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On transitivity in two Tibeto-Burman languages

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This paper presents the analyses of transitivity and questions about transitivity in two languages (Rawang and Qiang) that have been described using very different definitions of transitivity, with a view to showing that each language must be analysed on its own terms, and so the criteria used for identifying transitivity, if it is to be identified at all, might be different between languages. In the case of these two languages it is at least partly due to the two languages differing in terms of the degree of systematicity of the marking, with the Rawang marking being more systematic.

Keywords: Transitivity, Rawang, Qiang

o. Introduction¹

This paper presents alternative analyses of transitivity and questions about transitivity in two Tibeto-Burman languages I have personally worked on. The point here is not to argue for the analyses — that has been done elsewhere (see the references given below). The goal here is just to point out how the facts of different languages have led me to use very different criteria in identifying certain constructions in the languages as transitive or intransitive. Given the discussion in the introduction to this volume, showing that transitivity is a grammaticalised phenomenon and so differs in each language that manifests it, this is what we would expect.

1. Rawang

Rawang (Rvwang [rə'wàŋ]) is a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in the far north of Kachin State, Myanmar (Burma). The data are from the Mvtwang (Mvt River) dialect, and the analyses discussed are those of Morse (1962, 1963, 1965) and

LaPolla (2000, 2006, 2008a, 2008b, 2010a, 2010b; LaPolla & Poa 2001; LaPolla with Yang 2004, LaPolla & Yang 2007).²

Rawang is verb-final, agglutinative, and both head marking and dependent marking. Verbs can take hierarchical person marking, aspect marking, directional marking (which also marks aspect in some cases), and tense marking. Unlike many other Sino-Tibetan languages, in Rawang transitivity is a very salient concept and absolutely necessary for understanding the patterns in the grammar. All verbs are clearly distinguished (even in citation) by their morphology in terms of what has been analysed as transitivity, and there are a number of different affixes for increasing or decreasing valency (see LaPolla 2000 on valency-changing derivations). The citation form for verbs is third person non-past affirmative/declarative:

- Intransitives take the non-past affirmative/declarative marker (*ē*) alone in the non-past (e.g. *ngōē* ‘to cry’, *àng ngōē* ‘He’s crying’) and the intransitive past tense marker (*-i*) in past forms (with third person argument; e.g. *ngà ròmnvng-pè gō shì bōi* [1sg friend-MALE also die PFV-INTR.PAST] ‘My friend also died’). They can be used transitively only when they take valency-increasing morphological marking (causative, benefactive). Adjectives can take the intransitive morphology or the nominaliser *wē* in citation (e.g. *tēē ~ tēwē* ‘big’), and can modify a noun in post-head position without being nominalised (e.g. *lègā tē bok* [book big CL] ‘the big book’), unlike verbs, but when used as predicates function the same as other intransitive verbs (e.g. *ngà nō tē-ng wē ínigō* [1sg TOP big-1sg NOM although] ‘Although I was older, ...’) and so are considered a subclass of intransitive verb. Some stative intransitive verbs can take an oblique argument marked by the locative/dative marker, such as the stimulus argument in (1):

- (1) *Ngà vgī svng svrēngē.*
ngà [vgī svng] svrē-ng=ē
 1sg dog LOC afraid-1sg=NPST
 ‘I’m afraid of dogs.’

- Transitives take the non-past third person undergoer marker (*ò*) plus the non-past affirmative/declarative marker (*ē*) in non-past forms (e.g. *shádē* ‘to know (something)’, *riðē* ‘to carry (something)’, *yvngóē* ‘to see (something)’; see (2), below, for a full example) and the transitive past tense marker (*à*) in past forms (with third person undergoer arguments; see (3) below). They can be used intransitively only when they take valency-reducing morphological marking (the intransitivising prefix or the reflexive/middle marking suffix). Rawang seems to have only two underived ditransitive roots: *zìðē* ‘give’ and *vìðē* ‘tell’,

and they take the same morphology as mono-transitives. All other ditransitive verbs, e.g. *dvtānòē* ‘show’ (< *vtānē* ‘be visible’) and *shvríòē* ‘send’ (< *riòē* ‘carry’), are derived using the causative construction.

