

GREETINGS AMONG NAXI AND KHAM TIBETANS ON YUNNAN'S HIGH PLATEAU¹

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INTRODUCTION

The act of greeting, both verbal and nonverbal, is a universal phenomenon of human communicative behavior. Every speech community devises such interactive behavioral patterns, the "common formula for social intercourse" (Bloomfield 1933). Turner (1973), however, claims that this act of greeting is semantically "empty, to accommodate and acknowledge a hearer [rather] than to carry a message" (p. 212). In the same line of thought, Searle (1969) states that salutations are insincere and have no propositional content. Consequently, greetings or salutations, in spite of their universal occurrence, have received very little attention by Western linguists and students of social behavior. By contrast, greetings in Tibeto-Burman are meaningful, context-sensitive, sincere, highly personal, even region-specific.

The lofty Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau in northwestern Yunnan has long been the home of two neighboring ethnic groups, the Kham Tibetans bordering on Tibet, and south of them the Naxi. This paper describes the intricate interdependencies of contemporary greeting patterns among these two neighboring ethnic groups, both of Tibeto-Burman stock.

The sociolinguistic research reported here consists of greeting patterns in Naxi and Kham Tibetan, collected in urban, rural and enclave settings of northwestern Yunnan between 1991 and 1996, totalling 7 1/2 months of fieldwork (about 670 initial encounters). Our sample represents the western Naxi and southeastern Kham Tibetan dialects spoken in the autonomous Naxi

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county of Lijiang and the autonomous Tibetan Prefecture of Deqing, especially in Zhongdian County.

Our method comprised two approaches: (1) informal interviews and (2) participant-observation, based on which we will describe the use and distribution of greetings in a variety of everyday situations (home, bilingual school, Nationality Clothes factory, monastery, medical institution and on the street/trails). Across sociolinguistic boundaries, urban greeting patterns will then be compared to rural and enclave greetings. Variations will be explained in demographic terms (Giles et al. 1987:71-72), such as population size and geographic/dialectal distinctions); and in psycho-sociological terms (such as age, kinship, status and gender differences, and institutional affiliations/support). We formulate the first sociolinguistic generalizations on greeting behavior in Tibeto-Burman.²

THE NAXI

Dialects

Naxi speakers live mainly in northwestern Yunnan, in the Naxi autonomous county of Lijiang. The Naxi language belongs to the Yi branch of the Tibeto-Burman family. Naxi scholars (i.e., Yang 1991 [pers. comm.], Jiang 1993) divide the Naxi varieties into two major dialect groups, the Western varieties spoken in an area expanding north and west from Lijiang, and the Eastern varieties spoken northeast of Lijiang³. The Western dialect is further divided into three dialectal zones (Li 1988): Dayanzhen, Lijiang Plain and Baoshanzhou. Our paper reports only on the western dialects as spoken in: (i) Lijiang town and surrounding villages (Dayanzhen dialect), (ii) Tacheng township (Lijiang Plain dialect) and (iii) Baidi administrative villages (Lijiang Plain dialect, an enclave that is probably one of the most traditional Western Naxi settlements. (We opted for the Tacheng township (Yilong), because of its traditional language usage often labeled by Lijiang speakers as the 'good spoken Naxi' variety. Dialectal differences did not affect its general intelligibility).⁴

² Sociolinguistic papers on Kham Tibetan of Zhongdian (Rgyalthang dialect) are only recent (Bartee, 1994, Feuer 1997) as are linguistic papers, e.g., Hongladarom (1996), Wang (1996).

³ The Western dialect is predominantly spoken in Lijiang county, parts of Weixi, Zhongdian and Yongsheng counties and the Eastern dialect particularly in Ninlang, Yanyuan, Yanbian and Muli counties. The variety spoken by the Mosuo people belongs to the eastern dialect and is often regarded as the most conservative variety of Naxi (Yang, pers. comm., 1991). Rock (1963), however, suggests that the two main dialects, once distinct, became confused under the common name 'Moso', given earlier in this century to both dialect varieties, the Western and the Eastern ones.

