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BANGLADESH KHUMI VERBAL CLASSIFIERS AND KUKI-CHIN 'CHIMING'*

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Abstract: This paper provides an examination of elements which are claimed to be verbal classifiers in the northern dialect of Bangladesh Khumi (Kuki-Chin) from the standpoint of classifier typology as elaborated in Aikhenvald 2000. The elements in question are argued to conform in most respects to what Aikhenvald identifies for verbal classifiers elsewhere, a noteworthy finding as such elements are not generally recognized to characterize languages of the area or Tibeto-Burman languages more generally. The paper proceeds to consider the place of these verbal classifiers in a wider Kuki-Chin context, concluding that they are most closely related to elements otherwise described as 'chiming' adverbs (e.g., in Tedim) or as ideophonic elements (e.g., for Hakha Lai). A number of similarities and differences between the elements found in Khumi and those found elsewhere are discussed, and a possible developmental scenario is suggested to account for the differences seen between Khumi and other languages.

Keywords: Chin languages, Tibeto-Burman languages, classifiers, Khumi

1. INTRODUCTION

Bangladesh Khumi is a variety of Khumi (Kuki-Chin) spoken in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of southeastern Bangladesh. There are around 2,000 speakers divided between two dialects here, most of whom lead a relatively traditional swidden-based lifestyle. The data used here represents the more northerly of these dialects, and was collected in villages situated about halfway between Bandarban and Ruma, and to the immediate southeast of Ruma. The two dialects spoken in Bangladesh have a high degree of mutual intelligibility and are reportedly quite similar to Khumi varieties spoken to the east of the Burmese border in southern

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Chin State. Mro-Khimi, for instance, treated by Hartmann 2001, would appear to be highly similar to the variety under consideration here.[1]

If one examines just a few lines of Bangladesh Khumi narrative text, one will almost always encounter elements which consultants explain as indicating that the participant associated with an intransitive verb is 'big' or 'small', or that in a transitive event the P participant is 'big' or 'small'. Consider example (1) in which the augmentative classifier element *–paaw* in the verbal complex indicates that the birds in question, in this case a pair of eagles, were big:

(1) ang-jeew=boeloee ueeng moo='iee beewng-puuy
3-come=WHEN house front=GEN banyan-AUG

cangpaay=aa ajuu=poee coeng-paaw
branch=ALL wife=also land-AUGVCL

jvoó=poee coeng-paaw=te
husband=also land-AUGVCL=EVID
'When they came, the female bird and the male bird landed on the branch of the big banyan tree in front of the house.' (8.42)[2]

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[1] Note that Hartmann's Mro-Khimi appears to be a clear Kuki-Chin language, unlike Bangladesh Mru (mentioned below).

[2] Numbers following examples indicate the location of a sentence in the text corpus, discussed below. The orthography used here for Khumi requires some discussion. = indicates a clitic boundary and – indicates an affix boundary. Most symbols have their usual IPA value, with the following exceptions: *Ch* indicates an aspirate plosive, *ng* indicates a velar nasal, *j* is an alveopalatal affricate, *y* is a palatal glide, and *s* indicates an alveopalatal fricative, except for individual items where it is in free variation with [s]. *'* indicates either glottal stop or the short vowel associated with a sesquisyllabic structure in case it is unpredictable for a syllable-initial consonant sequence (e.g., for the initial sequence *jv-*, as in the word 'husband' in example (1), this short vowel is predictable, since initial *jv-* sequences are impossible, but in the word *t'hieé* 'drill', seen in example (13), the *'* must be used to distinguish the *t'h-* initial from *th*, an aspirate alveolar stop. In addition, *'* is sometimes used word-finally to indicate an extremely checked tone variant corresponding to an omitted genitive case clitic, as in example (14). Representation of the tonal system of Khumi (five underlying distinctions) and the vowel system present some additional complications. For a vowel indicated by a single symbol ([a], [i], [e], [u], [o]), there are five possible representations, depending on tone: e.g., *a* (low checked tone), *á* (high checked tone), *aa* (low tone), *áa* (high falling tone), and *aá* (rising-falling tone). Several digraphs (and trigraphs) are used to represent additional vowels (*ie*/*iee* is a tense vowel intermediate between [i] and [e], *ue*/*uee* is approximately [ʏ], *oe*/*oee* is close to [ə], and *aw*/*aaw* represents [ɔ]); for these vowels, the accent associated with high checked and high falling tones is written over the first vowel, and with the rising-falling tone is written over the last vowel of a trigraph. E.g., for *oe*/*oee*: *oe* (low checked tone), *óe* (high checked tone), *oee* (low tone), *óee* (high falling tone), *oeé* (rising-falling tone).

Abbreviations used in the examples are as follows: 1 'first person', 2 'second person', 3 'third person', ABL 'ablative', ADVB 'adverbial element', ALL 'allative', ANDAT 'andative', AUG 'augmentative', AUGVCL 'augmentative verbal classifier', AUX 'auxiliary', CAUS 'causative', COND 'conditional', COP 'copula', DEF 'definite', DIM 'diminutive', DIMVCL 'diminutive verbal

On the other hand, the same verb at the end of (2) contains the diminutive classifier element *–poee*, which reflects the relatively small size of the bird which lands, in this case a nightingale:

(2) toeéng=te toeéng-maa=boeloee
arrive=EVID arrive-FIRST=WHEN

ewkóo sahueeng coeng-poee=te
deck fence land-DIMVCL=EVID
'It arrived, and after it arrived, it landed on the deck fence.' (1.80)

Similarly, in (3), the relatively large size of the human referred to by the personal name *puykhawng*, allows the verb to contain the augmentative classifier *raang*:

(3) puykhawng ptiiw-raang-vuy=bo=te noekhaá
(name) catch-AUGVCL-PFV-PERF=EVID that.time
'Then they caught Puykhawng.' (18.174)

A smaller P participant, the treeshrew, as in (4), allows the corresponding diminutive classifier:

(4) …tengtaáwng téwsuú tvóeeng=moe
finally.LOC treeshrew.ALL bear=DEF

ptiiw-raeeng-vuy=bo=te ayoee
catch-dimvcl-pfv=perf=evid you.see
'…finally Bear caught Treeshrew, you see.' (31.156)

While there are semantic nuances in Bangladesh Khumi (henceforth simply Khumi) to be discussed below which deviate from these basic diminutive/augmentative designations, it is the main claim of this paper that the primary function of these elements in Khumi is as suggested by these consultants' initial glosses: they are, in Aikhenvald's (2000) terms, verbal classifiers, conveying information about the size of one of the participants. This conclusion is initially interesting in that verbal classifiers of this sort are not

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classifier', DIR 'directional', ELAB 'elaboration (in an elaborate expression)', EMOT 'emotive', EVID 'hearsay evidential', FOC 'focus', FUT 'future', GEN 'genitive', IDEO 'ideophonic element', IMPERF 'imperfect', INCL 'inclusive', INST 'instrumental', INTENS 'intensifier', INTERJ 'interjection', LOC 'locative', NUM 'numeral building element', NZ 'nominalizer', P 'plural', PFV 'perfective', PERF 'perfect', PST 'past', QUOT 'quotative', S 'subject', S 'singular', SUPPL 'supplicative', TOP 'topic'.

recognized as characterizing languages of this area, or indeed Tibeto-Burman languages in general.

A further noteworthy issue is that in the wider Kuki-Chin context, Khumi verbal classifiers are most clearly related to postverbal elements which are characterized as essentially ideophonic in nature, what Henderson 1965 and Bhaskararao 1989 refer to as 'chiming' adverbs; however, consideration of these elements' semantic characteristics across the Kuki-Chin subgroup makes it clear that the big/small dimension of classification is almost always present. For instance, consider the examples in (5) from Hakha Lai (Patent 1998:177). In this language the diminutive/augmentative nature of these elements is readily apparent, although it is perhaps not always as fundamental an aspect of their semantics as it is in Khumi:

(5) a. hŋaak-tshia ʔa-vaak ʔuaʔ-maʔ
baby 3SS-crawl IDEO
'The [big, fat] baby crawls around.'

b. hŋaak-tshia ʔa-vaak ʔiaʔ-maʔ
baby 3SS-crawl IDEO
'The [small, thin] baby crawls around.'