- There is an agentive marker *í* which appears after the NP representing the actor argument (if one is present in the clause) of transitive clauses (those with a transitive verb as defined above). It does not appear in intransitive clauses, either single argument clauses or two argument clauses with intransitive verbs.

(2) *Ngái gō tiq gó shángòē.*
 ngà=i gō [tiq gó] shá-ng-ò=ē
 1sg=AGT also one person know-1sg-3U.NPST=NPST
 ‘I also know one man (there).’ (Interview with Bezideu, 38:3)

(3) *Rvshàrì ỳvng bóà kvt, ...*
 rvshà-rì=i ỳvng bó-à kvt
 monkey-pl=AGT see PFV-TR.PAST when
 ‘When the monkeys saw (him), ...’ (Mykangya and the monkeys, 4:2)

- Ambitransitives (labile verbs) can be used as transitives or intransitives without morphological derivation. There are two patterns, representing the two conceptions of transitivity discussed in the introduction to this issue: one type involves a Medium and an event, but to which an agent can be added (e.g. *gvyaqē* ‘be broken, destroyed’ ~ *gvyaqòē* ‘break, destroy’). In this type, adding an agent argument creates a causative without the need for a causative prefix. The other type involves an actor and an activity, to which a second argument can be added in the traditional sense of the action being carried over to another participant (e.g. *á:mòē / v̄mē* ‘to eat’). Within this second type there are also two patterns when a second participant is added: in one type the clause retains the intransitive morphology, while in the second type the verb takes full transitive morphology and the NP representing the actor takes the agentive marker. Contrast (4a–b):

(4) a. *Àng pē zvtñē.*
 àng pē zvt=ē
 3sg basket weave=NPST
 ‘He weaves baskets.’ (general or habitual sense)

b. *À:ngí pē tiqch̀vng za:tnòē.*
 àng=i [pē tiq-ch̀vng] zvt-ò=ē
 3sg=AGT basket one-CL weave-3U.NPST=NPST
 ‘He is weaving a basket.’

Use of the intransitive vs. the transitive form marks a difference between a general or habitual situation and a particular situation respectively. The second

argument of the intransitive form is non-referential and simply acts to specify the activity, though it is not grammatically or phonologically incorporated into the verb. The transitive form can also be used if the second argument is not specific, but *if the second argument is specific, then the transitive form must be used.*

- The copula, *îē*, takes the intransitive morphology and is like other intransitive verbs in terms of person marking, tense/aspect marking, interrogative marking, applicative marking, and nominalization, but it has two arguments. The copula cannot take causative marking, the way most other intransitives can, though it can take the precative marker (*laq-*), which is a sub-type of imperative (e.g. *cilcè laq-(mò)-í* '(Don't) let him be a soldier'). Two other verbs that take two arguments but are always morphologically intransitive are *mvyóē* 'to want, to like' and *vdáē* 'to have, own'.

Morse (1965:346–8) analysed the appearance of the verbal suffix *-ò* in the non-past or *-à* in the past as a necessary criterion, aside from the appearance of the agentive marker, for a clause to be transitive (adapted from Morse 1965: 346):

| | Clause-marking suffixes | |
|----------|-------------------------|--------------|
| | Transitive | Intransitive |
| Past | -à | -ì |
| Non-past | -ò | -Ø |

He argued that only clauses with third person undergoer arguments are transitive ("Only action from first or second to third person, or between two third parties, is expressed as transitive action"; 1965:348), even though in clauses that do not have third person undergoer arguments the NP representing the actor argument can take the agentive marker. For Morse then, (5a) is transitive, but (5b) is intransitive (from Morse 1965:348; glosses added), whereas in my analysis both are transitive because I take the use of the agentive marker as criterial and consider the *-ò* suffix to be a non-past third person undergoer marker, and transitivity harmony (see below) works the same regardless of person.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>(5) a. <i>Ngái àng shvlòē.</i> <i>ngà=í àng shvl-ò=ē</i> 1sg=AGT 3sg drag-3U.NPST=NPST 'I am dragging him.'</p> | <p>b. <i>à:ngí ngà èshvlē.</i> <i>àng=í ngà è-shvl=ē</i> 3sg=AGT 1sg N.I-drag=NPST 'He is dragging me.'</p> |
|---|--|

