ ɬoptɕoŋ pɛoŋgɨjó?*

B: *ŋi ɬoptɕoŋə kaŋgɨ pɛoŋní ɬoptɕoŋ pɛoŋgɨjokə.*

A: *o…re. təna cʰu tarta ɣɹajik̚, wojik̚, ɣjɪndʑi tã̃ã rɪx tə cʰu pɛoŋe kəŋgɨ pɛoŋne ŋarkə?*

A: *cʰu*   *tarta*   *ɬoptɕoŋ*   *tɕɪ-zɨç-kə*   *ɬoptɕoŋ*   *pɛoŋ-kəjo*

    2S.ERG   now   studying   what-INDEF-GEN   studying   study-PROG.EGO

    'What are you studying these days?'

B: *ŋi*   *ɬoptɕoŋn-a*   *kaŋkə*   *pɛoŋ-ni*   *ɬoptɕoŋ*

    1S.GEN studying-DAT   which   study-TOP   studying

    pɛoŋ-kəjo-kə

    study-PROG-DE.IPF

    'I'm studying whatever things one studies.' (I.e., 'I study all the usual things.')

A: ***o***   ***re***

    Oh   EQ.ALLO

    'Ok.'

    təna   *cʰu*   *tarta*   *ɣɹajik*   *wojik*   *ɣjɪndʑi*   *tənʈa*

    then   2S.ERG now   Chinese   Tibetan   English   DEM.similar

    rɪx=tə

    science=DEF

    cʰu   *pɛoŋ-e*   *kəŋkə*   *pɛoŋ-ne*   *ŋar-kə*

    2S.ERG   study-CNV   which   study-CNV   be.strong-DE

    'So, then, in your studying, which subject are you strongest in—Written Chinese,

    Written Tibetan, English, etc.?'   (Gcig.sgril)

The dialog presented in (323) was excerpted from an interview recorded between Ye.shes Sgrol.ma (Speaker A) and Sgrol.ma Dbang.mo (Speaker B). The interview format was intended to generate natural speech data that was still produced with some degree of control over the subject matter. As a good interviewer, Ye.sgrol demonstrates that she is listening and also keeps the conversation going by uttering rhetorical *re* frequently, always in the form of a statement, not as a question. My observation, so far, is that *re*, not *jɪm*, is used this way.

7.5.2   Evidentiality in copular clauses

In many dialects, speakers altogether do without evidential distinctions in the grammar of their copula clauses. However, some dialects allow for the expression of finer contrasts within the non-egophoric domain for copular sentences. Evidential copular forms are attested in the speech of speakers of varieties spoken in and around the Mgo.log region, as well as speakers from the nomad region of Them.chen near Mtsho.dgon (Qīnghǎi Lake). More generally, I have frequently heard reports from Tibetans elsewhere in Amdo that such copula forms are a feature of 'nomad' dialects, so I suspect that more dialects than Mgo.log (Gcig.sgril) and Them.chen have them. For those dialects which do mark direct and indirect evidence in copulas, it is not entirely clear that the use of these two categories correspond exactly to the functions they express in verbal predicates.

The Gcig.sgril dialect has both DIRECT EVIDENCE and INDIRECT EVIDENCE forms for existential and equative copulas. These forms are provided in the following examples.

Direct evidence inchoative existential

(324)   *ŋa-sa*   *jotʰa*

        sleep-LOC   EXIST.DE

        'There is a place to sleep (after all).'   (Gcig.sgril)

Indirect evidence existential

(325)   *kʰərgə*   *ʂki*   *toχwa jara   joziç*

        3S   stairs.GEN   top   up   EXIST.DE

        'He must be upstairs.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Direct evidence equative

(326)   *tə*   *rgɛrgan*   *jɪntʰa*

        DEF   teacher   EQ.DE

        'It turns out he is/was a teacher.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Indirect evidence equative

(327)   *ndɨ*   *ʂkɨma jɪnziç*

        PROX   thief   EQ.IE

        'This guy is a thief for sure!'   (Gcig.sgril)

        My translations of the two direct evidence-marked clauses reflect my impression

that these copula forms have a primary function of expressing mirative information.

Specifically, they seem to be used to code information that is surprising or counter to the

speaker's previous beliefs. The existential copula *jotʰa* thus seems to be analogous in

function to the mirative use of the direct evidence copula *'dug* in Lhasa Tibetan, as

described by DeLancey (1997: 44) and the equative copula *jɪntʰa* is analogous to Lhasa Tibetan's *red.shag* construction.

I say speaker, as opposed to assertor, because the two consultants who discussed the issue with me felt at the time that use of direct evidence copulas is motivated by how the speaker perceives a situation, not how the speaker anticipates the addressee or anyone else to perceive it. Moreover, it appears that the direct evidence copulas only occur in declarative sentences, meaning that, along with the speculative copulas, they do not display the full distributional range the other copular forms do.

In his description on the Them.chen dialect, Haller has extensive documentation and analysis of IE copulas, but does not describe any DE forms not make any mention of their non-existence. Within Gcig.sgril, it seems like the IE copulas are applicable to a slightly larger range of communicative and experiential conditions than the DE copulas, so it may be that Them.chen speakers also have DE copulas, but their use is restricted enough that they simply never came up for Haller. It is also possible that Them.chen has only one evidential category for copular clauses.

The two evidential categories of copular verbs that I have identified are DIRECT EVIDENCE and INDIRECT EVIDENCE, corresponding to categories found in verbal predicates. Etymologically, the evidential copulas developed from the verbal evidential forms. However, there are some functional dissimilarities in evidence as a grammatical category of copular clauses. Examples of the two evidential categories are illustrated with equative clauses, below. Example (326) is reproduced from Sec.5.2.1, above. Example (328) is cited from Haller (2004: 70).

(326) *tə* *rgɛrgan* *jɪntʰa*

    DEF teacher EQ.DE

    'It turns out that is/was a teacher.' (Gcig.sgril)

(328) *ka* *rgergən.ʂtamɖʐən* *jənzəç.*

    DIST Teacher.Tamdrin EQ.IE

    'That is Teacher Tamdrin over there.' (Them.chen)

As far as I can tell[141], the difference between the two copula forms comes down to the following semantic points: *jɪntʰa* has either an inchoative/change-of-state sense or a mirative sense; *jɪnzɪç* can also have a mirative sense, an inferential sense or a sense that is closer to the evidential sense conveyed by the verbal IE construction, *-zɨç*, with no temporal connotations.

To explain in greater detail, the Direct Evidence sentence in (326) implicates that the speaker at one point didn't know the person was a teacher, but now they do know. This implicature is a result of the speaker's decision to highlight how they know this information, since information source is not part of the semantics of proper inclusion, normally. By highlighting the source of information for what is essentially temporally-unbounded situation, the speaker necessarily highlights the point in time at which they encountered the evidence for this assertion, thereby introducing the element of time into the semantic content of the utterance. This temporal sense can be extended to express a

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[141] Unfortunately, I didn't start looking into the question of evidential copulas until after my last field trip, so I simply don't have much data on them and consequently know very little about the motivations behind their use.

mirative sense, conveying that the information is new to the speaker, and is therefore unexpected and possibly surprising. The temporal sense can also be the primary function of the utterance, expressing inchoative aspect.

A mirative sense may actually be the primary function of the direct evidence equative copula in (326), but I do not have enough data to actually investigate the question at present and my investigations into the matter during elicitation sessions haven't provided much insight, either. In any case, the mirative sense of *jɪntʰa* (and the existential *jotʰa*) derives from the evidential function which is to express that the speaker knows 'they' are a teacher on the basis of direct evidence.

It is also possible for the sentence in (326) to not have a mirative sense, because *jɪntʰa* can also be used to express that the person has become a teacher when they weren't one before. As one consultant put it, the information "isn't necessarily surprising", but it could be. So, *jɪntʰa* can be used to highlight a change from not knowing to knowing for the assertor (mirative), or it can be used to highlight a change in state for the subject of the clause (inchoative). Both senses, however, are grounded in the perceptual experience of the speaker.

Haller explains the Indirect Evidence sentence in (300) as meaning that the speaker knows for sure that 'that' is Teacher Tamdrin, but they know this because they see someone carrying a bunch of books walking into the class that they know is Teacher Tamdrin's class. This seems like a process of inference, but, again, there is no hint of uncertainty or epistemic hedging. One of my consultant's speculated that the speaker of

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(328) probably can't see the person's face[142], but even so, they know that it is Teacher Tamdrin. Were they not certain, they would either use the epistemic modal form *jɪnsare* or possibly the allophoric copula *re* and include a modal adverb. A speaker of the Gcig.sgril offered the sentence in (329) as an epistemic modal version of the sentence in (328), above. The difference between these two sentences is this: the speaker of (328) knows who the person is; the speaker of (329) is confident they know who the person is.

(329) *ka*   *rgergən.ʂtamɖʐən*   *jɪnsare*

  DIST   Teacher.Tamdrin   EQ.SPEC

  'That must be Teacher Tamdrin over there.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Unlike *jɪntʰa,* there is no temporal connotation to *jɪnzɨç*: all that we know is that Tamdrin is a teacher at the point the observation of 'that' being him was made. Like *jɪntʰa, jɪnzɨç* also has mirative overtones in some contexts, though this seems to be less important to the overall function of *jɪnzɨç* than *jɪntʰa*.

Another interpretation I have been given for *jɪnzɨç* and *jozɨç* is that the speaker learned the information from someone else, so the propositional content of the utterance reported information. Nonetheless, the sense is still different from that of the Quotative Construction. I suspect that that difference is a higher degree of responsibility by the assertor for the utterance content with *jɪnzɨç* than QC.

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[142] The consultant is a speaker of the Gcig.sgril dialect which for sure has both *jɪntʰa* and *jɪnzɨç*, so in commenting that the speaker of (328) couldn't have seen the subject's face, she is likely alluding to a difference between direct and indirect evidence. Haller does not mention a face in his explanation of (328), but assuming that Them.chen speakers actually only ever use *jɪnzɨç*, never *jɪntʰa*, it is possible that a distinction between direct and indirect evidence is collapsed.

Speaking just of *jɪnzɨç*, it is clear that the contexts in which it occurs are far more restricted than for *-zɨç* in verbal clauses. For instance, *-zɨç* is a preferred assertional marker for jokes and anecdotal accounts but *jɪnzɨç* is dispreferred. Why is this so? It seems that *-zɨç* expresses that a situation is real, or true, but it is known to the assertor from something other than their own sensory perceptions or conscious awareness. But knowledge of the situation is still characterized as stemming from the subjective experience of the assertor so there is an implicature that the interlocutor wouldn't know the information and is learning about it now from the assertor. In this kind of discourse context, *jɪnzɨç* is inappropriate because it highlights the question of how the assertor knows the information, entailing a specific experience of encountering evidence for the situation, and the assertor who tells a joke of course had no such experience.

7.5.3 Evidential copulas and assertor perspective

As explained in Sec. 4.2, the distribution of evidential markers in verbal predicates is determined by the perspective of the assertor on the event at the time the event occurred. For this reason, grammaticalized evidence in Amdo Tibetan is closely associated with both tense (i.e., the timing of the situation relative to the time of speech) and aspect (i.e., what part or phase of the situation did the assertor have a perspective on). Because non-verbal predicates lack an inherent starting point or end-point, this raises the question of whether or not that same connection to tense-aspect is present in evidential copulas.

In Sec. 7.5.2, above, I gave the example of (309), reproduced below.

(309) ŋɐ   ˢŋawa-na   jozɨç

1S   Rnga.ba-LOC   EXIST.IE

'I'm in Rnga.ba Prefecture.'

The reader may recall that the motivation for producing (309) is that the speaker has unexpectedly found themselves in Rnga.ba Prefecture. I must admit that I do not know for certain that the Direct Evidence form, *jotʰa*, cannot be used in this context since it did not occur to me at the time to even ask about this. I can only say that *jozɨç* is the form that was volunteered as the 'correct' way for me to express this situation (as correction for the sentence I originally proposed, which contained the allophoric *jokə*. On this basis, it is clear that the IE Copula Construction can be used to express mirative information when there is assertor-involvement.

I assume that the IE Copula Construction would be used in preference to the DE Copula Construction in such cases because the latter implicates an information-acquiring scenario in which the speaker directly witnessed or experienced the situation of being in Rnga.ba prior to the time of speaking, which means that the information would no longer be surprising at the time of speaking. In contrast, because delayed evidence is included in the domain of indirect evidence, the IE Copula Construction is felicitous in this sentence because it expresses a sense of delayed discovery—I was in Rnga.ba before I saw evidence that that's where I was—and the moment of discovery could therefore be coterminous with the time of speaking, thus conveying a mirative sense.

The wider evidential scope of *jɪnzɨç*, coupled with its narrower distribution, are cause for analyzing it as a mediative marker. It would be interesting to compare it to

mediative markers in other languages, such Turkish or the Turkic languages spoken in Amdo, Western Yugur and Salar.

A potentially interesting line of inquiry is the way that speakers of dialects without evidential copulas interpret the forms when then encounter them in the speech of people coming from other dialect areas. I have only spoken to two people from Kri.ka and one person from Xunhua, which is far from a representative sample. Nonetheless, I found it interesting that all three individuals claimed to be familiar with the DE and IE copulas, although they attested to nobody using such forms in their home communities. In spite of their familiarity, all three stated that they believe the forms are essentially identical in meaning to the Speculative Copula Construction. In other words, speakers from these dialects see the sentences in (328) and (329) as identical in terms of their semantic content. In contrast, speakers of Gcig.sgril (and likely Them.chen, etc.) see the two sentences as semantically different.

One social domain where the semantic differences between the speculative, allophoric, and indirect evidential forms is especially salient is the realm of accusations. This was demonstrated by asking two consultants to imagine a scenario where someone's wallet goes missing at a crowded bus station and one person notices someone acting suspiciously. What would that person yell to draw everyone's attention to the suspect? We discussed four possible options.

(330) *tɨ*   *ʰkɨma*   *re*

     DEF   thief   EQ.ALLO

     'That (person) is a thief!'   (Gcigs.sgril)

(331)　　*tɨ*　　　　　　*ʰkɨma*　　　　　*jɪnzɨç*

　　　　DEF　　　　　thief　　　　　EQ.IE

　　　　'That (person) is a thief!'　　　　　　　　　　　　　(Gcig.sgril)

(332)　　*tɨ*　　　　　　*ʰkɨma*　　　　　*jɪnsare*

　　　　DEF　　　　　thief　　　　　EQ.SPEC

　　　　'That (person) must be a thief.'　　　　　　　　　(Gcig.sgril)

(333)　　*ti*　　　　　*xciç*　　*ʂkɨ-tʰa.*

　　　　DEF.GEN　　　one　　steal-DE.PST

　　　　'That guy stole something!'　　　　　　　　　　　(Gcig.sgril)

The sentence in (339) is likely the first thing one would yell in a situation where the speaker's intent is to alert others to the identity of the thief, or else to make people aware of the fact that there is a thief in the building. The sentence in (331) is more likely to be used in a situation where there is some doubt about the credibility of the assertion. One consultant translated the meaning of (331) into the Chinese sentence, below.

(334)　　他就是小偷

　　　　tā　　　　　　*jìu*　　*shì*　　*xiǎotōu*

　　　　3S　　　　　EMP[143]　COP　　thief

　　　　'He's really a thief!'

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[143] The Chinese adverb *jìu* has several functions, including emphatic focus (Zhang & Lee 2013). In an utterance like (334), the emphatic focus sense can be an expression of counterfactual assertion—oriented toward the addressee—or of mirativity—oriented toward the assertor.

The allophoric copula in (330) is epistemically neutral: it merely asserts information that belongs to the 'other' category of knowledge. Because this is the default way to assert predications of identity or proper inclusion, the act of adding information about how the speaker knows what they are asserting is pragmatically marked, and the most obvious reasons my consultant could come up with that someone would want to speak this way is if they want to make it clear that there is no doubt that what they are saying is true or if they themselves are surprised to discover—through clear evidence—that the person is a thief. The IE copula of (331) therefore conveys senses either of epistemic certainty or of mirativity.

In contrast, the sentence in (332) is not something one would shout at all in this kind of situation. Rather, it is the sort of the thing one might say quietly to a companion when they notice a stranger person skulking around passengers' luggage: the person seems like they might be a thief.

Finally, the sentence in (334) was produced when I attempted to elicit a version of the sentences in (331-333) with a direct evidence equative copula. The fact that my consultants decided that the sense of direct evidence was best expressed by an action event predicate doesn't mean they would never use *jɪntʰa* (I didn't directly ask these two people about this), just that, for an assertor to have direct evidence of someone being a thief, it makes the most sense to describe the event that the assertor witnessed that thereby provides this evidence.

7.5.4 Irrealis Copular Clauses: the Future Copula Construction and Speculative (Epistemic) Copula Construction

The bulk of this chapter has been spent describing egophoric, allophoric and evidential copulas. The speculative and future copular forms are considered together in this section because there is some functional overlap between them, as well as some structural similarities.

One such similarity is the absence of egophoric forms for either construction. The Speculative Verbal Construction doesn't have an egophoric form, either, but the Future Verbal Construction, which is etymologically related to the Future Copular Construction, has both egophoric and allophoric forms (see Sec. 8.8).

The lack of dedicated egophoric variants for *irrealis* copulas suggests either that the forms themselves are inherently allophoric or else that they are egophorically-neutral. If egophoricity contrasts are determined by information access, then it follows that grammatical expressions of modality, which are based on different attitudes toward information, will be egophorically-neutral. A neutral interpretation particularly makes sense for the Future Copula Construction when we consider that this construction can occur with both assertor-participants and non-assertor participants.

The Speculative Copula Construction conveys the speaker's attitude toward the factuality or truthfulness of a proposition, which conforms to definitions of epistemic modality put forth by scholars such as Lyons (1977: 793), Palmer (1986; 2001). I refer to the 'speaker' in preference to 'assertor' because, while interrogative forms of SCC exist and are readily produced and accepted by consultants in elicitation sessions, they seem quite rare. Epistemic attitude seems to be something speakers only mark for themselves,

rather than presuming for others, although I hasten to add that I consider SCC to belong

to Bybee, Perkins and Pagliuca's (1994) notion of 'propositional modality' and not their

notion of 'speaker-oriented modality' (p.176).

The Future Copula Construction appears to be the only way to distinguish future-

tense in copular clauses, but it also can be extended to express a sense epistemic

modality. In fact, Sung & Rgya employ the label 'conjectural' for the latter category (p.

307). I follow Haller (2004) in calling these FUTURE forms. Examples of both

constructions are given below.

Speculative copular clause

(335) *jɪnˣkæt ɕimkʰæn josamɛt.*

　　　　jɪn.ʂkæt　　　*ɕi-m̥kʰan*　　　*josame*

　　　　English　　　know-NMZ.AG EXIST.SPEC.NEG

　　　　'There probably aren't any English-speakers (around).'　　　　(Gcig.sgril)

Future copular clause

(336) རིང་ཐུང་འབྲིང་ང་པོ་ཏུ་ཆར་ཡིན་རྒྱུ་རེད།

　　　　ring.thung　　　'bring-nga-bo　　　ha.char　　　yin.rgyu.red

　　　　size　　　middle -NMZ-NMZ　　　probably　　　EQ.FUT.ALLO

　　　　'The middle size will probably fit.'　　　　(Sung & Rgya 2005: 307)

7.5.4.1 Speculative modality in copular clauses

Speculative modality seems to function in copulas in the same way as it functions

in verbal predicates, with no differences in distributional behaviors that I can discern.

This includes the existence of two allomorphs of the speculative construction: all my consultant that I have asked, regardless of where they are from, report being familiar with both the forms *jɪnkʰare* and *jokʰare* and the forms *jɪnsare* and *josare*, but only the latter set occurs in my data. In addition, neither Haller[144] nor do Sung & Rgya include such a form[145]. As with other copular forms, the speculative copulas can occur alone as the sole constituent of a sentence. This provides a basis for analyzing the speculative copulas as non-compositional morphemes.

Speculative copulas imply that the speaker believes the assertion to be true, but that their knowledge is speculative in nature, perhaps inferred from directly or indirectly perceived evidence, or else based purely on logical assumptions. Speakers often translate speculative-marked sentences using words like 'probably' (大概是), or 'should be' (应该是), suggesting a high degree of confidence, so sometimes such sentences are explained as the speaker being "certain" that they are true. As with the allophoric and egophoric copulas, the speculative copulas are neutral for tense-aspect.

Speakers also frequently employ a translation of 'looks like'. My impression is that this is often how speculative-marked equative clauses are interpreted. Consider (337), below.

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[144] Haller (2004: 192) records a form *jən-kʰa-zəç* in the following sentence, excerpted from the second narrative.
(30) *ti rəɣuŋ tɕerloχ-zəç jən-kʰa-zəç...!*
'(Das) scheint dann ein (bie Gefahr) mit aufgerissehen Augen daliegender Hase zu sein!' ("The hare seemed to be wide-eyed with fear…!" (P.192, line 30)

[145] I believe that, rather than representing instances of dialect-based variation, these two forms are likely allomorphs of a single construction. This is because both elements occur as nominalizers in Classical Literary Tibetan and some registers of Written Tibetan to create complement clause constructons with similar semantic overtones.

(337) *tə*   *rgɛrgan*   *jɪnsare*

DEF   teacher   EQ.SPEC

'They must be a teacher.' Or, 'they must have been a teacher.'   (Gcig.sgril)

The subject of the sentence in (337) is a stranger at the bus station in Gcig.sgril who looks like a white foreigner. The apparent race, and perhaps age, of the person causes the speaker to speculate that they may be a foreign teacher. However, not all assumptions are based on appearance. Example (338), below, is of a speculative existential clause.

(338) *kʰɨtɕʰu-a*   *ɣŋil*   *maŋo*   *josare*

3P-DAT money   many   EXIST.SPEC

'They must have a lot of money (because they live in a giant, new house).'
(Gcig.sgril)

In (338), the speaker deduces that the people are wealthy on the basis of the kind of house they live in; the house looks expensive, so they owners must have a lot of money.

No distinction in egophoricity is made in speculative clauses, so this category is truly egophorically neutral.

7.5.4.2 FUTURE Copula Construction

I have identified future tense forms of existential and equative copulas which are, respectively, *joɟire*[146] and *jɳɟire*. I employ the label future for these forms because I believe that to be their default interpretation. Moreover, this appears to be the only interpretation for sentences with assertor-subjects. However, when there is a non-assertor subject, a modal interpretation is sometimes more felicitous. Thus, while example (336), above, is translated by Sung & Rgya into English with the word 'will', Sung & Rgya refer to it as a 'conjectural' statement (p. 307). Haller uses the label[147] Future. This connection between future tense and conjectural modality is illustrated with the examples below.

Future sense of FCC

(339) *targoŋ   ŋa   kʰom-ba   joɟimare*

     this.evening   1S.DAT be.free-NMZ   EXIST.FUT.ALLO.NEG

     'I won't have time this evening.'   (Gcig.sgril)

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[146] I suspect that there may be an egophoric future existential copula, *joɟijn*. Haller presents a possible allomorph of such a form in is Them.chen grammar (p. 168), but I have not encountered the form anywhere else. I have not yet found such a form while doing extensive searches on Google or looking through my collection of printed Tibetan-language literature from Amdo. This is not conclusive evidence that such a form doesn't occur, of course, and when I have asked consultants from various parts of Amdo on the matter, rather than being given a straightforward answer of 'no', I have been told either that they don't believe they themselves would say such a form, but that others might; or I have been told that such a form seems possible, but it is hard to imagine a situation in which it would make sense to say it. In contrast, everyone I have ever asks immediately rejects the proposed future egophoric equative copula *jɳɟijn*. This is a good illustration of the limitations and strengths of elicitation as a tool for understanding egophoricity.

[147] Haller (2004) and Sung & Rgya each analyze forms like *jɳɟire* as morphologically complex, with the same suffix *-ɟire* that also occurs in verbal clauses.

Conjectural sense of FCC

(340) | *kʰərga* | *soma* | *ta* | *kʰom-ba* | *joɟimare* |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 3S.DAT | right.now | now | be.free-NMZ | EXIST.FUT.ALLO.NEG |

'They most likely don't have time right now.'   (Gcig.sgril)

(341) | *ŋa* | *soma* | *ta* | *kʰom-ba* | *joɟimare* |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1S.DAT | right.now | now | be.free-NMZ | EXIST.FUT.ALLO.NEG |

'I won't have time right now.'   (Gcig.sgril)

The speaker of (341) is simply asserting that they won't be free that evening so the sentence seems like a straightforward expression of future tense. A conjectural interpretation of 'shouldn't be free' is also compatible, but a future sense appears to be primary.