⁴ In contrast, the Baozhong dialect was apparently not understood by Dayanzhen speakers.

Research locations

(1) *Town of Lijiang*: In the shade of the snow-capped Jade Dragon mountain lies one of the most beautiful ancient towns of China, *Lijiang*, situated at 2400 m. altitude, 600 km. northwest of the provincial capital of Kunming. In the past, Lijiang was an important trading post for caravans from neighboring Tibet, and still today remains an important center in northwestern Yunnan, the soul of the Naxi world. Most Naxi, numbering approx. 240,000 distributed across northwestern Yunnan, consider Lijiang their sociolinguistic keystone.

(2) *Tacheng township* (Yilong administrative district), with its homogeneous agricultural Naxi population, is situated in a mountainous area about 200 km. northwest of Lijiang at the border of the Deqing Tibetan Prefecture. It is known for its well preserved, traditional Naxi culture (i.e. several Dongba priests and traditional dance groups). We collected our data mainly in two villages, with a total population of 543.

(3) *Baidi*, an enclave with 1575 Naxi inhabitants, 72% of the total population (1990 census), is a cluster of administrative villages under the township of Samba (Naxi nationality township) located within Zhongdian County. Situated northeast of Lijiang County, this enclave is separated by a river from its neighboring Naxi autonomous county and by mountains from Zhongdian to the northwest. Due to its isolation it is one of the most traditional Naxi strongholds, with practicing Dongba priests, dances, and oral Naxi literature, and is a sacred place for the Dongba religion. Our data was taken from three homogeneous Naxi villages with a total population of 963.

Dongba culture and religion

The ancient Dongba religion is Bon-related, with religious rites (nature worship, worship of heaven, etc.), divination practices, medical activities, and astrology. Traces of a once fierce yet culturally distinct Naxi kingdom are still evident today in the elite group of aging Dongba priests, numbering close to 70, who are the last transmitters of a body of cultural and religious knowledge⁵. Dongba priests are independent farmers, herdsmen or craftsmen in their communities.

KHAM TIBET

The Kham Tibetans of Diqing Prefecture number over 100,000 (32% of the total population), and form the largest ethnic group in a multiethnic region that

⁵ Dongba priests, we need to clarify, are not professional priests. They are neither affiliated with nor members of monasteries or religious organizations (He and Yang, 1993).

also includes Lisu, Han, Naxi, Bai, Pumi and Yi. They are distributed in three counties (Zhongdian, Deqin and Weixi), although we shall limit ourselves to the first.

Kham Dialects

Whereas Naxi dialects have been for some time the focus of research, the Kham dialects of Yunnan have yet to be investigated. When this study started in 1991, the most accessible urban dialect was Rgyalthang, spoken in the town of Zhongdian. We then collected rural data in the Deqin dialect, spoken in a remote area 200 km. north of Zhongdian, in order to match the Naxi urban/rural dialectal distinctions. Yet our sample made certain Rgyalthang informants uncomfortable, in that they felt the Deqin dialect to be closer to that of Lhasa. My Deqin informant even told me that certain Zhongdian persons claimed not to understand her dialect. According to local consensus, the best traditional Kham (Rgyalthang) speakers were the inhabitants of the two townships Xiao Zhongdian and Nixi Thangdui (abbreviated to Thangdui henceforth). Therefore, discarding dialectal boundaries and distance as the primary criteria, we collected data in 1996 from these two rural townships, in order to match our Naxi sample where the rural variety was also considered to be the most traditional. While it is clear that Xiao Zhongdian is a sub-dialect of Rgyalthang, Thangdui has linguistic features characteristic of the Deqin dialect.⁶ The Kham variety spoken in the enclave (Tacheng township), seems to be a sub-variety of the Weixi dialect.

