

2.22 Intransitive Verb Affixes

Even more indicative of the historical independence of T-B from Munda are the verb affix systems themselves. The following chart, of the intransitive verb paradigm, will be presented first. In this chart a distinction is made between neuter and intransitive affixes for Bahing. (The terms are from Hodgeon.) Neuter affixes are used with a small set of intransitive verbs which from their structure seem to be derived from old causatives. In any event it is a lexically determined contrast.

	Santali	Bahing		
		pres/fut.		preterite
		intr.	neuter	
1 sg	-iñ	-gna	-u	-ti
1 dl incl	-laq	-sa	-isa	-tasa
1 dl excl	-liñ	-suku	-isuku	-tasuku
1 pl incl	-bon	-ya	-iya	-ntayo
1 pl excl	-le	-ka	-ika	-ktayo
2 sg	-em	-ye	-i	-te
2 dl	-ben	-si	-isi	-tasi
2 pl	-pe	-ni	-ini	-ntani
3 sg	-e	-ø	-a	-ta
3 dl	-kin	-se	-ise	-tase
3 pl	-ko	-me	-ime	-mtame

Chart 2: Intransitive Verb Affixes of Santali and Bahing.

Syntactically, the Santali affixes are applied most commonly to the word immediately preceding the verb or to the final position in the verb following the "finite marker" (Bodding 1929:49). These affixes are only used with animate subjects in the active voice (however, Bodding also remarks that the subject marker can appear if there is an underlying animate subject not appearing on the surface, as even in a passive sentence, for example). In Bahing a subject marker will appear in a fixed position for every sentence.

A comparison of this chart with the independent pronouns of both languages shows that the Santali affixes are all easily derived from the free forms, showing typically the loss of the initial vocalic element (or of the entire first

syllable of 3rd person forms), while the Bahing forms are sometimes less obviously derived or even suppletive (cf 1st sg intr -gna [-na] with 1st sg go; 2nd sg intr -ye with 2nd sg ga; the 3rd person affixes have no relation to 3rd person free pronouns, since these latter have probably only recently developed). In addition the Bahing forms show a great deal of internal diversity. For example the neuter set calls to mind the possessive set of independent stems (cf -u '1st sg neuter' with -wa '1st sg possessive'; -i '2nd sg neuter' with i '2nd sg possessive'; -a '3rd sg neuter' with a '3rd sg possessive') and also duplicates the subject affixes of transitive verbs used with 3rd person objects²⁷ (cf sec. 2.23). Another complication is the presence of a preterite set of affixes sometimes not easily relatable to the present/future set, even allowing for the assuredly temporal value to be assigned to the t- or ta- of these forms (cf 1st sg preterite -t-i (< ta + i) with -gna [-na] or -u 1st sg affixes; 1st pl excl preterite -k-ta-yo with -ka '1st sg intransitive' where there is a discontinuity around the temporal element). It is quite probable then that there was some interaction, presumably phonological, between tense/aspect and pronouns which resulted in a morphological syncretism for these affixes. The morphological details will be explored at greater length in following discussions (cf sec. 4.3131, 4.321).

2.23 Transitive Verb Affixes

The final comparison relates to the respective treatments of transitive propositions. The Santali situation includes the placement of an object affix, either direct or indirect but not both, after the "verbal suffix" and before an optional possessive affix.²⁸ These forms are essentially identical to the subject affixes (however, the 2nd sg object affix is -me, cf 2nd sg subject affix -em); it is their order with respect to the root which unambiguously defines them as objects. Subject affixes, it will be recalled, either precede the verb root or occur as the final element of the verb phrase. The possessive affix functions as a possessive pronoun, though its use is optional. Again, the forms are phonologically identical to the affixal form of the pronoun but with the addition of a prefixed element ta- (for example, -taben '2nd dl possessive', cf -ben '2nd dl affix'); morphophonemic changes are possible, however (cf -tiñ '1st sg possessive' < -ta + iñ).

The Bahing data is much more complex than this relatively simple situation. It is charted on the following page.