It seems probable that many of the other semantic nuances that these elements have in languages besides Khumi stem from relatively straightforward extensions of diminutive/augmentative semantics (in particular, to meliorative/pejorative).

In what follows, I first give as exhaustive a treatment as possible at this point to verbal classifiers in Khumi from the perspective of classifier typology. Then, I consider the relationship of these classifiers to comparable elements in other Kuki-Chin languages. Finally, I discuss possible approaches to the diachrony of these elements, both language-internally, and for the Kuki-Chin languages as a family.

2. KHUMI VERBAL CLASSIFIERS

While, for reasons to be made clear below, I cannot promise to give a full account of Khumi verbal classifiers in this paper, in this section I provide as exhaustive a treatment of the phenomenon as possible, paying special attention to parameters of variation noted in Aikhenvald's (2000:149ff) typological characterization of such elements, including:

- optionality
- occurrence of different predicates with different classifiers
- occurrence of multiple classifiers with a single predicate

- use of classifiers for maintenance of participant reference in discourse
- participant type that classifiers can refer to

The following sections treat each of these aspects of verbal classifier (VCL) behavior in turn.

The analysis here is based on a corpus of over forty texts of various sorts and a lexical database of about 5000 items. Since there are more than eighty diminutive/augmentative classifier pairs so far identified, and there are around 2000 verbal bases in the lexical database, it has not been possible to directly test the use of each classifier with every predicate. In fact, speaker intuitions about predicate-classifier compatibility were not found to be completely consistent with information gleaned from consideration of text occurrence, so it is not clear that simply directly testing the possibility of predicate-classifier combinations will yield entirely reliable results. Moreover, while the currently recognized classifier pairs are enough to formulate an initial account, it seems unlikely that all classifier pairs have been identified. A list of VCLs which have been identified in Khumi, along with a few examples of predicates that can be used with them (if more than one has been found) is given as an appendix to the paper; again, it should be stressed that this list is almost certainly incomplete.

2.1. Optional nature of classifier use

One basic feature of VCLs in Khumi is that their use is essentially optional, except insofar as they may convey nuances which are crucial to the characterization of an action. For instance, in (6), we see the intransitive predicate *coeng* 'land' occurring without either of the VCLs *-paaw or -poee* indicating the size of the S participant, which we saw in (1) and (2) at the beginning of the paper.

(6) ...ewkóo sangbáang alúuy kanglíiwng coeng=te
deck railing.ALL cock white land=EVID
'…a white cock landed on the deck railing.' (8.148)

As with many other occurrences of the predicate in the corpus, the diminutive classifier might have been used with *coeng* in this sentence, but for whatever reason, the speaker chose not to include it here. Similarly, in (7), the transitive predicate *ptiiw*, which we saw in (3) and (4) above may bear the VCLs *-raang* or *-raeeng* to indicate the size of its P participant, does not actually require such classifiers, although the fish in question would be compatible with a diminutive classifier element.

(7) hní mteéwng-khuemrueng-coee ngoo ptiiw máwy tleewng
this old.person-feeble-DIM fish catch ground top

tkhueé ngoo ptiiw mawy tleewng tkhueé-noe=te
pick.up fish catch ground top pick.up-PST=EVID
'This little old lady caught the fish and put them up on the ground, caught the fish and put them up on the ground.' (42.108)

Hence, verbal classifiers in Khumi are essentially optional, as is common for verbal classifiers according to Aikhenvald (2000:149).

2.2. Different predicates/different classifiers

As mentioned earlier, elements identified as verbal classifiers are listed in the appendix, along with one to several predicates they may occur with. Certain predicates will occur prototypically with one classifier, while other predicates will occur prototypically with another classifier. It should be noted, however, as will be discussed in the following section, that different classifiers may occur with a single predicate to achieve particular semantic effects.

It would be desirable to recognize some commonality for all predicates occurring with a given classifier pair. However, this is only possible in a few cases if more than one predicate is known to be associated with a given classifier; there are nearly always exceptions. For instance, *-phruee/-phraa* occur with numerous verbs of motion, but they also occur with *caa* 'eat' and *nee* 'drink', seemingly a quite distinct type of action. *-tloe/-tlaw* occur with *caa* 'eat', *nee* 'drink', *ce* 'go', *i* 'sleep', *ataeé* 'sit', and *kung* 'enter', a similarly disparate set of event types. Thus, while there may be some generalizations that may be made for a given classifier pair, assuming they occur with more than one predicate, such generalizations are usually not absolute. In many cases the pairing of predicate and verbal classifiers seems relatively arbitrary. Future investigation will hopefully be able to shed further light on this issue.

2.3. Different classifiers used with a single predicate

Individual predicates are usually not limited to occurrence with a single classifier. If different classifiers are used with a single predicate, sometimes the difference involves some component of motion, although the diminutive/augmentative distinction is also always present (see (8a) vs. (8b).)

(8) a. nuy-baaw/boee
push-AUGVCL/DIMVCL 'push away'

b. nuy-maaw/moee
push-AUGVCL/DIMVCL 'push down'

Another possibility is that use of one or the other classifier has to do with some aspect of a participant other than its size, e.g., the shape or consistency of the P participant, as in (9a) vs. (9b.)

(9) a. hie-maa/miee
scoop-AUGVCL/DIMVCL 'scoop out (as in carving out wood)'

b. hie-baaw/boee
scoop-AUGVCL/DIMVCL 'scrape off (e.g., a leech)'

Other semantic anomalies include a variety of unpredictable adverbial nuances. Here I will only mention a few of these that have come to my attention. (10) shows the predicate *amsúy* 'tied up' together with the diminutive/augmentative classifier pair *–ciee/-caaw*. While this may have the simple diminutive/augmentative distinction, in reference to the P participant, it may instead imply either tightness or looseness of the bonds involved.

(10) a. amsúy-ciee
tied.up-DIMVCL 'tied up (of something small, or tightly)'

b. amsúy-caaw
tied.up-AUGVCL 'tied up (of something large, or loosely)'

In a similar manner, for the classifier pair *-thuu/-thuee*, the diminutive classifier also indicates that the action is performed carefully, for *-kaaw/-koee*, the diminutive classifier indicates that the action is performed secretly or stealthily, and for *-su/-sue*, the diminutive classifier indicates that the action is performed patiently, quietly, without lots of motion or restlessness. *-pháa/-phíee* typically indicates that the action involves a bursting sound.

To illustrate the kind of complexity involved, some more extended examples are given in (11) and (12), where all of the elements listed in the appendix were tested for cooccurrence with individual predicates. (For brevity's sake, only augmentative classifiers are included here; in all but a couple of instances, the corresponding diminutive classifiers could be used in place of these.)