Research locations

(1) *Zongdian (Rgyalthang)* is the largest town and government seat of the Diqing Autonomous Tibetan Prefecture. It is located about 709 km. north of Kunming, capital of Yunnan, or seven hours by bus (on a scenic mountain road) north of the nearest town, Lijiang, at 3200 m. altitude. Formerly, this town was an important trading center on the Tibet-Yunnan caravan route. Caravans of importance have disappeared, and trucks have taken over their function. This autonomous Tibetan region has witnessed a slower development than the autonomous Naxi region, mainly because of poor transportation facilities.

(2) *Rural region: Xiao Zhongdian* (Small Zhongdian) township is located about 25 km. south of the town of Zhongdian, where women wear a typical local Tibetan costume. There we collected our sample in two homogeneous

⁶ Yet Kham speakers claim that a dialectal shift occurs only north of Thangdui after crossing the Yangtze River. Further research will be needed to establish Kham dialectal boundaries.

Kham farming villages with a total population of 254. Thangdui is situated 40 km. north of Zhongdian with a predominantly agricultural Kham population of 780; its female population dresses without partiality in either western or national clothes. This community appears to be somewhat less traditional than the one further south.

(3) *Enclave: Luogu Village West no. 6* is a part of the Tacheng township that is predominantly Naxi, yet with a large presence of Lisu and Tibetans. Among the three predominantly Tibetan villages (where two lamas still practice) only the village called by the government “West no. 6” has not been linguistically assimilated by its Naxi neighbors. It is located on top of a steep hill that borders a Tibetan official rural area of Weixi County. Its population of 78 includes 68 Tibetans and 10 Naxi (intermarriage). The villagers are bilingual in Tibetan and Naxi—but the schoolchildren are trilingual, studying in Chinese. In spite of linguistic and social assimilatory tendencies⁷ they have preserved their culture of strong traditional lamaistic beliefs, ancient Tibetan ballads and dances.

Religion

Kham Tibetans practise Tibetan Buddhism, often referred to as Lamaism. According to the Lama Ron Mangin of the Guihua Temple, Lamaism was introduced into northwestern Yunnan during the Tubo Kingdom in the 7th century. It now includes four sects: the Geluba or Yellow sect, today the most popular; the Nigmaba (Red Sect); the Gajuba (White Sect); and the Saja (Color Sect).

In the past, besides religious activities, lamaistic monasteries exerted political, educational and economic powers. Today, monasteries have lost such privileges, though they still occupy a large place in Kham Tibetan society. Besides their religious role, they are sought out for their skills in traditional Tibetan medicine, astrology and divination. Tibetan sacred texts are carefully hidden in private homes and only brought out for occasional readings by a knowledgeable family member or a hired monk. Prayerflags flutter on each roof top, incense is burned daily, and certain rites are performed on auspicious dates. In general, religion is an intrinsic part of everyday activities for the ordinary Kham individual.

This paper will show how genetically related populations, living side-by-side, may express greetings sharing certain traits, while still having distinct ethnolinguistic patterns based on different religious practices and social customs.

⁷ For example, women wear the Naxi nationality costume for work, and a Tibetan nationality costume, resembling that of Weixi Kham Tibetans, for special occasions.

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF GREETING PATTERNS

Depending on the situation in which they are uttered, greetings in Naxi and Kham Tibetan generally function as confirmation, solicitation, or information-seeking acts that are characterized by their propositional content and sincerity. They are phatic acts (in the sense of Jakobson 1967), or initial encounters, where two individuals recognize and acknowledge each other's presence verbally and/or non-verbally.

In this study we will contrast the sociolinguistic greeting patterns of Naxi and Kham Tibetan, first at the morphosyntactic level (pronominal features of greetings and their restricted usage, and the proper forms of politeness); secondly, at the semantic level (context-sensitivity of greetings).

1. *Pronominal restrictions*

NAXI

The second person pronominal address form (2pp) *you* in Naxi has five different variants: (1) A lower form expressing closeness or impoliteness used to younger siblings or children; (2) an unmarked, normal form; (3) a higher form we call honorific (*h*) used for high status or elderly persons; and two variants traditionally gender specific: (4) used among men but now also by friends of both genders; (5) used among women, but now also by men to women. These variants permit a Naxi speaker to differentiate social variants such as age, status, and kinship.

