DULONG AND PROTO-TIBETO-BURMAN[1]

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ABSTRACT

This paper compares the Dulong language of northwestern Yunnan Province in China to other Tibeto-Burman languages and to Proto-Tibeto-Burman, with a view toward understanding the historical development of Dulong and toward supporting, revising, and adding to the body of accepted PTB reconstructions.

INTRODUCTION[2]

The Dulong people live in the north-west corner of China's Yunnan Province, along the banks of the Dulong River in the Gongshan Dulong and Nu Nationality Autonomous County of the Nujiang Lisu Nationality Autonomous Prefecture. Their land is bordered by Tibet to the north, and by Burma to the west and south. Their language is generally considered to be in the Jingpo branch of Tibeto-Burman.[3] Though the Dulong people number less than five thousand, the Nujiang dialect of Dulong is also spoken by approximately six thousand of the Nu people. This paper will concentrate on the Dulong River (Dulonghe) dialect of Dulong, but the Nujiang dialect will also be given for reference. There is little difference between the two. Please see Appendix B for a list of the major differences.

Loan words acount for some ten percent of the Dulong vocabulary. Of these loans, 80% are Chinese loans, 10% are Tibetan loans, five percent are Yi loans, and there are also a few Burmese loans. I have dealt only with native vocabulary in this paper.

TONES AND VOWEL LENGTH

From a careful comparison of the Dulong forms in Sun (1982) with the tone sets of Jingpo and Burmese in Matisoff (1974), it seems that although Jingpo, Burmese, and Dulong all have three tone categories in open syllables, there is only the vaguest connection between any two of the tone systems of these languages. I could find only 61 words in Dulong that had cognates among the 322 open syllable[4] Jingpo-Burmese cognates given in Matisoff (1974). Only the two high tones of Dulong are significant in doing comparative work, as the low-falling tone is rarely used word-finally. Because of this, though it is possible to see some regular patterns in the proveniences of proto tone *2, these could be simple coincidence. The number of roots in proto tones *1 and *2 with both Jingpo and Dulong correspondences are given below:

PLB *1, JP 55 (not enough Dulong examples)
PLB *1, JP 31 = DL 55 (6 examples), DL 53 (6 examples)

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[1] I would like to thank Sun Hongkai, Mark Hansell, and especially James A. Matisoff for their valuable suggestions during the revision of this paper.

[2] The information in this introduction and Appendix B is taken from Sun (1982, 1983a).

[3] Benedict (1972:5) suggests that Nungish (=Dulong) might belong to the Lolo-Burmese branch of Tibeto-Burman, but on pages six and eight recognizes its closeness to Kachin (=Jingpo) as well. According to Sun Hongkai (1983a:233;243), The Rawang language in Barnard (1934) (cited by Benedict as 'Nung'), and the Trung language in Lo (1942) are basically the same as Dulong. From a comparison of the forms in Benedict (from both Lo and Barnard) with the forms given for the two dialects of Dulong, it seems that Trung = Dulonghe Dulong (in this paper DLa) and Nung = Nujiang Dulong (in this paper DLb). Though Benedict (1972:8) feels that "Rawang and Trung are separate languages in a Nungish group," Sun (1983a:233-247) argues convincingly that these are merely dialects of the same language, Dulong, and that this language belongs to the Jingpo branch of Tibeto-Burman. Sun (1983a:100) includes Jingpo, Dulong, Darang and Geman Deng, and Luoba in this branch. Benedict (1972:5-6) has Geman (Miju) and Darang (Digaro = Taraon) Deng in the Abor-Miri-Dafla branch.

[4] Dulong stopped tones are almost all high-level, so I did not use them in the comparison.

PLB *1, JP 33 = DL 55 (5 examples), DL 53 (6 examples)
PLB *2, JP 55 = DL 55 (8 examples)
PLB *2, JP 31 = DL 55 (9 examples), DL 53 (3 examples)
PLB *2, JP 33 = DL 53 (11 examples), DL 55 (4 examples)

The vowel length distinctions in Dulong also do not correspond with anything in the proto language or other TB languages except Deng. Because of the above facts, I have not dealt with tones or vowel length in the rest of this paper.[5]

INITIALS

Simple Initials

Dulong is relatively conservative in that it preserves the proto place of articulation fairly well, though, as in Jingpo, the voicing and aspiration of the initial are not always regular vis à vis the proto form. Even so, the main trend in Dulong is to reflect the proto voicing contrast (aspiration is not phonemic in Dulonghe Dulong, so is not marked), and the forms that deviate from this are definitely in the minority. The dental fricative became an alveo-palatal in those forms where it is followed by the high front vowel /i/ in Dulonghe Dulong or the high unrounded vowel /ɯ/ in Nujiang Dulong. The nasals basically reflect the proto-form, except where there is palatalization or an m → n shift before a high unrounded vowel.