(11) classifiers occurring with *thew* 'come out'
thew-baaw 'many Ss come out at once'
thew-caaw 'many Ss come out at once'
thew-pu 'one person comes out with a big quick motion'
thew-laaw 'something comes out once, just for a second (e.g., of lightning)'
thew-lewlaang 'come out happily and hang around (of a group or just one person)'
thew-phraa 'come out for a while and go back again'
thew-yaa 'come out, of a lot of something (e.g., of blood)'

thew-maa ‘come out (e.g., of blood) in abundance, but stop fairly quickly’
thew-sáa ‘come out in a swarm (e.g., of lots of people, ants)’
thew-su ‘grow a lot (e.g., of weeds after a field has been weeded)’
thew-piiw ‘come out (e.g., of a bear)’
thew-tlaw ‘come out instead of something big’
thew-’u ‘come (grow) out quickly and tightly (e.g., of grass on a path)’

(12) classifiers occurring with *atoeéyng* ‘cut’
atoeéyng-haaw ‘cut something big (and bring it along)’
atoeéyng-paaw ‘cut something big such that it falls down (e.g., a jackfruit)’
atoeéyng-baaw ‘many people cut something big (e.g., a large swidden)’
atoeéyng-báw ‘cut (e.g., a big vine)’
atoeéyng-taaw ‘cut something big such that it splits in two’
atoeéyng-khraw ‘cut something big (finally, with some difficulty)’
atoeéyng-caaw ‘cut many things and collect them together (e.g., bamboos)’
atoeéyng-phiiw ‘cut something big (a round thing, like a fruit) such that it breaks a bit’
atoeéyng-biiw ‘cut a big field (remove the vegetation from it)’
atoeéyng-vaw ‘cut and make a big (round) hole in something big’
atoeéyng-thlaw ‘cut (bark) off with a scooping/hacking motion’
atoeéyng-yu ‘cut something big and soft’
atoeéyng-phriiw ‘cut something large slightly (maybe inadequately)’
atoeéyng-pháa ‘cut something big such that it is broken into many pieces’
atoeéyng-khu ‘cut something big suddenly, secretly’
atoeéyng-thla ‘cut something big such that it splits open (e.g., a pumpkin)’
atoeéyng-phróo ‘cut something big free (e.g., someone who is tied up)’
atoeéyng-phuu ‘secretly cut something big’
atoeéyng-vaa ‘cut something big off, with a scooping motion (e.g., tree bark)’
atoeéyng-khiiwng ‘cut something big (involving a big sound)’
atoeéyng-kaaw ‘cut something big such that it dies (P is a living thing)’
atoeéyng-kaa ‘cut something big such that it dies (P is a living thing)’
atoeéyng-paang ‘cut something big with a clean cut’
atoeéyng-ya ‘cut something big, making a wound in it’

atoeéyng-saaw 'cut something big without making a wound, but maybe removing skin'
atoeéyng-maw 'cut something big so that it becomes unconscious'
atoeéyng-khaang 'cut something big, rendering it unconscious, with a sound'
atoeéyng-kraa 'cut a hole in something big (e.g., a cloth)'
atoeéyng-thuu 'cut a big rope, vine, something pulled very taut'
atoeéyng-pyaawng 'cut something big and hollow'
atoeéyng-piw 'cut something big angrily, or causing anger'
atoeéyng-tlaw 'cut something big (instead of someone else)'

In light of these examples, it is worth noting that sometimes different classifier elements may involve classification which is not exclusively along the diminutive/augmentative dimension, but instead reflects more familiar classificatory parameters. For instance, some classifiers refer specifically to participants which have a vine-like appearance (e.g., *-báw*, *-thuu*), or to something for which the prototype referent would be a round or fruitlike entity (e.g., *-thlaa*, *-phiiw*), or to something which must be animate rather than inanimate (e.g., *-kaaw*, *-kaa*).

2.4. Classifier use for participant maintenance in discourse

As Aikhenvald claims may be the case (2000:149), verbal classifiers are frequently used to maintain reference to participants in Khumi discourse. That is, once a classifier has been used either together with a full NP referent or independently, they may appear in subsequent clauses in which the entity referenced by the classifier is still active in the discourse. For instance, in the following text sequence (example (13)), several brothers have been covered by a large stone inside a hole. The stone is mentioned explicitly to begin with. After an intervening parenthetical clause, the stone is signalled by means of a demonstrative (*hní*)-classifier (*baaw*) combination, and ultimately just by means of the classifier:

(13) lumseewng t'hieé-roesoee t'hieé-roesoee t'hieé-roesoee
stone drill-SLOWLY drill-SLOWLY drill-SLOWLY

t'hieé-roesoee-maa=boeloee kási-lo vang a-niiw
drill-SLOWLY-FIRST=WHEN ELAB-moon light MID-see

kási-lo vang=loee a-niiw=bo
ELAB-moon light=TOP MID-see=PERF

acíee hní iee-baaw=khloee pyaáw=mi
1PINCL this push-AUGVCL=COND able=perhaps

tláeeng(moe) hní=ciee amyo'amnaáw léewng
suddenly this=P siblings person

srue-riee báwybawy ktaeng-pray=loee iee-pray=loee
seven-NUM all pull-INTENS=TOP push-INTENS=TOP

nuy-baaw=te
push-AUGVCL=EVID

nuy-baaw-maa=boeloee ní=ciee thew-saaw
push-augvcl-first=when 3=p go.out-augvcl
'He [the youngest of seven brothers] slowly drilled at the stone, slowly drilled, slowly drilled, and after he slowly drilled, the moonlight was visible. The light from the moon became visible, [and he said] "Maybe if we push this [the stone], we'll be able." Suddenly those seven siblings all pulled and pushed, and pushed it away, and after they pushed it away, they went out.' (28.27-30)

In (14), similarly, two women, *Sluy* and *Slay*, are already active in the narrative from long before (they are the main characters, the story is named for them, etc.), and hence here may be referred to only by means of an agumentative classifier. In the last line, this reference is re-established by repetition of the classifier.

(14) noe slay thuy-noe=maá taee-yo
and (name) say-NZ=ALL go-IMPERF

náy tkay' avang thew-piiw
thus tiger.GEN village come.out-AUGVCL

hm ahaawy vaay=loee khieeng=too tkay'
INTERJ friend now=TOP look=SUPPL tiger.GEN

avang thew=bo=too=noe piee-noetlaa
village come.out=PERF=SUPPL=QUOT say-PST

náy thew-piiw-boeloee…
thus come.out-AUGVCL-WHEN

'And they went to where Slay said (they should go), and came out into a tiger village. "See friend, look! We've come out into a tiger village," she (Sluy) said. So, they came out into the village and…' (15.60-62)

Referents for classifiers appear to always be third-person participants. Note that in the previous example *-piiw* refers to the women only in the material surrounding the quoted material. Sluy, the woman who speaks, does not use it in conjunction with the same predicate in her speech.

2.5. Participant type of classifier referents

The available Khumi evidence largely confirms Aikhenvald's claims about the types of participants that verbal classifiers can reference. Namely, verbal classifiers almost without exception reference an S participant (with an intransitive predicate) or a P participant (with a transitive predicate). However, there are instances where the classifier may refer to some other participant present in the frame.

The most straightforward instances are with predicates that include or may include a recipient (e.g., *vá* 'throw'). For such predicates, a cooccurring classifier can refer either to the P participant or to the recipient. This is hardly surprising given Khumi's essentially primary/secondary (as opposed to direct/indirect) ditransitive alignment: normally object properties, like case marking, accrue to a recipient rather than the P participant.

However, there are also cases where the reference of a classifier is surprising, from the standpoint of Aikhenvald's account. For instance, in (15), the predicate *klew* 'to mark' has *t'o* 'throat' as its P participant; however, the diminutive classifier *-miee* is understood to indicate the small amount of blood involved, which is clarified as an afterthought:

(15) …thangbuliyaay ngaa-boeloee t'oo klew
large.bamboo.rat get-WHEN throat mark

kleew-<u>miee</u>=rawy=te angtaeng=l'oo thii=baee
mark-<u>DIMVCL</u>=STILL=EVID correct=right? blood=EMOT
'…when they got a large bamboo rat, he marked their throats, with a little bit, right? (Of) blood.'

In this instance, the blood is not marked as an instrument of the action (as it might be), but instead is simply something which is understood to be an element present in the frame, and the classifier may refer to it instead of to a particular participant normally associated with the predicate. In fact, there are numerous instances where a classifier, rather than providing reference to a P participant, instead may refer to an implied or stated instrument that the action is performed with.