Morse (1965:349) and I both analyse reflexive/middle voice clauses, where the verb is marked by the suffix *-shì* and the actor cannot take the agentive marker, as intransitive, even when there are two noun phrases in the clause, as in (6).³

- (6) *Nvpè gō vPuqdap taq cilcè wáshì yà:ng má?*
 nv-pè gō vPuq-dap taq cilcè wà-shì yǜng má
 2-father also Jinghpaw-army.base LOC soldier do-R/M TMyrs Q
 ‘Was your father also a soldier in the Jinghpaw army base?’ (Lit.: ‘make himself a soldier’; Interview with Bezidø, 33.3)

One manifestation of the importance of transitivity in Rawang grammar is the phenomenon of transitivity harmony (LaPolla 2010b). A small subset of transitive verbs can be used following a main verb to mark the phase or other aspects of the action, such as *dýn* (*dá:nòē*) ‘be about to’, *pýng* (*pà:ngòē*) ‘begin to’, *m̄vn* (*mā:nòē*) ‘continue’, *m̄nòē* ‘be used to’, *dýng* (*dá:ngòē*) ‘finish’. There is also at least one ambitransitive verb that can be used as an auxiliary as well, *daqē* ~ *daqòē* ‘be able to’. When these verbs act as auxiliary to another verb, they have to match the transitivity of the main verb. For example, with a transitive main verb, the auxiliary simply follows that verb and the two verbs together take one set of transitive marking morphology, as in (7), where the auxiliary verb *m̄vn* (*mā:nòē*) ‘continue’ follows the transitive verb *dvkòmòē* ‘gather (something)’, and the transitive non-past marker *-ò* marks the combined predicate as transitive.

- (7) *Paqzí sháò shvlē gō wēdō dvkóm mā:nò!*
 [paqzí shá-ò shvlē] gō wē-dō [dvkòm⁴ m̄vn-ò]_{PRED}
 education know-3U.NPST layer also that-ADV gather continue-3U.NPST
 ‘Continue to gather the educated ones that way!’ (Karu Zong, 46.3)

If instead the main verb is intransitive, then the auxiliary verb must be intransitivised, as in (8), where the same auxiliary, *m̄vn* (*mā:nòē*) ‘continue’, is made intransitive by the reflexive/middle voice suffix *-shì* to harmonise with the intransitive verb *vløp* (*vløpmē*) ‘enter, go/sink into’:

- (8) *Kādō wàò nìgō, sòngmèdým nō vløp m̄vnshìē wā.*
 kã-dō wà-ò nìgō, [sòngmè-dým] nō [vløp
 WH-ADV do-3U.NPST though needle-CL TOP go.into
 m̄vn-shì=ē]_{PRED} wā
 continue-R/M=NPST HS
 ‘No matter how (he tried) the needle kept on going inside, it is said.’
 (Makangya, 6.5)

In (9), the ambitransitive verb *daqē* ~ *daqòē* ‘be able to’ is used first as an intransitive, as it follows an intransitive verb (which is intransitivised by the reflexive/middle marker *-shì* because it is reflexive), and then is used in its transitive form, as it follows a transitive verb:

- (9) *Ỳvng̀lòng n̄ wāshì daqē, wā; T̀l̀l̀l̀ng n̄ gw̄r daq̄è, wā.*
 ỳvng̀-̀l̀l̀ng n̄ [wā-shì **daq-ē**]_{PRED} wā t̀-̀l̀l̀ng n̄ [gw̄r
 long-CL TOP do-R/M able-NPST HS short-CL TOP toss
daq-ò=ē]_{PRED} wā
 able-3U.NPST=NPST HS
 ‘Long ones can be taken for oneself; short ones can be discarded.’ (Rawang
 proverbs, #8)