The most interesting aspects of this transitive conjugation are the identical forms for the 2nd and 3rd person subjects with 1st person objects (2 → 1, 3 → 1)²⁹ and the 2nd person subjects with 1st or 3rd person objects (2 → 1,

Top half of cell: present/future form

Bottom half of cell: preterite form

3rd	2nd	1st	SG	Incl	DL	Excl	Incl	DL	Excl	SG	DL	PL	SG	DL	PL	
SG										-na	-ne-si	-ne-ni	-gna	-gna-si	-gna-mi	
											-n-ta-na	-n-ta-ne-si	-n-ta-ne-ni	-tong	-tong-si	-tong-mi
														-sa	-sa-si	-sa-mi
											-ye-si	-si-si	-ni-si	-ta-sa	-ta-sa-si	-ta-sa-mi
DL									-e-si	-ta-si-si	-n-ta-ni-si	-ta-suku	-ta-suku-si	-ta-suku-mi		
													-ya	-ya-si	-ya-mi	
													-n-ta-yo	-n-ta-yo-si	-n-ta-yo-mi	
													-ka	-ka-si	-ka-mi	
SG									-e-mi	-ta-si-mi	-n-ta-ni-mi	-k-ta-ko	-k-ta-ko-si	-k-ta-ko-mi		
DL									-e-mi	-ta-si-mi	-n-ta-ni-mi	-k-ta-ko	-k-ta-ko-si	-k-ta-ko-mi		
PL									-e-mi	-ta-si-mi	-n-ta-ni-mi	-k-ta-ko	-k-ta-ko-si	-k-ta-ko-mi		
SG									-e-mi	-ta-si-mi	-n-ta-ni-mi	-k-ta-ko	-k-ta-ko-si	-k-ta-ko-mi		
DL									-e-mi	-ta-si-mi	-n-ta-ni-mi	-k-ta-ko	-k-ta-ko-si	-k-ta-ko-mi		
PL									-e-mi	-ta-si-mi	-n-ta-ni-mi	-k-ta-ko	-k-ta-ko-si	-k-ta-ko-mi		

2 - 3); the appearance of forms without any correspondants in the set of intransitive affixes, such as -na in '1 - 2' or -ka '1 pl excl - 3'; in the preterite forms, one of several consonants preceding the preterite marker -ta; and the seemingly reversed syntax of some forms, with the order subject-object varying with object-subject in the affixes. It would appear that some affixes are capable of shuffling some of their semantic features in different occurrences; for example, the suffix -ni has the meaning 2nd person plural object or 2nd person plural subject, but it confusingly also appears in preterite 2 - 3 pl forms making for complicated homophony, such that 'we saw you (pl)', 'you (pl) saw them', and 'they saw you (pl)' would share identical verb structure.³⁰ There are many other instances.

It would appear also that some rule of semantic priority operates to mark 1st person whether it occurs as subject or object in preference to 2nd person, and, in turn, 2nd person takes priority over 3rd. There are many problems with this hypothesis, but whether it eventually holds up or not the very complexity of the conjugation sets it strongly apart from the relative straightforwardness of the Santali conjugation.

In evaluating all of the above data, from independent pronouns to affixes of transitive verbs it is apparent that the burden of accounting for the evolution of the Bahing system falls on the back of the Tibeto-Burmanist. In all points Bahing seems either equally or more complex than Munda, not only in the total number of morphological distinctions, but also in its highly involved and elaborate syntax. But to round out the arguments, we can also consider the impressive work by Pinnow in reconstructing Munda verbal morphology (1966) and the Austroasiatic pronoun system (1965).

2. Munda and Austroasiatic

It would seem that the contention of a Munda influence on T-B verb morphology would itself revert back to earlier stages of the language, most likely being itself a feature of the ancestral Proto-Austroasiatic. This presupposition is necessary because the time depth of the postulated contact with T-B must be fairly early, predating the Aryan invasion and the split of early T-B dialects. However, on gross comparative evidence alone, it might be expected that the nearer we approach Proto-Austroasiatic the more we will have to accommodate the simpler morphological structures of the majority of the family. On the whole, Austroasiatic exhibits much the same overall pattern as T-B; a definite minority of its members show the complex pronominalization at issue, the majority are decidedly analytic in structure. Pinnow suggests the following explanation to account for