Similarly, in (16),

(16) klaay=’iee yaangkduy vae ckrae pakhoó
monkey=GEN genitals all rope.trap opening.ALL

vá-pu=te=’ieebo amsúy-cie-vuy=praay=loee…
throw-augvcl=evid=and tied.up-dimvcl-perf-intens=top
‘The monkey threw his entire genitals into the rope trap opening, and they were all tied up…’ (18.42)

the diminutive classifier *-ciee*, according to consultants, might be taken to refer to the monkey’s genitals; however, equally likely (and possibly more so, given the augmentative classifier *-puu* in the text immediately preceding, which definitely does refer to the monkey’s genitals), is that it refers to the tightness (=smallness) of the rope trap. So, the classifier may here refer to some characteristic of the trap or its tightness, rather than to the predicate’s single S participant. In this respect, that classifiers need not refer exclusively to S or P participants, but may instead refer to some other entity evoked in the frame, VCLs in Khumi deviate somewhat from the ones Aikhenvald discusses. While they show a clear tendency to indicate an S/P participant, there are instances where they simply refer to a particularly salient entity in a given context, and hence probably should not be viewed as evidence for any established set of grammatical relations (in particular, absolutive as opposed to ergative.)

2.6. Summary

As an interim summary, then, the elements identified as verbal classifiers in Khumi have some largely unpredictable semantic nuances with given predicates, and so to a certain extent involve lexicalization. However, in terms of their main semantic organizing principle, they are straightforward verbal classifiers with respect to the characteristics identified for such elements by Aikhenvald 2000. They are largely optional; individual classifiers tend to occur with particular predicates, but given predicates may occur with different classifiers; they may be used for discourse maintenance of a participant; usually they refer to an S or P participant of the predicate they are associated with, although occasionally they may reference some other entity present in a frame.

Before proceeding to the next section, which will examine these elements from a cross-Kuki-Chin perspective, a few miscellaneous details should be mentioned. First, there are a few instances in which a diminutive or augmentative classifier does not appear to have a matching augmentative or diminutive classifier. For instance, *-kriw* appears to speakers to be an augmentative classifier, but they have difficulty identifying a diminutive classifier which would correspond to it. Also, a few non-paired elements are difficult for speakers to identify as classifier or non-classifier; Khumi also has a number of postverbal elements indicating intensification or exhaustive effect on P participants, and

speakers are unable to decide whether a non-paired element fits into this or the classifier category. In the appendix, I list only elements which are clearly paired classifier elements.

As Bhaskararao pointed out for Tedim, there are some unusual phonological characteristics for this class of elements. The overwhelming majority of the classifiers have Khumi's low, unchecked tone. In addition, one classifier has a sound (a voiceless labiodental fricative), which as far as I know, does not occur in any other word or particle in the language. In general, though, aberrant phonology for this class of elements in Khumi is not extensive.

A further detail which the preceding examples have not given evidence for is that in Khumi monosyllabic verbal classifiers may occur in a fully reduplicated form, as in example (17).

(17) puykhawng p-kung-phuphuu khaá
(name) CAUS-enter-AUGVCL when

oeyngkeéwng ngaang hawplay leng-ceng
tree.ALL leaf well stuff.into-tightly

khay-yo=pray=loee naang=poee
leave-IMPERF=INTENS=TOP 2S=FOC
'When Puykhawng made him [a bear] go inside, he packed the tree tightly with leaves, and left, you see.' (18.197)

This may be contrasted with an earlier sentence in this text, (18), where the same classifier is not reduplicated:

(18) cewng thiíwng=aa luu=maa kung-phuu khaá
fish.catching.basket inside=LOC head=ABL enter-AUGVCL time

ckrae vuynaw abay-thuee=te='iee
rope.trap rope cut-DIMVCL=EVID=AND

p'iíwng-rang-vuy=te nayboeloee
keep.inside-AUGVCL-PFV=EVID then
'When he [the monkey] entered headfirst into the fish catching basket, he [Puykhawng, a man] cut the trap rope, and he kept him in it [in the basket].' (18.45)

Examples where the elements are reduplicated as in (17) are not frequent in the text corpus. However, speakers are of the opinion that it is possible for monosyllabic VCLs to be reduplicated under most circumstances, although any

semantic distinction between non-reduplicated and reduplicated forms remains elusive.

Lastly, it is noteworthy that while it is present for a few VCLs, the phonaesthetic aspect of the Khumi elements is considerably less pronounced than it is in other languages we will examine below. In fact, in Khumi there is an separate lexical class that corresponds to some of the elements Patent 1998 describes as ideophones in Hakha Lai, an extensive set of onomatopoetic words expressing information about sound and/or motion distinct from its set of VCLs. These other items occur in what is essentially a quotative construction, seen in (19):

(19) tlaengmoe huúsangtlo=haawy troey=te
suddenly bamboo.variety=INST poke=EVID

kriiwng kriiwng kriiwng kriiwng=noe troey=te
sound of bamboo hitting something=QUOT poke=EVID
'Suddenly, he poked around [inside a bear's lair] with a bamboo and hit something.'(34.110)

Below I will suggest that the prevalence of this construction and class of elements may be important to understanding the development of these VCLs in Khumi when compared with their instantiations in other Kuki-Chin languages.

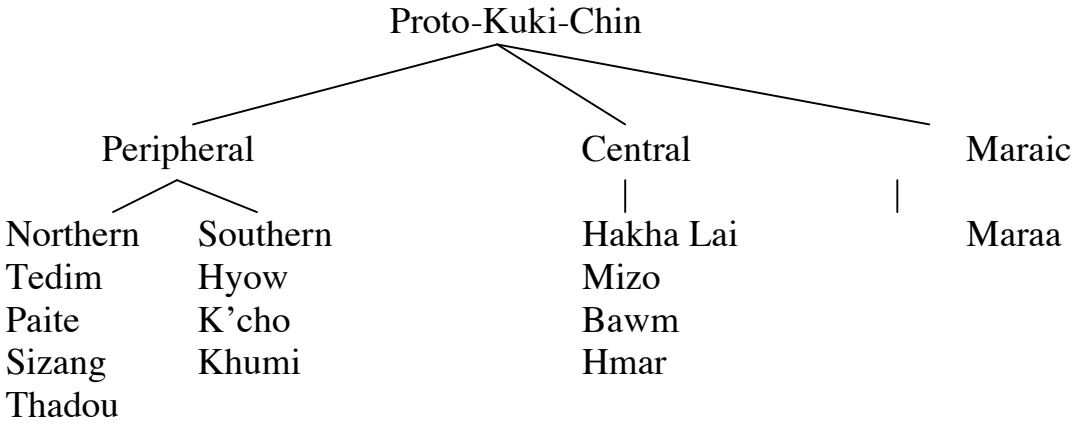
3. VERBAL CLASSIFIERS IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

There are two fundamental differences between Khumi verbal classifiers and the elements most comparable to them in other Kuki-Chin languages. First, the main impression that one gets concerning these elements in other languages is that they are less homogeneous in semantic terms than Khumi's VCLs are: they are more essentially ideophonic in nature or more likely to indicate some specific type of motion or evaluative (good or bad) connotation, while nevertheless retaining at least some hint of a more basic diminutive/augmentative classificatory function. Second, while there are a few exceptions, in the other Kuki-Chin languages that we have information for, the elements are primarily partially reduplicative in nature. While *full* reduplication of VCLs appears to be an option in Khumi, it is not particularly frequent in discourse.

In this section, I will briefly survey the phenomena attested in related languages; representative languages, including those to be discussed below, are shown in Figure 1. I will not attempt a finalized subgrouping of Kuki-Chin languages here (for recent thoughts see Peterson 2000 and VanBik 2006). For purposes of the present discussion, I adopt the subgrouping of VanBik 2006 (26). However, as in Peterson 2000, I here would reserve judgment on the exact position of Khumi; in fact, it may occupy a position outside of the southern group and more remotely affiliated with the remainder of the family as a whole. Adoption of this subgrouping is not essential, and I introduce it here simply to

help the reader to conceptualize the distribution of the features summarized in this section.