Notice we are talking here purely about morphological transitivity; as with the ambitransitives and the reflexives, there may be two arguments in the clause, but the clause is morphologically intransitive. Note also that this morphological intransitivity does not correspond with what in Role and Reference Grammar (Van Valin & LaPolla 1997, §4.2) is called M-transitivity, transitivity defined in terms of the number of macro-roles (which correlates with Aktionsart) rather than syntactic arguments, as both the intransitive and transitive clauses have the same sort of arguments, even though, in the M-transitivity view, transitivity is dependent on there being an individuated undergoer, similar to the condition for the use of the transitive form of ambitransitives.

In (10) we can see that when the main verb is intransitivised by the other intransitivising marker (*v-*), which is used here to give the sense of a reciprocal, *daqē* also has to be intransitive:

- (10) *Àngní dvh̄ n̄ dvkū màkūí vrú kē n̄ vshvt daqē, wā.*
 àng-ní dvh̄ n̄ dvkū màkū=í v-rú kē n̄ [v-shvt
 3-dl in.laws TOP ladle SCOOP=INST INTR-hit RECIP PS INTR-fight
daq=ē]_{PRED} wā
 able-NPST HS
 ‘Close relatives sometimes can fight.’ (Rawang proverbs #7)

The auxiliaries follow the harmony pattern even when the different forms of the ambitransitive verbs are used as the main verb. That is, when the ambitransitive main verb is used as an intransitive, the auxiliary verb will also be intransitive, but if the ambitransitive main verb is used as a transitive verb, then the auxiliary will be transitive. Compare (11a–b), for example:

- (11) a. *àng v̄m̀d̀v̄ng̀shì b̄òì*
 àng [v̄m-**d̀v̄ng-shì** b̄ò-ì]_{PRED}
 3sg eat-finish-R/M PFV-INTR.PAST
 ‘He finished eating.’ (intransitive *v̄mē* ‘eat’)
- b. *àngí v̄mpà̀l̀l̀ng v̄m̀d̀v̄ng b̄òà*
 àng=í v̄mpà-̀l̀l̀ng [v̄m-**d̀v̄ng** b̄ò-à]_{PRED}
 3sg=AGT food-CL eat-finish PFV-TR.PAST
 ‘He has finished eating the food.’ (transitive *v̄mòè* ‘eat’)

The pattern is also followed when the main verb takes the purposive nominaliser, as in (10), where *ngaqòè* ‘push over’ is intransitivised by the intransitivising prefix (*v-*), and then nominalised by the purposive suffix (see LaPolla 2000 on the prefix, and LaPolla 2008a on the suffix and complement structures). Because the verb is intransitive, the auxiliary must be intransitivised.

- (12) *Vngaqólím dýnshìē.*
 v-ngaq-lím dýn-shì=ē
 INTR-push-PUR about.to-R/M=NPST
 ‘(It) seems like (it) is about to fall down.’

The pattern also holds regardless of person. For example, if a phase verb is added to (5b), which Morse analysed as intransitive, the phase verb follows the transitive pattern, not the intransitive pattern:

- (13) *à:ngí ngà s̀v̀ng sh̀vl è̀p̀v̀ngē.*
 àng=i ngà s̀v̀ng sh̀vl è̀p̀v̀ng=ē
 3sg=AGT 1sg LOC drag N.1-begin=NPST
 ‘He began to drag me.’