*Second person pronominal (2pp) paradigm*⁸

	<i>singular</i>	<i>plural</i>	
(1)	nw	nw gw	(elder to younger, closeness/impoliteness)
(2)	na	na gw	(normal, unmarked)
(3)	ŋv	ŋv hə	(honorific, younger to elder)
(4)	wu / u	ugw hə	(to friends/men to men)
(5)	wa	ua hə	(women/men to women)

In initial encounters, these pronominal markers are used minimally: Lijiang 13%, Tacheng township 10%, and in the enclave 0% of our greeting sample.⁹ However, the fact remains that every use of a particular pronominal variant indicates the greeter's choice based on his/her communicative intentions (functions), thus portraying his/her relationship with the addressee at the time of the encounter.

⁸ This paradigm exclusively presents 2pp singular forms and their plural equivalents, thus omitting other plurals.

⁹ This percentage is derived from a total greeting sample of 257 initial encounters.

Greetings at the Nationality Clothes Factory, though seldom used, were reported to signal a special occasion, such as in (8) where the 2pp would be used in greeting a newcomer. As a norm, factory workers did not greet each other. One Naxi worker remarked with astonishment: "Why use a greeting? What's so special meeting each other day after day?"

- | |
|---|
| tson _e * ə be se? |
| homework (LW) Q do PRT |
| Did you do your homework?' |

- (7) NL/G guɹɪ nu gu du tsæ
 younger brother you PL one time

 tʃhɪ khuijə
 came kindly
 ‘Brother, you all have so kindly come (visiting me).’

¹⁰ Abbreviations: ASP=aspect, DIR=directional, EXCL=exclamatory, G=greeting, HON or (h)=honorific, Hs=Host, IMPV=imperative, INV=invitation, KL=Kham Tibetan of Luogu Village W no. 6 (enclave), KT=Kham Tibetan of Thangdui, KXZ=Kham Tibetan of Small Zhongdian, KZ=Kham Tibetan of the town of Zhongdian, LW=loanword (from Chinese unless otherwise specified), NB=Naxi of Baidi (enclave), NL=Naxi of Lijiang, NT=Naxi of the Tacheng township, PL=plural, POL=politeness, pp=person(al) pronoun, PREFIX=prefix, PRT=particle, Q=question particle, R=response, TQ=tag question, Vs=visitor.

/R	ũ	du	tsæ	tshɿ
	mhm	one	time	came

'Yes, we have come.'

(8) NL/G na tshɿ læ?

you came TQ

'You have come, eh?'

/R	na	la	tshɿ	se	læ
	you	PRT	came	ASP	TQ

'You came too, eh?'

The majority of 2 pp occurred on trails or streets. Of these, the honorific **ŋv** and the normal form **na** were rare. Only one person we interviewed, an elderly Lijiang lady, claimed to address her women friends in the street by **na** (9) rather than by a personal name (a more common practice among friends) or, most often, without either a pronoun or term of address¹¹. In Lijiang the use of the honorific pp **ŋv** was the norm only in an initial encounter with an elderly man, whether known (10) or unknown (12). Some individuals however considered the use of the address term **alo** 'elder man'/'grandfather' with or without a pp (i.e., example 11) to be more polite and appropriate when greeting an older man, especially if the person was kin to the speaker.

(9) NL/G na zekv bu le?

you where go Q

'Where are you going?'

/R	dʒɿ	bu
	market	go

'I'm going to the market.'

¹¹ Popular greetings usually had no pronominal marking, as observed in Feuerer (1997): 18NT/G: **əko ze gəbu?** 'Brother, where (are you) going?' R: **le wu bu.** '(We are) going back.' 21NB/G: **the cje.** 'Rest (a while)!' R: *The person enters.* 28NL/G: **le u tshɿ se la?** '(You) have come back, eh?' R: **le tshɿ se.** '(I) have come back.' Other common initial encounters: 'Are (you) tired?' to a visitor; 'Are (you) hungry?' after a meal time; 'What are (you) doing?' to a friend in the street.