Figure 1. Kuki-Chin Subgrouping



For some languages, there is copious information available on this topic. For a few, the information is suggestive, but scanty. Finally, for a couple of languages, it is possible that information might be gleaned from careful consideration of lexical materials available for them, but any relevant information is at present not easily extractable, and will remain an area for future investigation.

3.1. Northern Chin

In Northern Chin languages, a phenomenon comparable to that seen in Khumi is well-attested, and indeed this is where these elements were first noted. However, only in Thadou is the diminutive/augmentative component clearly present. Available Tedim data is less promising in this regard, although possibly reconsideration of it would yield more of a diminutive/augmentative component than was originally recognized, especially given its prevalence in the rest of the family.

3.1.1. Thadou

Thadou (Krishan 1980), also cited by Bhaskararao (see below), exhibits partially-reduplicative elements with systematic vowel alternations, which are described as varying in terms of two parameters. The primary parameter of variation relates to the attitude expressed towards one or another participant: appreciated or disliked, or in terms used earlier, 'meliorative' vs. 'pejorative'. Alongside this parameter, although not exemplified extensively in the grammar, there is a more straightforward one: diminutive vs. augmentative, shown in example (20). As often appears to be the case cross-linguistically (see, for instance, Silverstein 1994:51-2), diminutive corresponds to meliorative and augmentative corresponds to perjorative.

(20) a. kələm ə-sàn pí-pè? é
pen 3sS-red (lovely) AUX
'The pen is red (appreciated)'

b . xúŋ-tùŋ ə-sə̀n pé?pò? é
almirah 3sS-red (disliked) AUX
'The almirah is red (disliked)' (53, adapted)

Given Krishan's equation of meliorative with diminutive and pejorative with augmentative in the discussion immediately preceding this example, presumably it is included to show the use of the diminutive/meliorative element in conjunction with a relatively smaller participant, the pen, as compared to the larger almirah, which occurs together with the augmentative/pejorative element.

3.1.2. Tedim

Bhaskararao's 1989 article on Tedim chiming, following Henderson's (1965) initial identification of the phenomenon, is the seminal work on this phenomenon in Kuki-Chin, but surprisingly, it is the only study not to identify diminutive/augmentative as one of the primary aspects of semantics for the elements in question. For Bhaskararao, the main semantic parameter involved is state versus motion (114). However, there are copious indications of diminutive/augmentative semantic nuances present in the discussion and given for many of the examples. For instance, compare the elements in (21):

(21) vi:l^{2}-vial^{2}: 'circular, roundish (but not globular) things' (130)
vial^{2}=vual^{2}: 'circular, roundish objects but bigger in size than those denoted by vi:l2-vial2' (129)

Other elements have explanations which imply large or small size, but appear to lack opposing counterparts in Bhaskararao's list, like *he:k*^{2}*-ha:k* 'bigness of size in the case of holes' (120) or *kik*^{1}*-kek*^{1} 'denotes small persons, animals or things' (122). Still other elements appear to involve meliorative (or at least non-pejorative)/pejorative (or at least non-meliorative) connotations, like those in (22) or (23):

(22) zi^{2}zia^{2}: 'pleasant atmosphere created by keeping several similar things in one place' (130)
zi^{1}=zia^{1}: 'large area with things spread in clusters [one need not get a pleasant feeling by looking at them as cf. zi^{2}-zia^{2}]' (130)

(23) ge[1]-ga[1]: 'look with fully open eyes' (118)
ge[1]-ga[3]: 'looking at somebody with fully open eyes indicating disrespect' (118)

Other nuances which might reflect an earlier basic diminutive/augmentative semantic distinction are also represented, as in (24).

(24) dem[2]-dam[2]: 'being gloomy as before it rains or as the surface of sea when the sun has just set' (117)
dim[2]-dem[2]: 'having a very green view as a valley when the sky is slightly overcast' (117)

The difference between the two elements in (24) might be regarded as involving a more extreme (large) amount vs. a less extreme (small) amount of darkness.

It is not clear from the discussion how Bhaskararao's list of chiming adverbs was compiled, and it might be that a different methodology would identify other trends besides the ones identified. However, although the diminutive/ augmentative dimension is not the central one mentioned, it is lurking in the examples.

3.1.3. Paite

Singh's recent (2005) grammatical description of Paite contains little evidence for a morphological category identical to those seen elsewhere in Northern Chin; but there are a couple of partially reduplicative elements which involve suggestive vocalic alternations. For instance, *ə́má? ə́tūgèmgu̱àm* 'He sits (indicating tall)' (191) and *ə́má? ə́páyvi̱ālvu̱āl* 'He goes in a big manner' (191) both appear to include semi-reduplicative elements at the end of their verbs which indicate some kind of augmentative semantics associated with the S participant. However, there is little evidence provided for classificatory elements comparable to those of the other languages considered so far. On the other hand, some other elements could conceivably be interpreted as representing pejorative semantics, as elsewhere in this subgroup, so possibly a more thorough study focussing on this issue would identify the kind of systematicity present in languages like Tedim and Thadou.

It is noteworthy that this study appears to be mostly based on directly elicited data, rather than on text occurrence. Such a methodology is less likely to provide evidence for this morphological category, so a different approach might yield more information about this category for this language.[3]

[3] For some useful discussion of methods for studying such phenomena, see Patent 1998.

3.2. Central Chin

In Central Chin languages, a corresponding category is generally well-attested, with a clear diminutive/augmentative component, as well as clearly motivated developments from this basic distinction.

3.2.1. Mizo

Chhangte 1993 has an extended discussion of what she terms adverbials involving vowel sound symbolism. These express information about participant size and speaker attitude (meliorative/pejorative) towards participants, in addition to sometimes conveying spatial or temporal information, indications of motion, and also connotations about the successfulness of actions. Some of the elements also have particular sound-effect associations. A representative example is seen in (25).

(25) a. kán-nââw â-tap-lhiam-lhiam
1P-baby 3S-cry-ADVB
'Our tiny little baby is crying' (122)

b. kán-nââw â-tap-lhuam-lhuam
1P-baby 3S-cry-ADVB
'Our chubby baby is crying' (123)

It is noteworthy that in Mizo most elements are typified by complete rather than by partial reduplication. That is, unlike the Northern Chin elements, and the Hakha Lai ones we will turn to next, the two syllables that comprise the relevant formatives have the same vowel, although this is not without exception. There also is at least one monosyllabic element (*puur*/*peer*) that Chhangte considers to be a member of the same category, and her discussion implies the presence of other ones like this (123).

While the use of these elements in Mizo does not appear to functionally match their use in Khumi fully, in formal terms, the fact that they are sometimes monosyllabic and usually involve full reduplication is somewhat more reminiscent of the Khumi elements than the phenomena seen in other languages.

3.2.2. Hakha Lai

Patent 1998 makes numerous observations in his thorough study of the corresponding class of elements in Hakha Lai, most of which are congruous with those made by Chhangte for Mizo. In terms of form, though, some of the elements in Lai are quite distinct from most of the ones considered so far.

One set resembles the partially-reduplicated forms seen in Northern Chin and for some Mizo elements: the consonants of the two-part elements are the same, but the vowels alternate, and the difference in vowel quality typically involves a size distinction, alongside other semantic nuances.

The other, Patent's 'm-type' involves templatic partial reduplication with replacement of all but a final consonant by a *ma(a)* sequence, as in example (5) cited from Lai earlier. This type of reduplicative element so far does not appear to have any counterparts in the languages considered here.