In contrast, a future tense interpretation is impossible for the sentence in (341), as the two temporal adverbs, *soma* 'right now' and *ta* 'now', entail that the time of the proposition is also the time of speech. The adverb *soma* is incompatible with this copular form in a declarative sentence with a fist person subject, as we see in the rejected sentence in (341). This suggests that, at least for assertor-subjects, *joɟire* and *jɪnɟire* have a primary sense of future tense. The conjectural extension of these forms suggests that, in fact, they are really an expression of *irrealis* mood. Perhaps the reason that there is no egophoricity contrast for future tense copulas is because egophoricity is a feature of realis mood, only. Nonetheless, especially for equative predicates, the future copula is the preferred way to express proper inclusion and identity predicates that will be true at a

time after the time of speech. So, the future tense copula seems to be the preferred way to express the proposition in (342), below.

(342) *mawõŋpa-a*   *ŋə*   *pɛixwo=zɨç*   *jɪnɟɨre*

future -LOC   1S   rich.person=INDEF   EQ.FUT.ALLO

'In the future I will be rich.'   (Gcig.sgril)

7.5.4.3   Factual Copular Construction

Both existential copulas and equative copulas have corresponding factual forms. I refer to this as the Factual Copula Construction. Etymologically, this construction is related to the Factual Verbal Construction (see Sec.8.7), but whereas the verbal construction has both egophoric and allophoric forms, the Factual Copular Construction only occurs with the allophoric element red. Examples of Factual Copular Construction for existential and equative copulas are presented below.

Equative Factual Copula Construction

(343) *kʰərgə* *rgɛrgæn*   *jɪnəre*

3S   teacher   EQ.FACT

'She is a teacher.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Existential Factual Copula Construction

(344) *tsʰoŋra*   *tə-naŋna*   *ʂm̥æn*   *jonəmare*

store   DEF-LOC   medicine   EXIST.FACT.NEG

'The store (that you mentioned) doesn't have medicine.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Because the sentences in (343)-(344) are marked as factual, their propositional content belongs to the category of information that I term 'general knowledge'. As a grammatical marker, the Factual Copula Category is used in the following ways: first, to express information that the speaker assumes is already known by the interlocutor; second, to express information for which information source and information access are irrelevant. These concepts are at play in different contexts, but the structural expression is still the same.

Perhaps the most important property of the Factual Copula Construction is that it is non-egophoric (as opposed to being egophorically-neutral). Its distributional behavior suggests that it primarily contrasts with the allophoric copula forms. One such behavior is the fact that it almost never occurs with assertor-subjects and my consultants have tended to reject such sentences when directly asked.

The factual existential construction seems to have the same functional profile as the factual verbal construction: it is primarily used to mark information as 'general knowledge' or to mark the information as assumed. It occurs frequently in legends and accounts of events or situations that are part of the common cultural knowledge of the community, so a majority of the existential copular clauses in the three legendary narratives published in Haller (2004) are the Factual Copula Construction.

The functional profile of factual equative clauses includes the above (and is also common in legends), but it appears that the more common function is actually as an epistemic modal marker: speakers use it to indicate a high degree of certainty. Often, this form is used to correct a (presumed) misconception on the part of the interlocutor. For

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instance, the consultant who produced (343) went on to explain that the main reason she would use this form is if the person she was speaking to had given some sort of indication that they didn't believe the subject was a teacher. For her, there is a sense of insistence to the utterance.

One reason this modal use of this construction is more common than the affirmative or factual use is that the allophoric function of red already encompasses a factual interpretation. As stated, red is used for situations that the assertor has evidence for, as well as for situations that the assertor doesn't have evidence for, but which they assume to be true, anyway. Pragmatically, there is a sense of arguing with or trying to persuade the other person, as well.

So, in daily conversations, the allophoric equative copula is used in expressions like (345), below, when the speaker wishes to simply assert information about a subject without conveying any additional sense of how their attitude toward the assertion or what they assume the interlocutor knows or doesn't know.

(345) *tʰəmp*   *mikɔ-ɣi*   *tsoŋtʰoŋ*   *re*

     Trump   U.S.-GEN   president   EQ.ALLO

This epistemic sense of the factual equative copula construction seems to be primary.

7.6 Non-finite copular clauses

As stated in Chapter 4, the constructions within the post-verbal assertion-marking paradigm only occur with finite verbs, meaning they are only found on the last verbs of sentences. This is also true for copular verbs, which frequently occur in non-finite form as subordinate clauses in clause chains and as embedded, non-finite clauses in nominalizations. However, to my knowledge, copulas do not occur in serial verbs in any position—finite or non-finite.

The forms of the existential and equative copulas that appear in non-finite clauses are identical to the forms that occur in finite clauses with an egophoric function. This is illustrated with an example of a nominalized existential clause (346) and an example of a nominalized equative clause (347).

(346) *lu ɦziukɛ àná*

     lu   *bʑi*   ***jo-kə***   *ana*

     year   four   EXIST-GEN   girl

     'Four year-old girl'   (Yăqūtān)

(347) *tɕa tɕʰɪme jinə n̥tʰoŋ?*

     tɕa   *tɕʰɨmi*   ***jɪn-nə***   *n̥tʰoŋ*

     tea   how   EQ-NMZ   drink

     'How (would you like) to drink the tea?' (E.g. cold or hot?)   (Gcig.sgril)

Example (346) shows a relative clause, which is expressed by the Genitive Phrase Construction (Sec.5.5.1). Example (347) shows a complement clause. Note that the

nominalized form of the existential copula in a relative clause is phonologically reminiscent of the allophoric existential copula. This possibly reflects possible historical origins of the allophoric existential copula (and direct evidence imperfective construction in verbal clauses) in relative clauses[148].

In addition to functioning as verb complements (347) and nominal modifiers (346), subordinate copular clauses frequently function adverbially, as demonstrated in (348), below, with an utterance that is comprised of two complex sentences. Each sentence contains a subordinate clause, occupying the first position in the entire utterance[149]. These clauses are made subordinate by the conditional marker *-na*, which can only attach to the *yin* form of the equative copula. The example is excerpted from the language primer by Min & Di (2005: 228). The sentence has a total of six verbs, so the three VPs which are relevant to this current discussion are bolded. I have parsed the utterance into three clauses. Clause (348b) and clause (348c) are finite complex clauses. The first clause is a non-finite simplex clause.

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[148] Another likely source is a complement clause construction with the agent-oriented nominalizer *-mkhan* (WT: མཁན), which Saxena (1997) describes as a probable source for finite verbal constructions in Lhasa Tibetan. *-mkhan* is also a common nominalizer in Lhasa Tibetan (DeLancey 1999:234-237) and also modern Amdo Tibetan. It occurs in examples (277) and (284), above.

[149] I have followed the punctuation and spacing of the original source for the Tibetan orthography (not the transliterated and glossed lines) and included the original Chinese translation. It may be apparent from this example that Tibetan conventions around punctuation and spacing do not completely correspond to written English conventions.

(348) ངའི་ལྟ་ཚུལ་ཡིན་ན། གཅིག་ཡིན་ན་ངོ་ཚ་མི་ཉན། གཉིས་ཡིན་ན་བཤད་རྒྱུའོ་ཧོད་པ་ཡོད་དགོ..

A. nga'i   lta.tshul   **yin-na**

    1S.GEN   opinion   **EQ**   **-COND**

    'My views **are**…'

B. gcig   **yin-na,**   ngo.tsha   mi-   nyan.

    One   **EQ-COND**   hot.face   NEG.IPF[150]-   listen

    'The first **is**, don't be shy.'

C. gnyis   **yin-na,**

    two   **EQ-COND**

    bshad   -rgyu'o   hod.pa   yod-dgo.

    speak   -NMZ   courage   EXIST-need

    'The second **is**, (one) must have the courage to speak.'

 'My thinking is, first, don't be shy; second, speaking requires courage… ("我的

看法，一， 不能害羞，二， 说话要大胆… (p. 228)"'

The utterance in (348) is a response to a request for tips on how to learn a second

language. The clause in (348a) thus frames the information expressed in (348b) and

(348c) as the speaker's suggestions. The informational scope of (348a) therefore extends

to the two clauses that come after. This is signaled by the conditional clause of (348a).

The context of (348a) is such that the Conditional Clause Construction does not actually

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[150] Note that the use of the imperfective negative prefix in this sentence is different than the usual
prohibitive construction, which has the perfective negative prefix. I don't think this is a mistake in Min et
al. Rather, I think the imperfective aspect of the negation here is due to the semantic class of the verb nyan,
which is an intransitive, non-control verb.

have a conditional interpretation. Rather, it indicates that the thought 'my view is' is not complete.

The Conditional Clause Construction (CondCC) also occurs in (348b) and again in (348c) with the same function. For (b) and (c), I have chosen to include the CondCC as part of the finite sentences that follow. This analysis is partly cued by the punctuation of the utterance, which isolates (348a), but not the other two CondCC clauses. Even so, the internal syntax of all three CondCC clauses is identical.

The CondCC is also used to express conditional information. This function is illustrated with the following example excerpted from a spontaneous dialog recorded in my data collection.

(349) *sɛm tɕʰoŋ pɕi məna, oŋɛcʰək ŋgo ʂŋæ ɹtɕæ ndzokə.*

    'If you aren't careful, the seat will flip over.' (Gcigs.gril)

sɛm.tɕʰoŋ	*pɕi-wi*	*mən-na*
careful	do-NMZ	EQ.NEG-COND

    'If (you) aren't careful…'

oŋ.ɹcʰaχ	*ŋgo.ʂŋa*	*ɹtɕæ*	*nɟo-kə*
seat	front.part	over.turn	go-DE.IPF

    'The seat is going to flip over.'

The CondCC is a semantically non-finite clause construction that is also morphosyntactically non-finite. Other examples of both equative and existential copulas in non-finite constructions are given, below. The relevant constructions are bolded.

(350)   *timə ziç **jɪn ti**, ɹvæɣə tʰoʁ timi vcav [ndəɣ] bzaχ ti, kʰəŋ tɕʰækæ mæɹa ʂfəɣ tonəɹe.*

'[The tool] is (designed) that way so that when you hit the tent, it can knock down the snow.'   (Gcig.sgril)

timə=ziç		**jɪn-ti**		
this.way=INDEF		EQ-when		

'When it is like this…'

ɹvæ	*-ɣə*	*tʰoʁ*	*timi*	*vcav [=ndəɣ]=bzaχ-ti*
tent	-GEN	top	this.way	hit=CONT=CMP-WHEN

'When (you) hit the top of the tent like this…'

kʰəŋ	*tɕʰækæ*	*mæɹa*	*ʂfəɣ=tʰɨɣ-nɨre*
snow	all	down	knock=can-FACT.ALLO

'The snow can be knocked down.'

(351)   *…tə -ŋiɣa,   **jo-nu**…*

    DEF-DU   **EXIST-NMZ**

'…the two, having…'   (Them.chen) (Haller 2004: p.168, line 32)

As we can see from the above examples, there is no morphological alternation conditioned by assertor-involvement—or any other propositional or informational factor—so it is clear that, while isomorphic, non-finite copulas are functionally distinct from finite copulas.

7.7 Co-occurrence of copulas with verbal auxiliaries

Copulas occur with a restricted inventory of auxiliary verbs. Compared to other verbs, they also occur more rarely with auxiliaries overall. Most commonly, copulas occur in the Deontic Construction, which we saw was the form of the final verb in example (318c), reproduced below. Example (), below that, is of an equative version of this copula, excerpted from Haller (p. 168, line 27).

(318c) gnyis   yin-na,

       two   EQ-COND

       bshad-rgyu'o   hod.pa   **yod-dgo.**

       speak-NMZ   courage   EXIST-need

       'The second **is**, (one) must have the courage to speak.'   (Bla.brang WT)

(352) *kʰərge rdzəm̩tʂʰəl-tɕan təmu-zəç **jən-rgo-ɣe!***

       "Er muss (jemand) mit offenschtlichen magischen Kraften, ein solcher, sein!"

       (Translation from German: 'He must be some kind of magician!'

       kʰərge rdzəm̩tʂʰəl-tɕan   *təmu-zəç*   *jən=rgo-ɣe*

       3S   magic-NMZ.AGENT   this.way-INDEF   EQ=DEON-DE.IPF

I have encountered almost no other auxiliaries. The exceptions that come to mind are single instance of the equative copula co-occurring with the continuous auxiliary *=ndəç*.

7.8   Nominalized clauses as copular complements

Along with clause chains and serial verbs, copular clauses are an important historical source of finite assertional constructions. How such markers emerge is from an initially pragmatic use of a CopCC to express a proposition that is generally expressed verbally. The pragmatic use of various kinds of copular clauses with nominalized clause complements continues to be a prominent feature of the modern Tibetic languages. This process is particularly well illustrated in the occasional use of copular clauses to express property concepts, which are usually expressed with a stative verb construction in Amdo Tibetan, and expressed by copular clauses in other varieties of Tibetan.

I've included a few examples of such non-verbal attributive clauses below with a discussion of the semantic nuances that distinguish them from pragmatically un-marked verbal constructions.

(353) *ŋa-ki*   *milʝ*   *ndoχ*   *nəɣnəɣ*   *jin*

     1S-GEN   cat   color   black   EQ.EGO

     'My cat is the color black.'   (Yăqūtān)

The sentence predicates an attribute of 'black' for the subject 'my cat'. Generally, attributive predication is expressed with a verbal clause with a stative verb, as illustrated below.

(354) *milɣ*   *nəɣ*   *-ki*

cat   be.black   -DE

'The cat is/was black.'

(Yăqūtān)

Note that the color term 'black' is nominalized in (353) by being reduplicated, which makes it an Adjective Phrase that can then modify the noun 'color'.

The two clauses are nearly identical in terms of their propositional content. The primary difference is that (353) includes an assertor participant in the form of a possessor, which as we have seen for this particular dialect can trigger an optional egophoric marking, when the discourse-pragmatic context merits it. One explanation for why in (353) the proposition is realized as a nominalized copular complement clause is that the speaker wants to express assertor involvement and the fact that in their finite form, stative verbs may be evidential or factual (see Sec. 8.1 below) precludes expressing this kind of information except through a nominalized clause construction.

On the other hand, we also see incidents of allophoric equative clauses expressing attributes. This is the case with the predicate *ṣcɨt.po zɨç re* 'was fun', in (355), below. Because the attribute is of a situation, not something the speaker possesses, it cannot be egophoric. The more typical method to describe a past situation as 'fun' is also presented, in example (356).

(355) *təɣə ʂta zondi tə çɕɨɣə ʂcit.po ziç rɛɣo, aro!*

      təɣə   ʂta   zon-ti=tə

      well   horse ride-when=DEF

      çɕɨɣə   ʂcit-po=ziç   re-ɣo   aro

      very   be.happy-NMZ=INDEF   EQ.ALLO-SFP friend.VOC

      'Well, dude, horseback riding that time was a lot of fun!'   (Gcig.sgril)

(356) *ʁjɨʂtse soŋe ə́ʂcəʔtʰa.*

      ɣjɨʂtse   soŋ-ne ə-ʂcɨt-tʰa

      Gyu.rtsa'e   went-ABL   Q-be.happy-DE.PST

      'Was it fun going to Gyu.rtsa'e?'   (Gcig.sgril)

Both of the above sentences are descriptions of past events. In fact, both are accounts of recent horseback treks. Why is the event in (355) characterized using an equative clause and the event in (356) using a stative verb? One possibility is that the intention of the speaker in (355) is to highlight the fun sense of the proposition by downplaying the past tense sense. We know from context (as well as the use of the definite marker) that the speaker of (355) is referencing a specific horseback riding event that already occurred, but the sentence itself has no overt indications of time. Since this was only the speaker's second time to ride a horse, perhaps she was most concerned with expressing an essential fact she learned as a result of the experience—that horseback riding is fun.

In contrast, the speaker of (356) highlights the past sense of the situation. This might be because he was speaking about a place that he had been to before and so the

time of his 'fun' experience was more salient. On the other hand, it might also be because he found his pleasant experience to be more mundane or less remarkable than the other speaker found her enjoyment of horseback riding to be.

Action verbs are commonly show up as nominalized complements of equative verbs. An example of this is (357), below. In this instance, the nominalized clause is a complement to a subordinate copula clause.

(357) *sɛm.tɕʰoŋ*   *pɕi-wi*[151]   *mɪn-na*

       careful   do-NMZ   EQ.NEG-COND

       'If (you) aren't careful…'   (Gcig.sgril)

(358) *ʁoŋ.ɹcəχ*   *ŋgo.ʂŋa*   *ɹtɕœ*   *ɲo-kə*

       seat   front.part   over.turn   go-DE.IPF

       'The seat is going to flip over.'   (Gcig.sgril)

In (357), the subordinate clause consists of the transitive action verb 'do' (*pɕi* (WT: *byas*)) that is a nominalized complement of the negative equative copula *mɪn*. The

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[151] The nominalizer -*wi* is cognate with a very old nominalizer, -Ba, that is marginally productive in Amdo Tibetan, but is frequently encountered in fossilized form in lexical items such as ʂm̥æn.pa 'doctor' (literally, 'medicine-NMZ'). It is also a semi-productive way to derive 'new' nouns from actions, although this usage seems restricted to fairly formal registers, like the creation of job titles, as in the word for 'master of ceremonies', which one of my Gro.tsang consultants told me is *xtsoɹɕɕoŋ pɕetpa*—literally a nominalization of the clause 'to speak a presentation', (WT: *gtso.skyong bshad*).

This historical nominalizer occurs in as part of various perfective constructions in the TAME paradigm of Standard Tibetan, as in the following sentence (c). It also occurs in as part of the epistemic modal construction *yin.pa.red* in Classical Literary Tibetan.
(c)   *ləp*   =*ɕàà*   -*pa jĩ̃*
       speak   =detr   -ego.pst
'I was determined to speak (Tibetan).'   (Darjeeling)

more typical way to express the information encoded in this clause is presented in (359), below.

(359) *sɛm.tɕʰoŋ*   *ma-pɕi-na*

   careful   NEG.PFV-do-COND

   'If (you) aren't careful…'

What's the difference in meaning between these two forms? For one, speakers seem to feel that (357) sounds more formal—and therefore more respectful or less judgmental—than (359). Also, as with the nominalization in (357), an epistemic difference may be a factor. Even though (359) is non-finite, it seems to be suggesting a hypothetical scenario that is more generally true than that expressed in (357). This sense (as well as the more formal/respectful sense) may owe something to the fact that in (359) the event is no longer construed as an action with an agent, but is now construed as an identity or proper inclusion predicate and the concept of agency is removed. This may contribute to a reduced sense of responsibility over the event.

Finally, another example of this is sentence (360), below, which is said by a host to a guest when handing out tea or water.

(360) *tɕʰy*   *ɹko-ma*   *re*

   water   boil-NMZ   EQ.ALLO

   'The water is very hot.' (Lit. 'the water is boiled.')   (Yăqūtān)

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The sentence in (360) is something one would say when handing a guest a cup of boiling hot water to warm them to be careful handling it so they don't burn themselves. The word *ɹko* is an action verb meaning 'boil'. It also occurs in the nominal expression *tɕʰuɹko* 'boiled water'[152].

The structure of (360) was explained to me as emphasizing the fact that the water was just boiled, as opposed to the meaning of a sentence like (361):

(361) *tɕʰy*   *çɕigi*   *tsʰɹ̩-ki*

     water   very   be.hot-DE.IPF

     'The water is very hot.'   (Yǎqūtān)

7.9   Occurrence of copulas as elements in TAME constructions for verbal clauses

Both existential and equative copulas show up as elements in the TAME morphology of verbal clauses. Almost certainly they got there as a result of the grammaticalization of the kinds of pragmatically-marked sentences (and it has to be sentence, since the assertion-marking TAME paradigm only occurs on finite verbs) briefly discussed in Chapter 4. In this section, I will present an overview of those verbal TAME markers which contain etymological copulas. This information is organized according to the presumed morphosyntactic configuration of the historical source construction for each.

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[152] This phrase is sometimes translated into Chinese as 开水(kāi shuǐ)—literally, 'water that has been boiled'—which contrasts with 生水 (shēng shuǐ)—'raw water'—which is naturally water that hasn't been boiled.

7.9.1 Equative copula constructions

Verbal TAME constructions derived from the equative copula set can be divided into two diachronic categories—those which are transparently derived from a nominalized copula complement clause, and those for which, from their internal structure, the historical source construction is less obvious.

7.9.1.1 Occurrence of Equative Allophoric in Purposive Construction

In verbal sentences, the Factual Construction, Speculative Construction and Future Construction all contain equative elements that are preceded by elements that to this day function as nominalizers in the language. For reasons of space, I will just examine the likely grammaticalization process for the Factual Construction.

The Verbal Factual Construction derives from a nominalization construction in which the focus marker *-ni* (WT: ནི) nominalizes the clause so that it can appear as a complement for an equative copula. Example (362), below, illustrates the Factual Egophoric Copula. Example (363) illustrates the Factual Allophoric Copula.

(362) *ŋi   ŋɨma ʑeʑe   lika   le-nɨjɪn*

1S.ERG   sun   every   work   do-FACT.EGO

'I work every day.'   (Gcig.sgril)

(363) *ŋima   tsʰə-nire*

sun   be.hot-FACT.ALLO

'It's hot (today).'   (Yăqūtān)

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The TAME constructions illustrated in (362)-(363) derive from the nominalization construction illustrated below in (364). Note that Smin.thang is a neighboring County to Gcig.sgril in Mgo.log Prefecture.

(364) *ŋi*   *[mŋe   tɕʰɪmi   [mbə=ɹgo]_VP]_CLAUSE-nə]_NP*   *ma-ɕi*

     1S.ERG fire   how   light=DEON-NMZ   NEG.PFV-know

     'I didn't know how to start a fire.'   (Smin.thang Mgo.log)

In (364) we see the basic structure of the Focus Nominalization Construction (FocNomC), provided in the template, below.

(365)   [[CLAUSE] *-ni*]_NP [VERB]

To get from the basic structure in (365), in which any verb that takes a complement (like 'know' in (364)), to the Factual Construction, the verb constituent of the FocNomC must become restricted to an equative copula. The following example, (366) is a bridge between FocNomC and the Factual Construction.

(366) *ta*   *[pkopa maŋwo mɛt]_CLAUSE-nɨ]_NP*   *jin-a*

     now   plan   many   EXIST.NEG-NMZ   EQ.EGO-SFP

     'I'm not much of a planner.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Example (366) very nicely illustrates the shift in meaning that comes with framing a habitual proposition as an identity of the speaker, rather than as an imperfective activity. Instead of saying, 'I don't make plans', the speaker asserts that not being a big planner is part of their identity. Likewise, in terms of information source, the assertion is now framed as a general fact, so there is no source, while in terms of information access, it is egophoric and therefore is a form of self-knowledge for the speaker. The emphatic, or focal meaning of the construction have disappeared as the last two semantic features were preserved as the construction grammaticalized into a formal category of FACTUAL EGOPHORIC.

7.9.2   TAME constructions of equative copulas and no nominalizers

There is one verbal TAME construction that does not have a transparent nominalization element and that is the Purposive Construction, the template for which is given below.

[VERB.IPF] *red*

An example of this construction is given below, using the phrase 'make a call'.

(367) *kʰapar*   *ɲaχ*   *re*

phone   hit   EQ.ALLO

'I'll call (Ye.shes Sgrol.ma) (for you).'   (Gcig.sgril)

This construction must originate in a nominalization construction similar that of (360), reproduced below, but there is no obvious nominalizing morphology to the semantic main verb 'hit'.

(360) tɕʰy   ɹko   -ma   re

water   boil   -NMZ   EQ.ALLO

'The water is very hot.' (Lit. 'the water is boiled.')   (Yǎqūtān)

I assume that the Purposive Construction developed from a nominalized complement clause source construction on the basis that the alternative hypothesis, that it developed from a serial verb construction, contradicts what we know about the properties serial verbs display in the language today—namely, the final verb in a series cannot be a copula.

We are left, then, with two possible grammaticalization pathways, both of which are based on nominalization. The first hypothesis is that Purposive Construction developed from a construction similar to FocNomC, but with a nominalizing suffix that eventually disappeared, leaving no trace. The second hypothesis is that there never was a nominalizing suffix but there was still a complement clause. This hypothesis seems the most likely, given how persistent morphological traces of old nominalizers usually are in Tibetan. In fact, as Hill (2019) shows, in Old Tibetan and Classical Literary Tibetan, verb stems often occur in non-finite contexts with no overt nominalizing morphology.

The functional and structural properties of the Purposive Construction will be described in detail in Sec. 8.9.

7.9.3 Existential copulas as elements in verbal assertion marking

Existential copulas also show up as elements in verbal assertion-marking constructions. Most notably, they occur in the Perfect Construction, illustrated below with both egophoric and allophoric examples.