- (10) NL/G $\eta v(h)$ ə la la le?
 you Q healthy Q
 ‘How is your health?’
- /R la la mə
 health PRT
 ‘My health is unexpectedly fine.’
- (11) NL/G əlo $\eta v(h)$ zə kv khui le?
 grandfather you where went Q
 ‘Grandfather, where did you go?’
- /R *Smiles as an answer.*
- (12) NL/G $\eta v(h)$ tshi sə lv ne læ?
 you animals herd-ing TQ
 ‘You are herding your animals, aren’t you?’
- /R wa + *nodding*
 yes
 ‘Yes.’

The most frequent 2pp address **wu / u** was observed in public places. It was used in informal greeting contexts by elders to the younger (14) (16), among young people (13) or those of similar age (15). It was used most often in the countryside and was considered by NL speakers to be slightly more polite than **na**. It signaled an attitude of camaraderie toward the addressee, if unknown by name (14); it was used if allegiance was sought (15); it also indicated a relationship of solidarity to a superior (16) in spite of age differences. In the latter example, the interlocutor was a senior addressing respectfully the very approachable middle-aged county governor by his title and **wu**, while jokingly inquiring about his journey ‘over the mountains’ up to his village in the Tacheng township.

- (13) NL/G wu he tsi lo tshi læ?
 you PL street in came TQ
 ‘You have come outside, to the street, haven’t you?’

- /R ã
mhm
'Yeah.'
- (14) NT/G u ge tcy bui læ?
you up DIR go TQ
'You are going up, aren't you?'
- /R ã ã
mhm mhm
'Yeah, yeah!'
- (15) NT/G lu dzi ne læ?
field dig PRT TQ
'You are digging your field, aren't you?'
- wu jə ə dzɿ le?
you cigarettes Q have Q
'Do you have any cigarettes (in your store)?'
- /R jə mə dzɿ se
cigarettes not have PRT
'I don't have any.'
- (16) NT/G ɕjætsə*¹² wu dzɿ tʂhua
county governor (LW) you mountain climb
- tʂɪ læ?
came TQ
'Governor, you came here by climbing mountains, eh?'
- /R *Nods and smiles.*

Two things are to be noticed: (1) Pronominal addresses were absent in greetings initiated by a term of address and in informal greeting paradigms,

¹² Since the present governmental structure has been introduced by the Chinese, it is not surprising that government titles have been borrowed from Chinese, although they have become phonetically integrated into the Naxi lexicon.

often marked by rapid speech. (2) On the trail strangers only exchanged greetings if of the same gender. Cross-gender greetings occurred only if initiated by a relatively senior person.

The following patterns emerge in Naxi 2pp usage. Firstly, the occurrence of 2pp in greetings was rare, even if initiated by a term of address. Secondly, the presence and use of a particular pronominal category in greetings depended on particular circumstances. If a situation changed, the 2pp was either changed, replaced by an appropriate term of address (see, e.g., the comments on 10), or dropped (example 15, first sentence). Thirdly, relative age determined the choice of the category of 2pp. Finally, the most frequent place of occurrence was in the street/trail towards outsiders, thus expressing friendliness or camaraderie. It is worth noting that the use of terms of address with or without a 2pp was considered to be more polite or respectful.

KHAM TIBETAN

Kham Tibetan employs two second person pronouns, the ordinary unmarked form and the honorific:

*Second person pronominal (2pp) paradigm*¹³:

	<i>singular</i>	<i>plural</i>	
(17)	tchy / tchi	tche tshə	(ordinary, unmarked form)
(18)	tchəna	tchəna tshə	(honorific)

Although in our greeting sample¹⁴ (Town of Zhongdian 8.5%, Small Zhongdian/Thangdui 10%, Luogu village [enclave] 5%) the use of the honorific pronoun does not occur, Kham Tibetans used the pronominal address form more frequently than the Naxi. One exception was the clinical institution where greetings were rare. Let us consider examples referring to (i) home, (ii) school, (iii) Nationality Clothes Factory, (iv) street or trail.