3.2.3. Hmar

There is little evidence for a related morphological category in Hmar, as described in Baruah and Bapui 1996. There are numerous elements which have a clear ideophonic nature, but only a few seem to have any discernible diminutive or augmentative semantics, e.g., *mèt mùt* 'big and steady' (113) and *hem hum* 'sound/be successful (in a big way)' (114). Without further information on the context of these items, it is difficult to equate them with what is attested elsewhere in the family, although these isolated instances are suggestive that such a phenomenon may exist. Like Singh's description of Paite, this study appears to be based mostly on directly elicited data, so again, a different methodology might reveal better evidence for a corresponding category in Hmar.

3.2.4. Bawm

Reichle's discussion of Bawm grammar does not include a category which would correspond to what has been seen elsewhere in Central Chin. However, I am confident from listening to Bawm discourse that a category highly comparable to that seen in Hakha Lai is present; these two languages have a high level of mutual-intelligibility. Moreover, Khumi speakers also fluent in Bawm insist that it has such a category.

3.3. Southern Chin

In the Southern Chin languages, other than Khumi (which is not clearly more closely related to Southern languages than to any other Kuki-Chin languages, despite traditional classifications), so far there is not good evidence for the presence of this sort of phenomenon. In particular, in my work with Hyow, which is apparently in a fairly close relationship with K'cho and Daai, I have yet to encounter clear examples of a postverbal classificatory or ideophonic category. There is clear evidence for a separate lexical class of ideophones in Hyow. However, it is a free class, not postverbally bound, which occurs in a quotative construction like the Khumi one illustrated in example (19) above. (26) gives an example of this construction in Hyow:

(26) ...ɔʔ-ɔŋ bruŋ=tiŋ u-cu
3SPOSS-deep.part jumping.sound=QUOT 3SS-jump
'…he jumped into it's (the river's) deep part.' (6.23)

3.4. Phenomena in areally affiliated languages

3.4.1. Mru

Although such elements do not appear to have as high a text frequency as they do in Khumi, Bangladesh Mru (unclassified Tibeto-Burman, genetically affiliated with Kuki-Chin only remotely, if at all) does have elements which are highly comparable to those seen in Khumi. A couple of examples are seen in (27) and (28):

(27) …ju=k'e ja=dö t'-tüö-krara
down.there=LOC 3S=TOP MID-sit-AUGVCL

t'=pe hot-wöj
COP=EVID DIR-stay
'…down there she [an ogre] sat and stayed.' (32.135)

(28) wing prum-hülü=nö…
fly swarm-DIMVCL=AND…
'Flies swarmed around them [s.o.'s internal organs], and…' (32.166)

In the first example, *krara* indicates the large size of the ogre and also has a pejorative nuance. Two other possibilities exist: *krörö*, which would indicate a small size (or weakness), or *kroro*, which would indicate a really large participant. In (28), *hülü* indicates that there are a small number of small flies; *hulu*, on the contrary, would indicate a large number of big flies.

3.4.2. Mikir

Lastly, although it also is not a Kuki-Chin language in any strict sense, Mikir bears numerous resemblances to Kuki-Chin, and may well be remotely affiliated with it more closely than with other branches of Tibeto-Burman. Whether by shared inheritance, or as an independent but areally motivated development, available sources for Mikir would appear to show considerable evidence for classificatory markers such as those seen in Kuki-Chin, relating both to size and also to other more traditional classificatory parameters.

In a manuscript dictionary for Mikir by Grüßner, there are repeatedly sets of related entries which differ according to suffixal elements, which often seem to imply classificatory nuances. In (29) I cite just one representative entry:

(29) pú- to split
pú-kàng- to split (axe is repelled)
pú-klòy- to split (obj. is extremely hard)
pú-chèt- to chop off (small piece)
pú-thèp- to split (one stroke)

pú-dàk-	to split open, be split
pú-dáp-	to split quick
pú-pòng-	to split, chop (into pieces)
pú-phùk-	to split open (less than pú-dàk-)
pú-phlèp-	to split (obj. is soft, elastic)
pú-sèr-	to split (long crack, but not separated)
pú-sit-	to split (but only on the place where the axe hits)
pú-wòk-	to split (very soft obj.)

This list is highly reminiscent of examples (11) and (12) from Khumi given earlier. Although it is not clear that all of these are verbal classifiers, some of them clearly have to do with classification of the associated P participant.

Moreover, in Grüßner's (1978) list of postverbal elements, there are many items which would appear to have a similar classificatory function. Here I list only a few such suggestive elements: 111: /-*kàng*-/ "Obj. ist elastisch"; 114: /-*tán*-/ "Obj. ist groß, umfangreich"; 116: /-*ni*-/ "Obj. ist fein, weich, klein"; 119: /-*lèn*-/ "Obj. ist lang"; 120: /-*lùt*-/ "Obj. ist weich"; 121: /-*wòk*-/ "Obj. ist weich, wässerig". A couple of these elements should be familiar from the lexical entry for *pú*- 'split' seen in (29).

3.5. Summary

In addition to the sources mentioned here, a number of other sources were surveyed for data relevant to this issue, including the L.S.I., Fryer 1875, Houghton 1892, and Joorman 1906 for Ashö, Rundall 1891, Naylor 1925, and Stern 1963 for Sizang, Hodson 1906 for Thadou, Lorrain 1951 for Maraa, Osburne 1975 for Laizo, Bernot and Bernot 1958 for Hyow, and Jordan 1968 for K'cho. However, no easy generalizations from these sources were forthcoming. It may be that in the future, more systematic consideration of the lexical information contained in these resources will yield more satisfying evidence.

Clearly, in semantic terms, the diminutive/augmentative dimension of these elements is relatively consistent across the family. Meliorative/pejorative semantics also is a usual extension. Table 1. summarizes the distribution of the formal characteristics of this class of elements for major languages insofar as possible. Inferences are marked with a question mark. Table 2 summarizes the distribution of various widespread semantic nuances that the elements may have.

	Thadou	*Tedim*	*Mizo*	*Lai*	*Khumi*
vowel/size alternation?	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
monosyllabic form?	no?	no?	some	no	yes
full reduplication?	no?	yes	yes	no	yes
partial reduplication?	yes	yes	yes	yes	some
templatic reduplication?	no	no	no	yes	no

Table 1. Formal characteristics of 'chiming' elements in major KC languages

	Thadou	*Tedim*	*Mizo*	*Lai*	*Khumi*
diminutive/augmentative	yes	traces	yes	yes	yes
meliorative/pejorative	yes	traces	yes	yes	traces
movement nuances	no?	yes	yes	yes	traces
phonaesthetic nuances	no?	yes	yes	yes	traces

Table 2. Semantic characteristics of 'chiming' elements in major KC languages

4. DIACHRONIC CONSIDERATIONS

A definitive diachronic account of these elements in Kuki-Chin will depend on a firm subgrouping for the family and a clearer understanding of Kuki-Chin-internal areal influences. However, in absence of these desiderata, I will hazard a guess at a potential developmental scenario for these elements.

4.1. Grammaticalization sources

In most cases the grammaticalization sources remain obscure for classifier or chiming elements. It is unlikely that any of the elements themselves may be securely reconstructed to the level of Proto-Kuki-Chin, and probably individual source morphology will have to be identified on a language-by-language basis. In the cases where we can speculate, there appear to be both verbal and nominal sources. Here I list only a few examples which seem relatively straightforward.

For Tedim, Bhaskararao comments on a few apparent grammaticalization sources. *beu*^{2} 'log', a nominal source, seems to be the origin of *beu*^{2}*-bau*^{2}, referring to 'a big chunk of meat or a large piece of timber' (1989:115). *ne:i*^{2}*-na:i*^{2} 'dirty looking bodily secretions' (1989:126) would appear to have **hnaay* 'pus' (VanBik 2006:235) as a likely source, again a nominal origin, as would *the:u*^{2}*-tha:u*^{2} 'fattiness' (1989:128) (cf. VanBik's reconstructed PKC **thaaw* 'fat, grease', 2006:133). On the other hand, *ga:i*^{2} 'pregnant', a verbal root, seems to be the source for *ge:i*^{2}*ga:i*^{2} 'humorous description of the state of a person with a huge belly, like a pregnant woman' (1989:119).