(368) *ta*   *zama*   *za*   *=jo*

      now   food   eat.IPF =PERF.EGO

      'I've eaten; I ate (already).'   (Gcig.sgril)

(369) *ta*   *zama*   *za=jokə*

      now   food   eat.IPF=PERF.ALLO

      'They've eaten; They ate (already).'   (Gcig.sgril)

Note that the form of the verb stem in this construction is identical to that of the Purposive Construction, presented above: an imperfective verb stem (where such a form exists) with no overt nominalization marker.

The Perfect Construction will be described in detail in Sec. 8.6.

CHAPTER VIII

VERBAL CLAUSES

The basic structure of verbal clauses has already been discussed in Sec. 6. The current chapter introduces the semantic classes of verbs, as defined by their behaviors in assertion-marking constructions. Then I provide an overview of clause chaining phenomena, specifically converbs and serial verbs, that have contributed to those assertional constructions which did not originate in copular constructions. Then, I introduce the basic constructions that make up the morphological paradigm of finite verbal clauses. Because many of these topics have been covered extensively elsewhere in this dissertation or in other publications (see Tribur 2017), I will only provide an overview of each discussion with some additional comments. Finally, I discuss the phenomenon of verbal auxiliaries, which in terms of function and morphosyntax, fall somewhere between serial verb constructions and assertional constructions.

8.1   Semantic classes of lexical verbs

On the basis of the TAME markers they take, verbs fall into two primary lexical classes: stative verbs and action verbs. Stative verbs have an inherent imperfective aspect, and so do not obligatorily take perfective or past-tense markings when they occur in past contexts. This feature of stative verbs is illustrated below.

Stative (Present)

(370) *cʰo   ʂʈa   lɛn-ko-no   ə́-ɕi-Ø?*

2S   sound   send-PROG-NMZ   Q-know-EGO

'Are you aware you are being recorded?'   (Chu.ma Reb.gong)

Stative (past)

(371) *ⁿdɨ   ŋə   mɨ-ɕi-Ø*

PROX   1S.ERG   NEG.IPF-know -EGO

'I didn't know this.'   (Chu.ma Reb.gong)

The sentence in (371) was specifically elicited as a way to express the past-tense English translation. Stative verbs can occur in past-tense or perfective grammatical constructions, but this generally alters the inherent aspect to coerce a perfective sense, as in (372), below.

(372) *ko-tʰa*

understand-DE.PST

'I understand (now).' (I didn't understand before.)

The verb 'understand', like 'know', is stative and inherently imperfective, but the sentence in (372) is a high frequency expression because it is the usual way to respond to an explanation or instruction: one didn't know the information before, but now they do. I have not been told this, but I suspect that, also, the perfective form comes off as more polite or respectful than the unmarked, imperfective sense. This is because the perfective

sense highlights a change of state from not understanding to understanding that is directly attributable to information that was just provided by the addressee.

Of course, such perfective construals of negative states are impossible, as shown in the following examples.

(373) *tə*   *bzi*   *ta*   *ŋə*   *mɨ-ko-kə*

DEF   say   now   1S.ERG   NEG.IPF-understand-DE

'I didn't understand what she said.'   (Gcig.sgril)

(374) *ŋə*   *ma-*   *ko-tʰa*

1S.ERG   NEG.PST-   understand-DE.PST

Intended: I didn't understand. (Actual: 'I didn't hear.')   (Gcig.sgril)

Stative verbs are mostly intransitive, but a handful—mostly verbs of cognition (PCU) and related senses—are transitive, so the first-person participant in (374) is ergative. The second-person participant in (373) is not ergative-marked because the second person is also the patient of the nominalized clause.

As mentioned in Sec. 0, predicate attribution is expressed by stative verbs, so many property concepts are stative verbs. Examples of such predicates are given below.

(375) *ə́-nɖiç-kə*

Q-be.correct-DE

'Is it correct?'   (Gcig.sgril)

(376) *ti ʁoŋa tə zɨn, jəχwa jɪnə tsʰanəre.*

ti	*ʁoŋa=tə*	*zɨn,*
MED.GEN	dry.dung=DEF	take

jəχ-wa	*jɪn-na*	*tsʰa-nɨre.*
be.good-NMZ	EQ-COND	be.hot -FACT.ALLO

'(You) took the dung there (and) if it is (positioned) right, then it will be hot.'[153]

(Gcig.sgril)

(377) *ʌstanpa*   *ʌdzi*   **bzaŋ-kə**

tsampa	mix	**be.good-DE**

'The tsampa is mixed well.'   (Rnga.ba)

Stative verbs are rarely egophoric—the obvious exceptions being PCU verbs. This is because stative verbs tend to describe properties, which are not situations that an assertor might initiate or control. Also, many stative verbs are endopathic, meaning that they refer to internal conditions that are perceivable only through one's senses. Expressions of illness or pain are stative verbs, for example.

Action verbs can be further divided into activities versus accomplishments on the basis of telicity, and also achievements for punctual events. Sub-classes of action verbs will be described as they come up in the following sections.

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[153] The speaker was referring to my method of placing dung when building a fire in the stove: I would manage to get the fire to ignite, but then the flame would self-extinguish after ten minutes or so.

8.2   From complex predicates to TAME morphology

Previous authors have observed that a certain number of verb stems occur most frequently in SVC final position, in particular, verbs of motion. Some authors (e.g., Vorkuková 2008: 295-321; and Oisel 2013 and 2017b:168) refer to these verbs and their serial verb position as 'secondary verbs'. The most common of these seem to be the translocative motion verb 'go' and the cislocative verb of motion 'come'.

Before I continue with the discussion of assertional and auxiliary constructions and how they interact with the lexical aspect of verbs, I wish to briefly address the structural origins of Tassertion-marking and auxiliary constructions in complex clauses, specifically the structure of concatenated verb phrases commonly known as serial verbs.

All Tibetic languages are characterized by two structural features that are crucial to the development of the finitizing assertional markers: clause chaining and serial verb constructions. A clause chain is comprised of multiple clauses, none of which are morphosyntactically subordinate. However, only the verb of the final clause has finite morphology, the post-verbal morphemes described above, which exercise semantic scope over all the preceding verbs in the chain. The non-finite clauses in a clause chain are often, but not always, linked to the following clause by converb morphemes. Example (378) below is of an imperative complex clause with a converb.

(378) *ta*   *cʰu*   *tə*   *ptaŋ* *-a*   *zoχ*

now   2S.ERG   DEF   discard -CNV put.IMP

'Set that down and put it away now.'

Any arguments that are shared among all clauses in the chain will appear overtly only in the first clause. This is illustrated in the following example from Standard Tibetan.

(379) 'ben   gcig-la   gdung-btsugs//   gcig-la   mda'-brgyab //

target   one-DAT   spear -thrust//   one-DAT   arrow-hit

gcig-la   memda'-brgyab dgos   red

one-DAT   gun   -hit   must   AUX

'(the riders) have to stick a spear into the first target, shoot an arrow into the

second, and fire a gun at the third!"   (Tournadre 2003: 338)

Example (379) contains three clauses joined together to form a coordinate clause chain. Each coordinate clause has its own dative object and is separated by a pause. There is no overt agent for any of the clauses, however it is understood that all three predicates have the same agent, the previously mentioned riders. The actions are understood to happen in sequence rather than simultaneously, but simultaneous events are also expressed with the same coordinate structure. The auxiliary, *dgos-red*, which occurs in the third clause, has scope over the two preceding clauses.

The clause chain construction paves the way, structurally, for the evolution of serial verb constructions. Like a clause chain, a serial verb consists of more than one lexical verb, however each verb does not code a separate event, but rather their interpretations are combined to form a complex semantic representation of a single event, a complex predicate. Because of this, there are restrictions on SVC constituency that are

not present in clause chain constructions. While both SVCs and clause chains must share an A/O argument, transitive SVCs must also share patients. Additionally, there are restrictions on what types of lexical verbs can occur in the second verb (V₂) position in an SVC, while it appears that there are no lexical restrictions on the distribution of verbs in clause chains. V₂ verbs seem to fit a specific semantic profile. They express broader, more abstract notions, such as 'go', 'come', 'can' and 'finish', etc. All V₂ verbs also occur alone as the SMVs of simplex predicates. They also occur in the V₁ position, but rarely, and never with an identical V₂.

(380) *pɛa*   ***m̥pʰir***   ***wit***-*tʰa*

    bird   **fly**   **went**-DE.PST

    'The birds flew away.'   (Gcig.sgril)

In (380), the verbs 'fly' and 'went' combine to form a predicate that expresses both manner (flight) and direction. In this case the second position verb, 'went' expresses that the motion was away from the speaker. The verb *m̥pʰir* is very specific as to the manner of movement, it does not in and of itself contain any sense of directionality so to talk of translocation happening by means of flight requires a SVC such as in the above example.

    Like simplex predicates, SVCs can also occur as bare stem imperatives, as in (381), below.

(381) *rɟiɤ   soŋ*

      run   go.IMP

      'Go on, run (away)!'   (Gcig.sgril)

Note that the imperative stem of 'go', *soŋ*, also occurs as an auxiliary verb. We know that *soŋ* in (381) it is a lexical verb that is the V$_2$ of an SVC in part because the semantics of imperative *soŋ* are quite different from that of auxiliary *=soŋ*: the latter is a perfective marker and when paired with an action verb, expresses that the event has taken place, but an imperative utterance entails that the desired event has not yet transpired. There is another difference between (381) and a usage of *=soŋ* as an auxiliary that is apparent when we consider a superficially identical utterance in (382), below.

(382) *rɟiɤ=soŋ-Ø*

      run=PFV-EGO

      'I ran.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Constructionally, SVCs consist of a VP which has multiple verbs, or a phrase of multiple verbs. In contrast, an auxiliary or TAME construction contains one verb that is semantically non-compositional. Both pf the preceding examples are of sentences containing verb phrases that have two morphological verbs. But the concatenated verb structure of (381) is functionally different from that of (382). The combination of the word 'run' with the word 'go' results in a meaning of 'run away'. In other words, the senses of the two words are combined to represent nuances of a motion event that could

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not be expressed as fully with the use of only one word. So, (381) is both formally and semantically compositional. The combinatory form of *ᵐpʰɨr* and *wɨt* in (380) is more phrase-like than the combinatory form of *rɟɨr soŋ* in (382).

The constructional nature of *ᵐpʰɨr wɨt* is made apparent by constraints on the order in which the two lexemes can occur when they are juxtaposed—*wɨt* must always be in the second position. The conventionalized order corresponds to a conventionalized interpretation—*ᵐpʰɨr wɨt* can only be interpreted as a single event. It is never understood to mean, for instance, that some birds flew around at the same time that some other birds left, or that the birds flew and then departed. Since 'fly' is not the only verb that *wɨt* combines with on the basis of these two semantic and formal constraints, nor is *wɨt* the only verb of movement that behaves this way, it makes sense to postulate a construction consisting of two positions, the first specified for manner of motion and the second specified for direction of movement (towards or away from a reference point). When two verbs occur in this construction, they each retain their individual semantic content, but there is also the non-predictable, construction-specific sense of a single event. We can refer to this as the Manner of Movement Construction (MMC), and represent it as a schema—two positions, each specified for certain constraints in terms of the components, or lexemes, that can occur in them, but otherwise unspecified. Example (351), below, is such a representation.

Manner of Movement Construction

(383)   [[manner of motion]ᵥₑᵣᵦ [direction of movement] ᵥₑᵣᵦ]ᵥₑᵣᵦ

The concatenated elements in (383) result in a functional unit that is structurally equivalent to the form *wɨt* in sentences such as (384), below.

(384) *titsʰo rŋæɣə tʰoχni lama viʔro nɖe.*

   titsʰo   *rŋa-kə*   *tʰoχ-ni*

   time   five-GEN   on-ABL

   lam-a   *wɨt =rgo-nɨre*

   road-DAT   depart=DEON-FACT.ALLO

   '… (we) have to be on the road by five o'clock (tomorrow morning).' (Gcig.sgril)

The analysis that *ᵐpʰɨr wɨt* is an equivalent unit to *wɨt* in (384) is further supported by the fact that *ᵐpʰɨr wɨt* can also occur with the suffix *-bʑaχ*, as in (385), below, but *wɨt -bʑaχ* cannot be followed by a second *-bʑaχ*, as we see from the rejected and uninterpretable sentence in example (386).

(385) *ɸpɛa   ᵐpʰɨr   wɨt-bʑaχ-tʰa.*

   bird   fly   went-CMP.PFV-DE.PFV

   'The birds finally flew away', or, 'The birds flew away for good.'   (Gcig.sgril)

(386) **wɨt bʑaχ-bʑaχ -tʰa[154].*

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[154] The consultant I asked about this example offered a different sentence (d) in which *wɨt* and *bʑaχ* are separated by a marker, the converb *-a*. In the resulting sentence, the two lexemes are interpreted as separate verbs representing two separate events that are linked in terms of sharing an argument and occurring in a sequence that corresponds to the order of their occurrence in the sentence. He was not able to provide a translation for the sentence as it occurs in (386) so I don't provide one.

(d) *wɨt-e   bʑaχ-bʑaχ-tʰa.*
    went-CNV   discard.PFV-CMP.PFV-DE.PFV

While *wɨt-bzaχ* is clearly less phrase-like than *m̥pʰɨr wɨt*, it is not entirely semantically non-compositional. The final interpretation of 'went' or translocative movement undertaken prior to the time of speech, is directly associated to the verb *wɨt*. The perfective-completive interpretation of *-bzaχ* is also predictable based on its position—when it follows a verb, it cannot mean 'quit' or 'put down' or any of the other meanings it has when it is the only verb in a verb phrase. For this reason, I analyze it in (385) as a suffix and gloss it as perfective-completive aspect. So, there are clearly associated meanings for *wɨt* and *-bzaχ* that are present in the semantic content of the entire sentence.

We can analyze *=bzaχ* as a construction because it is syntactically complex and semantically distinct from *bzaχ*, the morphological verb. Simply parsing it as a post-clitic entails a schematic analysis in which this element must follow some other element. The representation for this construction, which I'll simply refer to as the Completive Construction is given in (387), below.

Completive Construction

(387)   [VERB]ᵥₑᵣᵦ*=[bzaχ/ndzoχ/zoχ]*ᴄᴏᴍᴘ

This examination and comparison of clause chains, SVC, MMC and the Completive Construction gives us a sense of the transitional changes that must take place

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'They went (to finally throw it away (somewhere)).'

in both the semantic and formal sides in order for a phrase to grammaticalize into a more

and more non-compositional construction.

The following examples are reproduced from Sec. 2.2, above.

(388) *kʰərgi*   *ma-nd̪o*   *wɨt-tʰa*

       3S.ERG   NEG.PFV-go.IPF   depart-DE.PFV

       'He didn't go.'

(389) *kʰərgə nd̪o*   **ma-*wɨt-tʰa***

       3S   go.IPF   **NEG.PFV-**depart-DE.PFV

       'He didn't go, yet.'

Both examples were elicited. In serial verb constructions, the position of

the negative marker determines its semantic scope. When it occurs before the first

verb stem, as in (388), both verbs are negated as a single event. When the

negative marker occurs before the final verb stem, the resulting sense is of two

events, only one of which has been negated. Because one event didn't happen,

however the other action also probably hasn't occurred, but, at least in (389),

there is an implication that event expressed by the first verb stem might still

occur, resulting in a translation of 'he hasn't gone yet', rather than 'he didn't go'.

8.3   Egophoric verbal clauses

Here is a brief overview of the functions of the egophoric category in verbal

sentences.

Typically, sentences are marked as egophoric when the asserted information is a form of 'self-knowledge' for the assertor, who can be the speaker, an interlocutor, or a quoted third person, depending on the context. What counts as 'self-knowledge' is information about either an event that the assertor was a controlling and volitional participant (see Sun 1993), or a condition directly affecting the assertor the entire duration of which they have been aware. For conditions, which are realized by stative verbs, the difference between egophoric and non-egophoric therefore has a temporal-aspectual element that is otherwise missing from the egophoric construction (EgoC).

Egophoric activity (past sense)

(390) *tə*   *ŋi*   *hu*   *bzaχ*   *plo-Ø*

DEF   1S.ERG   out   put.PFV   pour.PFV-EGO

'I poured it out (on the ground).'   (Gcig.sgril)

Egophoric activity (present or future sense)

(391) *ta*   *mɨ-za-Ø*

now   NEG.IPF-eat.IPF-EGO

'I'm not eating now.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Egophoric state (continuous, present sense)

(392) *ŋə*   *ɣʝækɛt*   *pɛat*   *ma-ɕi-ji,*

1S.ERG   Chinese   speak   NEG.PFV-know-CNV

ti   *mŋaŋ*   *mɨ-ɕi-Ø*

DEF.GEN   name   NEG.IPF-know-EGO

'I didn't learn how to speak Chinese, so I don't know the name of this (because it

is a Chinese word).'   (Gcig.sgril)

Egophoric state (temporary, present sense)

(393) *cʰo*   *satɛʰa=ndɨ*   *ə́-rga?*

      2S.DAT   place=PROX   Q-like

      'Do you like this place?'   (Gcig.sgril)

Egophoric state (temporary, past sense)

(394) *cʰo*   *satɛʰa=kan*   *ə́-rga?*

      2S.DAT   place=DIST   Q-like

      'Did you enjoy that place?'   (Gcig.sgril)

Non-egophoric state (continuative state, continuous awareness)

(395) *ŋa*   *ʁomtɛa*   *mɨ-rga*

      1S.DAT   milk.tea   NEG.IPF-like

      'I don't like milk tea.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Non-egophoric state (continuative state, temporary awareness)

(396) *ŋa*   *ʁomtɛa*   *mɨ-rga-kə*

      1S.DAT   milk.tea   NEG.IPF-like -DE

      'I didn't like milk tea (at the restaurant).'   (Gcig.sgril)

      It is apparent from the above examples that EgoC by itself conveys no temporal-aspectual senses. If such senses are expressed in an egophoric sentence, this is through overt encoding via verb stems or adverbs, or else is implied by context.

      However, there is a temporal facet to the informational function of EgoC, which is highlighted in the difference between (395) and (396). In the sentence in (395), the assertor is aware of their state for the entire duration of it. There is a one-to-one

correlation between the time of information access and the time of the proposition. However, in (396), there is a temporal mis-match between the assertor's point of access to the information and the duration of the state.

The egophoric meaning of the sentence in (395) implies that the speaker will dislike any milk tea that she is given: it is just a general dis-preference that she is well aware of and that is unlikely to change. In contrast, the direct evidence meaning of (396) highlights how the speaker knows this information about herself, and thereby allows two different senses, based on temporality.

The first is that the speaker is referencing a specific experience in which she drank some milk tea and disliked it, hence the background scenario of the restaurant: perhaps she normally likes milk tea. The second possible sense is that the speaker generally hates milk tea, but she was made aware of the fact by a specific experience.

EgoC connotes that the speaker is aware of the situation and also, in some sense, is responsible for it happening. For this reason, when used for conditions such as 'like', even when a more general preference (or dis-preference) is expressed, speakers tend to avoid EgoC, opting instead to use the factual allophoric construction, as in (397), below.

(397) *mɖe=ʌɪʁa*   *ʌtsæmpa*   *za*   *ʌga-nəre*

      rice=CMP   tsampa   eat.IPF like-FACT.ALLO

      'I like eating tsampa more than rice.'   (Rnga.ba)

One context in which EgoC is used for continuous states is in expressing a strong affection or love, as in (398), below. In this context, the difference between 'like' and

'love' is expressed by a difference in the degree of responsibility the assertor has for the emotion.

(398) *ŋa*　　　　　*cʰo*　　*rga-Ø*

　　　　1S.DAT　　　　2S　　like-EGO

　　　　'I love you.'　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(Gcig.sgril)

Depending on things like dialect, individual speaker preference and the type of predicate, the scope of egophoric information can be narrower or wider. (See Sec. 7.5.1.2 for a more in-depth discussion of this issue in copular sentences.). However, it is my observation that in verbal clauses, the egophoric construction tends to be applied more narrowly, even by speakers who exhibit a wider egophoric scope in their copular sentences.

8.3.1　Morphophonology of the Egophoric Construction

As mentioned elsewhere, the default form of the egophoric marker in verbal egophoric constructs is zero. As Sun (1993), notes, a zero marker is the only form for this construction in negative and interrogative sentences. However, in affirmative declarative sentences, speakers often produce a form *-a* or *-Ca*, in which the onset reduplicates the coda of the verb stem.

For some dialects, especially Mgo.log, EgoC is generally realized with a zero-marker in affirmative contexts, as well. This, plus the fact that it doesn't occur with copulas, plus the fact that historically bare verb stems were finite forms and even show

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up in non-egophoric contexts in modern spoken Amdo Tibetan, leads me to conclude that the -*Ca* allomorph is an innovation—the re-analysis of perhaps the affirmative sentence final particle into a dedicated egophoric marker. If so, this would be an instance of morphological regularization: all other members of the verbal TAME paradigm which are all realized by post-verbal morphology.

8.4   Grammatical expressions of Evidence in verbal predicates

There exist numerous excellent descriptions of the evidential distinctions expressed in the morphosyntax of verbal predicates in Tibetan, including Amdo Tibetan. So, for this section I will briefly introduce the notions of 'indirect evidence' and 'direct evidence' and present an overview of the two direct evidence categories and the one 'indirect evidence' category which are distinguished in the verbal morphology of Amdo Tibetan. All three constructions are expressed primarily in the form of monosyllabic suffixes that occur in the final position of the sentence. The presence of an evidential suffix indicates a finite clause. In complex sentences with multiple clauses expressing multiple events, the evidential value of the finite main clause has scope over all subordinate clauses. The three evidential constructons of Amdo Tibetan are illustrated with the following examples.

Direct Evidence Imperfective

(399) *təɣə ŋịŋịɣæ soŋe ndəye titsoʔ ʁni nɖa ziɣ ndəɣa.*

təɣə	*ŋịŋịɣa*	*soŋ-e*	*ndɨɣ-wi*	*titso*	*ɣni=nɖa*
then	2DU	went-CNV	sit-NMZ	o'clock	two=resemble

=ziç	*ndɨɣ*	**-kə**	*-a*
=INDEF	sit.IPF	**-DE.IPF**	-SFP

'Well, we hung out there for about two hours.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Direct Evidence Past

(400) *ɲịma* *rŋa* *ŋgor-tʰa*

day	five	use.up-**DE.PST**

'It took five days (to circumambulate the lakes).'   (Gcig.sgril)

Indirect Evidence Past

(401) *kʰɨkɪ* *ndagoŋ* *ɲɪlæm=zɪk* *çɲi-taŋ-**zɪk***

3S	last.night	dream=INDEF	dream-PFV-**IE.PST**

'She had a dream last night.' (She told me about it today.)   (Rdo.spis

As a semantic domain, I define EVIDENCE narrowly, as the expression of information source. An information source serves as direct evidence when the assertor was not volitionally involved in the situation represented in the proposition, but witnessed or else directly experienced the situation as it happened. In contrast, an information source serves as indirect evidence when the assertor was not volitionally involved and also was not aware of the situation, but came to know about indirectly, either by inferring that the situation took place from any effects produced simultaneously

or afterwards, or by learning of it from others. Because DIRECT and INDIRECT EVIDENCE categories entail assertor non-involvement, they are *de facto* non-egophoric.

Section 8.4.1 discusses the two DIRECT EVIDENCE categories and the constructions by which they are instantiated in verbal predicates. Section 8.4.2 discussed the INDIRECT PAST construction of verbal predicates.

8.4.1 Direct Evidence

Amdo Tibetan has two DIRECT EVIDENCE categories—an IMPERFECTIVE category expressed by the suffix *-kə*, and a PAST category expressed by the suffix *-tʰa*.

It should be noted that the distributional and semantic properties of these two constructions varies considerably from that described in this section in at least two dialects, Yăqūtān and Rdo.spis. Otherwise, it suffices to say that the system operates the same as described here for the majority of Amdo Tibetan dialects.

The reason I analyze the *-kə* suffix as imperfective, not non-past, is because it frequently occurs in past-tense contexts. Nor are past-tense uses of *-kə* restricted to stative verbs, which are neutral for tense. As we saw in example (358), above, *-kə* shows up on activity verbs in past contexts, too.

By the same logic, *-tʰa* is not a perfective marker because it is restricted to past contexts, even when it occurs with stative verbs, as in example (372) from Sec.8.1, above. The example, an excerpt from a spontaneous conversation, is reproduced below. The person was discussing a restaurant they had just been to so presumably they were referencing a past situation.

(402) *ŋa*   *ʁomtɕa*   *mi-rga-kə*

1S.DAT milk.tea   NEG.IPF-like-DE

'I didn't like milk tea (at the restaurant).'   (Gcig.sgril)

What kinds of experience count as direct evidence for Tibetan speakers seems fairly ambiguous. Certainly sensory experiences count, so seeing, smelling, touching, etc. count. So does perception of one's own internal 'endopathic' experiences (Tournadre & LaPolla 2014). However, we sometimes see DE marking for situations that might seem difficult for one to experience, as in the situation expressed in (403), below.