In the home, greetings were exchanged only on salient occasions such as the visit of an uncle from far away (19), or the father returning from a long trip (20). In both instances, the appropriate biological kinship term used to express reference was followed by the 2pp, to reinforce the importance of the addressee in the sentence. The utterance that followed in (19) was an informal invitation (weakly polite) where the pp markers were absent. Such patterns were found in other family contexts, as presented later in this paper. At the Tibetan

¹³ This paradigm exclusively presents 2pp singular forms and their plural equivalents, thus omitting other plurals.

¹⁴ This percentage is derived from a total greeting sample of 265 initial encounters. Not included are an additional 153 instances of initial encounters from Deqin County.

Nationality School, the school principal recalled a greeting exchange (21) between parents from remote Kham villages and himself. Identical to the structure of preceding examples, the function was nevertheless slightly modified by indicating a higher degree of politeness both in the choice of the address (a title) and the nonverbal honorific (a bow). Both the nonverbal gesture and the high title signalled deference and submission.

- (19) KZ/G ake tchy bei wō ?æ ?
 uncle (paternal) you return come TQ
 'Uncle, you have returned, haven't you?'
 ui bi su thōŋ su tsha su !
 up come INV drink INV eat INV
 'Come up; come drink and eat (with us)!'

/R *Goes upstairs.*

- (20) KXZ/G aba tchy tshu won rē wo
 father you back come PRT IMPV
 'Father, you're back!'

/R jī wo
 yes IMPV
 'Yes!'

- (21) KZ/G xiazaŋ* tchy do thi+ *bowing* (HON)
 master (LW) you hard PRT
 'Principal, you've had a hard time' (with my son)

/R mə do thi
 not hard PRT
 'Not at all.'

In the Nationality Clothes Factory again greetings occurred only on special occasions such as the visit of an outsider (22) or the arrival of a new workmate (23). The visitor was myself returning to the factory to try on a vest. I was addressed by the 2pp, a somewhat more polite way of addressing an outsider than without an address marker, though the minister of nationalities claimed that the 2pp was only used if saluting younger people. He considered this form impolite if used without an address term and addressed to seniors. His standard

of politeness, possibly a reflection of his social background, was not necessarily representative of the rest of the population, as seen in example (22). There was simply no precedent in the worker's experience to enable him to address this outsider with the appropriate title or term of address. Example (23) seemed to be identical in function to (22). Someone unknown, a new workmate, is welcome in a somewhat more personal way than if the 2pp had been omitted. In passing, we noticed that the Chinese loanword for 'work' was used among Kham Tibetans and Naxi in initial encounters. Possibly its widespread use testified to the frequency of Chinese employment (see the comments in §3 under 'economy').

(22) KZ/G tchy wō je
 you come PRT
 'You have come.'

/R *Smile.*

(23) KZ/G tchy sambaŋ* jy wō ʔæ ?
 you work (LW) PRT come TQ
 'You have come to work, eh?'

/R *Shy glance at the greeter.*

Again, as among the Naxi, the bulk of greetings marked by the 2pp address form were found in the street and on trails. My organizer greeted an elder acquaintance by a kinship term and name (24). The kin term extended to a biologically unrelated person suggests a reciprocity in caring for the elder by the younger. A vigorous handshake solidified the encounter. This modern nonverbal greeting gesture, a rather recent loan from the West, has become popular among Kham Tibetan men; not so among women who are not used to any physical contact in public encounters. The greeting response (R/G) was marked by a more informal address form, the 2pp, used by this elderly gentleman. Considering the age difference, the pronoun not only symbolized seniority but also camaraderie and solidarity as in (25), uttered by an elder woman. In (25) R/G the habitual, unmarked greeting pattern¹⁵ was used in returning the salutation to a senior; yet the tone was rather informal and playful. An older man in the enclave greeted my young informant, a stranger to him,

