DULONG TEXTS: SEVEN FULLY ANALYZED NARRATIVE AND PROCEDURAL TEXTS

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INTRODUCTION

Dulong is a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in Gongshan Dulong and Nu Autonomous county in Yunnan, China, by members of the Dulong nationality (pop.: 6,000), and part of the Nu nationality (roughly 6,000 people). The First Township dialect, represented by the texts below, is spoken in Dízhèngdāng village, in a relatively inaccessible area of the Dulong River valley, just south of the border of the Tibetan Autonomous Region not far from the border of Myanmar (Burma). The affiliations of the language are still unclear. Most scholars put it together with the Jinghpaw language, but there is suspicion that the resemblances are simply due to contact at an earlier period. Certain key types of morphology, such as the reflexive/middle marking, are not shared by Jinghpaw, and are instead shared by the Kiranti languages of Nepal (see LaPolla 1996, 2000b).

Dulong is a verb-final language with both head and dependent marking morphology. It has semantic case marking on the NPs, the order of which is decided by pragmatic principles, verbal prefixes for intransitivization and causativization, and verbal suffixes for reflexive/middle marking and person marking. Person marking is hierarchical, generally of a first person argument, regardless of its role. Second person is marked only for number, and third person is generally unmarked. There is also a verbal prefix (glossed ‘NF’) which acts something like an inverse marker, marking a situation where a first or second person referent is involved, but the actor is not a first person referent. There are two phonemic tones, level (á) and falling (à), and a reduced tone which appears on unstressed syllables (ã). For a more thorough discussion of Dulong phonology and grammar, see LaPolla to appear. For other works which discuss Dulong and the closely related Rawang language, see the References. The following texts were recorded from two different informants.

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2 See the Abbreviations for the glosses used for the different grammatical markers.
in January of 1998. The first four are procedural texts, and the last three are traditional Dulong folk stories. In the procedural texts, a pattern of discourse segmentation can be seen where several clauses will end in a reduplicated verb, then will be followed by an unreduplicated verb. This has the sense of ‘Do this, this, this, and then this’, or ‘Having done this, and this, then do this.’ The next segment then generally begins ‘Having finished ...’, repeating the last verb, and then goes on to start another series like the one before.

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HOW TO MAKE WINE
told by Tseng Yulan (dû no?)

mû ñ: bôi nã,
wine do+1pl LNK TOP

When we make wine,

ôjâ tânbtû tê cû ñ:;
that corn INST also do+1pl

we do it with corn,

dâi tê cû ñ;
millet INST also do+1pl

we do it with millet

pôkô tê cû ñ;
buckwheat INST also do +1pl

we do it with buckwheat

bândô tê cû ñ:
barnyard.millet INST also do+1pl

we do it with barnyard millet.
When we make wine,

wine make NOM thing also oil NEG-stick NOM

the wine-making things, they can’t have any oil on them.

We make it that they don’t have any dried rice on them either,

oil NEG-stick

(and) no oil on them.

clean make+1pl-REDUP LNK

We make (them) clean.

wine much-REDUP make+1pl LNK TOP

If (we) want to make a lot of wine,

cooking.pot big LOC make+1pl

we make it in a big pot,

one wine.container fill NOM

one that can hold a whole wine-container’s worth.

If we only make a little,

(proper) pot-pl make+1pl

(then) we use the proper pots.

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3 tcŋŋ is an alternate form of ŝtcŋŋ:

yul jum dš ŝndvl ŝpl cf ŝtcŋŋ.

This bag can hold two catties.

4 ŝd used as plural. Normally the LOC dš would be used here, but it was not used by the speaker.
that grounds INST also make+1pl
(for the material used for the wine) we (can) use (roughly) ground corn,
flour INST also make+1pl
or we can use flour.

DEM-ADV^5 make+1pl-REDUP LNK say LNK

After we have done this,
that also DEM-ADV be
that is also this way.

that cooked.meal make+1pl-REDUP winnowing.pan INST sprinkle+1pl
after we cook the rice, we sprinkle it with a winnowing pan.

cold-weather become LNK

If the weather becomes cold,
a.little warm time
when the (rice) is still a little warm,
that brewer’s.yeast put.in+1pl EMPH RQ
we put in the brewer’s yeast, no?

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^5  Rel seems to consist of the copula, ə, plus the adverbal marker, wā, but it means ‘this way’; there is also an expression ə'Ie ‘there’, all of which is ə plus the dative marker, and an expression ə-be ‘after that’, all of which seem to point to ə also having a demonstrative (deictic) function (although it is not one of the usual demonstrative pronouns) so I am glossing it as ‘DEM’.

^6  A zero pronoun is used here, even though the referent is not the immediate topic.

^7  While somewhat similar in form, the emphatic particle ɕin is not the same particle as the simultaneous action marker ɕin; e.g.

a. nā ə-wā ə-gul! ɕin!
2sg DEM-ADV NF-say EMPH
You said it this way!

b. nā ɕi ɕin!
2sg+AGT IMP-do EMPH
(Why don’t you) do it!