TOWARDS AN ANALYSIS OF THE SOUTH MUNDA[1] VERBAL SYSTEM

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1 Introduction

One of the vexing issues in the comparative analysis of the Austroasiatic group of languages is the obvious typological difference between the complex (polysynthetic, agglutinative) Munda verb and the seemingly isolating structure preferred by the bulk of Mon-Khmer languages.[2] In this paper we examine the South Munda group of languages, working towards a reconstruction of the Proto-South Munda verbal system. Following a careful comparison of the various South Munda subgroups and the corresponding resultant intermediate proto-languages, the Proto-South Munda verbal system is now beginning to become clearer. When stripping away the various systems of progressive and perfective marking which seem to be innovations within the history of individual languages or subgroups, predominantly calqued on areal models (Hook 1991), one is still left with a large component of truly Munda features, frequently lacking analogs in other surrounding languages of the Indian subcontinent. The only previous analysis of South Munda verb structure (Pinnow 1966) lacks sufficient data from Gutob-Remo-Gta? and Gorum,[3] languages which, it turns out, are extremely important to our understanding of the ancestral verb structure. In the present study we discuss the following categories morphologically indexed in the Proto-South Munda verb: person, tense, mood and negation,[4] offering parallels with other Austroasiatic languages when warranted.

2 Person

Correspondences among the various South Munda languages suggest that both subject [SUBJ] and object [OBJ] were marked affixally in the South Munda verb. SUBJ markers were probably prefixal and OBJ markers suffixal in the proto-language. This is preserved in both Juang and Gorum, while Gta? has preserved the SUBJ agreement prefixes and Sora, in part, the OBJ suffixes. Various languages have only suffixal or enclitic person agreement with the SUBJ alone (Kharia, Gutob, Remo); in these instances this likely reflects a later encliticization of the pronominal forms following areal norms.[5] In Sora, on the other hand, there seems to have been a genuine shift in interpretation of the role of the person indexed by the agreement suffixes from OBJ to SUBJ in particular verb classes.[6] PSJG lost the PSM duals and the inclusive/exclusive contrast for first person; the other daughters of PSM preserved this. North Munda subject clitic- and object-marking phenomena are theoretically challenging (see Sadock (1991) on

marking phenomena are theoretically challenging (see Sadock (1991) on Santali, or G. Anderson (1995-ms.) for more on NM in general). While Proto-Munda probably had both SUBJ prefixes and OBJ suffixes, the issues are complicated and beyond the scope of the present study. For a list of person markers in SM languages, see Table-I.

SUBJ

	1	1DLi	1DLe	1PLi	1PLe	2
Kharia	-ñ/ŋ	-naŋ	-jar	-niŋ	-le	-m
Juang	-V₁-	ba-			nV₍ı₎-	mV₍ı₎-
Sora	-ay			-be	ə-..-ay	*
Gorum	ne-				le-	mo-
Gutob	-niŋ				-nei	-nom
Remo	-(n)iŋ	-naŋ			-nay	-no
Gta?	N̥-	ni-		næ/ne-	næ?/ne?	na-

	2DL	2PL	3	3DL	3PL
Kharia	-bar	-pe	--	-ki-yaɪ	-ki
Juang	ha-	V₁-	--	-ki-a	-ki
Sora		ə-..-ɛ	--		-ji
Gorum		bo-	--		-gi
Gutob		-pen	--		-nen
Remo	-pa	-pe	--		
Gta?	pa-	pe-	--		-har-

OBJ

	1	1DL	1PL	2	2DL
Juang	-(ni)ñ	-ñ-ba	-nen-iñ	-(n)(ɔ)m	-pa
Sora	-iñ	-ay	-lɛn/ŋ	-əm	
Gorum	-iŋ		-ileŋ	-om	

	2PL	3	3DL	3PL
Juang	-pe	--	(-ki-a)	(-ki)
Sora	-bɛn	-e		-ji
Gorum	-ibeŋ			(-gi)