Patent (1998:204) notes that often Lai ideophones derive from independent verbal roots, with the following examples: *neem-nuam* from *neem* 'soft', *keeŋ-kuuŋ*, possibly related to *kiiŋ* 'sparse', *heʔn-huʔr* from *heʔn* 'to sting', *puar-maar*, from *puar* 'to swell'.

Khumi *-maaw*/*-moee* usually indicates effect on a living thing, implying that it becomes unconscious, but not dead. Probably this element arises from the root *maw* 'unconscious', yielding yet another verbal source.

From Aikhenvald's perspective on grammaticalization sources for verbal classifiers, nominal sources are to be expected, but the verbal sources seen here are potentially problematic. However, it is necessary to bear in mind that the relationship between verbs and nouns in these languages is relatively fluid, or at least may be mediated by zero-derivation or tonal shift as an indicator of class change, which makes firm identification of the lexical category for grammaticalization sources difficult.

4.2. Direction of development

In considering the formal characteristics of the chiming elements across Kuki-Chin, three things stand out: the templatic reduplicative forms in Hakha Lai, the virtual absence of partial reduplication in Khumi, and the presence of monosyllabic elements in at least two languages without particularly close affiliation, Khumi and Mizo. On the latter point, it is not clear from the available discussions for Thadou and Tedim whether any monosyllabic forms are attested.

The simplest explanation for the first of these would seem to be that Lai has innovated the templatic reduplicative type of chiming element. Otherwise, we would expect some evidence for this sort of phenomenon in other parts of the family.

The last point would seem to imply that probably the original form of such elements could have been monosyllabic, if not exclusively so. As noted, Khumi only marginally shows full reduplication of the related elements, and only a few elements are partially reduplicative. So perhaps a plausible initial scenario is one in which the elements were monosyllabic, but susceptible to full reduplication. From this full reduplication, some forms may have undergone differentiation of their vowels, for whatever reason, to result in partially reduplicative forms.

From a semantic perspective, it is difficult to account fully for all of the developments, but presumably the original meanings did include diminutive/ augmentative semantics. However, given the widespread connotations of movement and phonaesthetic effects, it is clear that some of these originally also must have had such associations. More straightforwardly, in some languages the diminutive/augmentative component was extended to meliorative/pejorative, or related meanings (e.g. successful/unsuccessful). In Khumi, the original diminutive/augmentative aspect of semantics was emphasized, however, resulting in a reasonably coherent system of prototypical verbal classification, with only residual traces of the other original meanings.

It seems likely that this semantic development in Khumi was aided by the rise of the ideophone lexical class and construction illustrated in example (19) and seen also in Hyow (example (26)). Mru also has a highly comparable set of ideophone elements which occur in a quotative construction, exemplified in (30), and it may be that one or all of these languages developed them under areal influence.[4]

(30) wing	tekpe-mi	ko	ngorngeng	ngorngeng	ngorngeng
fly	say-PST	later	buzzing sound of fly		

[4] In fact, there is evidence that such a construction also exists for Central Chin languages, at least in Hakha Lai, although it appears to have a much lower text frequency than it does in Khumi and Mru.

rutcok=köj dök=pö ang k-rik-cöm-köm…
finger=ALLlanding.motion=QUOT 1S ANDAT-FIRST-land-FUT
'The fly said, "Later, I'll first come land on (your) finger, (and then…)"' (19.191)

The proliferation of this construction, and the associated ideophone lexical class that these languages all have, would have removed the burden of ideophonic semantics from the bound postverbal class of elements, allowing them to undergo semantic narrowing as more highly grammaticalized diminutive/augmentative VCLs.

Compared with the phenomenon as attested elsewhere, the Khumi elements are also more clearly grammaticalized in two ways. First, unlike Hakha Lai, where, as Patent demonstrates, at least some of these elements are not bound postverbal ones, but instead can occur in other positions in the sentence, in Khumi, they are strictly postverbal, restricted to a position tight inside the postverbal sequence of elements. Also, as we saw earlier, the Khumi elements are able to serve, much like pronominal agreement, for reference of entities in discourse. In no other language do these elements appear to have such a function.

5. Conclusion

Although it is the claim of this paper that the diminutive/augmentative aspect of these classifiers is primary and largely regular, as shown in section 2.3, this would be an oversimplification of their semantics. In many cases, predicate-classifier combinations in Khumi resemble verb-particle collocations in English, where use of a different particle implies a different type of P participant, especially. From the standpoint of lexicography, such cases are extremely important, in that compared to a language like English, with distinct predicates (e.g., *scoop* vs. *scrape*), Khumi's classifiers allow the construction of complex predicates establishing similar semantic nuances. In fact, it is only by looking at the way predicates and their possible classifier pairs jointly encode meaning that we can arrive at a genuine translation for individual verbal roots.

Obviously this has tremendous consequences for the organization of lexical materials for the language. Essentially, in order for a dictionary to accurately capture the way lexical information is distributed in Khumi, and possibly related languages, it must ideally look at every conceivable pairing of predicate and classifier with the expectation that these may be idiosyncratic. With a few exceptions, Kuki-Chin and other area languages have not been provided with extensive lexical documentation. It is hoped that these findings about the importance of considering predicate-classifier (or whatever the relevant category is for a given language) combinations will guide those who seek to compile such materials.

APPENDIX: IDENTIFIED VCLS (AUGVLC/DIMVCL) IN BANGLADESH KHUMI WITH REPRESENTATIVE PREDICATES

baá/*bieé*: *pnuung* 'black'

baang/*boeeyng*: *poó* 'bloated'

baaw/*bee*: *plee* 'lick up'

báaw/*bíee*: *pthuú* 'crazy'

báw/*bóe*: *taáw* 'cut, hack', *anaáwy* 'fall down (e.g., of a wall)'

baaw/*boee*: *doey* 'die', *ieé* 'contradict, oppose', *jaw* 'pick, pluck', *klie* 'knock down (with a stick)', *laeé* 'run away, flee', *ptoeey* 'take off, unload', *nuy* 'push', *pkawy* 'break', *lieng* 'big, large', *tlie* 'cut off', *atoeéyng* 'cut', *thew* 'come out', *hie* 'scoop', *iee* 'push'

biiw/*boeey*: *ie* 'peel fruit', *aboeéng* 'covered/included', *lee* 'peel bark', *raáwng* 'wither', *atoeéyng* 'cut'

biiwng/*boeeyng*: *poó* 'bloated', *lung* 'pack'

caa/*ciee*: *apaaw* 'mix together by hand'

caaw/*ciee*: *amsúy* 'tied', *ptiiw* 'catch, grab', *atoeéyng* 'cut', *thew* 'come out', *amsúy* 'tied up'

caaw/*coee*: *ae'aeéng* 'choke'

duu/*duee*: *naw* 'soft/rotten', *a(m)laáwy* 'smooth, silky'

fiiw/*foeey*: *ḿ* 'blow, inflate'

haa/*hee*: *ciíw* 'sharp'

haaw/*haee*: *bíwng* 'plant', *bo* 'prepare (a pot of rice beer)', *akhuuy* 'pick up', *a(m)yaw* 'float', *avaa* 'crawl, climb', *phó* 'carry (in a basket)', *pviiw* 'steal', *ang* 'open mouth', *atoeéyng* 'cut'

haawng/*haeeng*: *p'ye* 'roast on fire', *pkang* 'bake'

haláang/*heléeng*: *bií* 'hot' (*haang*/*heeng* is a variant of this)

huu/*huee*: *bií* 'hot', *baw* 'swell up', *tmuy* 'stroke'