We can see from these examples that some conception of transitivity is needed for understanding the patterns found in the Rawang examples. But how should transitivity be defined in Rawang? One of the analyses in the literature (mine) assumes a dependency between the individuation of the undergoer and transitivity in the case of ambitransitives, which correlates with the use of agentive marking and particular verbal affixes; the other one (Morse’s) assumes a dependency between person and transitivity, which also correlates with use of the same verbal affixes, but in a different way, and he assumes the presence or absence of the agentive marker does not affect transitivity. Neither view is based on core vs. non-core arguments, as it can be difficult to distinguish core and non-core arguments, given that none are obligatory in the clause, and in clauses which we might assume are transitive, non-agentive animate arguments (which we must assume are core arguments if we want to say the clause is transitive) can be marked the same way as peripheral arguments (using the same marker locative/dative marker as used in (1) above; see (13) and line 2 of (14)). We will return to this question after the discussion of Qiang.

- (14) *Vlāng Pū:ngí nō s̀v̀ngzàwàngcè̀rì taqkè̀ní*
 [vlāng pūng=i nō s̀v̀ngzàwàngcè̀rì taq-kè̀ní
 Vlang Pung=AGT TOP human.beings-pl LOC-from
 ‘Alang Pung, from among the humans,

s̀vng vnvpr̀i s̀vng t̀vm vb̀un baq kéò nò, ... (LaPolla & Poa 2001:50–51)
 [s̀vng vnv-p-r̀i s̀vng] t̀vm vb̀un baq ké-ò] nò
 person beautiful-pl LOC quickly lift carry eat-3U.NPST PS
 picked up the beautiful ones and quickly carried them away to eat, ...'

2.2 Qiang

Qiang is a Tibeto-Burman language of northern Sichuan. The examples and discussion below are of the Ronghong variety, from LaPolla with Huang 2003. We argued on the basis of the unmarked arguments that can appear in a clause that Qiang has intransitive, transitive, and ditransitive verbs, plus some ambitransitive verbs. Transitives can be formed from intransitives, or ditransitives from transitives, by the addition of the causative suffix. There is no intransitivizing marking other than the reduplication that marks the reciprocal. In a transitive clause, when the actor is the topic, the noun phrase representing the actor need not take any agentive marking, and the undergoer can also be unmarked. With few exceptions, this is true regardless of whether the noun phrase representing the actor is a noun or a pronoun, or whether the referent is first, second, or third person, or whether the argument is agentive or non-agentive, and is true for all aspects. The person marking on the verb generally reflects the person and number of the actor, regardless of whether the actor is agentive or non-agentive. The post-nominal agentive marker, *-wu*, is optional, as shown by the lack of it in the semantically very effective clause in (15), but it can be used when there is marked word order, or when there is a need to emphasise the agentivity of the actor. The (a) and (b) examples in (16) and (17) come from the same story, and were said just a few lines apart, but differ in terms of the use or non-use of the agentive marker (examples from LaPolla with Huang 2003):

- (15) *t̀cile pəmaha tse: qəta:-wa* (p. 272, story line 97)
 2pl tonight this:CL beat.to.death:PRS-EMPH
 'We will beat this (orangutan) to death tonight.'
- (16) a. *ʃkup-le:-wu qa dza:* (p. 268, story line 38)
 orangutan-DEF:CL-AGT 1sg eat:PRS
 'The orangutan will eat me.'
- b. *ʃkup-le:-ŋuəŋi qa dza:-wa* (p. 268, story line 50)
 orangutan-DEF:CL-TOP 1sg eat:PRS-EMPH
 'The orangutan will eat me.'
- (17) a. *χa-la-ha⁵ japə-le:-ta ə-tʃə-ŋiaufu...* (p. 274, story line 123)
 needle-DEF:one-pl hand-DEF:CL-LOC DIR-stab-as.soon.as
 'As soon as the needles stabbed the hand (of the orangutan) ...'

- b. *qusap-te:-wu japə-le:-xʃe tu-tua-kui,...* (p.275, story line 130)
 scissors-DEF:CL-AGT hand-DEF:CL-side DIR-cut-NAR
 ‘The scissors cut off the hand (of the orangutan), ...’

Normally the noun phrase representing the causer of a derived monotransitive clause does not take the agentive marker, but if it is an inanimate force, such as ‘wind’ in (18), the agentive marker would generally be used for clarity.

