

Lecture V

How to Write a Grammatical Sketch of a language?

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How to make questionnaire/s?

- Depending upon the nature of objective one can write sentences in the contact language so that the consultant can translate them.
- Certain **Guidelines** have to be followed:
 1. Questionnaire should be in simple and easy to understand language. All kinds of ambiguities should be avoided.
 2. It is better to have questionnaire in the contact language than in English.
 3. Each questionnaire should be numbered.
 4. It should not be very long and boring.
 5. Each sentence in the questionnaire should have paraphrasable quality.

6. Under each sentence leave enough space for you to write the translated sentence in IPA.
7. Number each sentence in a chronological order.
8. It is not recommended to give the questionnaire to the consultant in advance.
9. Each questionnaire should carry the same template of information regarding the consultant. This will help you compare variation across speakers.
10. While making a questionnaire keep a little space to write about the extra features---such as environment, cultural aspect or any other issue that catches your attention.
11. Make space for the name of the place, the date the interview is taken and the name of the investigator.
12. Make space to write your grammatical notes and other linguistic observations.

Interlinear Glossing

- Follow the Leipzig Glossing Rules.

<https://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/resources/glossing-rules.php>

- Use IPA fonts in italics for the example sentence
- Interlinear glosses are left-aligned vertically, each gloss under each word, e.g.

Hindi

(1) *muj^he* *bukhaar* *nahĩ* *hε*

To me fever not is

‘I don’t have fever.’

- The next step is morpheme-to-morpheme glossing as in:

(2) *Naisha ne k^hilɔn-e k^hərid-e*
Naisha ERG toys-3MPL buy-3MPL
‘Naisha bought toys.’

- Clitics are symbolized by equal to = sign as in Great Andamanese:

(3) *t^h=ot=nyo*
1SG=POSS=house
‘My house’

- Explicator compound verbs (ECV) are written with second verb, i.e., V2 in caps as given in Hindi example given below.
- Portmanteau morphs are symbolized by a dot.

(4) *Suhani ne sari roṭi k^ha li*
Suhani ERG all bread eat TAKE.3FSG.PST
‘Suhani ate up the whole bread.’

Interlinear gloss gives information regarding agreement, affixations and verb complex nature of the language under investigation.

Topics for writing short descriptive grammars

- Topics are generally divided into **six divisions**, each elaborating on the linguistic structure of the language concerned. The major headings under which grammar writing can be undertaken are:

1. Introductory remarks on language family, language community, map of the region, population figures and review literature.

2. Phonology giving details on phonemic contrasts and allophonic variations of Vowels, Consonants, Semivowels, Suprasegmental features, Syllabic Structure, and phonotactics, i.e., positional occurrence of sounds initially, medially and finally in a word—all should constitute the phonology section.

Contd....

3. Morphology: This will constitute the major portion of the grammar writing. Following topics should be written about.

- ✓ Nominal morphology
- ✓ Pronouns
- ✓ Adjectives
- ✓ Adverbs
- ✓ Particles and Emphatics
- ✓ Compounding and Blending
- ✓ Verbs [Tense, Aspect, Mood, Voice Negation, Converbs etc.]
- ✓ Reduplication
- ✓ Expressives especially for the languages of the Northeast

4. Syntax: Various types of sentences, both simple and complex. Word order, Topic and Focus, Coordination, Subordination, Nominalization, Negative copula if any, Adjectival clauses, Relativization and Discourse phenomena are some of the topics that each grammar should throw some lights on.

5. Sociolinguistics. Kinship terms, politeness strategy, Domain analysis, Language shift and language retention and language death are some of the areas which should be explored. All kinds of variation within the members of a community should be accounted for. How linguistic structure is affected by language contact in a bilingual society should be explained.

6. Sample texts: Narrations of all types should be interlinearized with word-to-word and running translation in English and the contact language.

Glossory should be accompanied with the text.

Basic Linguistic Theory

- Basic Linguistic Theory is a term coined by R.M.W. Dixon to describe the theoretical framework and basic concepts that is generally used in grammatical description of languages, and in linguistic typology. It is a particular "theory neutral" language description. Proponents of Basic Linguistic Theory as theory point out that it is a set of concepts and theoretical assumptions that has been accumulated from empirical investigation of the world's languages.

- BLT has incorporated many substantive concepts discussed in the typological literature. Hence, it is very current and is open-ended to incorporate new structures.
- Unlike many theoretical frameworks in linguistics, which are often ephemeral and pass quickly into obsolescence, basic linguistic theory is a cumulative framework that has slowly developed over the past century as linguists have learned how to describe languages better.

Tibeto-Burman

- Most but not all of the languages are isolating in nature so that each word consists of one morpheme. Consider:

(3) *un-pan-t^h-a* ‘ice-rule-month’, i.e. ‘winter’ in Meithei

(4) *tiŋ-lum-gən* ‘rain-hot-time’, i.e. ‘summer’ in Rongmei.