kaa/*kiee*: *pvuy* ‘get drunk’, *atoeéyng* ‘cut’

kaa/*koee*: *ke* ‘bite’, *atoeéyng* ‘cut’

kaang/*kaeeng*: *ptíwng* ‘put into a topknot’, *(jaang) ciw* ‘have an erection’

kaang/*kieeng*: *tmáng* ‘catch, trap’

kaaw/*koee*: *daáw* ‘hit target’, *t’laáw* ‘catch’, *atoeéyng* ‘cut’, *ciiw* ‘step’

kduruu/*kdueruee*: *amieé* ‘spin around’

khaa/*khoeey*: *tang* ‘harden, ripen’

khaang/*khaeeng*: *angvuy* ‘fall on’, *atoeéyng* ‘cut’

khiiwng/*khoeeyng*: *naang* ‘bark’, *atoeéyng* ‘cut’

khraw/*khrae*: *pnóe* ‘know’, *apaeé* ‘meet, encounter’, *sa* ‘make’, *atoeéyng* ‘cut’

khu/*khue*: *caáng* ‘hang’, *voeéng* ‘dark’, *atoeéyng* ‘cut’

kraa/*kree*: *bae* ‘cut a hole’, *kawy* ‘break open’, *t’hoó* ‘pierce’, *baáw* ‘make an incision’, *t’kie* ‘cut (with scissors)’, *atoeéyng* ‘cut’, *i* ‘sleep’

kraay/*kree*: *thung* ‘stab’ *pcew* ‘pierce’

kúu/*kúee*: *p’yáwng* ‘swallow’

kuung/*kueeng*: *a(m)blueé* ‘round’

laaw/*lee*: *pcaw* ‘toss into air’, *angproeyng* ‘run’, *thew* ‘come out’

lewlaang/*lewleeng*: *amyaw* ‘float, drift’, *thew* ‘come out’

maa/*miee*: *kleew* ‘mark’, *p’ung* ‘put in mouth’, *ptiiw* ‘grab’, *thew* ‘come out’, *hie* ‘scoop’

maaw/*moee*: *pkhaw* ‘beat’, *ti* ‘put’, *pthuy* ‘kick’, *nuy* ‘push’, *vá* ‘throw’, *ataeé* ‘sit’, *atoeéyng* ‘cut’

meew/*miee*: *caw* ‘pick up’, *ke* ‘bite’

mu/moe: *aba* 'stuff into mouth'

paang/pueeng: *cay* 'clear, clean', *atoeéyng* 'cut'

paaw/poee: *tlaáy* 'graze', *t'háwy* 'stir', *déng* 'pound (rice)', *nieé(ng)* 'crush, grind', *psiee* 'winnow', *t'hoó* 'pierce', *plang* 'roll in hands', *póeliee* 'fold', *yaáw* 'swim', *láng* 'dance', *haw* 'look for', *taáw* 'cut, hack', *ksew* 'comb', *vo* 'cry', *ho* 'fan', *coeng* 'land'

paáw/poeé: *tlaa* 'fall', *atoeéyng* 'cut'

pháa/phíee: *pnúy* 'laugh, smile', *aday* 'spread out', *atoeéyng* 'cut'

phaang/phoeeyng: *p'éwng* 'open (e.g., a door)', *ko* 'shoot', *ciiw* 'step on'

phiiw/phoeey: *bue* 'boil', *ke* 'bite', *atoeéyng* 'cut'

phraa/phruee: *angproeyng* 'run', *stlaa* 'descend', *caa* 'eat', *nee* 'drink', *lúeng* 'ascend', *ce* 'go', *angkhaeng* 'fly', *pee* 'give', *thew* 'come out'

phriiw/phroeey: *tmuy* 'stroke', *kang* 'burn', *atoeéyng* 'cut'

phróo/phríee: *phra* 'destroyed', *atoeéyng* 'cut'

phuu/phoee: *kung* 'enter', *bang* 'wrap, cover', *thuúng* 'put into'

phuu/phuee: *bang* 'wrap, cover', *hew* 'hide', *tkawy* 'embrace', *nee* 'drink', *caa* 'eat', *kung* 'enter', *atoeéyng* 'cut'

phyuu/phyuee: *vawy* 'fart'

piiw/poeey: *laa* 'take', *thew* 'come out', *atoeéyng* 'cut'

plaa/plee: *suy* 'wet' (*paa/pee* appears to be a variant of this one)

pu/pue: *nuy* 'push', *tpaawng* 'put into', *vá* 'throw', *kung* 'enter', *thew* 'come out'

puu/puee: *aba* 'stuff into mouth', *kdúy* 'lay an egg', *vawy* 'fart'

pyaa/pyiee: *thoo* 'sour', *(bo) thew* 'ejaculate', *pthawy* 'spit out'

pyaawng/pyueeng: *atoeéyng* 'cut'

raa/*riee*: *luúng* ‘salty’

raang/*raeeng*: *ptiiw* ‘grab, catch’, *pawng* ‘pregnant’, *p’iíwng* ‘keep in a basket’, *tmáng* ‘catch, trap’, *angdo* ‘stand’, *tueng* ‘cut (rice)’

raawng/*roeeng*: *kang* ‘burn’, *muúy* ‘smell, fragrant’

rewraang/*rewreeng*: *avaa* ‘crawl’

roo/*riee*: *ha* ‘have holes’

ruu/*ruee*: *p’yaaw* ‘suck’, *p’haa* ‘suck, breathe in’, *s’waay* ‘cold/comfortable’, *ie* ‘peel’, *laáng* ‘spread out (arms)’

sáa/*síee*: *vá* ‘throw’, *thew* ‘come out’

saaw/*siee*: *k’yue* ‘write’, *thew* ‘come out’

sewraang/*sewreeng*: *atlie* ‘slip out (e.g., from a trap), fall off’

su/*sue*: *ataeé* ‘sit’, *i* ‘sleep’

taa/*tiee*: *khoo* ‘bitter’

táng/*táeng*: *koee* ‘shiver’

taaw/*toee*: *t’áy* ‘chew’, *athue* ‘agitate’, *akhaeéng* ‘blocked, obstructed’, *pthaáy* ‘turn over’, *p’ie* ‘stick inside’, *pkhueng* ‘shut, close’, *atoeéyng* ‘cut’

thaa/*thiee*: *ksoo* ‘spicy’

thla/*thle*: *kdaáy* ‘open up’, *atoeéyng* ‘cut’

thlaa/*thliee*: *pcewng* ‘skewer’, *vue* ‘stab’, *atoeéyng* ‘cut’, *t’hoó* ‘pierce’

thlaw/*thle*: *t’hu* ‘scrape, scratch’, *thew* ‘come out’, *atoeéyng* ‘cut’

thliiwng/*thloeeyng*: *khuee* ‘smoke’, *ayo* ‘quarrel’

thloo/*thliee*: *paw* ‘bloom’, *avang* ‘bright, shine’

thuu/*thuee*: *atoeéyng* ‘cut’, *abay* ‘cut (up)’

tlaang/*tleeng*: *kóedaang* ‘click tongue’

tlaw/tloe: *ataeé* 'sit', *caa* 'eat', *ce* 'go', *kung* 'enter', *nee* 'drink', *i* 'sleep'

u/ue: *boeyng* 'messy', *thew* 'come out'

vaa/vie: *atoeéyng* 'cut', *ke* 'bite' (note that these classifiers present an anomaly in that their tones differ)

vaw/voey: *léng* 'burn', *psaa* 'filter', *pcewng* 'pierce', *t'hoó* 'make a hole in', *pew* 'wear out, develop holes', *atoeéyng* 'cut'

yaa/yiee: *aka* 'stick to', *vá* 'throw', *atoeéyng* 'cut', *thew* 'come out'

yu/yue: *pnie* 'rub, massage', *tuú* 'sink', *miw* 'dive', *atoeéyng* 'cut'

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