- (18) *тову-wu qa da-tuə-z̄*
 wind-AGT 1sg DIR-fall.over-CAUS
 ‘The wind knocked me down.’

Another context where the agentive marking is often needed for disambiguation is in relative clauses, as relative clauses are nominalisations, and there is no person marking within nominalisations. See how the marking affects the interpretation of the following two examples:

- (19) a. [*qa panə dele-m*] *mi*
 1sg thing give-NMLZ person
 ‘the person who gave me something’
 b. [*qa-wu panə dele-m*] *mi*
 1sg-AGT thing give-NMLZ person
 ‘the person to whom I gave something’

The one exception to the lack of marking of the undergoer of a transitive verb is when the undergoer is animate and the noun phrase representing the actor does not have agentive marking, so there might be confusion of which referent is the actor and which is the undergoer. In this case the dative/allative marker *-ta* can be used after the noun phrase representing the undergoer to disambiguate the actor from the undergoer or emphasise the undergoer, as in the following examples:

- (20) *the: qa-ta dze!*
 3sg 1sg-DAT hit
 ‘He is hitting me!’
 (21) *khuə-le: qa-ta ha-bdʒe-ʃa.*⁶
 dog-DEF:CL 1sg-DAT DIR-bite-1sgU
 ‘The dog bit me.’
 (22) *xʃe-le: ʔũ-ta ə-tə-san.*
 bull-DEF:CL 2sg-DAT DIR-gore-2sgU
 ‘The bull gored you.’

There is no change in the transitivity of the clause with the use of this marking (even though it is often used to mark peripheral arguments), as its use here is

purely to distinguish semantic roles. While generally it is used when the agentive marking is not used, the two markers can appear in the same clause. For example, (20) could also have the agentive marker *-wu* after the noun phrase representing the actor.⁷

3. Discussion

In Section 1 we saw that two different conceptions of transitivity are possible for Rawang.⁸ Morse's view is that only clauses with third person patients are transitive. Mine is that any clause where the actor takes the agentive marker or (in cases where no actor argument is mentioned) the verb takes one of the transitive suffixes is transitive. Neither view is based on the number of unmarked or core arguments, or the traditional sense of adding another participant that the action "passes over" to. So having the agentive marker and the "transitive" verbal affixes (which pattern together) mark a clause as transitive, not the number of unmarked arguments that appear in the clause. Looking at the different conceptions of transitivity in the introduction to this issue, we see that the RRG view of transitivity and also Hopper and Thompson's (1980) and Næss' (2007) views of transitivity might be of use in understanding this system.⁹ All three of these conceptions take the individuation and affectedness of the patient as a crucial factor in determining transitivity. In the view of Hopper & Thompson (1980) and Næss (2007, §3.3), prototypical transitive clauses are the ones that have more morphological marking distinguishing the two arguments. That is, a prototypical transitive clause is a morphologically marked construction. In this view the construction I am calling transitive in Rawang, with agentive marking and extra participant marking on the verb and, in the case of animate undergoers, dative marking on the undergoer, would be a prototypical transitive clause. In the case of Qiang, again the clauses with agentive marking and dative/animate patient marking would be prototypical transitive clauses. Thompson & Hopper (2001) argue that what they call high transitivity clauses are also marked in terms of frequency in conversation, that is, they are rare. In the case of Qiang the construction with the agentive marking is also more marked in terms of frequency.

In RRG only an individuated and referential patient will be an undergoer, and only when the clause has an undergoer will it be considered M-transitive. With verbs that have both activity and active-accomplishment uses, the difference in use correlates with there being a undergoer in the clause (active-accomplishment) or not (activity). This seems to be what is going on in the case of the ambitransitives in Rawang, where the intransitive use is an activity/non-telic use, and the transitive use is an active-accomplishment/telic use. This is completely independent of

person, and direction of action.¹⁰ Morse's view also cannot account for the facts of transitivity harmony, as it also functions independent of person.