(403) *ɣciɣʂcil-kə*   *kʰɔŋwa maŋ-tʰa*

Gcig.sgril-GEN   house   be.many-DE.PST

'Gcig.sgril has a lot of houses these days.'   (Gcig.sgril)

The DIRECT EVIDENCE PAST marking of (403) implies that Gcig.sgril Township did not have so many houses before. It expresses that the speaker knows this because they were around to experience the shift from few houses to many, a change that *-tʰa* also entails took place prior to the time of speech. This knowledge can't really be pinned down to a particular sensory pathway or a particular experience because it might have been acquired over a period of time or it might have been acquired from a specific experience. What we do know is that the speaker probably didn't acquire knowledge of the change by looking at a photo or watching video of Gcig.sgril from somewhere else—

to express that kind of information source, they would use the indirect evidence past construction, *-zig*, to be described in Sec. 8.4.2, below.

8.4.2 Imperfective Direct Evidence

Perhaps the single most frequent assertion marker in my data (including elicited as well as spontaneous speech) is the Direct Evidence marker *-kə*. This high frequency is largely due to the fact that *-kə* frequently occurs in stative verbs.

In terms of its morphosyntactic status, I analyze *-kə* as a suffix because it cannot occur independently and it always follows either the verb stem of a VP or an auxiliary. Negative or interrogative sentences are expressed with the necessary prefix attaching to the verb root, or for VPs that have them, the verbal auxiliary, as will be shown.

In the majority of dialects which I have data on, *-kə* also expresses imperfectivity. The exception is the Rdo.spis dialect, where *-kə* occurs in perfective as well as imperfective contexts. Two such examples are (404) and (405), below.

(404) *kʰɪgɪ*   *xapa*   *sæ-taŋ-gɪ*

      3S.ERG   dog   kill-PFV-DE

      'He killed the dog.'   (Speaker saw the event; the dog is now dead.)

      Rdo.spis

(405) *kʰɪka* *çkowa* *wʉ-taŋ-ɣɪ*

    3s outside depart-PFV-DE

    'He left (home).' (Speaker saw him go; he's probably not coming back.)

The rest of Sec. 8.4.2, I will describe the functional and structural properties of -*kə* as it occurs in the majority of Amdo Tibetan dialects.

8.4.2.1 Aspectual functions of -*kə*

In this sub-section, I describe the aspectual functions of the Imperfective Indirect Evidence Construction. In the majority of dialects, -*kə* is clearly imperfective. Regardless of the inherent aspectuality of the root, when -*kə* occurs on a verb stem the resulting VP has an imperfective interpretation, meaning that the event is construed as being on-going (as opposed to completed) relative to a point in time, which may either be the time of speech or some other time. Because the relative point in time is not always coterminous with the time of speech, this marker cannot be analyzed as a present-tense marker. The following examples demonstrate how -*kə* is not a present tense marker.

Present context

  (406) *təna* *təraŋ* *ɣji̢ʂtse* *jo-sa*

    so today Gyu.rtse EXIST-NMZ

    ɣnam *mbap-kə.o-kə*

    sky fall.IPF-Q.PROG-DE.IPF

    'Is it raining at Gyu.rste today?' (Gcig.sgril)

Past context

(407) *kʰartsaŋ   ŋa   wɨt   mi-tʰɨp-kə*

       yesterday   1s   depart NEG.IPF-can-DE.IPF

'I wasn't able to go yesterday.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Note that the negative prefix in (407) is imperfective. In Gcig.sgril, *-kə* never occurs with the perfective negative prefix. Note also that the sentence in (406) could also be interpreted as past tense, since the speaker who produced the utterance was asking the addressee about a trip to Gyu.rtse Lake that they had made earlier the same day. According to the consultant who helped me transcribe this sentence (but did not produce it), both present-progressive and past-progressive interpretations make sense. This ambiguity is only possible because *-kə* by itself does not express any information about the when the event took place. It is an imperfective aspect marker.

The inherent aspectual sense of the verb stem is another determining factor in the aspectual interpretation of VPs marked with *-kə*. Verb roots have inherent aspect, as do verbal auxiliaries (see Chapter 0). The VPs in (406) and (407), above, are both stative, so *-kə* conveys an imperfective sense. Example (406) is stative because 'be many' is a stative verb root. In contrast, the verb root 'depart' in (407) is an accomplishment, as defined by Givón (2001: 288). This verb should be incompatible with *-kə*, but because it occurs with the auxiliary *=tʰɨp* 'can', which has a stative sense, the resulting VP also has a stative sense and so can occur with *-kə*.

For activity or process verbs, as defined by Givón (2001: 287-288), the resulting VP has a habitual interpretation, as shown in example (408), below. As with the stative

VPs presented above, VPs expressing habitual actions do not have an inherent temporal sense.

(408) *nɖoχwi*   *ɕa*   *za-kə*

     herder.ERG   meat   eat.IPF-DE.IPF

     'Herders eat/ate meat.'   (Gcig.sgril)

For activity verbs, imperfective aspect is expressed using the Progressive Construction, which is described in detail in Sec. 9.1. The Progressive Construction imperfective and so is compatible with *-kə*, as shown in the following example.

(409) *təna*   *ɣjiʂtse*   *jo-sa*

     well   Gyu.rtse.LOC   EXIST-NMZ

     ɣnam   *mbap*   *-kə.ɔ́.jo -kə*

     sky   fall.IPF   -PROG.Q-DE.IPF

     'So, then, was it raining while you were at Gyu.rtse?'   (Gcig.sgril)

Only verbs expressing situations that have internal duration can occur with *-kə*. Thus, the verb *wɨt*, which is an inherent accomplishment, can only occur with *-kə* if it also occurs with a stative auxiliary, such as 'can'. My Gcig.sgril consultants reject productions such as (410), below, as ungrammatical.

(410) *kʰərgə   wit-kə

       3s   depart-DE.IPF

       Intended: 'He departs.'

Just as -kə only occurs with the imperfective negative prefix, so too is it restricted to imperfective verb stems for those roots that have them. My consultants reject sentences like (411), below.

(411) nɖoχwi   ɕa   *zu-kə

       herder.ERG   meat   eat.PFV-DE.IPF

Having discussed the aspectual functions of this construction, I will now go on to discuss the evidential functions in the following sub-section.

8.4.2.2   Evidential functions of -kə

As mentioned at the beginning of Sec. 8.4.2, because -kə occurs on stative verbs it may well have the highest token frequency of any of the overt finite verb markers in Amdo Tibetan. In contrast, the other two evidential markers in this paradigm—perfective indirect evidence -ziç and perfective direct evidence -tʰa—are both noticeably less frequent. In particular, the perfective evidentials rarely occur with stative verbs, which is to be expected, given that, cross-linguistically, stative verbs are inherently imperfective (Givón 2001: 291-292). Nonetheless, the different distributional behaviors of -kə as compared to -ziç and -tʰa raises the question of whether or not -kə is really best analyzed

as an evidential. This is especially true when we consider that in stative VPs, the next most frequent finite verb ending is the Egophoric Construction. This contrast between direct evidence and egophoric in stative clauses was described in detail in Sec. 8.3, but further illustration is provided with the two examples, below.

Egophoric stative

(412) *ʈoʁmo*　　　*jiɖon*　　　*m̥tsʰon -na*

　　　friend.F　　　Ye.sgrol　　　show-COND

　　　ŋi　　　*ʐtaŋ -a*　　　*ɕɨɣə*　　*bzaŋ-a*

　　　1S.GEN　　　manner-DAT　　very　　be.good-EGO

　　　'Concerning (my) friend Ye.sgrol, (she) was always very good to me.'

　　　(Gcig.sgril)

The potential ambiguity of what counts as direct versus indirect is really only a concern when DIRECT EVIDENCE contrasts with INDIRECT EVIDENCE, or, in other words, when there is more than one non-egophoric category. But, aside from copular clauses (see Sec. 7.5.2), INDIRECT EVIDENCE is confined to perfective or past-tense sentences. In imperfective (e.g., non-past) contexts, there is just one evidential category. Because speakers' explanations of the semantic implications of this category suggest that in imperfective contexts, only directly witnessed events or situations are marked as evidential, I still label this as 'direct evidence imperfective', rather than 'imperfective evidential'. Events that are inferred or known through the reports of others are either marked INDIRECT EVIDENCE PAST or HEARSAY.

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Regardless of the label, when there is only one evidential category that contrasts with egophoric or factual, the system begins to look a lot like that of the copulas, for which I have analyzed an allophoric category that subsumes evidentiality. What is my basis for analyzing the imperfective suffix -*kə* in verbal predicates as a direct evidence marker rather than an allophoric marker? The main reason is primarily frequency-based: the factual allophoric category seems to occur more frequently, and therefore are less pragmatically marked, in imperfective verbal clauses than does the factual category in copular clauses. Thus, speakers commonly produce utterances like the following.

(413) *ɣcɨɣṣḍɨl-ɣə*   *kʰɔŋwa*   *maŋ-nəre*

Gcig.sgril-GEN house   be.many-FACT.ALLO

'Gcig.sgril has many houses.'   (Gcig.sgril)

However, factual marking is incompatible with endopathic assertions about assertor-participants (or at least, it sounds ridiculous). This is illustrated by the following.

(414) *ʔŋa*   *mgo*   *na-nəre*

1S   head   be.sick-FACT.ALLO

Intended: 'I have a headache.'

The sentence in (414) sounds absurd—at least in a simple assertive context—because the default interpretation of the factual construction is common knowledge, yet, as an endopathic state, the experience of having a headache is known only through

sensory evidence. In this case, the preference for *-kə* seems directly tied to it expressing

an evidential information source, rather than allophoric information access.

8.4.3   Direct Evidence Past Construction

The DIRECT EVIDENCE PAST Construction is primarily realized by a combination

of the perfective stem of the lexical verb and the suffix *-tʰa*. Where such a contrast is

made, *-tʰa* is restricted to perfective stems. Examples of this construction are given

below.

(415)   *ɸɛa*   *ᵐpʰir*   ***wit**-tʰa.*

       bird   **fly**   **went**-DE.PST

       'The birds flew away (and I saw/heard them).'   (Gcig.sgril)

This construction marks a proposition as knowledge that the speaker knows from

first-hand, or direct experience of the described situation, which took place prior to the

time of speech. When it is attached to an event, *-tʰa* means that the event happened in the

past. When it is attached to a condition or state, it means that the point of information

access happened in the past (and, depending upon the predicate) that the situation was

previously untrue. This temporal-aspectual difference between DE-marked events and

states is illustrated, below.

Direct Evidence Past Event

(416) *ŋɨ*   *tʰaŋ-a*   *hwu*   *ptaŋ-tʰa*

      1S.ERG   grass.land-LOC   out   discard-DE.PST

      'I spilled it on the grass.'   (Explanation for why speaker needs more tea.)

      (Gcig.sgril)

Direct Evidence Past Perception of an on-going State

(417) *ta*   *ŋɨ*   *ɕi-tʰa-ja*

      now   1S.ERG   know-DE.PST-SFP

      'Then I got it (I didn't know before, but now I do know).'   (Gro.tsang)

Note that for both (416) and (417) the stem forms of the finite verbs are neutral for aspect. There are also no adverbs or other indications of event time. Nonetheless, the sentence in (416) expressed a necessarily past event while the sentence in (417) strongly implicates a present condition. Also, for (416), it is implied that the speaker previously didn't know. So, the use of *-tʰa* can give an inchoative sense to states. This is further illustrated with the example, below.

(418) *ŋɨ*   *zama*   *zu-ni*   *ɣjəχ-tʰa*

      1S.ERG food   eat.PFV-CNV   be.full-DE.PST

      'I'm full from eating.' (Implicature: speaker is full now)   (Gcig.sgril)

In all of my parsed examples, I have analyzed *–tʰa* as a suffix primarily on the basis of its distributional properties, which are highly restricted. It never occurs

independently and is restricted to morphological verbs, with the exception of a dialect spoken in Padma County, Mgo.log. It is always the final constituent in a verb phrase.

8.4.4 An explanation of the phonology of –*tʰa in the* Direct Evidence Past Construction

I have chosen to generically represent this marker as –*tʰa* because this appears to be the most common pronunciation throughout the A.mdo region. However, Sun (1986; 1993) reports a pronunciation of *tʰæ* for Mdzod.dge County in the north of Rnga.ba Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture, Sìchuān. I have also observed a fronted pronunciation in the Yǎqūtān dialect that is perhaps not quite as fronted as *æ*. Both Mdzod.dge and Yǎqūtān exhibit a phonology-wide fronting of historical **a* in open syllables.

Most other phonological descriptions report a pronunciation of *tʰa*. This includes Haller's (2004) grammar of the Themchen dialect, Shao's (2014) description of the A.rig dialect, Sung & Rgya's (2009) textbook, Min & Di's (2005) textbook.

8.5 Indirect evidence

As stated in Sec. 8.4, with the exception of non-verbal predicates (see Sec. 7.5.2), the grammatical expression of indirect evidence is restricted to perfective or past tense clauses. As with copular clauses, indirect evidence is not inferential or an expression of epistemic (un)certainty: speakers use this construction to express a factual, or realis situation that they have evidence for, but in this case the evidence is excluded from whatever counts as direct evidence (see above).

Whereas in non-verbal predicates, which have dedicated allophoric constructions, making the marking of evidence a pragmatically marked choice that can be used as an epistemic strategy in certain contexts, speakers do not seem to use the verbal Indirect Evidence Construction (IE) this way. I assume this is because events and even states are situations that more clearly exist in time. Representing such situations when they have transpired wholly or partly in the past naturally raises the question of information source, or what the assertor's relationship to the situation is. So, the use of IE in verbal clauses is unambiguously evidential and about events the reality of which is as established as events that are marked egophoric, direct evidence or factual.

8.6   Perfect Construction

The Perfect Construction (PerfC) is restricted to activity verbs, but within this lexical class, it is apparently unrestricted. Consequently, its semantic connotations are partially dependent on the inherent semantics of the verb stem, but generally, it expresses two temporal-aspectual concepts, interchangeably. The first concept is the prototypical sense of perfect constructions in the world's languages: an event took place in the past that produced a persistent result or otherwise has current relevance (Comrie 1976: 56-61). The sense of a persistent result is illustrated with the following example.

(419)   *ɣnam*   *wap=jokə*

       sky   fall.PFV=DE.PERF

       'It rained.' (Entailed: it is not raining now. Implied: the ground is still wet.)

       (Gcig.sgril)

PerfC is also used to express that an event has "already" taken place, which is also a common cross-linguistic function of perfects (Dahl 1985: 129).

The Perfect Construction (PerfC) is expressed by the concatenation of an imperfective verb stem and an existential copula. There are egophoric, direct evidence, speculative and mediative (INDIRECT EVIDENCE) variations, but not, apparently factual, direct evidence or future forms. There are negative, as well as, affirmative forms. The various forms of PerC are illustrated by the following examples. Note that the interrogative marker always follows the verb stem and precedes the perfect marker, as in (420).

Egophoric PerfC

(420) *cʰu*   *ɲjɪn*   *ņtʰoŋ*   *é-jot*

       2S.ERG   lunch   drink   Q-PERF.EGO

       'Have you had lunch yet?'   (Gcig.sgril)

Direct evidence PerfC

(421) *cʰo tɛ ʁoŋscɪχə ʰtoŋ timi ndɨç jokə.*

       cʰo   *te*   *ʁoŋscɛχ-kə*   *ʰtoŋ*   *timi*   *ndɨç=jokə*

       2S   DEF   sitting-GEN   manner   this.way   sit =PRF.DE

       'You are sitting like this.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Specualtive PerfC

(422) *zama =tə*   *zu=tsʰar=josare*

      food=DEF   eat.PFV=TERM =PRF.SPEC

      'They must have already finished eating by now (because we're late).'

      (Gcig.sgril)

Indirect Evidence PerfC

(423) *ɣdʐonma-ɣə* *χwetɕʰa=tə*   *ɸti=mezəç*

      Drolma-ERG   book=DEF   see.PFV=PERF.NEG.IE

      'Drolma apparently hasn't read the book (because she doesn't know its content.)'

      (Them.chen[155])

8.6.1   Interaction of PerfC with inherent aspect of verbs

With the exception of (421) all of the examples given in the last section express events that ended prior to the time of speech. The verbs 'eat' and 'see' are telic actions, so PerfC highlights the perfective sense of these verbs, implying the actions ended and that this fact is relevant to the time of speech, either because it recently happened or because the result of the action (for example, being satiated) is persists at the time of speech.

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[155] This example is from Haller (2004: 143), example (704). I have maintained his transcription and parsing, but slightly altered the glossing and changed the morphological categories of the definite marker and the perfect marker to conform to my analysis. Haller's original translation is : "Drolma hat das Buch offenbar nicht gelesen. (Sie kennt dessen Inhalt nicht.)"

I do not have any examples of indirect evidence PerfC in my own data, but one conslutant confirmed online that such a form exists in Gcig.sgril. I suspect that dialects that do not have evidential copulas do not have a mediative PerfC.

The verb 'sit' has two possible construals. It can be construed as a durative event or as a punctual event. When it occurs as a constituent in PerfC, the punctual event construal is coerced, leading to an imperfective present sense, as in example (421). This sentence is excerpted from a spontaneous conversation and the event of sitting is coterminous with the utterance.

8.6.2   Evidential, Epistemic and Egophoric functions

Rather than discussing the informational functions PerfC can express, it is more interesting to consider those which it doesn't express. These are factual and future. The exclusion of the future category seems quite logical, given that it entails an event that hasn't taken place, and is semantically incompatible with PerfC, which has a perfective connotation.

As for the exclusion of a factual sense for PerfC, my sense is that the 'current relevance' connotation of the construction is incompatible with generic knowledge: deictic center of relevance is a specific time or situation, not a general category of time or situations.

8.6.3   Morphological status of Perfect Construction

PerfC consists of a perfective verb stem and a post-clitic. I analyze the copula element in PerfC as a morphological post-clitic because, unlike the IE or DE suffixes, this element can occur alone, as a stand-in for the entire clause. This is demonstrated in example (424), below.

(424)

    A.   *apʰa*   *tʰɨn*   *ə̀-jokə*

          Father   arrive Q-PRF.DE

          'Has Father arrived?'

    B.   *jokə*

          PRF.DE

          '(He) has.'   (Gcig.sgril)

8.7　Factual Verbal Construction

The factual verbal construction (FactVC) differs from the Factual Copular Construction in a number of ways. The first is that the verbal construction has both egophoric and allophoric forms. This is illustrated below.

Factual Egophoric

(425) *tɕʰu vɣ̩ laŋ nija?*

    tɕʰu   *vɣ̩*   *laŋ-nəjɪn-ja*

    2S   go.PFV   arrive-FACT.EGO-SFP

    'You finally arrived, did you?'   (Yăqūtān)

Factual Allophoric

(426) *cʰo*   *ŋa*   *rɪʁa* *ɕɨt*   *tɕʰe-nəre*

    2S   1S   COMP strength   be.big-FACT.ALLO

    'You are stronger than me.'   (Rnga.ba)

Sentence (425) is the kind of thing one would say to a person they have been waiting for by way of a greeting or perhaps to chide them for being late. It is a rhetorical question because the speaker clearly sees that the person has arrived. Even so, the utterance is in the form of a request for information. The speaker assumes that the information constitutes self-knowledge for the addressee, so the sentence is egophoric. Because the question is also rhetorical (constituting established or assumed knowledge for the assertor), the sentence is also factual.

The sentence in (426) is a declarative assertion of a fact. In this case, the factual form of the sentence marks the information as objective, or common knowledge. It is not a form of self-knowledge for the speaker-assertor, so it is allophoric.

One way that FactVC resembles factual copulas is that they are neutral for tense-aspect. Thus, FactVC is perhaps more frequent than any other verbal assertion construction in certain genres, such as legends and historical accounts, which express information without expressing information source.

8.8   Future construction

In verbal clauses, the future construction (FutC) is expressed by the imperfective verb stem followed by a suffix, which varies according to egophoricity. The egophoric suffix is *-rʲəjɪn*, frequently realized as *-ʝi* (Sung & Rgya 2005: 234). The allophoric suffix is *-rʲɨre*, less frequently realized as *-rʲə*.

As stated in Sec. 6.3, above, speakers commonly extend the use of FutC to express senses more closely related to *irrealis* mood or epistemic modality. 'conjectural'

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applied by Sung & Rgya. Nonetheless, my consultants readily identify the form as expressing future tense. Nevertheless, it is not used in all future contexts. In particular, assertions of actions to undertaken by assertor-participants in the immediate future are un-marked, as in (429).

Egophoric future

(427) *ŋa   samŋaŋ   nɟo-ɟi*

      1S   tomorrow   go.IPF–FUT.EGO

      'I'll go tomorrow.'   (Gcig.sgril)

Allophoric future

(428) *ɣnam   mbap-ɟire*

      sky   fall.IPF–FUT.EGO

      'It's going to rain.'

(429) *tɕa   é-ɳtʰoŋ?*

      tea   Q-drink

      'Are you going to drink tea?'

When FutC is used in such questions, it has the implicature of asking for help, as in (430), below.

(430) *ŋa   mŋe   tɕon   ʈok-dʑi-ta?*

      1S.DAT fire   build   help-FUT.EGO-SFP

      'Will you help me build a fire?'   (Smin.thang)

This is a weaker deontic sense than that expressed by the use of the deontic auxiliary, *=rgo*, which has more of a sense of necessity or urgency. The extended modal meaning of the future egophoric construction is illustrated in the sentence, below. I have not provided a translation because I have observed that there are two typical communicative contexts for this utterance. The first is as a polite way for a visitor to announce their departure to the host, which may or may not trigger the host to insist that they stay. The second is as a polite way for one member of a group to rouse the others to leave.

(431)　*ta*　　*ŋo-ɟi*

　　　now　go-FUT.EGO　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(Gcig.sgril)

8.9　Purposive Construction

The Purposive Construction (PurpC)consists of an imperfective verb stem followed by the element *red*. I believe this element to be cognate with the allophoric equative copula *red*. However, Sung & Rgya (2009: 165) analyze the element as a "sentential particle" with the form *re* (ᶉ). Since one of the authors is a native Amdo Tibetan speaker, it is highly unlikely that their analysis is wrong. Nonetheless, I maintain that the form is *red* on the basis that the two Gcig.sgril speakers who provided the PurpC data used in this dissertation on some occasions produced the form with a clear obstruent coda.

The basic meaning of PurpC is to express the speaker's (not assertor's) intention to engage in an activity for a specific purpose. Commonly, this means doing something

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on behalf of, or for the benefit of, the interlocutor. The template for the Purposive

Construction is reproduced below. To my knowledge, this construction is common to all

Amdo Tibetan dialects[156].

(432)   [VERB.IPF] *red*

The Purposive Construction only occurs with the allophoric equative copula but,

as far as I know, it only occurs in contexts in which the speaker of the utterance is also

construed as the subject or agent of the intended action. For these reasons, I analyze the

construction as egophorically neutral.

Purposive clauses optionally include an intransitive subject or transitive agent. As

in the following example.

(433) *ŋə*   *cʰo*   *ŋasa*   *ptɕa*   *re*

       1S.ERG 2S   sleep.place   lay.out.IPF   EQ.ALLO

       'I shall roll out a sleeping bed for you.'   (Gcig.sgril)

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[156] It is also formally cognate with TAME constructions in other Tibetic languages, such as the perfective allophoric construction in the Bde.chen dialect of Rgyal.thang Khams.

(g)   *ŋa*   *wùríŋ*   *ɕi*   *rè*
       1s   before   know   allo.pfv
'I used to know this.'

Compare the sentence in (433), with the following sentences expressing more or less the same propositional content:

(434) *ŋə*   *cʰu*   *ŋasa*   *ptɕa-Ø*

       1S.ERG 2S. GEN   sleep.place   lay.out.IPF-EGO

       'I will roll out your bed; I roll out your bed.'   (Gcig.sgril)

(435) *ŋə*   *cʰu*   *ŋasa*   *ptɕi-Ø*

       1S.ERG 2S. GEN   sleep.place   lay.out.PFV-EGO

       'I rolled out your bed.'   (Gcig.sgril)

(436) *ʔŋə*   *cʰu*   *ŋasa*   *ptɕa-ɟi*

       1S.ERG 2S.GEN   sleep.place   lay.out.IPF-FUT.EGO

       'I will roll out your bed.'   (Gcig.sgril)

My consultants found the sentence in (434) acceptable, but not likely something they would say. In all the examples, above, the second person participant is construed as a possessor, whereas in (433) the participant is unmarked, suggesting a different construal. It is possible that the form of the second person pronoun is the same in all of the examples—I can't tell for sure from my recordings.