These languages are highly affixal and derivations of various word classes such as nouns, adjectives, and adverbs can be achieved by prefixes or sequences of suffixes.

Hence, these are highly agglutinative too.

- Hence, notions like ‘causative’, ‘progression’, ‘duration’, ‘completion’, and ‘inchoation’ are shown by a lexical verb, which is semantically bleached and thus, partially or completely grammaticalised.

- Different grammatical categories are derived by affixation to the core root , i.e., there is no independent class of modifiers. For example in Meithei:

(a) *hay-rə-gə* ‘say-PERF- assocaitive’, i.e. ‘afterwards’

(b) *hay-bə- si-də* ‘say-INF-DET-DAT’, i.e. , ‘therefore’

(5)	<i>cay-saŋ-bə</i>	<i>əy-gi-ni</i>
	stick-long-INF	my-GEN-be

‘The long stick is mine.’

Verbs have multiple tier systems

- There is a three tier system of adding affixes in Meithei, such as the **first level** represents direction and manner in which an action is performed, the **second level** derivation consists of suffixes representing deictic markers, modality, such as negation, and valency increasing potentiality, such as causative. The **third level** of derivation consists of suffixes that signal aspect and modality (other than negation) (For details see Chelliah 1997: chapter 7).

- **Kuki-Chin** languages, such as Thadou has two verbal paradigms known as Stem 1 and Stem II. The Stem 1 and Stem II verbs differ in their phonological shapes. Usually, the two forms differ in their tone and in the final segment. The Stem 1 usually has any one of the three tones and the Stem II usually has the low tone and the final segment is usually a stop (Mary Kim 2014).

- The agreement pattern in most of the languages indicate person marking and not gender marking.
- Thadou-Kuki language such as Thadou uses pronominal proclitics as well as enclitics added to the verb. Contrary to this, Sino-Tibetan languages do not mark subject and object on verbs.
- These are aspect prominent and not tense prominent languages.
- Verb 'to say' is used as a complementizer.

- Tibeto-Burman languages are known to have an intricate system of **evidential particles** that characterize the nature of the speaker's information. The pragmatic features such as 'hearsay', 'preconceived knowledge', 'first-hand knowledge', 'visual' vs. 'auditory information' and other emotional attitudes are encoded in the verbal morphology.

Tai-Kadai

- Tai-Kadai languages are isolating in nature, meaning thereby each word consists one morpheme and each lexical unit and grammatical unit is shown as a distinct word. A sentence is constituted of series of monosyllabic and bisyllabic morphemes which are words themselves.
- *mən⁵ - naŋ⁵* (3SG- female person) ‘she’.
- Heavy use of classifiers: generic classifiers, shape-based classifiers, classifiers of plurality, and classifiers showing social stratification.

All data is from *Das, Bishakha. 2014. A Descriptive Grammar of Tai-Khamti*. Ph.D. dissertation. JNU.

Classifiers:

This kind of juxtaposition leads to polysyllabic words in the language. Thus, the word for ‘waist’ is derived by juxtaposing the generic word for ‘body’ such as *haŋ*²- and adding the word for ‘waist’ *ŋeŋ*⁴ derived as *haŋ*²-*ŋeŋ*⁴ ‘waist of a human’, or the word for ‘mango’ is derived by the combination of ‘fruit’ and the specific name of the fruit viz. ‘mango’ as in *mək*¹-*muŋ*¹ fruit-SPECIFIC BOUND LEXEME ‘mango’.

The content words (or lexical verbs) *ka*¹ ‘go’ and *ma*⁵ ‘come’ also function as temporal words. Various lexical verbs *əu*² ‘take’, *ca*³ ‘share’, *loi*⁴ ‘follow’/‘accompany’ are grammaticalized as prepositions and perform the functions of causative, instrumental, benefactive and comitative (Sharma 2014).

In other words, linguists have maintained that languages of this family, especially Khamti has only content words. Some of the content words function as grammatical words.

Many polysyllabic verbs result from reduplication of the reciprocal word *kən²* with synonymous verbs.

Thus following verbs in Tai-Khamti are derived by discontinuous reduplication. The strict distinction between Verb and Noun is not maintained.

(1) *ka¹ –kən² –ma⁵ –kən² –su¹ –nəm¹*
go—RECPL—come—RECPL—PROG—BE
‘Frequent visits’

(2) *tan⁴ –kən² –moun² –kən²*
speak —RECPL —speak —RECPL
‘To discuss’/ ‘discussion’

(3) *toup*¹ –*kən*² –*məŋ*² –*kən*²
beat –RECPL –beat –RECPL
‘To fight’/ ‘a fight’

(4) *khəi*² –*kən*² –*ləu*² –*kən*²
tell –RECPL –inform –RECPL
‘to inform’ / ‘information’

- Expressive morphology is used to create new words as in Tai-Khamti
different shades of dark red are symbolized by different expressive.

neŋ²-ha²-ha² ‘dark red’

neŋ²-fe²-fe² ‘dark red’

neŋ²-hɔŋ³-hɔŋ³ ‘dark red’

- Reduplication, especially of discontinuous type and compound formations
are other strategies to form new words.

