

The Verbal Morphology of Dumi Rai Simplicia

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Dumi Rai is a 'complex pronominalizing' Kiranti language spoken in *Khoṭān* district, *Sagaramāthā* zone, in eastern Nepal.

A verb in Dumi Rai may have one or more different stems. Dumi verbs may be divided into various conjugations on the basis of paradigmatic stem alternation. A conjugation therefore is a fixed pattern of stem alternation, not a fixed set of inflectional affixes. The inflectional affixes of the intransitive, transitive and reflexive paradigms are constant throughout all conjugations. Once the conjugation of any given verb has been specified, it is predictable which stem will occur in a given inflected form.

A single stem may have one or two phonologically conditioned forms, an ante-vocalic form and an ante-consonantal, ante-pausal form. Before a consonant or word-finally: (1) a post-syllabic augment is not realized, (2) /d/ is devoiced, and (3) an aspirated final is de-aspirated.

In this article, a synoptic account will be given of Dumi Rai conjugations, and a morphological analysis will be provided of the verbal affixes in Dumi Rai simplex forms. Simplicia are non-periphrastic indicative forms without an overt aspect marker.

ABBREVIATIONS

| | | | |
|---|---------------|---|----------|
| 1 | first person | s | singular |
| 2 | second person | d | dual |
| 3 | third person | p | plural |

→ indicates the direction of a transitive relationship

| | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| A | agent (of a transitive verb) |
| P | patient (of a transitive verb) |
| S | subject (of an intransitive verb) |

| | | | |
|-----|--------------|----|-----------------------|
| PT | preterit | pf | prefix, prefixal slot |
| NPT | non-preterit | sf | suffix, suffixal slot |

| | | | |
|---|------|---|------|
| ∅ | zero | Σ | stem |
|---|------|---|------|

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§1. Conjugations

A conjugation in Dumi Rai is defined as a fixed pattern of stem alternation, not a fixed set of inflectional endings. Five intransitive conjugations, eleven transitive conjugations and one reflexive conjugation must be distinguished to account for the different patterns of stem alternation in Dumi Rai verbs.

In a glossary entry, the conjugation of a verb and its various stems must be specified. The conjugation of an intransitive verb is indicated as: vi-1, vi-2, vi-3, vi-4 or vi-5. The conjugation of a transitive verb is indicated as: vt-1, vt-2a, vt-2b, vt-2c, vt-3, vt-4, vt-5a, vt-5b, vt-6a, vt-6b or vt-7. A reflexive verb is indicated as: vr, and the glossary entry of a reflexive verb must specify whether its subject is in the ergative case, like the agent of a transitive verb, or is in the absolutive case, as is the subject of an intransitive verb and the patient of a transitive verb.

Once a verb's conjugation has been specified and its various stems have been provided, it can be predicted which stem it will have in a given inflected form. For example, the transitive verb *dzi·tni* "to make wet" is specified as belonging to conjugation vt-2a, and its stems are given as *dzi·t-dzi·tš/dzi·š*. For verbs of conjugation vt-2a, forms with a first singular agent take the first stem or Σ_1 , *dzi·t*, and forms with a first singular patient take the second stem or Σ_2 , *dzi·tš/dzi·š*.

dzi·t-nta. I'll make you^s wet.

dzi·t-u. I made him wet.

dzi·tš-əni. They^P made me wet.

dzi·š-tə? Will you^s make me wet?

In certain instances, finite forms may have formally identical affixes but take different stems:

a-dzi·t-ini. You^s made them wet (2s→3p).

a-dzi·tš-ini. You^P made him/them wet; he/they made you^P wet (2p→3/3→2p).

In verbs with an invariable stem, i.e. verbs of the first conjugations, vi-1 and vt-1, finite forms bearing formally identical affixes are alike:

*a-dim-ini.*¹ You^s met them (2s→3p).

a-dim-ini. You^P met him/them; he/they met you^P
(2p→3/3→2p).

A parallel situation exists in German with certain apophonic verbs as compared to weak verbs. For example, the present indicative endings of the third singular and second plural are both *-t*. In certain verbs with Umlaut, the third singular and second plural have different stems:

| | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Er schläf-t.</i> | He is sleeping. |
| <i>Ihr schlaf-t.</i> | You ^P are sleeping. |

In regular verbs, both these finite forms are alike.

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Er sag-t.</i> | He says. |
| <i>Ihr sag-t.</i> | You ^P say. |

Unlike German, but as in Russian or French, stem alternation in Dumi Rai may involve stem vowel, stem final or both. The phenomenon of stem alternation is known in Russian as чередование основ.

(1) stem vowel affected

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>on-ni</i> | to enter |
| <i>un-tə</i> | I enter |
| <i>on-kita</i> | we ^P enter |
| <i>un-a</i> | he came in |
| <i>ho'-ni</i> | to come |
| <i>hu'-ti</i> | we ^{de} shall come |
| <i>a-hu'-yi</i> | you ^d came |
| <i>ham-ho'-ta</i> | they'll come |

(2) stem final affected

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>dhyek-ni</i> | to plug up |
| <i>dhyekh-i</i> | we ^{de} plugged it up |
| <i>a-dhyekt-i</i> | you ^s plugged it up |
| <i>a-dhyekh-ini</i> | you ^P plugged it up |
| <i>dhyekt-u</i> | I plugged it up |