Unlike in my analysis of Rawang, in analysing Qiang I did use the number of unmarked arguments as the criterion for transitivity, and said the appearance of the agentive marker or undergoer marker was purely for disambiguation. I think this is not problematic, as it just means the marking systems in the two languages are at different stages of development (the Rawang morphological system is more fully systematised — see LaPolla 1995 on the difference between systematic and non-systematic agentive marking), though we can see the beginnings of the Rawang type of system in the Qiang system, as the agentive marker is more likely to be used when there is a topical (referential and differentiated) patient and its use is more predictable in certain contexts, such as in relative clauses.

Abbreviations

| | | | |
|-----------|--|---------|---|
| 1sgU | first person singular undergoer verb suffix | LOC | locative marker (also used for dative, purpose) |
| 2sgU | second person singular undergoer verb suffix | N.1 | non-first-person actor |
| 3U.NPST | 3rd person transitive non-past marker | NAR | narrative/hearsay marker |
| ADV | adverbial marker | NMLZ | nominaliser |
| AGT | agentive marker | NPST | non-past declarative marker |
| CAUS | causative marker | PFV | perfective marker |
| CL | classifier | pl | plural |
| CSM | change of state marker | PN | proper name |
| DAT | dative marker | PRED | predicate |
| DEF | definite marker | PRS | prospective aspect marker |
| DIR | direction/orientation marker | PS | predicate sequencer (non-final marker) |
| GEN | genitive marker | PUR | purposive nominaliser |
| EMPH | emphasis marker | RECIP | reciprocal marker |
| HS | hearsay marker | R/M | reflexive/middle marker |
| INST | instrumental | TMYRS | temporal marker of remote past (years ago) |
| INTR | intransitivising prefix | TOP | topic marker |
| INTR.PAST | 3rd person intransitive past marker | TR.PAST | transitive past marker |
| | | WH | interrogative morpheme |

Notes

1. I'd like to thank Alec Coupe, Balthasar Bickel, and two reviewers for helpful comments on a draft of this paper.
2. The Rawang orthography (Morse 1962, 1963) is used in this paper. Most letters represent the pronunciations of English, except $i = [i]$, $v = [ə]$, $a = [a]$, $o = [u]$, $q = [ʔ]$, and $c = [s]$. Tones: high falling: \acute{a} , mid: \bar{a} , low falling: \grave{a} . Syllables ending in a stop consonant ($-p$, $-t$, $-q$, $-k$) are in the high tone. Open syllables with no tone mark are unstressed. A colon marks non-basic long vowels. Four lines are used because of frequent morphophonological changes which blur morpheme boundaries.
3. See LaPolla with Yang 2004 for details. See Kemmer 1993 on the transitivity-reducing effect of reflexives and middles.
4. There is a tone change from low to high tone on this verb when the auxiliary is added. It is a type of stem formation and nominalization.
5. The needles and scissors in this folktale are animate, so are the agents of the actions in these examples.
6. There are two sets of person marking forms: one for actors and one for salient non-actors. Which is used depends to some extent on the relevant saliency of the referents in the discourse, but the former is more common than the latter in natural texts. Third person singular is unmarked in the actor-marking paradigm, though 3dl and 3pl take $-t\check{c}i$.
7. The agentive marker is actually not very common in natural discourse in the Ronghong variety, except with verbs of speaking, and has been essentially lost in the neighboring Qugu variety (LaPolla & Poa 2003, Huang and Zhou 2006).
8. There is also a third possibility, that the morphological alternations I talked about as marking transitivity are actually just emphatic or for disambiguation, and do not affect the transitivity of the clause, but this would not allow us to explain what we are calling transitivity harmony and the other transitivity-related phenomena.
9. Notice that while Hopper & Thompson and Næss talk of transitivity as gradient, because they talk of semantic transitivity (actually effectiveness), in the case of Rawang I am talking about morphological transitivity, and it is a yes or no matter in this case.
10. See LaPolla 2010a for discussion of the marking of direction of action in transitive clauses.

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