Regardless, the Purposive Construction differs in fundamental ways from the other constructions. It is restricted to non-perfective contexts and it implies that the action will be performed for some purpose, usually the benefit of the addressee.

The Purposive Construction has affirmative and interrogative forms, but I have not encountered a negative form. The interrogative form of this construction is used frequently and "sounds very courteous", speakers say.

(437) *kʰapar*   *rʝaχ*   *ə́-re*

       phone   hit   Q-EQ.ALLO

       'Shall I call (Ye.shes Sgrol.ma) (for you)?'   (Gcig.sgril)

The sentence in (437) was uttered in response to the addressee showing up at the house and for Ye.shes Sgrol.ma, who was out. The latter's sister then offered to call her, which she could only have meant as an action to be performed for the benefit of the addressee.

This construction can also be used to express jussive mood, as in (438), below.

(438) *ɲo*   *re*

       go.IPF   PURP

       'Let's go.'

CHAPTER IX

AUXILIARY VERBS

As stated in Sec. 6.5, in terms of their structural and semantic compositionality, auxiliary verb constructions lie somewhere between complement clause and serial verb constructions, and the fully grammaticalized markers of assertor perspective presented in Sec. . Moreover, unlike most TAME markers, auxiliaries may occur in non-finite clauses. To illustrate these properties of auxiliaries, as well as to illustrate the Aktionsart effect they may have, I will describe the terminative and completive constructions.

9.1   Progressive Construction

Action verbs can be marked for PROGRESSIVE aspect using the Progressive Constructions (ProgC). The function of this construction is to express that a situation is on-going at a particular point in time. This point may be determined by the timing of some other situation, in which case we see ProgC occurring in past tense, future tense and present tense contexts. Minus the mention of a second event, however, ProgC has a default present tense interpretation. ProgC is appears to be the most frequent verbal auxiliary construction in my naturalistic speech dataset. The template for ProgC is given below.

Progressive Construction

(439)   [[VERB]-*kot* [-TAME]]ᵥₚ

The morpheme -*kot* (alternatively realized as -*ko*), while being the most frequent form by far in my dataset, is actually a contraction of two syllables *kə* and *jo*, which display some attributes of morphosyntactic autonomy in a limited number of contexts. Even so, the elements *kə* and *jo* operate as a "chunk", in Bybee's sense (2010: 107-108), and are semantically unanalyzable

The uncontracted form is indicative of the source construction for ProgC: the connector **-kə*[157], This is probably etymological related to the DIRECT EVIDENCE IMPERFECTIVE suffix -*kə*, and the existential copula **yod*. The presence of the existential copula suggests that ProgC may have originated as a perfect. However, it is important to note that while superficially ProgC seems to consist of the imperfective direct evidence marker -*kə*, by itself ProgC does not have any evidential sense. Epsitemic, evidential and egophoricity-related meanings are all supplied by other constructions.

I have not noticed any dialectal differences in terms of the distribution and function, or even really the pronunciation, of this construction. Examples of ProgC clauses are provided below.

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[157] It seems likely that this is etymologically related to the DIRECT EVIDENCE IMPERFECTIVE suffix -*kə*. However, more evidence is needed, especially considering that the -*kə* constituent of ProgC occurs in clauses that do not have direct evidence interpretations.

(440) *nɪ pəngɪ xapa sʏtoχwa ɟɟa kokɪ.*

    ŋi   *pən[158]-ki*   *xapa*   *sʏtoχ-pa*   *ɟɟa-ko-ki*

    1S.GEN   sibling-ERG   dog   kick-NMZ   hit-PROG-DE

    'My brother is kicking the dog.'   (Rdo.spis)

(441) ŋe jiɣji nɖʐko.

    ŋə   *jɨɣə*   *nɖɨ-ko-Ø*

    1S.ERG   letter   write.IPF-PROG-EGO

    'I'm writing.'   (Yăqūtān)

Examples (440)-(441) are both of actions. For unambiguous activity verbs like 'kick' and 'write', ProgC always expresses that the situation is in progress, with the implication that it is on-going at a particular point in time. Impressionistically, in spontaneous speech the point in time is usually defined in terms of another event or situation. However, in both (440) and (441) no such other event is stated, so the default interpretation is that the represented actions are on-going at the time of speech. In terms of egophoricity or evidential senses, the sentence in (440) is marked as direct evidence, indicating that the speaker is witnessing (or perhaps hearing) the action as it unfolds. The sentence in (441) is marked as self-knowledge, indicating that the speaker is the willing performer of the action of writing. Both sentences also have a default present-tense interpretation because of the absence of any temporal adverbs or other expressions of time.

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[158] It is interesting that Rdo.spis uses this word instead of other terms for 'brother' because *spɨn* is commonly used in Classical Literary Tibetan (with the spelling spun (སྤུན)) and is largely restricted to formal genres in places like Mgo.log or Reb.gong.

9.1.1   Expansion of ProgC as an evidential strategy

ProgC is a sub-category of imperfective aspect. As such, it contrasts with the default habitual sense of imperfective-marked activity verbs to express a present-tense or on-going sense. However, in some contexts, the difference between a ProgC clause and the equivalent imperfective clause is less a matter of the internal temporal profile of the event than the timing of how the assertor became aware of the event. This is illustrated, below.

(442)   *kã̀gi oke ɕeki.*

       kan-kə   *wot.ʂkat*   *ɸɕat-kə*

       INDEF.SPF.S-ERG   Tibetan.language   speak-DE

       'They speak Tibetan.'   (I have known them for a while.)   (Yǎqūtān)

(443)   *kã̀gi oke ɕekoki.*

       kan-kə   *wot.ʂkat*   *ɸɕat-ko-kə*

       INDEF.SPF.S-ERG   Tibetan.language   speak-PROG-DE

       'They are speaking Tibetan.' Or, 'They speak Tibetan.' (I heard them speak at a specific point in time.)   (Yǎqūtān)

The sentence in (442) is unambiguous in its interpretation as an assertion that the subject habitually speaks Tibetan. However, there are two different ways to interpret the sentence in (443). One way is to interpret it as an event that was actively transpiring at the time of speech (or some other temporal reference point). There is also a second way, which is to interpret the utterance as expressing the same propositional content of (442),

including the habitual nature of the act of speaking Tibetan, but as expressing stronger evidential connotations than (442). By framing the proposition as an event that was on-going relative to some point in time, the speaker highlights the point in time at which the speaker realized or knew that the subject speaks Tibetan. It is therefore possible to interpret the function of *-ko* in this sentence as an evidential strategy or as a marker of progressive aspect.

When we consider the potential differences in evidential meaning between (442) and (443), we begin to understand how ProgC became an important strategy for marking medial evidence in endopathic stative verbs, as mentioned in Sec. 4.2.1.2. As defined by Tournadre (1996: 226), 'endopathic' refers to internal states such as physical sensations like being hungry or in pain, or states of mind, like being happy.

For one, ProgC seems to only have evidential overtones in events that do not involve the assertor. Secondly, the evidential overtone only becomes the default interpretation (as opposed to a progressive aspectual interpretation) when a temporal interpretation is not logical or is irrelevant. These conditions are met when ProgC occurs with the endopathic subset of stative verbs. The examples given in Sec. 4.2.1 are reproduced below.

(444) *kʰərgə na-ko-kə*

      3S   be.sick-PROG-DE

      'He is sick.'   (Speaker visited him while subject was home sick.) (Gcig.sgril)

(445) *ʔkʰərɣə   na-kə*

3s	be.sick-DE.IPF

'He is hurt.'   (Speaker knows because she punched him in the face)

(Gcig.sgril)

Both sentences have the stative verb 'be sick'. Both are marked as direct evidence, implying that speaker has come to know about the related situations by conscious, sensory perception. Both sentences consist of the stative verb 'be sick'.

The backgrounds provided in parentheses for the sentences in (444) and (445) are based off of scenarios given by the consultant who first alerted me to the difference. She found my initial suggestion of (445) hilariously absurd—not because the sentence itself is ungrammatical, but because my use of this construction implied I was the cause of the other person's ill health. Otherwise, "how would I know?"—hence the story that I must have punched the person.

In terms of morphosyntax, sentences (444) and (445) are both marked as DIRECT EVIDENCE, meaning that the speaker directly perceived the represented state, but did not voluntarily cause it. However, there is appears to be an added degree of directness, as it were, to the simple Imperfective Direct Evidence Construction (ImpDEC) that isn't conveyed in the direct evidence-marked ProgC. This added dimension of evidence is a factor of the nature of internal states. Like other states, endopathic situations are durative and atelic, and so have an inherent imperfective aspectual sense. They are also "internal" and therefore don't necessarily have any external evidence for someone who isn't experiencing them to percieve. By this logic, knowledge of a non-assertor's endopathic state can only be acquired when such external evidence is available.

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In other words, a direct evidence source of information for the endopathic experiences of others requires further characterization of the timing of the evidence: 'be sick' is a potentially continuous state, that may or may not have start and end points. The use of ProgC would therefore seem redundant or incompatible, except if we interpret it as applying to the information source rather than the situation of being sick. When looked at this way, it is now understood that the speaker's evidence for the subject's endopathic state is on-going and so need only be contiguous with a portion of the time in which the person has been feeling unwell: the person was sick at the time the speaker found them to be so. Presumably this state extends beyond the speaker's experience, but the assertion makes no claim about that. The absence of such evidential specification in (445) thus raises interesting questions[159], hence the question mark before the sentence and the odd background scenario. This scenario now seems less odd when understood as a logical condition under which the speaker might know the state of the subject's suffering for its entire duration, as the VP structure of (445) suggests.

9.1.2 Interaction of ProgC with inherent aspect

ProgC can also be used to alter the inherent aspect of a lexical verb. We see this in the following examples which contain the verb 'sneeze'. In terms of its morphosyntax, this looks like a stative verb, which means even with an assertor subject, it still takes non-egophoric marking. It also usually occurs with imperfective marking, regardless of the temporal value of the clause. Even so, 'cough' still has an inherent punctual sense,

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[159] There appears to be dialectal variation in the degree to which speakers find the sentence in (445) strange or not.

meaning an event that transpires instantaneously (Comrie 1976: 7). When it occurs as a component in ProgC, it has a semelfactive interpretation, meaning that it expresses an event consisting of multiple instances of coughing.

(446)   *ŋa lʷyʌki.*

   ŋa   løʌ-ki

   1S   cough-DE.IPF

   'I coughed/sneezed[160] (once).'   (Yăqūtān)

(447)   *ŋa lʷyʌkoki.*

   ŋa   løʌ-ko-ki

   1S   cough-PROG-DE

   'I was coughing a bunch.' Or, 'I kept coughing.'   (Yăqūtān)

   ProgC is incompatible with either the TRANSITIVE aspect auxiliary *-ptaŋ* or the PAST aspect auxiliary *-soŋ*[161]. This makes sense as both auxiliaries express perfective functions. This incompatibility is illustrated in the following examples, also from Yăqūtān.

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[160] The verb *løʌ* is used for sneezing as well as coughing.
[161] See Sec. 6.5.

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(448) *kã̀gi jiɣji nd̤tɔ̀ŋgi.*

    kan-kə   *jɪɣə*   *nd̤-ptaŋ-kə*

    INDEF.SPF.S-ERG   letter   write-TR-DE

    'They wrote the letter.' Or, 'They did the writing.'   (Yǎqūtān)

(449) **nd̤*   *-ptaŋ* *-ko*   *-kə*

    Intended: 'They were writing the letter.'

9.1.3 Lexical restrictions of ProgC

While we have seen that ProgC is used with endopathic stative verbs, it appears to be incompatible with other stative verbs. The following attempted utterances on my part were received with laughter on the part of my consultants.

(450) *bzaŋ*   *(*-ko)*   *-kə*

    be.good   (*-PROG)   -DE

(451) *mtʰo*   *(*-ko)*   *-kə*

    be.high   (*-PROG)   -DE

(452) *tɕʰe-*   *(*-ko)*   *-kə*

    be.good   (*-PROG)   -DE

The verbs in (450)-(452) all appear to have in common the fact that they represent time-stable properties. This means that a progressive or on-going sense is already part of their inherent semantics.

9.1.4 Negative and interrogative ProgC

Interrogative ProgC clauses are formed by various processes. Across dialects, the most common process is the insertion of the interrogative prefix *ə-*, which usually occurs in between the *kə* and *jo* components of ProgC. We see this in example (453).

(453)   *ɦnæn   bæ-[kɪ-ə́   jo]-kɪ*

       sky   fall.IPF-[PROG-**Q**   PROG]_{PROG}-DE.IPF

       'Is it raining out?'   (Rdo.spis)

But there are other ways of expressing questions with ProgC, such as (454), below, which is a common interrogative strategy in Rdo.spis.

(454)   ɦnæn   bæ-[kɪ jo]-kɪ-nã   me-kɪ

       sky   fall.IPF-[PROG]-DE.IPF-Q.CN   NEG.EXIST]_{PROG}-DE.IPF

       'Is it raining out or not?'   (Rdo.spis)

This interrogative strategy or construction involves the use of a connective morpheme to coordinate affirmative and negative assertional constructions to produce a polar question. The morphosyntax of this strategy interacts with the morphosyntax of ProgC in interesting ways that shed light on possible sources for ProgC.

Negation of ProgC is accomplished by replacing the jo component with the negative form *me* (or *mɛt*, in the careful speech of Gcig.sgril). Not coincidentally, this

form is identical to the negative existential copula *me*. Example (455), below is of a negative ProgC sentence produced in spontaneous dialog.

(455)   *ʂcəʔ tʰa.ja! ŋəɲiɣæ soŋdi ɣnæm mbæʔkə mekį̀.*

    ʂcɨt-tʰa-ja

    be.happy-DE.PST-SFP

    ŋįɲiɣa soŋ=ti   *ɣnam mbap-[kə*   *me]-kə*

    1DU   went=when   sky   fall-[PROG   NEG.EXIST]_{PROG}-DE.IPF

    'It was fun! It wasn't raining when we two went.'   (Gcig.sgril)

9.1.5 Non-finite occurrence of ProgC

In spite of being a marker of imperfectivity, ProgC does not belong in the TAME paradigm on the basis of its morphosyntactic properties. In particular, it does not share the the property of this paradigm of being restricted to finite verbs. In fact, ProgC frequently shows up in subordinate clauses, especially relative clauses, as in the following example.

(456)   *taɣə*   *jiɖon*   *zer-**ko**-no*

    so   Ye.sgron   call-**PROG**-NMZ

    cʰįɲiɣa ṃintʰaŋ-ni   *ḷopɖoχ*   *jɪnɉire-pa?*

    2DU   Smin.thang-ABL   classmate   EQ.FUT.ALLO-SFP

'So, you and Ye.sgron, the two of you… so, Ye.sgron, whom you are talking about, the two of you must have been classmates in Smin.thang, right?'

9.2   Completive Construction

The Completive Construction (CompC) is not present in all dialects of Amdo Tibetan, but appears to be widely recognized, if not precisely understood in most places. It is a socially prominent feature of so-called nomad dialects, such as most varieties of Mgo.log. However, I have also encountered it in Yǎqūtān, which is a sedentary farming community and have been told that, until only very recently, it was not part of the dialect of Mgo.log spoken in Rnga.ba Prefecture (Yu Lha, p.c. 2018). Most notably, CompC is absent from the speech of the larger urban or farming communities that lie in the low elevation area around the confluence of the Huángshuǐ and Dàxià Rivers and the Yellow River. So, I have been told by native born residents of Reb.gong, Gtsos, Gcan.tsa, Rdo.spis and Kri.ka that CompC is not a feature of their speech. I have also been told that it is not a feature of standardized (e.g. formally taught or having official guidelines) language and that it is not used in newspapers, government announcements or other formal written publications. Nonetheless, it is not considered incorrect or informal speech. It frequently occurs in mass media, most notably in radio programming. Thanks to its association with *'brog.pa* culture and mass media, CompC may be expanding into new dialects.

9.2.1 Completive functions

I have labeled this construction COMPLETIVE because its prototypical function[162] is
to express whether or not an action is complete. A secondary function is to express a
situation as reaching (or failing to reach) a culmination point. More precisely, speakers
use CompC when they construe a situation as telic—that is, having a natural terminal
point, or point of completion—and want to highlight the telic aspect of the situation.
From this overly simplified description, it is tempting to analyze CompC as a dedicated
marker of telicity, but I think a more qualified analysis, one that is probably a closer
approximation of the conceptual processes motivating speakers' use of this construction,
is to say that CompC characterizes a situation as 'complete' or 'incomplete', which has
the effect of coercing a telic interpretation for some verbs that are generally not
associated with telicity when they occur in other contexts.

Such is the case with the following examples, which present pairs of CompC and
non-CompC sentences in order to better illustrate the unique functional contributions of
CompC. Examples (457) and (458) contain verbs which have default interpretations—as
evidenced by the interpretations of the non-CompC (b) sentences—of situations that
conform to Vendler's (1957) definition of ACTIVITY, a durative event that does not have a
natural endpoint, or telos. When these lexemes occur in the constructional context of
CompC, the resulting sense is of an ACCOMPLISHMENT, a durative event that does have a
natural endpoint. I have chosen to use elicited examples with the construction,
[CLAUSE]-*tʰa*, for maximum consistency. Since examples (457-458) are all declarative

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[162] More accurately, this is the explanation that speakers have given me when I've asked for a quick
definition of this construction.

sentences, the use of this construction signals that the speaker was an observer, but not a volitional participant, of the represented event which necessarily took place prior to the time of speech.

(457)

    a. ɕa   *zu-**bʒəx**-tʰa*

        meat   eat.PFV=**CMP.PFV**-DE.PST

        '(The dog) ate up the meat.' Or, 'the meat was eaten up.' Entailed: there is no more meat.

    b. ɕa   *zu-tʰa*

        meat   eat.PFV-DE.PST

        '(The dog) ate (the) meat.' Unlikely: 'The meat was eaten.'

(458)

    a. lika   *je=**bʐaχ**-tʰa*

        work   do=**CMP.PFV**-DE.PST

        '(They) finished working', '(they) finished the job; 'the job was finished/completed.'

    b. lika   *je-tʰa*

        work   do-DE.PST

        '(They) worked.'

The sentences in (457) contain the word *zu*, which is the perfective form of 'eat'[163]. The meanings of (457a) and (457b) are quite similar. The primary difference between them is that (457a) entails that the meat has been completely consumed[164].

A less salient difference has to do with the apparent construal of participants. I asked two people (not the person who produced them) to explain (457a) and (457b). Both produced passive sentences for (457a)—'肉被吃光了' ('the meat was eaten up')—and active sentences for (457b): '他吃过肉' ('They ate meat.')[165]. My explanation for this is that the semantic framing of CompC coerces[166] a telic interpretation of 'eat', the most natural endpoint for which is the complete consumption of whatever item is being eaten, hence the interpretation of 'eaten up'. A consequence of this telic framing is to focus the affected participant, 'meat', which is why a passive English translation for (457a) feels more obvious to speakers than for (457b). In other words, when presented with (457a) and (457b) out of context, speakers tend to interpret (457a) as a predication of 'eaten up' concerning a topic, 'the meat', and to interpret (457b) as a predication of 'ate meat' about an assumed, non-overt agent. Speakers accepted (457b) as an answer to both the question,

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[163] This way of pronouncing the 'past' stem (WT: འདས་ཚིག *'das.tshig*) of the morphological verb za.ba (ཟ་བ) is confined to a small minority of AT dialects. In most places, the form is /si/.

[164] It is possible for (413b) to also be interpreted as implying (but not entailing) that the meat has been completely consumed, but such an interpretation is only available in certain discourse contexts. This is shown by the English translation in which 'meat' is optionally specific.

[165] Note that some Tibetan speakers of Chinese use what Qiu and Su (2014) call the "guo2" past tense construction in Pǔtōnghuà Chinese as a more generalized past tense marker.

[166] By coerce I mean to say that the meaning of the lexeme *zu* is observed to change from its default interpretation when it occurs in this particular constructional context.

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"what did he eat?", and to the question, "did he eat the meat?" For this reason, my translation of (457b) presents 'meat' as optionally definite.

In the examples given in (458), the coercive effect of CompC is even more dramatic. Again, as with (457), the primary difference between (458a) and (458b) is that (458a) expresses an accomplishment and (457b) expresses an activity, but the two sentences in (458) represent mereologically different event structures, which in turn implicate potentially different argument structures. The sentence in (458a) expresses an INCREMENTAL accomplishment in the sense of Croft (2010) an event that encompasses a series of temporally dependent, distinct sub-events with the final sub-event corresponding to the telos, or terminal point. Beyond this feature, (458a) may be compatible with two different event-construals. When it is interpreted as meaning, '(they) finished working', then the sense of completion comes from the semantic framing of the final sub-event. When it is interpreted as meaning '(they) finished the job' or 'the job was finished', then the sense of completion is a resulting state, affecting an incremental theme—*lika*, 'job'— that is isomorphic with the process that produced it, as each sub-event corresponds to a distinct sub-part, or scalar quality, of the theme.

In contrast, (458b) expresses an event that has duration but with a homogeneous internal structure: there is no sense that there are distinct beginning, middle or end stages, so there are no discernible sub-events that might correspond with an incremental theme, nor is there any sense of a resulting state. So, even though the syntactic structure of (458b) is more or less identical to that of (457b), the nominal constituent in (458b), *lika* 'work' functions as a lexicalized component of a syntactically complex intransitive verb, 'to work'. In other words, (458a) and (458b) represent essentially different propositions:

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(458a) construes a semantic patient participant, 'job', that is not construed in (458b). For this reason, a passive translation is acceptable for (458a), but not (448b).

From the examples in (457) and (458), it is tempting to analyze CompC as a derivational marker of sorts, one that changes the inherent aspect of verbs from telic to atelic. If we assume that (457a)and (457b) represent essentially the same proposition—the dog ate the meat—then we can characterize the difference between them as a matter of event structure: in (457a)'eating' is construed as a telic accomplishment; in (457b), it is an atelic activity. This difference is even more stark in (458), in which telicity involves both the difference between an accomplishment and an activity and also the presence or absence of a semantic patient and therefore influences whether or not the verb 'do' is interpreted as transitive or intransitive. Perhaps more important than the notion of transitivity, however, is the notion of a referential object: both (457b) and (458b) can be interpreted as not expressing referential objects, but in (458b) the relative semantic "emptiness" of the verb *je* 'do' combined with the non-referential status of *lika* 'work' produces a default interpretation of a proposition that only has one participant, a semantic agent.

An even more abstract telic interpretation of CompC is apparent when it occurs with verbs that already have a telic sense, but which cannot be construed as having a patient. The sentences in (459), below, contain the verb 'go', or more precisely, 'went', which, when it does not occur in a CompC constructional context, can be classified as an achievement—it is a punctual (i.e., instantaneous) event resulting in a change of state. Rather than expressing completion, or coercing a transitive interpretation, the CompC construct in (459a) has a cumulative sense: while the action of leaving is still construed

as punctual, there is a sense of duration—that some sort of process was required building up to the moment of departure—hence the optional interpretation of 'finally'. The cumulative effect of CompC can be interpreted in one of two ways: either the speaker of (459a) has observed that subject some time or difficulty to get out the door, or else the subject's departure was anticipated for some time. Neither the sense of anticipation nor of a durative process are conveyed by the construct in (459b).

(459)

     a.   *wɨt-**bzaχ**-tʰa*

             go.PFV-**CMP.PFV**-DE.PST

             '(They) finally left.' Entailed: They are still gone.

     b.   *wɨt-tʰa*

             go.PFV-DE.PST

             '(They) left.' Or, 'they went.'

The sense of anticipation is also implied by the following sentence.

(460)   *tonɖɨp*   *joŋ-**bzaχ**-tʰa*

       Don.grub   arrive-**CMP.PFV**-DE.PST

       'Don.grub finally came.'

As with (459a), (460) also expresses a motion event that is construed as an achievement. It also expresses a sense of duration leading up to the event, implying either

that Don.grub's arrival was long anticipated (by the speaker) or else was achieved (by

Don.grub) with effort and time. The construct in (460) differs from that in (459a),

however, in that (460) does not seem to entail that Don.grub is still present where 'here'

is at the time of speaking, while (459a) entails that its un-named subject is still gone. This

difference likely has less to do with aspectual differences in the type of event than

speakers having different pragmatic reasons for choosing to describe someone's

departure as 'finally' happening versus someone's arrival: if the speaker has anticipated

the departure of the subject, it is logical that they are anticipating the subject's absence,

so people interpret the sentence in (459a) as meaning that the subject should still be gone.

In the case of 'come', however, the speaker may have all sorts of reasons for anticipating

the subject's arrival, not all of which involve them sticking around. For example, the

speaker might have been waiting for Don.grub to return their car or bring them a

package.