Expressives

- **Expressives.** A kind of Reduplication where iterated syllables are generally onomatopoeic in nature (Diffloth 1976, 1988) and derives its status of a word/lexeme only after it is duplicated as the non -reduplicated syllable does not exist as a word.

Languages of the Northeast India abound in expressive morphology for indicating 'manner' of an action. All South Asian languages without any exception use expressive morphology to derive **modifiers of 'manner'**, as **Finite verbs** and with **Conjunctive Participle** or a **Converb** construction (Abbi 1991, 1997).

The Structure of Expressives

- Abbi (1987, 1990, 1992) discusses Expressives from the point of view of reduplication, the linguistic structuration, which is more common and widespread in all the South Asian languages than the non-reduplicated ones. Whether the expressive form is reduplicated or non-reduplicated each form is a unit lexeme and a single structural category. Almost all (nearly 99%) reduplicated Expressives are formed by iterating a meaningless syllable. The resultant structure thus acquires a meaning, constitutes a single morpheme as well as a single lexeme in that language. Thus, Sora *mel mel* 'to inspect', *di di* 'to count', Khasi *raʔ raʔ* 'flowers' are words derived by expressive morphology.

Semantics of Expressive morphology

Complex semantic category

Expressives represent

- Five senses of perception (*panchendriya*), viz. of smell, sight, touch, hearing and taste.
- States of mind and Manner of an action
- Refers to kinship terminology—language universal
- Various states of confusion

Himalayan region of South Asia

- It is abundant in languages spoken in Himalayan region be it Tibeto-Burman language family, or Tai-Kadai, or Mon Khmer branch of Khasi, or Western Himalayan languages of Indo-Aryan. We will thus, draw our examples primarily from these languages. We would like to take into consideration the languages of the North-East, primarily Naga languages of the Tibeto-Burman family, Meitei of Kuki-Chin group, Tai-Khamti from Tai-Kadai and Khasi of Mon-Khmer group of Austro-Asiatic language family.

Tangkhul Naga and Meithei (Tibeto-Burman)

- Out of 342 Expressives known so far, 278 Expressives with initial consonant (48 are non-reduplicated and the rest are reduplicated either partially or completely), 31 with initial vowels and 33 with initial semi-vowels (Victor 1993).
- Expressive either forms the predicate or occurs in adjunct position as a verbal modifier. The prefix *ta-* is used as an adverbial particle to the expressive.

KHASI (Austroasiatic)

- During our fieldwork conducted in 1997 we came across Khasi expressives in a large number where we identified :
 - 66 different expressives that collocate with the verb *yaid* ‘walk’;
 - 57 which collocate with the verb ‘cry’
 - 20 expressives collocating with the verb *ba:m* ‘eat’
 - 28 expressives with the verb *khin* ‘tremble’
 - 38 with the verb *krin* ‘speak’, ‘say’ and,
 - 18 expressives collocate with the verb *mareh* ‘to run’.

The largest number of expressives begins with *k-* or *kh-* in Khasi. The enormity of manner expressives collocating with the verb ‘to walk’ in the Northeast could certainly license the area as a ‘Walking area’ (Abbi and Victor 1997: 427).

Khasi (Austroasiatic)

yaid (v) 'go, walk, proceed'

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| - <i>bak'-bak'</i> | 'go hurriedly' |
| - <i>bianṅ-bianṅ</i> | 'walk continuously'. |
| - <i>bran-bran</i> | 'go very fast' . |
| - <i>brum-brum</i> | 'go with heavy steps' |
| - <i>hai-hai</i> | 'walk shakingly as if very heavy' |
| - <i>han' -han'</i> | 'walk like a duck' |
| - <i>kep'-kep'</i> | 'go slowly not sure to keep the equilibrium' |
| - <i>ker' -ker'</i> | 'walk trembling' |
| - <i>khne?-khne?</i> | 'walk like a lame man' |
| - <i>khniṅ-khniṅ</i> | 'walk lamely' (as if very tired or there is a
stone in the sole) |
| - <i>khруп' khруп'</i> | 'walk quickly and stamping the floor with
the steps |
| - <i>kjik'-kjik'</i> | 'walk as if on pins' |