As Dulong often preserves the proto-prefixes as separate syllables, there doesn't seem to have been the kind of pervasive influence on the root initial that you see, for example, in the Yi languages. Exceptions to the above rules are discussed in the section on non-regular reflexes.

I include with the simple initials proto affricates and fricatives followed by *-y-, because as Benedict (1972) says on p. 37, these might better be seen as unit phonemes in a separate palatal series. Certainly the Dulong evidence seems to support this. For example, the /ś/ reflex of *s- occurs only when the Dulong initial is followed by /i/. The reflex of *sy- is /ś/ even when the Dulong initial is not followed by /i/.

Below is a list showing the various refexes of Proto-Tibeto-Burman (PTB) in Jingpo (from Benedict 1972) and in Dulong. Only those initials where I had sufficient data to make a generalization, or where the forms are very clearly cognate, are listed.

TB	Jingpo	Dulong
*k	k(h)~g	k(h)~g
*g	g~k(h)	g
*ng	ng	ng
*t	t(h)~d	t(h)
*d	d~t(h)	d
*n	n	n~ṇ/ń
*p	p(h)~b	p
*b	b~p(h)	b
*m	m	m~n
*s	s	s~ś
*ts	ts~dz	ts~s
*l	l	l
*r	r	r
*w	w	w
*y	y	y

[5] For a thorough analysis of vowel length in Dulong, please see Dai (1986), and for a discussion of the sources of vowel length in Tibeto-Burman, please see Sun (1983b).

Following are examples of the various correspondences:[6]

*k- → k(h)-[7]
bitter, crow, basket, tiger, steal, pillow, uncle, chin, speech, branch, plant

[1]bitter	DLa ka55; DLb kha53; T kha-ba; B khà; L kha.
	PTB *ka (8)
[2]crow	DLa tak55 ka55; DLb tang31 kha55; T kha-tha 'crow, raven';
	K kha; B khi-kàn (with *-n 'collective' suffix); Rawang
	thang-kha; Trung tak-ka; LCA kha31 nɔ?55; LXA ka55 na?31.
	PTB *ka [99-100]
[3]basket	DLa pai55 kɔ?55; DLb tɯ31 kɔ?55; T khug-ma 'pouch';
	G khok; Lepcha kóm ba-guk 'purse'.
	PTB *kuk (393)
[4]steal	DLa kɯ55; DLb khɯ53; T rku-ba; K ləgu; B khui; N khü.
	PTB *r-kuw (33)
[5]pillow	DLa u55 kɯm55; DLb u53 kɯm53; K bung-khum;
	N əgɔ məkhim; Lh ú-gé; B khum; L khum.
	PTB *m-kum (482)
[6]uncle	DLa a31 kɯ53; DLb a31 khɯ53; T ?akhu; B kui; K ku;
	N əkhö; Ao Naga okhu; Miri əkü.
	PTB *kuw (255)
[7]chin	DLa mɯ31 kai55; DLb mɯ31 kai55; N məkha;
	K nkha~ningkha; L kha; Thad kha.
	PTB *m-ka (470)
[8]word,speech	DLa ka55; DLb ka55; T bka~skad; B tsa-ka; K gà~səgà; N kha.
	PTB *ka (9)
[9]branch	DLa śing31 ang31 kɔ?55 (śing 'tree'); DLb śɯng55 ang31
	kɔ?55; B akhak; Lh ɔ̀-qá, L kaak 'fork of tree'.
	PLB *?gak [TSR 43]
	PTB *s-kaak (327) ≅ **s-k(w)aak

Though reconstructed for PTB in STC as *kaak, in TSR #43, Matisoff reconstructs the PLB form for 'branch' as *?gak, based on Lolo forms. There are no examples of Dulong k- < *g-, and the Lushei form is also voiceless, so I am including this form in the *k- → k- set, assuming that either the PTB form is voiceless or that there is a voiced ≅ voiceless doublet.

[10]plant	DLa kaat55; DLb kat55; JP khai55, K gàt 'sow,scatter';
	Boro gáy; Nocte khet.
	PTB *kay ≅ *gay [G&C 114]

The forms for 'plant' show a -t suffix in Dulong and some other languages. In Dulong, this suffix also shows up in an alternate form for 'speech,word': kat55.