Note that I describe the conveyed attitude toward both events as anticipation, not

expectation—this is because for these two sentences, the specific combination of duration

and highlighted outcome that CompC conveys suggests that for the speaker there was

some doubt as to whether or not the represented events would ever take place. This last

implication—the previous uncertainty about an outcome that has come to pass—will be

of interest when we come to descriptions of the Hell Bent and Mirative Constructions,

later.

From the examples given above, it is apparent that the interpretation of a given

CompC construct depends on the inherent semantic properties of the verbal constituent.

Aside from the inherent aspectual properties of the verbs, the external—or viewpoint

(461) *ɣnam wap-**bzaχ**-tʰa*

        sky   fall.PFV-**CMP.PFV**-DE.PST DE.PERF

        'It finally rained.' Entailed: it is not raining now.

(462) *ɣnam wap-tʰa*

        sky   fall.PFV-DE.PST

        'It rained.' Entailed: it is not raining now.

(463) *ɣnam wap-**bzaχ**=jokə*

        sky   fall.PFV-**CMP.PFV**=DE.PERF

        'It (finally) started to rain.' Entailed: it is raining now.

(464) *ɣnam wap=jokə*

        sky   fall.PFV=DE.PRF

        'It rained.' Entailed: it is not raining now. Implied: the ground is still wet.

Both (461) and (462) express events that occurred prior to the time of speech, as represented by the [CLAUSE]—*tʰa* construction. The same is true for (463): expresses that the entire process of rainfall is in the past (and so cannot be on-going at the time of speech). However, the sentence in (464) highlights just one stage of 'rain' as being past—the start. Because CompC frames 'rain' as a telic situation, the perfect aspectual context of *jokə* gives the sentence an inchoative interpretation of 'starting to rain', with the strong implication that the result of the change of state—the situation of rain—still holds true at the time of speech.

If CompC functions to frame a past-construed semantic activity as a change of state with the implication that the resulting state is not past, when CompC is combined

with the inherent aspectual properties of achievements, the resulting sense is also inchoative.

(465) *tonɖip*   *ɣŋit-bʑaχ-tʰa*

      Don.grub   fall.asleep-CMP.PFV-DE.PST

      'Don.grub finally fell asleep.' Implied: He is still asleep.

CompC derives from a lexical verb, *bzhag*, with a primary meaning of 'put down', and secondary meanings of 'quit' and 'be set down'. However, as the following examples show, when *bzhag* also occurs as an auxiliary it expresses grammatical functions that are not predictable from its semantic behavior as a lexical verb.

(466) *ŋi*   *gormo tə*   *ɣŋilkhaŋ-na*   *bzaχ=jot*

      1S.GEN   money DEF   bank-LOC   put=PERF.EGO

      'My money is kept in the bank.'   (Gcig.sgril)

(467) *tonɖip-kə*   *lika*   *bzaχ=soŋ-tʰa*

      Don.grub-ERG   work   quit=PFV-DE.PST

      'Don.grub quit work.' (I.e., the job is unfinished.)   (Gcig.sgril)

(468) *ptɛʰir-wa*   *zoχ*

      outside-LOC   put. IMP

      'Put (it) outside.'   (Gcig.sgril)

      The following examples are of CompC.

(469) *wɨt-bʐax-tha*

went-COMP.PFV-DE.PST

'(He) finally left.'   (Gcig.sgril)

(470) *lika   ji-bʐaχ-tʰa*

work   do-COMP-DE.PST

'(He) finished working.' (I.e., he completed the job.)   (Gcig.sgril)

The most dramatic illustration of the semantic divergence of CompC from its lexical source comes through a comparison of the sentence in (467), where Tondrip quits working, implying he left the job unfinished, and (470), where it is entailed that he completed the job.

Interestingly, the same lexical verb has grammaticalized into a perfect construction and a mirative construction in Standard Tibetan. That *bzhag* should show up in multiple independent grammaticalization pathways is not surprising, given the large degree of polysemy and its commonality to all Tibetic languages. Lexical *bzhag* is typical of the kinds of verbs that end up as the V$_2$ in a serial verb construction SVC: it is both highly polysemous and also, for some of its meanings, semantically general. Its lexical functions are thus easily incorporated into a predicate primarily expressed by a verb with very concrete, specific meanings. As a lexical verb, it crosses lines of transitivity and Aktionsart, occurring as both a transitive telic action and an intransitive state. ST grammatical *bzhag* and MT grammatical *bzhag* evolved from different event schemas of lexical *bzhag*. In ST, the source event schema is the intransitive state interpretation of *bzhag* and in MT it is the transitive action. Before describing how these different event

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schemas resulted in different functions, it is useful to summarize the semantic and morphosyntactic properties that *bzhag* displays as a lexical item.

9.3   Terminative Construction

The post-clitic =*tsʰar* is a terminative marker (TermC)in the sense that it selects the end phase of an event. In the above examples, it seems to express more or less the same meaning as CompC. The difference in meaning between TermC and CompC is very slight, but still significant.

For example, the two constructions do not have a complementary distribution in all environments, as the following examples show.

(471)   *wɨt-bʐaχ-tʰa*

   went-COMP-DE.PST

   '(He) finally left.'

(472)   **wɨt=tsʰar-tʰa*

   went=TERM-DE.PST

   '(He) finished leaving.'

(473)   *joŋ-bʐaχ-tʰa*

   come-COMP.PFV-DE.PST

   '(He) finally came.'

(474)   **joŋ=tshar-tʰa*

   come=TERM-DE.PST

'(He) finished coming.'

Sentences (472) and (474) are rejected as ungrammatical. As Dahl (1985) explains, completive aspect is a phasal operator that specifically highlights the endpoint phase of a bounded event. 'Went' and 'come' are both atelic verbs of motion and thus have no endpoint to highlight. They are thus incompatible with TermC. *CompC* however, can occur with either verb, in which case it has the meaning of 'finally'. The scenario my consultant gave for both of these examples was that the speaker was waiting for someone to arrive or to leave (such as a driver, in whose car he is riding). The use of CompC highlights that the event has taken place at all, not that it has been completed. There appears to be justification in describing CompC as functioning as a distinct grammatical category, conclusive.

9.4   Interaction of CompC and TermC with event type

CompC and TermC illustrate the ways in which auxiliaries coerce or highlight specific event types. CompC can't occur with any non-stative verb. Speakers reject combinations of *-bzhag* with verbs such 'know' and 'like', and also with any of the copulas, including the factual assertive copula, *red*. Below are examples of CompC with a variety of intransitive verbs. These contexts provide even greater information about the meaning of CompC.

Atelic activities

(475) *ɣnam   wap-bʐax=jokə*

rain   fall.PFV-CMP.PFV=DE.PERF

'It's started raining.' (It is raining now.)   (Gcig.sgril)

(476)   *ɣnam   wap=tshar=jokə*

rain   fall.PFV=TERM=DE.PERF

'It has finished raining.' (It's not raining now.)   (Gcig.sgril)

Punctual accomplishment

(477)   *tonɖip*   *ɣɲit-bʐaχ-tʰa*

Don.grub   sleep-COMP.PFV-DE.PST

Don.grub finally fell asleep.' (He is not sleeping now.)

(478)   *tonɖip*   *ɣɲit=tsʰar-tʰa*

Don.grub   sleep=TERM-DE.PFV

'Don.grub finished falling asleep.' (He might be sleeping now or not.)

(479)   *tonɖip*   *ɣɲit-bʐaχ-ziç*

Don.grub   sleep-COMP.PFV-IE.PST

'Don.grub finally fell asleep.' (He might be sleeping now, or not.)

Telic Activity

(480)   *xi-tʰa*

die-DE.PST

'He died.' (He is now dead.   (Gcig.sgril)

(481) *xi-bzaχ-ziç*

die-COMP.PFV-IE.PST

'He died.' (He is now dead.)   (Gcig.sgril)

(482) *xi-ziç*

die-IE.PST

'(He) died.' (He might have come back to life, however[167].)

(483) *xi=tshar-ziç*

die=TERM-DE.PFV

'(He) finally died.' (Impolite)

The above examples highlight a great deal of variation in the function of *-bzhag* in different environments. Unlike *=tshar,* which consistently has the same meaning in every context in which it is permitted—telic event has reached an endpoint—*bzhag* seems to have different meanings in different contexts. What seems to be happening is that *-bzhag* is interacting with the Aktionsart of the verbs with which it occurs. In the case of an atelic activity such as 'rain', it highlights that the event is taking place or has taken place, hence it has an inchoative interpretation. When it occurs with punctual accomplishments such as 'fall asleep', it also marks that the event has taken place, in which case whether the resulting state still holds is dependent on the evidential value of the information.

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[167] (482) was elicited, but the clarified explanation that the subject might not, in fact, be dead was offered immediately. The use of *zəç*, the inferential marker, indicates that the speaker does not have direct knowledge of the event. However, specifically in the case of 'die', but perhaps other telic verbs as well, its use can also be a stylistic choice, so apparently this is a common way to describe a character's death in a legend or Buddhist tale in which the same character dies multiple times and is either revived or else reincarnated.

In (477), the accomplishment was witnessed by the speaker and so the implication of *bzhag* is that the resulting state no longer holds because it is perfective aspect. In (478), however, the speaker has indirect evidence of Don.grub's falling asleep, which must be in the form of Don.grub still being asleep. As such, *bzhag* implies that Don.grub fell asleep after some effort. My consultant said that this statement would probably only ever be made about an infant, since a secondary meaning of *bzhag* in this context is that it marks the realization of a desired, and anticipated outcome and no one cares that much about the sleeping habits of adults. Both examples—(478) and (479)—have the same ambiguity as to whether or not Don.grub is asleep at the time of the utterance, but for different reasons. *Tsʰar* in (478) might mean that he has finished sleeping, in which case he is now awake, or that he has stopped falling asleep, in which case he is also now awake, or he has finished falling asleep, in which case is now asleep.

In (480)-(483) we see the differences in meaning to 'die' that are contributed by different endings, all inferential clauses. In (480), the statement is an announcement that someone is dead. Though the speaker does not have direct evidence of the act of dying, he has either seen the body for himself or has it on very good authority that that the individual is deceased. This is not so for (482), where the speaker is only expressing that he has indirect evidence that the subject was engaged in the process of dying prior to the time of speech. The default interpretation is that the subject is dead, but this is by no means a given, as this form is regularly used in mythical stories in which characters die and are reborn. The subject may have been dying, but then pulled through at the last minute, in which case the statement is still not false. In contrast, while (481) also contains the inferential morpheme, the presence of *bzhag* indicates that the inferential evidence of

the subject's passing is fairly concrete, such as a body. In (481) the subject is also dead, but there is the sense that his dying was the end point of a long process, such as an illness. Unlike (483), there wasn't necessarily any expectation on the part of the speaker that the subject would die in (481), whereas in (483) there is a sense that an expectation has been fulfilled. My consultant said that he felt that (483) might be said of a suicide or someone who has engaged in life-threatening behavior, but it could also be expressed of someone very old. The use of *tsʰar* with 'die' as in (483) appears to imply disrespect or negative feelings toward the subject. This is not surprising, since *tsʰar* has been associated elsewhere with a negative speaker stance (Zeisler 2004: 892).

CompC derives from a SVCs with an active event schema. It is still in the initial stage of grammaticalization, in which it still has the structural characteristics of an SVC V_2. CompC is only classified as an auxiliary and not as a SVC on the basis of a functional shift resulting in a semantic split between polysemous lexical *bzhag* and functionally restricted conclusive *bzhag*. There are as yet few structural signs of the reanalysis that has taken place. One such example is that unlike the SVC construction V_1-*tshar*, CompC can occur as an auxiliary to itself, as example (484) below shows.

(484) *tsʰaŋma*   *ɣŋilkʰaŋ-kə*   *naŋ-na*   *bzaχ-bzaχ-ziç*

      all   bank-GEN   inside-LOC   put-COMP-IE.PST

      '(They) finally transferred everything to the bank.' (I.e., they used to keep all their valuables under the mattress, but little by little, deposited it in the bank.'

CHAPTER X

QUOTATIVE CONSTRUCTION – A GRAMMATICAL HEARSAY CATEGORY

The element *zer* occurs as both a lexical verb and as a grammatical particle expressing information source. As a verb, it contrasts with other perception-cognition-utterance (PCU) verbs to convey nuanced distinctions in quoted speech events. As a grammatical particle, it expresses an evidential domain—REPORTED INFORMATION—that contrasts with other evidential and epistemic oppositions. I term this grammaticalized form the Quotative Construction (QC). In spite of expressing a cross-linguistically common evidential function , QC belongs to a different paradigm from other TAME constructions, including evidentials, because of its unique morphosyntactic properties.

QC also has several non-evidential extensions. Speakers commonly use it in pragmatically marked ways. Because it marks an external participant as the source of information, there is an implied shift of responsibility for the truth-value of the utterance away from the speaker. A speaker may then choose to employ QC to express a degree of epistemic uncertainty or lowered confidence in the validity of the information they are asserting. Alternatively, QC may be used to boost the authority of an assertion, particularly when the speaker is expressing a request. In another extended use, the fact that QC conveys mediative knowledge, it may be used to weaken the illocutionary force of an utterance, when the information presented is potentially contentious or insulting. Finally, *zer*, particularly in combination with the conditional marker *-na*, is used to mark a proposition as hypothetical or counterfactual.

The verb *zer* is often translated as 'say'. It is an active transitive verb that occurs in two clausal constructions—an ergative agent construction, with the sense of 'so-and-so said/says' (485); and an idiomatic dative subject construction in which the subject is restricted to the word 'name' (486).

(485) ɣgɛrgan-gə   mo   tɛraŋ joŋ-ɉire   zer-kə

teacher-ERG   3S.F.LOG[168]   today come-FUT.ALLO   say-DE.IPF

'The teacher_i says she_{ii} will come today.' Or, 'the teacher said, "She will come today."'   (Gcig.sgril)

(486) ŋɨ   mŋaŋ-ŋa   psʊnam   zer-ra

1S.GEN name-DAT   Sonam   say-EGO

'My name is Sonam.'   (Gcig.sgril)

The construction illustrated in example (485) is used for both direct and indirect quotes. We know that the subject of the embedded clause, 'she' is not co-referential with the agent of the matrix clause, 'the teacher', because the embedded clause is marked as non-egophoric, meaning that the proposition represented in the clause is not a form of intentional, self-knowledge for the person who being quoted.

Example (487), on the next page, shows a sentence in which the agent of the matrix clause, the person being quoted, is co-referential with the subject of the embedded clause.

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[168] As described in Ebihara (2014), Amdo Tibetan has logophoric third-person pronouns: *mo* is used for females, *kʰo* for males. Unlike the non-logophoric set, gender seems to be an obligatory category in the logophoric set. It is unclear that all dialects have dedicated logophoric pronouns.

(487) *ɣgɛrgan-kə   mo   tɛraŋ joŋ-ɟi   zer-kə*

teacher-ERG   3S   today come-FUT.EGO   say-DE.IPF

'The teacher$_i$ says she$_i$ will come today.' Or, 'The teacher said, "I will come

today."'   (Gcig.sgril)

As a verb, *zer* occurs with epistemic-evidential marking when it is a predicate in a

finite clause. It does not occur with these markers when it functions as a grammatical

particle. It also does not have any restrictions on argument structure. We see this in

example (488).

(488) *dzæmntsʰo   kʰarnəb   ndzo go   se*

Rgyamtsho   last.night   go.IPF want QUOT

'Rgyamtsho wanted to go last night (I heard).'   (Sun 1993: 988)

As with the two *zer* clauses in (485) and (487), (488) references an event that the

speaker knows about through a communicative act.

10.1 Epistemic use of the Quotative Construction

As mentioned in Sec. 4.2, unlike either the direct evidence or indirect evidence

categories, the QC is sometimes used by speakers as a strategy to express epistemic

distance from an assertion.

There can be many reasons why someone might wish to weaken the sense of

responsibility they have for the information communicated in an utterance. These include

a lack of confidence that what they are saying is true. An extended use of this sense is the use of QC to express a counterfactual assertion, as in the following excerpt from a religious lecture, transcribed into WT and published on-line.

(489) *mi.rnams*   *thog.mavi*   *dus.su*   *gcan.zan-gyi*

       people   first.GEN   time.LOC   beast-GEN

       gshis.ka₌[zer-na]   *vang.vdra*

       nature=psych-COND   resemble

       'It would seem that Man's original nature is that of a carnivorous beast (which is an incorrect assumption).'(2016 lecture by Mkhan.po Tshul.Krims Blo.gros[169])

The sentence in (489) is a rhetorical set-up for the point of the Mkhan.po's lecture, which is that human beings have an innate sense of reason and compassion and should act on this. The QC-marked assertion is not a quote, but is a hypothetical situation that is expressed in such a way that the listener should understand that it is not true. The use of QC in this sentence underscores that the information represented in it is not coming from the Mkhan.po, himself. In expressing an epistemic distance from the assertion, he implies that it is a misperception. The use of the conditional marker further emphasizes the counterfactual nature of the assertion.

In the case of (489), the association with epistemic distance of QC is employed strategically to imply that the assertion isn't true. Speakers also use QC to express epistemic distance for assertions that they do believe to be true, but which they think

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[169] Unfortunately, as of September 2019, this website has since been removed from the Internet.

might be poorly received by the audience. Such is the case with the sentence, below, which also illustrates how readily QC can be borrowed into other languages, like Chinese.

(490) *meiguoren*   *bijiao*   *pang=zɛr*

      American   comparatively   fat=QUOT

      'Supposedly Americans tend to be fat.'   (Gro.tsang)

The assertion in (490) was made in the presence of an American (the author). For the same reason the assertion was made in Chinese—I am more conversationally fluent in Chinese than Tibetan. The assertion was directed toward me, but the use of the QC as an epistemic marker in this sentence was later explained to me as an attempt to avoid offending me. Neither Tibetans nor Chinese in this area use 'fat' as a term of insult, but people are aware that it can be received that way by westerners. At any rate, the speaker uses QC to imply that responsibility for the assertion in (c) lies elsewhere: it is not necessarily his own opinion, just something he has heard said about Americans.

From the above examples we can see that the HEARSAY category in Amdo Tibetan, while having a primary evidential sense, is commonly extended to express an epistemic sense.

CHAPTER XI

SENTENCE FINAL PARTICLES

Another feature distinguishing finite from non-finite verbs is the ability of finite verbs to occur with of sentence final particles (SFP), of which Amdo Tibetan has three. I have not conducted the kind of extensive research on a large-scale corpus that would be necessary to present an in-depth analysis of these particles. Nonetheless, I believe I have enough understanding of how this system works in certain contexts to justify writing a preliminary description. Certainly, SFPs are a prominent feature of the language—they are particularly abundant in the natural discourse data that I have—and their syntactic position means that at least on the phonological level they interact with verbal morphology. It therefore feels like a greater offense to omit them entirely from this dissertation than to include a partial and overgeneralized description.

11.1 Syntax

I have only observed SFPs to occur after finite verbs—that is, at the end of sentences. This includes finite sentences that are embedded as complements of PCU (perception-cognition-utterance) verbs. I have not encountered examples of them occurring anywhere else in a sentence, nor am I aware of any examples of SFPs occurring at the end of utterance that is just comprised of a noun, for example. The distribution of Amdo Tibetan SFPs is therefore more like the SFP system of Japanese than the systems described for Sinitic languages.

Amdo Tibetan SFPs appear to be restricted to a subset of discourse genres. They are a feature of dialogs[170], showing up frequently in conversations but also occurring in other situational types of dialog that are more interactionally asymmetrical, such as when a parent scolds a child, or in a religious teaching delivered as a monolog to an audience. The fact that these markers do not have the same distributional frequency in all genres is an important indication of the kinds of functions they express. Specifically, they appear to be oriented toward narrowing the range of responses from the listener.

Amdo Tibetan SFPs may also be used along with other strategies, like tone of voice and lexical choice, to express irony or anger, because they do occur in such texts, but I have not attempted to investigate this matter.

By virtue of their syntactic properties, SFPs do not seem to interact with verbal morphology in significant ways. Nonetheless, their frequency in conversations and their role in organizing discourse structure justify a short diversion from the primary objectives of this dissertation to provide a cursory description of them. This list is certainly incomplete, but so far I have identified what appear to be the following contrastive functions for SFPs: ASSERTIVE, AFFIRMATIVE, INTERROGATIVE and RHETORICAL INTERROGATIVE.

11.2 Assertive SFP

There is an assertive SFP, *=ja*, which is used in declarative sentences, and an interrogative SFP, *=la*. The assertive SFP can also occur alone, as an exclamation, *ja*.

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[170] By "dialog", I mean an act of linguistic interaction between "mutually co-present individuals", following Linell's (1998: 8) definition.

The interrogative SFP is a true post-clitic, in that it is morphophonologically dependent, never occurring as word or utterance in itself. The distribution of both markers is asymmetrical across types of discourse: both occur in abundance in conversational texts but rarely occur in narratives, except in quoted speech. This suggests a conversational, rather than referential, function (Silverstein 1976).

The phonological representation of both particles is identical for all of the dialects included in my database. Both SFPs have an allomorph, *=a*. I have not identified any patterns behind this allomorphy. Examples (491)-(492), below, from Gcig.sgril Mgo.log, show that the two particles contrast with one another.

(491) *reja.*

re-ja

EQ.ALLO-AFF

'That is so.'

(492) *rela?*

re=la

EQ.ALLO=Q

'Is that so?'

Both (491) and (492) were produced with falling intonation on the SFP syllable, which is the intonational pattern of a short sentence without an SFP. Both morphemes convey the attitude of the speaker toward the proposition encoded in the utterance. The interrogative SFP also marks a sentence as a question. But, in addition to these pragmatic

and grammatical functions, these SFPs express important conversational functions. This means that their meaning cannot be understood by looking at isolated utterances; they must be understood in terms of the interaction of two or more speakers. I believe that both SFPs are used to establish what Pickering and Garrod (2004: 170) have termed 'interactive-alignment': the establishment of a shared mental representation of a situation being discussed. These SFPs serve as linguistic alignment devices by providing or soliciting certain kinds of feedback. The speaker's use these SFPs is thus oriented around the perceived mental state of the addressee.

11.3 Affirmative sentence-final particle

Although it shows up on many different types of verb stems in my data, the assertive SFP is overwhelmingly more frequent on copular verbs, in particular non-egophoric equative *re* and non-egophoric existential *jokə*. Consultants explain the presence of the assertive SFP in (445) as providing emphasis[171], but have trouble explaining what in the utterance is being emphasized and why. I believe that the morpheme is a linguistic alignment device used by interlocutors in a conversation to negotiate social roles, mediate informational common ground and act as a prompt for continuing or ending the dialog. It does all this by conveying that an utterance is a particular type of feedback.

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[171] One consultant put it as, "强调", or 'stressing the point'.

My own observations are that sentences such as (445) most frequently occur as answers to polar questions, and then as expressions of "active listening"[172]. A closer examination of the kinds of contexts in which we find the assertive SFP shows that its occurrence co-relates to the role of listener and it functions primarily as an expression of affirmation or confirmation for information that has been asserted to the listener by the person they are addressing when they use SFP on an utterance. The pragmatic function of this morpheme is to convey the speaker's attitude to something the addressee has said, not to their own utterance.

The verbal expression of confirmation or affirmation also signals that the addressee is listening and engaged in the conversation, even if they are not contributing information. As for the pragmatic difference between affirmation and confirmation, it depends on what kind of referential utterance is being responded to. For example, when it occurs in a response to a yes-no question, the question frequently pre-supposes an answer. We see this in the exchange in example (447), below:

(493)

A: *ⁿɖɪmgo mɛka?*

       ⁿɖɪmgo   *mekə=la*

       'Brug.'go   NEG.EXIST.ALLO=Q

       ''Brug.'go isn't (around), is he?'

---

[172] There are other verbal cues employed by the addressee to show that they are listening and having some sort of reaction to what the speaker is saying to them, but space constraints preclude describing them here.

B: *mɛka.*

     mekə=ja

     NEG.EXIST.DE=ASS

     'No, (he) isn't (as you expected).'

Speaker A anticipates that *'Brug.'go* (who happens to be her younger brother) isn't home, so she uses the negative, rather than assertive form of the copula. She also uses the interrogative SFP, instead of the interrogative enclitic, which further marks her question as pragmatically unusual: though she is asking a question, she expects a particular response. Speaker B's utterance meets this expectation, and the addition of the assertive SFP highlights this conversational function—that Speaker A's assumption is correct.