Table-I South Munda Person Markers

(1) <u>Juang</u> (Matson 1964, Pinnow 1960-ms.)
mɛ-jɔ-ki-ñ   n-ɔn-ɖe   ba-sɔŋ-a
[2-'see'-PRES.II-1]   [1PL-'go'-PRES.I]   [1DL-'buy'-FUT.II]
'you see me'   'we go'   'we 2 will buy'

jɔ:-k-ɔm   tele-ɔ-ñ   te-me-le-niñ
['see'.1-PRES.II-2]   ['push'-PAST.II-1]   ['push'-3FUT-'push'-
1]
'I see you'   'he pushed me'   'he will push me'

<u>Sora</u>   (Ramamurti 1931)   <u>Gorum</u> (Aze 1973)
uruŋ-l-iñ   mo-taʔy-iŋ
['take'-PAST-1]   [2-'give'-1]
'(you) took me'   'you gave me (money)'

an-uruŋ-l-am   ne-aʔy-t-om
[NEG-'take'-PAST-2]   [1'splash'-NPAST-2]
'(I) didn't take you'   'I will splash you'

<u>Remo</u> (Fernandez 1968)
way-t-iŋ way-oʔ-niŋ   i-g-niŋ   sum-oʔ-no-ki
['call'-NPAST-1]['call'-PAST.II-1]   ['return'-PAST.I-1]   ['eat'-PAST.I
Q]
'I call'   'I called'   'I returned'   'did you eat?'

<u>Gutob</u> (N. Zide 1997, field notes)
suŋ-to-niŋ   suŋ-oʔ-nom
['throw'-CUST-1]   ['throw'-PAST.II-2]
'I throw'   'you threw'

<u>Gtaʔ</u> (K. Mahapatra et al. 1989)
N̦-coŋ-ke   N̦-coŋ-ge
[1-'eat'-**ke**]   [1-'eat'-PAST]
'I ate'   'I ate'

Note that prefixal agreement markers for subject are not unique to Munda among Austroasiatic languages. They are found, for example, in such Aslian languages as Temiar:

(2) <u>Temiar</u> (Carey 1961)
kəʔan kəʔa-sɛhluh   *ʔi-səluh ñam ʔim-rec*
['you.2'] [2DL-'blow.pipe']   [1-'shoot'] ['animal'] [1-'eat']
'you 2 are blow-piping'   'I shot an animal to eat'

tɔʔ ha-reñrec sec mɛjmɛj naʔ
[NEG] [2-'eat'] ['meat'] ['excellent'] ['that']
'(why) didn't you eat that excellent meat'

Certain other Mon-Khmer languages, exhibit an interesting use of a resumptive pronoun in immediately preverbal position, as well as a lexically restricted bound pronominal allomorph. This may be viewed as a kind of incipient prefixal agreement system:

(3) <u>Pacŏh</u> (Watson 1964)
a-ám anhi acân ŋai pôc   *ŋép u-lúh*
['fathers'] ['uncles'] [FUT] [3PL 'go']   [non-sing] [3-'run']
'fathers and uncles will go'   'they all ran away'

Pronominal doubling is found in other Mon-Khmer languages as well, e.g. Katu.

(4) <u>Katu</u> (Wallace 1966)
dó dâh dó gamak   *yi 'bóðr pe jaal yi chô*
['he']['quickly']['he'   'become.big']   ['we']['2']['3']['times']['we'
'return']
'he quickly became big'   'we returned two or three times'

3 Tense-Aspect

One of the basic distinctions in the tense-aspect systems of the Munda languages is between past [PAST] and nonpast [NPAST] ('present-future'), both realized affixally; in NM the same basic distinction holds, but only past is marked.[7] PKJ, and, independently and differently, Gutob and Gtaʔ, each have developed future tenses, but there is no reason to reconstruct these for PSM.

Of the morphological aspectual forms, PKJ had a perfective, but this looks like an innovation. The Remo perfect, on the other hand, might be old, see below.[8] The reduplicated infinitival present in Gutob (functioning as a finite habitual aspect form) is found elsewhere in Munda, and in Mon-Khmer. For a summary of the tense-aspect markers in SM see Table-II.