*k- → g-[8]
body, nine, dog, yam, roast, star

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[6] In the word lists that follow, a number in parentheses after a proto-form is the number of the set in Benedict 1972 (STC); one in square brackets is the page number from the STC; one in brackets preceded by "G&C" is the number of the set from Matisoff 1985; one in brackets preceded by "Mpi" is the number of the set from Matisoff 1978; one in brackets preceded by "TSR" is the number of the set from Matisoff 1972. Proto-forms marked with two asterisks are my own reconstructions. Where there might be confusion as to which form of a phrase I consider cognate to the others of a set, I have underlined that form. Please see Appendix A for the key to language names, sources and symbols used.

[7] There doesn't seem to be any clear conditioning factor for determining when the DLb form will be aspirated.

[8] No conditioning factor is evident from the examples I have for explaining this change in voicing (assuming the transcription is correct).

[11]body[9]   DLa aŋ31 guɯ55; T sku; B kui(y); MC *khiu (身).
                    PTB *(s-)kəw=*(s-)kuw [184]

[12]nine   DLa duɯ31 guɯ53; DLb duɯ31 guɯ53; T dku; B kui;
                    G sku; N təgö.
                    PTB *d-kuw (13)

[13]dog   DLa duɯ31 guɯi55; DLb duɯ31 gi55; T khyi; K kui;
                    B khwè; L ui; Jili takwi; N təgi; Digaro nkwi.
                    PTB *kwiy=*kwəy (159) ≍ **d-k-wiy

[14]yam   DLa gui55; T skyi-ba 'potato'; B kywè; N gi; Digaro gi;
                    JP kui31 mjau33 'mushroom potato'.
                    PTB *kywiy (238)

[15]roast,toast   DLa duɯ31 gaaŋ55; DLb duɯ31 gaaŋ55; K kəkaŋ;
                    B kaŋ; L kaaŋ 'burn'; N dəgaŋ.
                    PTB *kaaŋ (330)

[16]star   DLa gur55 met55, DLb gu31 ńet55 (+ *s-ngwat 'moon');
                    T skar-ma; K ʃəgan; W. Kuki *s-gar; L ar-ʃi.
                    PTB *s-kar (49)

*g- → g-
bent, wear, vegetable, saddle, body

[17]bent   DLa duɯ31 gɔʔ55; DLb duɯ31 gɔʔ55; T kug; B kok; JP ma31 koʔ31
                    (ku5 in TSR); Bahing guk; Lh qɔ̀ʔ; Ahi gu44s; LCA kok55.
                    PLB *gok [TSR 2]
                    PTB *guk ≍ *kuk [125]; **gok

[18]wear   DLa gwa55; DLa gwa53; T bgo-ba; G gan; N gwa~ga; K khon.
                    PTB *gwa-n ≍ *kwa-n (160)

[19]vegetable   DLa dzuɯ31 gwaʔ55; DLb zuɯ31 gwaʔ55; Lh g̊ɔ̀-cá;
                    Ahi vu-tʃe22-44; Sani Yi o-tʃe11-55; MT tshɛ55.
                    PLB *ʔgyak [TSR 49]
                    PTB **gwak~**gyak

[20]saddle   DLa ga55; DLb ga55; T sga 'yoke-horses; to yoke'; B ka'
                    'saddle-frame'; MBb ga; AC *ka (牙)
                    PTB *s-ga [Matisoff 1983, set 60]

[21]body[10]   DLb gɔŋ53; Nungish: Rawang gung, Mutwang dial. gong;
                    B akhaung; Atsi kung; AC *kiông (朋); also possibly JP khum31.
                    PTB *gung [182]

The different forms for 'body' in the two dialects of Dulong possibly stem from an allofamic variation
of *-0 ≍ *-ng finals (as with 'you' *na ≍ *nang; cf. also the discussion of the Trung -ng suffix in n.74
in STC) that might go all the way back to PST.

*ng- → ng-
I, five, fish, silver, borrow, weep/cry, cattle

[22]I   DLa nga53; DLb guɯ55; T nga; N nga; B nga; G aŋ;
                    Dhimal ka; L ka; MW ka.
                    PTB *ka ≍ *nga (406)

[23]five   DLa puɯ31 nga53; DLb puɯ31 nga53; T lnga; K mənga;
                    B ngà; G bo'nga; L nga~pənga.
                    PTB *l/b-nga (78)

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[9] See page 7 for DLb form for 'body'.

[10] See page 5 for DLa form for 'body'.