The assertive SFP also occurs as a response to declarative sentences. The sentence in (491) is frequently produced as a form of "active listening", by which I mean is used to indicate that the listener is paying attention to, and comprehending something that their addressee has said. More specifically, since it exists alongside other verbal cues of active listening, *reja* expresses that the speaker what the addressee has said is true, that they understand it and agree with it or otherwise accept it. For this reason, I translate the sentence in (491) as, "That is so." It then marks an utterance as a specific type of feedback. The utterance isn't necessarily advancing any information relevant to the situation being discussed, rather it is signaling to the addressee that the speaker tracks and accepts what they are saying. The speaker may provide this feedback to encourage the addressee to keep talking Feedback contributes to communicative success. As Garrod and

Pickering (2009) point out, feedback from listeners contributes to the informativeness and length of a story.

The speaker may provide this feedback to encourage the addressee to keep talking or to signal that the conversation is over. Example (494), below, is a common way to end a conversation.

(494)

A: *ja. tã ɟo.*

    ja   ta   ⁿɟo

    ASS   now   go.IPF

    'Ok, I should go.'

B: *ja ja. ptɛmo.*

    ja   ja   ptɛmo

    ASS   ASS   wellness

    'Of course. Goodbye.

The exchange in (494) occurred at the end of a conversation between a visiting neighbor, speaker A, and their host, speaker B. It was preceded by a fairly long pause in conversation, of approximately twenty seconds, which was a signal to speaker A that speaker B had finished talking. Speaker A then signaled that the conversation was over by expressing that he understood and accepted the information that had just been exchanged. He then announced that he was going to leave. Speaker B then echoed

speaker A, affirming that she understood and accepted that the interaction was over and then bid him farewell with the polite, but informal, expression, *bde.mo*.

In contexts in which the end of the conversation does not coincide with one person leaving, one person may simply say, "*ja*", and the conversation is over. This is a common way to end phone conversations. Since *ja* is also used to prompt the interlocutor to keep speaking (by signaling, as has been said, that the information they have just expressed is confirmed or expected, so they should continue in the development of whatever larger informational objective they may have), its use as a signal that there is nothing more to say is especially confusing for non-native speakers who interpret *ja* as a prompt to keep talking and aren't expecting it to be immediately followed by a hang up. *Ja* is also a common way for conversations to begin, in which case it functions as an affirmation on the part of one person that the other person shares the intention of starting a dialog.

11.4 Interrogative sentence-final particle

The interrogative SF particle alone is enough to mark the sentences in (492) and ((493)a) as interrogative. Sometimes, but not always, the interrogative SFP is preceded by an exaggeratedly heightened intonational peak, which may be expressing some other function independently of, or in conjunction with, that of the SFP, or it may be part of the *=la* also frequently co-occurs with the interrogative enclitic, *ɔ́*. This is the case in example (495), taken from Yǎqūtān. Note that the form is *é*, not *ɔ́*, in this dialect.

(495) *tɕʰola toŋtsi éjola?*

      tɕʰo-la   *toŋtsi*   *é=jo-Ø-la*

      2S-DAT   money   Q= have-EGO-Q

      'You have money, don't you?'   (Yăqūtān)

Generally, SFPs occur with falling intonation, but I do have examples of the interrogative SF occurring with higher pitch relative to the preceding syllable. There a few examples of the *=a* allomorph of the interrogative SF occurring without the interrogative enclitic.

As was stated in the description of (493), above, the interrogative SFP marks a sentence as something other than a straight-forward question: the speaker expects a particular answer. So, in (495) the speaker expects that the addressee has money, and in (493a), the speaker expected that the referent of the sentence, 'Brug.'go, wasn't there. Questions structured this way convey the speaker's attitude—expectation. Depending on the context, questions marked with the interrogative SFP do not even require a response from the addressee. Example (492), below, was, like its counterpart in (491), *reja*, produced as a form of feedback during a long stream of speech by the addressee. It was neither a response to a question nor did it prompt the addressee for a response to it.

(496) *rela?*

      re=la

      EQ.ALLO=Q

      'Is that so?'

My consultant explained (496) as something to say when the speaker has heard new and interesting information (or perhaps simply wants to give this impression). She translated it as, '真的吗？'—"oh, really?" I have translated it here as, 'is that so?'. Like the Chinese and English equivalents, the utterance in (496) does not entail a response at all: the speaker is asking if what the addressee has been telling them is true, but the use of the interrogative SFP makes it clear that the speaker already believes what they are hearing to be the truth. There is therefore no need for the addressee to say anything further. So (496), like (495), is a form of feedback, conveying to the addressee that the speaker understands and accepts what they are saying and therefore the two interlocutors share the same situational model. How forms of feedback marked with the interrogative SFP differ from those with the assertive SFP is the sense that the speaker finds the information surprising or interesting. The assertive SFP does not convey anything about the speaker's attitude toward the information the addressee has expressed to them beyond the fact that they comprehend it, and accept or agree with it.

The following examples of the Gcig.sgril Mgo.log dialect are excerpts from a spontaneous conversation between three participants—myself, Ye.shes Sgrol.ma and her father, Ba.lo. The excerpted utterances were produced at the beginning of the interaction, which was initiated by Ye.shes Sgol.ma when her father entered the compound of their house as she and I were finishing up an elicitation session. Ye.shes Sgrol.ma suggested that I record her father, who was happy to oblige. However, my attempt to ask him questions using the Tibetan expressions Ye.shes had just taught me was an immediate flop. Example (497), then, is Ye.shes Sgrol.ma's explanation to her father of what I was trying to say. Example (498) is Ba.lo's response, asking for further explanation.

Example (499), below, is Ye.shes' attempt to clarify my request by modeling a response that Ba.lo might give to my answer.

(497) ⁿdɛ akə ɹtsam.ɹdze tɕʰimizɨk jinəre xtɕɨ ɕot **ta̋ zè**.

     ⁿde   [akə   [ɹtsam.ɹdzi¹⁷³   tɕʰimi=zɨk   jinəre]ᵢᵢ

     PROX.ERG   uncle.ERG   tsampa.mixing   how=INDEF   FACT.EQ

     ɣtɕɨk   ɕot   **ta**]ᵢ   zer

     one   speak.IMP   **CNX**   QUOT

     'She said, "can Uncle say again the way to mix tsampa into a ball?"'

(498) tə pzidà…?

     tə   pzi   **ta**

     DEF   say   **SFP**

     'Saying this, then…?'

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[173] ɹtsam.ɹdzi is a compound nominalization. The first syllable is an abbreviation of the noun ɹtsam.pa, 'tsampa'. The second syllable is the verb root ɹdzi. Compound nominalization is a productive construction in the Tibetan Language. The resulting compounds are always disyllables with the following underlying structure: [noun + verb]. Compound nominalizations are primarily used to reference generic activities, such as 'horse riding' ɹta.zʊn, in Gcig.sgril Mgo.log.

As for the activity ɹtsam.ɹdzi, I have glossed the verb ɹdzi as 'mix', but it actually seems to be specific to the process of mixing in a bit of liquid into a bowl of tsampa, working the liquid evenly throughout the flour and then pressing it into balls which can then be picked up and eaten.

(499) *mḍe ta ɟtsæmpa ɣŋika jinzɨkāá? ɟkærwa cʰo mḍɛ ta tsodmazɨ zune rəʁa, ɟtsampa*

  zune ɲəɣnəre.

  mḍe   ta   rtsampa   ɣŋiɣa   jinzɨç=a

  rice   and   tsampa   both   EQ.IE=**SFP**

  'Supposing there is both rice and tsampa…'

  rkarwa cʰo   mḍe   ta   tsodma=zɨç   zu-ni   rɪʁa

  very   2s   rice   and   vegetables=INDEF   eat.PST-ABL   compare

  rtsampa   zu-ne   rɟaɣ-nəre

  tsampa   eat.PST-ABL   be.full-FACT.ALLO

  'Really, compared to you eating some rice and vegetables, eating tsampa is more

  filling.'

Sentence final particles occur in all three utterances. Example (499) contains two

embedded clauses, *i* and *ii*. Clause *ii* is embedded in clause *i*. Both *i* and *ii* are verbal

complements. Both embedded clauses are fully finite sentences, which can function as

direct objects of PCU (perception-cognition-utterance) verbs.

11.5 Rhetorical interrogative SFP

Finally, there is a dedicated SFP for expressing rhetorical questions. The form of

this marker is -*pa*, which is phonetically similar to the Chinese rhetorical marker *ba* (吧).

However, -*pa* also shows up in Old Tibetan texts, so there is no reason to assume that

Amdo Tibetan borrowed this marker from Chinese as opposed to inheriting it from a

common ancestor.

Consultants tell me that this marker "sounds polite" and is used most frequently to confirm information expressed in previous assertions. Hence, in the following example it is used by an interviewer to confirm a fact that was implied, but not explicitly stated, by the interviewee in previous statements.

(500) *… taɣə, jiɖon zerkono, cʰɨɲiɣa m̥intʰəŋni s̥lovɖoχ jɪncərepa?*

taɣə	*jiɖon*	*zer-ko-no*	*cʰɨɲiɣa*	*m̥intʰaŋ-ni*
so	Ye.sgron	call-PROG-NMZ	2DU	Smin.thang-ABL

l̥opɖoχ	*jɪnɨire=**pa***
classmate	EQ.FUT.ALLO=**SFP**

'… So, Ye.sgron, whom you've been talking about, the two of you must have been classmates in Smin.thang, **right**?'   (Gcig.sgril)

Framed as a rhetorical interrogation, the question in (500) is intended to elicit just one response, 'yes', which is the response that was given. The communicative purpose of this construction is therefore to present the interlocutor with an assertion the speaker thinks they have said, or intended to say, giving them the chance to confirm that, yes, this is what they meant to say.

APPENDIX A

ABBREVIATIONS

1	First person	FACT	Factual
2	Second person	FOC	Focus
3	Third person	FUT	Future
Q	Interrogative	GEN	Genitive
ABL	Ablative	IE	Indirect evidence
AFF	Affirmative	IMP	Imperative
AG	Agent	INDEF	Indefinite
ALLO	Allophoric	INST	Instrumental
ASS	Assertive	INTR	Intransitive
CMP	Comparative	IPF	Imperfective
CNX	Connective	LOC	Locative
CNV	Converb marker	NCTR	Non-control
COMP	Completive	NEG	Negative
COND	Conditional	NMZ	Nominalizer
CONT	Continuative	PERF	Perfect
COP	Copula	PFV	Perfective
CTR	Control	PL	Plural
DAT	Dative	POL	Polite
DE	Direct evidence	PROG	Progressive
DEF	Definite	PROX	Proximate
DEON	Deontic	PST	Past
DIST	Distal	PURP	Purposive
DU	Dual	QUOT	Quotative
EGO	Egophoric	S	Singular
EMP	Emphasis		Sentence Final
EQ	Equative	SFP	Particle
ERG	Ergative	SPEC	Speculative
EXIST	Existential	TERM	Termanitive
EXP	Experiential perfect	TR	Transitive
F	Female	VOC	Vocative

APPENDIX B

TEXT:

Spontaneous conversation- Gcig.sgril (Ye.shes Sgrol.ma interviews Shang.shang)

(Label: JZ_10)

The text is a seven minute excerpt of a dialog between two women, Ye.shes Sgrol.ma and Shang.shang. The recording was made in July, 2014 using a Tascam DR_5. At the time of recording both women were 22 years of age.

Ye.shes Sgrol.ma (ཡེ་ཤེས་སྒྲོལ་མ) was born in Sog.ri.ma (སོག་རི་མ), a nomadic village in west Gcig.sgril. She has lived much of her life in Gcig.sgril Township. Typical of Tibetans, Ye.shes Sgrol.ma is called by a shortened form of her name that combines the first syllable of each disyllable name. In Written Tibetan, the form of this name is Ye.sgrol (ཡེ་སྒྲོལ), but, as is common in Amdo and elsewhere, her name is pronounced *jiɖoŋ*, sometimes written *ye.sgron* (ཡེ་སྒྲོན). This is the name that the Chinese name on her identity card is a transliteration of. However, Ye.sgron prefers Chinese speakers to call her *yīxī* (依西) because she thinks this sounds nicer. At the time of this recording, she had been operating her trekking business for a couple of years.

Shang.shang (ཤང་ཤང), who is Ye.sgrol's friend and relative, was born in Gcig.sgril Township. During the summer this text was produced, Shang.shang had tried out working with Ye.sgron as a trekking guide. The recording was made the day after the two women had returned from Shang.shang's first trek. After this experience Shang.shang decided that trekking was not the career for her.

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The recording was made in the home of Ye.sgron. Ye.sgron and I planned for Ye.sgron to interview Shang.shang and Shang.shang was invited to come over and be recorded. I was present at the time of recording to provide some guidance. I suggested the topic of discussing the recent backpacking trip. Otherwise, I provided no input. Ye.sgrol determined the content of the interview. Informed consent protocol was followed.

Where the speakers code switch into Chinese, the pinyin transcription is given in [brackets].

Description of content:

The dialog is in the form of an interview, with Ye.shes Sgrol.ma (Ye.sgron) asking questions of Shang.shang. Because it is an interview, both women sometimes refer to Ye.sgron in the third person.

The majority of the text is about a recent horse trek the two women had taken together. The trek was a paid trip guiding a group of tourists from Inner China to visit some of the areas glacier-fed lakes. The women also discuss their friendship and talk about a former teacher that they had in common. The teacher, 'Teacher Wáng' (王老师) was a volunteer Chinese-language teacher at what was then called the Smin.thang Vocational Middle School (I believe it has since been converted to a regular middle school), or Smin.thang Middle School.

Named after the county in which it is located, Smin.thang Middle School was founded by a local religious figure, Bla.ma Rdo.rje Btan, to meet the immense educational need of Mgo.log Prefecture and neighboring areas. The Bla.ma had previously built and staffed an elementary school for the area, seeing both projects as his

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duty to his community. The middle school was intended to provide an opportunity for any level of formal education to any Tibetan willing and able to come there. In the early years, especially, a majority of the students were in their late teens and twenties, with little to no experience with formal education. Before she came to Smin.thang at the age of 17, Ye.sgron had never gone to school. Shang.shang had gone to school, but had experienced various set-backs and suffered from having to attend school far from home. For both women, their time at Smin.thang radically changed their lives for the better. Shang.shang now works in the local Culture Bureau. Ye.sgron learned how to read and write in three different languages and how to use a computer and other skills that she has since parlayed into a successful tourism business, the income from which is helping to send her younger sister to university in Inner China. Teacher Wáng played a crucial role during their time at Smin.thang.

JZ_10 narrator="Xiangxiang and Yedrong" text type="Spontaneous conversation" language="Gcig.sgril Mgo.log"

Ye.sgron

ja, ẕɨmo[174]!

ja   ẕɨmo

yes   girl

'Greetings, Miss!'

---

[174] A formal way to greet a girl or young woman.

Ye.sgron

cʰo temo.

cʰo	ptɛmo
2s	peace

'Hello.'

cʰo saɸɛoʁ kəŋgə jɪn?

cʰo	sa.ɸɛoχ	kaŋ-kə	jɪn
2s	location	which-GEN	EQ.EGO

'What area are you from?'

Shang.shang

ŋæ saɸɛʰoʁ χdʑɨɣḍilgə jɪn.

ŋa	sa.ɸɛʰoʁ	ɣɟɨɣḍil-kə	jɪn
1s	place.direction	Gcig.sgril-GEN	EQ.EGO

'I'm from Gcig.sgril.'

Ye.sgron

cʰo tætæ lo tɨ re?

cʰo	tata	lo	tɨ	re
2s	right.now	year	how.many	EQ.ALLO

'How old are you now?'

Shang.shang

lo ȵɨç ʂtsæ ʁȵi re.

lo	ȵɨçɨ	rtsa	ɣȵi	re
year	twenty	two.decad[175]	two	EQ.ALLO

(I) am 22 years old.

Ye.sgron

o, cʰu pʰajɨl χdʑɨɣd̥ɨlgə rela?

o	cʰu	pʰa.jɨl	ɣɹɨɣd̥ɨl-kə	re-la
Uh	2.GEN	father.homeland	Gcig.sgril-GEN	EQ.ALLO-SFP

'Uh, your hometown is Gcig.sgril, right?'

Shang.shang

reja.

re-a

EQ.ALLO-SFP

'Right.'

---

[175] Tibetan has a decimal numeral system in which each decad (or tens) set has a special morpheme that comes between the tens number and the ones number. For the twenties set, this decad morpheme is *rtsa* (ཚ).
In Standard Tibetan, tens numerals are often expressed by just saying the decad plus the ones numeral. I have not observed Amdo speakers do this, even in casual conversation, but this doesn't mean they don't. The WT form for '22' is parsed and glossed below. Note that the form of 'two' and 'ten' is special to 'twenty'.

(a) ཉི་ཤུ་རྩ་གཉིས

nyi	shu	rtsa	gnyis
two	ten	two.decad	two

Ye.sgron

təni… təni tæ cʰu ʈoʁpo zəɣ … cʰu ʈoʁpo … ʈoʁpotɕʰakɨ nəŋni…

təni	təni	ta	cʰu	ʈokpo=zɨç
so.then	so.then	now	2.GEN	friend=INDEF

cʰu	ʈokpo	...	ʈokpo-tɕʰa-kə	naŋ-ni
2.GEN	friend	…	friend-PL-GEN	inside-ABL

'So, then… then, well, your friend…your friend…together with the friend…'

cʰu ʈoʁpotɕʰægi nəŋgə χdzəɣ …

cʰu	ʈokpo-tɕʰa-kə	naŋ-kə	çcɨɣ
2.GEN	friend-PL-GEN	inside-GEN	one

'With your one friend…

tæ tɕʰə zerkonɖo?

ta	tɕʰɨ	zer=rgo-nɨre-o
now	what	call=DEON-FACT.ALL-SFP

'How should I say?'

tæ kʰæχwe nɖæ ziç ʈoʁpotɕʰægi nəŋgə tæ tɕɨɣdzilo zəɣ ɸɕʰæʔnæ tɕʰimo zəɣ re?

ta	kʰaχwi=nɖa=ziç		ʈokpo-tɕʰa-kə	naŋ-kə	ta
now	difficulty.GEN=resemblance=INDEF		friend-PL-GEN	inside-GEN	now

'So, this sort of adventure with your friends…'

ɣcɨɣ.ɣcɨɣ-lo=ziç		ɸɕat-na	tɕʰimo=ziç	re?
one.one-EMP=INDEF		speak-COND	how=INDEF	EQ.ALLO

'How would it be if you were to say a little bit about it?'

Shang.shang

tɕʰoqəja.

tɕʰoχ-kə-ja

be.acceptable-DE-SFP

'Sure.'

Ye.sgron

[nà], cʰo ʈoʁpo ti mɲəŋæ tə tɕʰɨ ze?

[nà]	cʰu	ʈokpo=ti	mɲaŋ-na=tə	tɕʰɨ	zer-Ø
Well.	2S.GEN	friend=DEF.GEN	name-DAT=DEF	what	call-EGO

'So, what is this friend of yours called?'

Shang.shang

jiɛi ɖolma zenɖe.

jiɛi	ɖolma	zer-nɨre
Ye.shes	Sgrol.ma	call-FACT.ALLO

'She is called Ye.shes Sgrol.ma.'

Ye.sgron

ja. [nà] cʰu kʰuɣə lorci zɨɣ ŋitɕʰænæræ zɨɣ ɸɕæʔnæ tɕʰimo re?

ja

yes

[nà]	cʰu	kʰu-kə	lorɟi=zɨç	ŋi-tɕʰa-na-ra	zɨç	ɸɕʰat-na
well	2S.GEN	3S-GEN	history=INDEF	1S-PL-DAT-also	a.bit	say-COND

tɕʰimo	re
how	EQ.ALLO

'Yep. So, how would it be if you were to talk with us a little bit about your and her story?'

Shang.shang

ŋi ɖoʁpo ŋəɲɨɣi… ŋi ɖoʁpo ŋəɲɨɣi… tæ ɸɕiɣa… rɟæ maŋa cʰəʔ ti tæ mtsʰokʰa soŋaja.

ŋi	ʈokpo	ŋə-ɲi-kə…	ŋi	ʈokpo	ŋə-ɲi-kə…
1S.GEN	friend	1-DU-ERG…	1S.GEN	friend	1-DU-ERG

'My friend, the two of us… my friend, the two of us…

ta	ɸɕi-kə-a…
now	say.PFV-IPF-SFP

'So, saying this…'

rɟa	maŋ-wo	cʰər-ti	ta	mtsʰo-ka	soŋ-a-ja
Han	be.many-NMZ	bring-CNV	now	lake-LOC	went-EGO-SFP

'(We) took a bunch of Chinese people to the lake.'

[Some whispering]

Shang.shang

təjə re…

tə-ja	re
DEF-too	EQ.ALLO

'So then…'

Ye.sgron

təni rɟæ cʰərte kəŋæ soŋnɨre?

təni	rɟæ	cʰər-ti	kaŋ-na	soŋ-nɨre
well	Han	bring-CNV	where-LOC	went-FACT.ALLO

'Where did you the Chinese people?'

Shang.shang

mtsʰo ʂkora jini soŋa.

mtsʰo	ʂkor.a	ji-ni	soŋ-a
lake	revolution.NMZ	do-CNV	went-EGO

'(We) went to circumambulate the lake.'

Ye.sgron

mtsʰo kəŋkəŋ ʂkorna mɲəŋ zɨç ɸɕæʔnæ tɕʰimo re?

mtsʰo   kaŋ.kaŋ   ʂkor-na   mɲaŋ zɨç   ɸɕad-na

lake   which.which   revolve-COND name   a.bit   say   say-COND

tɕʰimo   re

how   EQ.ALLO

'How about telling us the names of different lakes you went around?'

Shang.shang

rŋo mtsʰo.

rŋo   mtsʰo

Rngo   lake

'Rngo Lake.

Ye.sgron

təɣə…

'And…?'

Shang.shang

raʁi mtsʰo.

'*ra ʁi* Lake.'

Ye.sgron

təɣə…

'And…?'

Shang.shang

təɣə ɸɕʰɨ mtsʰo…tæ mtsʰo məŋa zɨɣa soŋaja.

təɣə	ɸɕʰɨ	mtsʰo
then	'Phyi	Lake

'Then 'Phyi.mtsho Lake.'

ta	mtsʰo	maŋ-wo=zɨç-a	soŋ-a-ja
now	lake	be.many-NMZ=INDEF-LOC	went-EGO-SFP

'And (we) went to many lakes.'

Ye.sgron

o, təni lam nəŋni cʰətɕʰæ ʂkəŋ təŋji mtsʰo ʂkor soŋnɨre tæ ʂta zonne soŋnɨre?

o	təni	lam-nəŋni	cʰɨ-tɕʰa	ʂkaŋ	ptaŋ-ji
oh	then	road-LOC	2-PL	foot	hit-CNV

mtsʰo	ʂkor	soŋ-nɨre	ta	ʂta	zon-ni	soŋ-nɨre
lake	revolve	went-FACT.ALLO	now	horse	ride-CNV	went-FACT.ALLO

'Ok. So, on the road circumambulating the lakes, did you guys walk or did you ride horses?'

Shang.shang

tətɕʰægi ʂta ʐone soŋnɖe. tətɕʰægæ ʂkəŋtəŋ soŋnɖe. ŋi ʂta ʐonne soŋnɖe.

tə-tɕʰa-kə	ʂta	ʐon-ni	soŋ-nɨre
DEF-PL-ERG	horse	ride-CNV	went-FACT.ALLO

tə-tɕʰa-ka	ʂkaŋ.ptaŋ	soŋ-nɨre
DEF-PL-ERG	foot.hit	went-FACT.ALLO

ŋə	ʂta	ʐon-ni	soŋ-nɨre
1S.ERG	horse	ride-CNV	went-FACT.ALLO

'Some rode horses. Some walked. I rode a horse.'

Ye.sgron

o re.

'Oh.'

Shang.shang

ŋɨ ɲɨmæ ʁɲiɣə lama ʂta ʐonɖre.

ŋɨ	ɲima	ɣɲi-kə	lam-a	ʂta	ʐon-nɨre
1S.ERG	day	two-GEN	road-LOC	horse	ride-FACT.ALLO

'I rode a horse for two days.'

Ye.sgron

təni ʂta ʐonæ cʰətɕʰi ʂta χlæ rgonɖe tæ χjær rgonɨre?

təni   ʂta   ʐon-na

then   horse   ride-COND

cʰɨ-tɕʰi   ʂta   ɣla=rgo-nɨre   ta

2-PL.ERG   horse   rent=DEON-FACT.ALLO   now

ɣjar=rgo-nɨre

borrow=DEON-FACT.ALLO

'So, when you were riding horses, did you have to rent the horses or borrow?'

Shang.shang

χlæ.rkonɖe.

ɣla=rgo-nɨre

rent=DEON-FACT.ALLO

'(We) had to rent.'

Ye.sgron

χlænæ ʂta zɨɣæ tɨ re?