-- <i>knia?-knia?</i>	'walk nicely and willing to speak'.
- <i>knip'-knip?</i>	'walk with pain'
- <i>kor' -kor'</i>	'walk trembling (from sickness)
- <i>kthai-kthai</i>	'walk well-dressed'
- <i>kthek'-kthek'</i>	'walk like dancing as on springs'
- <i>kui-kui</i>	'move a short but large body'
- <i>kynrum'-kynrep'</i>	'go on pouncing'
- <i>kyrthek'-kyrthek'</i>	'walk like dancing'
- <i>kyntup' -kyntup'</i>	'walk dressing very modestly'

- *dar-dar* 'walk briskly'
- *der-der* 'walk about with flying clothes'
- *dat' dat'* 'walk quickly without turning to left or right'
- *doy' -doy'* 'walk quickly (small boy)'
- *don'-don'* 'walk like a bird or child'
- *dop'-dop'* 'walk like a child, who has just learned to walk'
- *dot-dot* 'move as an old person'
- *nen-nen* 'walk like an intoxicated'
- *ner-ner* 'move shakingly'
- *nun-nun* 'went on walking'
- *hir-hir* 'go longingly'
- *yor-yor* 'walk slowly from weakness'
- *jaw-jaw* 'go about in poorly wet clothes'
- *iben-iben* 'go completely naked'
- *lun-lun/len-len* 'go in a hurry'

- suki-suki don-don 'went out very slowly as an old person'
- mlen-mlen 'go about very healthy and muscular'
- rymphat' -rymphat' 'go about dirty and poorly dressed'
- *sak-sak* 'walk straight on'
- *san-san* 'daddle, walk as if not sure'
- *dain-ši-dain* 'going ahead successfully'
- šey-šey 'walk with long strides'
- šen-šen 'go as a drunkard'
- šop-šop 'walk with caution'
- sar-sar 'go stealthily'
- suki lwen'-lwen' (v) 'creep slowly'
- tai-tai 'go about very dirty'
- ter-ter 'proceed in order'
- thaid'-ši-thaid' 'proceed on and on'
- then'-then' 'walk steady'

- thew-thew 'walk with strong legs'
- thiaw-ši-thiaw 'walk uphill with strong legs'
- thir-thir 'go quickly'
- thnet' -thnet' 'walk as if on the point of falling'
- thud' -thud' 'walk as stumbling'
- thut' -thut' 'walk tremblingly'
- *twet'-twet'* 'walk too fast'
- *tub' -tub'* 'walk as if not liking it'
- *tub-pa-tub'* 'go slowly'
- *tuin' -tuin'* 'go slowly like an elephant'
- *wai-wai* 'walk weekly'
- *wey-wey* 'go in a zig-zag way'
- *wet-wet* 'go on hurriedly'
- *wit' -wit'* 'walk with many obstacles'
- *wut'-wut'* 'go on hurriedly'

Tangkhul Naga (Tibeto-Burman)

kəzət 'to go/walk'

yanyay kəzət 'to waddle like a child (when walked by grownup people)

šinšin - 'to walk with heavy footstep in a direct manner without
stopping or looking about'

t^huŋt^huŋ-
or 'to walk heedlessly and laboriously, usually with anger
wariness'

yuryur- 'to walk in batches at a time'

t^hutt^hut- 'to walk stealthily and slowly'

camcam- 'to walk blindly and slowly; walk like very old people'

həyhəy- 'to walk in a limping fashion'

nutnut- 'to walk un-progressingly with frequent backward
motions, as while forcing to go by pushing or dragging'

wuywuy- 'to walk waveringly, as when one is drunk'

yəyə- 'to walk in a leisure way without any purpose'

wakwak- 'to walk with long strides, especially by tall persons'

hiŋhiŋ- 'to walk fast with rather long strides'

rutrut- 'to walk silently and carefully, usually said of thief or
persons with suspicious look'

<i>təytəy-</i>	'to waddle (by around one-year old children)'
<i>p^hutp^hut-</i>	'to walk very fast (as if getting late for some place to reach)'
<i>namnam-</i>	'to walk straight and quickly not caring for hindrances'
<i>kuku-</i>	'to walk tiringly with bowed posture'
<i>həkhək-</i>	'to walk quickly with light steps'
<i>yokyok-</i>	'to walk swinging the upper part of the body from back to forth, especially by thin and tall person'
<i>haphap-</i>	'to walk carelessly without looking for what lies on the surface/ground'
<i>yapyap-</i>	'to walk uneasily with bowed legs, as when one has got boils in the thighs or buttocks'
<i>rinrin-</i>	'to walk carefully with hesitation, as on thorny surface'
<i>pəkək-</i>	'to walk lightly looking back and forth'
<i>t^həkt^hək-</i>	'to walk mincingly'
<i>nennen-</i>	'to walk slowly with hesitation, as with shyness in front of a crowd or someone'
<i>pikpik-</i>	'to walk fast and swingingly, as in a crowded street/ place'