ɣla-na   ʂta=zɨç-a   tɨ   re

rent-COND   horse=INDEF-DAT   how.much   EQ.ALLO

'How much to rent a horse?'

Shang.shang

vɣʝæ.

bɣʝa

hundred

'One hundred (yuan).'

Ye.sgron

ore. ja təni cʰɨtɕʰæ ɲɨmæ tɕʰɨ soŋa? mtsʰo tɨ ʂkora jizɨɣ?

ore	ja	təni	cʰɨ-tɕʰa		ɲɨma	tɕʰɨ	soŋ-a
right	yes	then	2-PL		day	what	went-EGO

mtsʰo	tɨ		ʂkora		ji-zɨç
lake	how.many		revolutions		do-IE.PST

'I see. How long were you there? How many lakes did you circumambulate?'

Shang.shang

mtsʰo … ŋe zɨɣ ʂtsə.aja.

mtsʰo		ŋə		zɨç	ʂtsɨ-a-ja
lakes		1S.ERG		a.bit	count-EGO-SFP

'Lakes…I'm counting.'

mtsʰo vcæʔ ta ʂkora ji soŋa.

mtsʰo	bɣʝat	ta	ʂkora		ji	soŋ-a
lake	eight	now	revolution		do	went-EGO

'We circumambulated eight lakes.'

Ye.sgron

ɲɨmæ tɕʰɨ ŋgortʰa?

ɲɨma   tɕʰɨ   ŋgor-tʰa

day   what   use.up-DE.PST

'How many days did it take?'

Shang.shang

ɲɨmæ rŋæ ŋgortʰa.

ɲɨma   rŋa   ŋgor-tʰa

day   five   use.up-DE.PST

'It took five days.'

Ye.sgrol

[næmɲə] tontəʁ nɖæ tɕəŋ mæɸɕʰoŋa?

[nam.ɲɨ]   tontaχ=nɖa   tɕaŋ   ma=ɸɕʰoŋ-a

period.day[176]   action   obstruction=resemblance   any   NEG.PFV=occur-SFP

'Did anything happen (during the trip)?'

---

[176] Environmental noise and other interference impacted this part of the recording, so this word is a guess.

Shang.shang

mæɸɕʰoŋ.

ma=ɸɕʰoŋ

NEG.PFV=occur

'We didn't experience (any difficulties).'

Ye.sgron

təni, tæ cʰɨtɕʰæ lamni vgæʔ xor ʂcʰəʔ re fɕʰæʔcə joʔcəre.a!

təni	ta	cʰɨ-tɕʰa	lam-ni	bgat.ɕor.ʂcʰɨt	re
then	now	2-PL	road-ABL	laughter.escape.joy	EQ.ALLO

ɸɕat-ɟɨ jo-ɟɨre-a

speak-NMZ　　EXIST-FUT.ALLO-SFP

'Then, you all had a happy and hilarious time on the trip. You must have (stories) you can tell (about that).'

Shang.shang

joʔcəre.

jo-ɟɨre

EXIST-FUT.ALLO

 'Sure do.'

Ye.sgron

ja cʰu vgæʔ xor ṣcʰəʔ zɨɣ tə mənæ … tə mənæ cʰo rəŋgə ɕʰoʔ tə mənæ tʰæmgə cʰu ɖoʁpo jiɕʰi ɖolma zeɣə joʔnə tə ɕʰoʔ.

ja	cʰu	[bgat.ɕor.ṣcɨt]=ziɕ=tə	mɪna
yes	2S.GEN	[hilarity]=a.bit=DEF	or

tə	mɪna	cʰo	raŋ-kə	ɕot
DEF	or	2S	self-GEN	say.IMP

tə	mɪna
DEF	or

tʰamgə	cʰu	ʈokpo	jiɕi.ɖolma=ziɕ-kə	jo-nɨ=tə	ɕot
just.now	2S.GEN	friend	Ye.sgron=INDEF-GEN	EXIST-NMZ=DEF	say.IMP

'Ok, talk about something funny, or tell something funny about yourself, or something funny about your friend, Ye.shes Sgrol.ma, (whom you) just mentioned.'

cʰu sə ɸɕæʔnæ, cʰo rəŋgə sə ɸɕæʔnæ cʰərkə ṣtu.

cʰu	sə	ɸɕat-na
2S.ERG	who	say-COND

cʰo	raŋ-kə	sə	ɸɕat-na	cʰɛrkə	ṣtu
2S	self-ERG	who	say-COND	alone	decide.IMP

'Whoever you talk about, you decide for yourself who to talk about.'

Shang.shang

ŋa rəŋge zəɣ ɸɕæla re.

ŋa	raŋ-kə	zɨɕ	ɸɕat-a	re
1S	self-ERG	a.bit	say-CNV	PURP

'I shall say something about myself.'

Ye.sgron

re re re. ja tənæ cʰo rəŋge zəɣ ɕoʔ.

re	re	re
EQ.ALLO	EQ.ALLO	EQ.ALLO

ja	təna	cʰo	raŋ-ke	zɨɕ	ɕot
yes	so	2S	self-ERG	a.bit	say.IMP

'All right. Ok, so talk a bit about yourself.'

Shang.shang

ŋi tatæ zono tə tʰoʁ ʁɲivæ nævo jɪn.

ŋə	tarta	ʐon-no=tə
1S.ERG	right.then	ride-NMZ=DEF

tʰoʁ	ʁɲiwa	nawo	jɪn
instance	second	really	EQ.EGO

'That was just my second time riding a horse.'

Shang.shang

təɣə ʂta ʐon ti tə xɕɨɣə χdʑipo zɨɣ reɣo, aro!

təɣə	ʂta	ʐon=ti	tə	ɕɕɨɣə	ɕɕɨtpo=zɨɕ	re-ɣo
well	horse	ride=DEF.GEN	DEF	very	happy.NMZ=INDEF	EQ.ALLO-SFP

aro

friend.VOC

'Riding horses is so hilarious, dude!'

Ye.sgron

a, re.

a	re
Ah	EQ.ALLO

'Yes, it is.'

Shang.shang

ŋi ta re! tə ʐon ti ʁɲivæ nævo jɨn.

ŋə	ta	re
1S.ERG	now	EQ.ALLO

tə	ʐon=ti	ɣɲiwa	nawo	jɨn
DEF	ride=DEF.GEN	second	really	EQ.EGO

'I'm serious! That was just my second time riding.'

təmə ŋi zon mamɲoŋ.

təmə	ŋɨ	zon	ma-mɲoŋ
that.way	1S.ERG	ride	NEG.PFV-EXP

'I haven't ridden more than that.'

Ye.sgron

[ŋə] cʰu ʂta tæ zon mazonæ tsʰorʂnəŋ tɕʰɨziç xərcə jokə?

[ŋə]	cʰu	ʂta	ta	zon	ma-zon-na	tsʰorʂnaŋ
[1S.ERG)	2S.ERG	horse	then	ride	NEG.PFV-ride-COND	feeling

tɕʰɨziç	ɕar-cə	jokə
what	arise-NMZ	EXIST.DE

'What was it like before and while you were riding the horse?'

Shang.shang

ʂcəʁsa zɨɣ reja!

ʂcaχ-sa=zɨç	re-ja
scare-NMZ=INDEF	EQ.ALLO-SFP

'It was scary!'

ʁoŋdzæ maŋ ptazɨɣ jok!

ʁoŋɟa	maŋ(a)	ptab=zɨç	jokə
butt	many	hit=INDEF	EXIST.ALLO

'I got knocked around a lot!'

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Ye.sgron

o, reja.

'I see.'

təni, cʰo rəŋgə χtɕɨʔko zone soŋnə. tæ rteva zɨɣæ cʰɨdkə mdzəye soŋnə.

təni	cʰo	raŋ-kə	ɣcɨɣ-ko	zon-ni	soŋ-nəjɪn
then	2s	self-ERG	one-CN	ride-CNV	went-FACT.EGO

ta	ʂtewa=zɨç-a		cʰɨt-kə	ndzəɣ-e	soŋ-nəjɪn
then	horse.leader=INDEF-DAT		lead-CNV	let-CNV	went-FACT.EGO

'So, did you ride all by yourself, or did you let a horse person lead?'

Shang.shang

ŋæ rəŋgə χtɕɨʔko zone soŋnə.

ŋa	raŋ-kə	ɣcɨɣ-ko	zon-ni	soŋ-nəjɪn
1s	self-ERG	one-CN	ride-CNV	went-FACT.EGO

'I rode all by myself.'

Ye.sgron

o, zone soŋ ti tɕʰimɨ zɨç re? tsʰorʂnəŋæ tɕʰimɨ zɨç re?

o	zon-ni	soŋ=ti	tɕʰimɨ=zɨç	re
oh	ride	went=	how=INDEF	EQ.ALLO

tsʰorʂnaŋ-a	tɕʰimɨ=zɨç	re
feeling-DAT	how=INDEF	EQ.ALLO

'Oh. What was it like riding? What was the feeling like?'

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Shang.shang

[…] *l̥ʰoŋ ncocəre nɖa ɸsæm ndəʔkə.*

l̥oŋ	nɟo-cɨre=nɖa	ɸsæm-ndɨɣ-kə
fall.off	go- FUT.ALLO=resemblance	think-CONT-DE

'It feels like you are going to fall off.'

Ye.sgron

l̥oŋɟo ə l̥oŋtʰa?

l̥oŋ-ɟo	ə=l̥oŋ-tʰa
fall.off-NMZ	?=fall.off-DE.PST

'Did (you) fall off?'

Shang.shang

xoŋ maxoŋtʰa.

l̥oŋ	ma-l̥oŋ-tʰa
fall.off	NEG.PFV-fall.off-DE.PST

'(I) didn't fall off.'

Ye.sgron

o reja. təni, cʰɨtɕʰæ nəvmo tɕʰɨzɨɣji ɲanəre?

o	re-ja	təni	cʰɨ-tɕʰa	nəbmo	tɕʰɨ=zɨç-i	ɲa-nɨre
oh	EQ.ALLO-SFP	then	2-PL	evening	what=INDEF-INST	sleep-FACT.ALLO

'That's so. So, how did you guys sleep at night?'

Shang.shang

nəvmo jiɛi ɖolma ŋįɲæ kər χtɛəʔkə nəŋæ ɲænɖe.

nəbmo	jiɛi ɖolma	ŋį-ɲa
evening	Ye.shes sgrol.ma	1-DU

kər	ɣcɨɣ-kə	naŋ-na	ɲa-nɨre
tent	one-GEN	inside-LOC	sleep-FACT.ALLO

'At night Ye.sgron and I slept in one tent.'

Ye.sgron

əŋ.

Uh huh…

Shang.shang

rɟætɕʰæ kʰərtɕʰæ kʰərtɕʰe kər βzoŋ jokə. ti nəŋæ ɲanɖe.

rɟa-tɕʰa	kʰər-tɕʰa	kʰər-tɕʰɨ	kər	bzoŋ=jokə
Han-PL	each-PL	each-PL.ERG	tent	hold=PERF.DE

ti	naŋ-a	ɲa-nɨre
DEF.GEN	inside-LOC	sleep-FACT.ALLO

'The Chinese each brought tents. (They) slept in those.'

Ye.sgron

o o.

Uh-huh.

Shang.shang

tæ ŋitɕʰi læmni ʂtse ɕor vgəʔ ɕor joŋnəjən.

ta	ŋi-tɕʰi	lam-ni	ʂtse	ɕor	bgat	ɕor	joŋ-nəjɪn
then	1-PL	road-LOC	game	play	laughter	play	come-FACT.EGO

'We laughed and played along the way.'

Ye.sgron

cʰɨtɕʰe tɕʰɨziɕ ʂtseja? cʰɨtɕʰæ ʂtsemo nɖa təmo joʔnəmɪna?

cʰɨ-tɕʰi	tɕʰɨ=zɨɕ	ʂtse-Ø-ja
2-PL.ERG	what=INDEF	play-EGO-SFP

cʰɨ-tɕʰa	ʂtsemo=nɖa=təmo	jonəmɪn-a
2-PL	game=resemblance=like.this	EXIST.NEG.FACT-SFP

'What did you guys play? You guys had some particular kind of game, didn't you?'

Shang.shang

ʂtsemo zɨ tɕəŋ kepi meʔ.

ʂtsemo=zɨɕ	caŋ	bge-pi	me
game=INDEF	any	laugh-NMZ	EXIST.NEG.EGO

'We didn't have any particular game that we played.'

ŋiteʰi caŋ jiɕi ɖolma zerco ti ŋɨ ʈʂʰoʁmo ti ŋiɲəɣi çɕɨɣə koʔɖɨɣ məŋa nʈʂʰa jija.

ŋi-tɕʰi	caŋ	jiɕi ɖolma	zer-co=ti
1-PL.ERG	also	Ye.shes sgrol.ma	call-NMZ=DEF

ŋɨ	ʈokmo=ti	ŋi-ɲa-kə	çɕɨɣə	pkokɖɨɣ	maŋa =nɖa
1-PL.ERG	friend.F=DEF	1-DU-ERG	very	plans	many=resemblance

ji-Ø-ja
do-EGO-SFP

'We…also, the one called Ye.shes Sgrol.ma, that friend of mine, the two of us did a lot of, like, planning.'

Ye.sgron

tɕʰɨziç tɕʰɨziç koʔɖəɣ jija?

tɕʰɨ=ziç	tɕʰɨ=ziç	pkokɖɨɣ	ji-Ø-ja
what=INDEF	what=INDEF	plans	do-EGO-SFP

'What all plans did you make?'

Shang.shang

koʈʂʰo ntɕʰama, təni sartəŋ ʁnæmrtəŋ ʂtseja.

koʈʂʰo	ntɕʰam-a
circle.dance	dancing-SFP

təni	sa-rtaŋ	ɣnam-rtaŋ	ʂtse-ja
then	ground-top	sky-top	play-SFP

'Circle dancing and "Jumping up and down" game.'

ta cɕɨjə χcɨʔbo soŋɟo soŋa.

ta	cɕɨɣə	ʂcɨtpo	soŋ-ɟo	soŋ-a
now	very	happiness	went-NMZ	went-EGO

'It was so, so much fun!'

Ye.sgron

o re. təni… təni, tæ cʰu tæ jɨɖon cʰɨ-ɲi tɕəʔki ta cʰətɕʰi vgæʔ xorcæ nɖa tɕʰimo ta tɕʰɨ ze rgonɖeɣo ta hara […] soŋni tontəʁ zəɣ vɕʰænæ tɕʰimo re?

o	re	əni	ta
oh	EQ.ALLO	hen	now

tcʰu	ta	jɨɖoŋ	cʰɨ-ɲi	bgat
t2S.ERG	and	Ye.sgron	2-DU.ERG	laughter

ɕor-co-a=nɖa		tɕʰimo	ta	tɕʰɨ	zer=rgo-nɨre-ko
loose-NMZ-DAT=resemblance	how	then	what	call=DEON-FACT.ALLO-SFP	

ta	hara	[…]	soŋ-ni	tontaχ=ziç	ɸɕat-na	tɕʰimo	re
now	over.there		went-ABL	situation=INDEF	say-COND	how	EQ.ALLO

'I see. So, then, how would you talk about something funny about you or Ye.sgron, the two of you, and how about talking about a situation that happened when you went [someplace] over there?'

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Shang.shang

tɕʰoʁkəja.

tɕʰoχ-kə-ja

be.acceptible-DE-SFP

'Sure.'

Ye.sgron

ja nà cʰu ʂŋəna sɨ ɸɕæʔcəjɪn?

ja	*nà*	cʰu	ʂŋona	sɨ	ɸɕat-cəjɪn
yes	then	2S.ERG first		who	say-FUT.EGO

'Who will you talk about first?'

rəŋgə ɸɕæʔcəjɪna taɣə cʰu ʈoʁpo ɸɕʰæʔcəjɪn?

raŋ-kə	ɸɕat-ɹəjɪn-na	ta-kə	cʰu	ʈokpo
ɸɕat-ɹəjɪn				
self-ERG	say-FUT.-COND	then-GEN	2S.GEN	friend
say-FUT.EGO				

'Will you talk about yourself or talk about your friend?'

[…]

Shang.shang

tənæ ʈoʁmo jɨɖon ŋɨɲɨɣa m̥ɨntʰəŋ ɬoʔɖa joʔ ti ʂkavsiɣə ti ndʐavi tontəʁ zɨ ɸɕʰæʔ tæ re.

təna	ʈokmo	jɨɖon	ŋɨ-ɲɨɣa	m̥ɨntʰəŋ	ɬopʈa	joʔ-ti
then	friend.F	Ye.sgron	1-DU	Smin.thang	school	EXIST-when

ʂkavsɨ-kə	ti=ndʐa.wi	tontaχ=zɨç	ɸɕat	ta	re
period-GEN	DEF=resemblance.NMZ	situation=INDEF	say	now	PURP

'I shall tell a story about the time when Ye.sgron and I, the two of us, were at Smin.thang School.'

ʈoʁmo jɨɖon mtsʰona ŋi ʂtəŋæ ɕɨɣə bzɔŋa.

ʈokmo	jɨɖon	mtsʰona	ŋi	ʂtəŋ-æ	ɕɨɣə	bzaŋ-a
friend.F	Ye.sgron	for.example	1S.GEN	on-DAT	very	be.good-EGO

'Friend Ye.sgron was very good to me, for example.'

Ye.sgron

ən re.

'I see.'

Shang.shang

ŋi-ɲiɣæ nḍæ m̥intʰəŋnæ joʔ ti ɕɨɣə həna ʂtseco tæ, saʁne kəŋæ soŋnæ ɬænæ soŋnɨjən.

ŋi-ɲiɣa=nḍa		m̥intʰəŋ-na	jo-ti	çɕɨɣə	huna	ʂtse-co	ta
1-DU=resemblance		Smin.thang-LOC	EXIST-when	very	there	play-NMZ	then

soχ-ni	kaŋa	soŋ-na	ḷa-na	soŋ-nəjɪn
various-ABL	where	went-COND	be.easy-COND	went-FACT.EGO

'Like, the two of us, when we were in Smin.thang, really had fun being carefree and going all over the place.'

Ye.sgron

tənæ, ʈoʁmo jɨḍon cʰiɲɨɣæ… taɣə jɨḍon zerkoʔno cʰiɲɨɣæ m̥intʰəŋni ʂlovḍoʁ jɨncəreba?

təna	ʈokmo	jɨḍon	cʰi-ɲiɣa,	taɣə	jɨḍon	zer-ko-no
so	friend	Ye.sgron	2-DU	so	Ye.sgron	call-PROG-NMZ

cʰi-ɲiɣa	m̥intʰaŋ-ni	ḷopḍoχ	jɪnɻire-pa
2-DU	Smin.thang-ABL	classmate	EQ.FUT.ALLO-SFP

'So, you and Ye.sgron, the two of you… so, Ye.sgron, whom you are talking about, the two of you must have been classmates in Smin.thang, right?'

Shang.shang

reja.

'Right.'

Ye.sgron

lo tɨɣə ʂlovɖoʁ re?

lo	ti-kə	l̥obɖoʁ	re
year	how.many-GEN	classmate	EQ.ALLO

'For how many years were (you and her) classmates?'

Shang.shang

ŋɨɲiɣæ lo ʁɲiɣə ʂlovɖoʁ re.

ŋɨɲiɣa	lo	ɣɲi-kə	l̥obɖoʁ	re
2DU	year	two-GEN	classmate	EQ.ALLO

'The two of us were classmates for two years.'

Shang.shang

tini tɕʰoŋ tɕʰoŋ jɪndini taɣə roʁa ləʁcʰəʁ joŋɖre.

tini	tɕʰoŋtɕʰoŋ	jɪn=ti-ni	ta-kə	roχpa	larɟaχ	joŋ-nəre
well	small.NMZ	EQ=when-ABL	then-GEN	together	loyalty	come-FACT.ALLO

'Also, we became friends at the time when we were little.'

Ye.sgron

o tənæ tæ cʰįɲɨɣæ çɕɨɣə hara səra xtɕikə xtɕiɣæ ʂtse toŋ ndʑævo mdza ʂtse ndʑævo çʰɨɣə tɕʰeɹire.a.

o	təna	ta	cʰįɲɨɣa	çɕɨɣə	[hara səra]	ɣcɨɣ-kə	ɣcɨɣ-a
oh	then	now	2DU.DAT	very	[super duper]	one-GEN	one-DAT

ʂtse=ptaŋ=ndʑa-po	mdza	ʂtse ndʑa-po	çɕʰɨɣə
play=TR=resemble-NMZ	befriend	play=resemble-NMZ	very

tɕʰe-ɹire-a

be.big-FUT.ALLO-SFP

'Oh, well, then, the two of you must really, super duper like each other and be really great friends!'

Shang.shang

ŋįɲɨɣæ ʂtse ndʑævo ɕʰəɣə tɕʰeja.

ŋįɲɨɣa	ʂtse=ndʑa-po	çɕʰɨɣə	tɕʰe-ja
1DU.DAT	play=resemble-NMZ	very	be.big-SFP

'The two of us have a lot of fun.'

Ye.sgron

ən. re. təni…

'Uh huh. True. So…'

[Whispering in Chinese]

Shang.shang

ŋə tɕʰo ŋi ʁgergæn zɨɣ ŋoɸʈoʔ jelaja.

ŋə	tɕʰo	ŋi	rgɛrgan=zɨç	ŋoɸʈoχ	ji-la-ja.
1S.ERG	2S	1S.GEN	teacher=INDEF	introduction	do-EMP-SFP

'I shall introduce a teacher of mine to you.'

mo hejloŋtɕaŋni joŋnəre. rɟamo zɨɣ re.

mo	hejloŋtɕaŋ-ni	joŋ-nɨre
3S.F	Hēilóngjiāng-ABL	come-FACT.ALLO

rɟamo=zɨç	re
Han.F=INDEF	EQ.ALLO

'She is from Heilongjiang Province. She is Chinese.'

xɕɨɣə ʁgergæn bzəŋo zɨç jɪn.

çɕɨɣə	rgergan	bzaŋ-po=zɨç	jɪn
very	teacher	be.good-NMZ=INDEF	EQ.EGO

'She is a great teacher.'

Ye.sgron

mo mɲəŋæ tɕʰɨzɨɣ zenəre.

mo	mɲaŋ-a	tɕʰɨ=zɨç	zer-nɨre
3F.LOG	name-NMZ	what=INDEF	call-FACT.ALLO

'What is her name?'

Shang.shang

waŋ ʁgergæn.

waŋ   rgɛrgan

Wáng   teacher

'Teacher Wáng.'

ŋitɕʰe sa mɲəŋo zɨ jɪn.

ŋitɕʰi   sa-a   mɲaŋ-po=zɨç   jɪn

1PL.GEN   place-DAT   name-NMZ=INDEF   EQ.EGO

'She is famous in our place.'

təɣə ɸɕʰæmʂtsetɕan zɨɣ jɪn ʂlobmatɕʰa məɲæ tsʰəŋma xtɕinəre.

təɣə   ɸɕʰæmʂtse.tɕan=zɨɣ   jɪn

then   compassion.being=INDEF   EQ.EGO

l̥obma-tɕʰa   maŋ-a   tsʰaŋma   ʂcit-nire

student-PL.DAT   many   all   love-FACT.ALLO

'She is a compassionate person so is beloved by all the students.'

əm… ta mu ŋitɕʰæ jiɣe ɸtsævno ɕʰɨɣə vzəɲæ.

ta   mu   ŋitɕʰa jiɣ-kə   ɸtsab-no   çɕʰɨɣə   bzaŋ-a

now 3S.F.ERG 1PL   writing-INST teach-NMZ   very   be.good- EGO

'She taught us really well.'

oncəŋ, məɲo samtʰani joŋnəɣə ta saʁne miʈʰoʔba timə tə tɕəɲæ mekə.

oncaŋ

furthermore

maŋ-po   sa.m̥tʰa-ni   joŋ-nə-ɣə   ta

be.many-NMZ far.place-ABL come-NMZ-GEN   then

sa-ndɨ-ni   mi-ʈʰoχ-pa   timə=tə   tɕaŋ-a   mekə

place-PROX-ABL   NEG.IPF-adjust-NMZ   that.way=DEF any-EMP   EXIST.NEG.DE

'Furthermore, she didn't have a problem adjusting to this place at all in spite of coming from so far away.'

Shang.shang

jɪnæjəŋ mɲətəŋmæ tɕʰimə ma joŋ ŋətɕʰa ʂtse roʁ ji vgæʔ roʁ ji ... (mumble)

Shang.shang

rtəʔ joʔ næ mɲam kʰər ʂɕʰəʔ joʔ næ mɲam kʰər ji soŋ nə jən

Shang.shang

mo nɖa mtson na xɕʰəɣə ʁgergæn vzəŋ ŋo zəɣ jən

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