¹⁵ Other common, unmarked greetings: KZ/G: **ka guo tʃi?** 'Where are (you) going?' (in the street/on the trail) KZ/G: **duo a co?** / KXZ/G: **tʃhe a tce coŋ?** 'Are (you) tired?' R: **me duo / me tce coŋ.** '(I'm) not tired.' (when arriving from a trip); KL/G: **ɣywo cje?** '(Are you) coming down?' R: **mhm.** 'Yeah.'

informally as in (28). Possibly in both encounters the greeters were either only loosely or not at all acquainted with the passers-by. In (26) and (27), the saluted persons knew each other. Among peers a common practice was the use of the name (if young) or a kin term (if older) by the greeter, and the 2pp in the greeting response. Notice the context specific meanings: on the trail (24), in the neighboring town (26) (27), on the outskirts of town where all inhabitants know each other (25).

(24) KZ/G ata dendzu + *shake hands*
 elder brother (name)
 ‘Elder brother Denzhu!’

/R /G tɕhy uɪ jǣ guo zi ʔǣ ?
 you up play go PRT TQ
 ‘You’re going up for fun, aren’t you?’

/R a ʔa
 yeah yeah
 ‘Oh, yes.’

(25) *Context : Horse race.*

KZ/G tɕhy tʃɪ bei wō ʔǣ ?
 you back come TQ
 ‘You’re coming back (from the horse race), eh?’

/R /G ijo deren ɲisuo ʔǣ ?
 yes today free TQ
 ‘Yeah. Today you are off, eh?’

/R *Smile.*

(26) KXZ/G wæra tɕədǎ wō jɛ?
 friend Zhongdian come PRT
 ‘Friend, you’ve come to Zhongdian?’

/R/G jɪ wo tɕhy tʃhə ʔu do?
 yes you what do PRT
 ‘Yes. What are you doing?’

/R	ryn	nə	tʃon	wō	je
	street	in	play	come	PRT

'Roaming the streets.'

(27) Context: *Downtown Zhongdian.*

KXZ/G	jaŋdzō	tʃō	wō	je?
	(name)	play	come	PRT

'Yangzho, you have come to play?'

/R/G	tʃy	la	tʃō	wō
	you	PRT	play	come

'You yourself have come to play?'

(28) Context: *Outside the Lama's house.*

KL/G	tʃy	thō	wō	ciɛ?
	you	out	come	PRT/Q

'You have left, eh?'

/R *Nods.*

A few definite patterns seem to emerge in Kham Tibetan (Rgyalthang dialect). First, the honorific 2pp is never used in greetings. We will see later that high lamas are only greeted by nonverbal honorifics such as a bow or prostration, or by title minus 2pp. Secondly, age seems to have a determining influence on the use of the pronominal address. The 2pp is acceptable in greetings among peers, though it is often preceded by a name or term of address. It signals a mark of seniority, though informally, if relative seniors employ it to juniors. Thirdly, if used among strangers, it conveys a tone of camaraderie and familiarity, rather than distance. Finally, preceded by a term of address, it functions as a topic marker, reinforcing the importance of the addressee. The Kham Tibetan use of pp therefore, as with the Naxi, varies according to the social context.

Comparison

The 2pp address forms we observed in two Tibeto-Burman languages are similar in some ways and clearly different in others. In both languages, this marker had a relatively low distribution and was considered to be a sign of an informal encounter. The most frequent occurrence of these pronouns was in the

street or on the trail for both the Kham and the Naxi, and the age factor seemed to play a dominant role in the use of this personal pronoun. In addition, when high respect was expressed, an appropriate term of address had to precede the greeting.

Differences between the two Tibeto-Burman languages were evident on both the linguistic and sociolinguistic levels. Linguistically, the N and K 2pp differ in the number of 2pp forms. Naxi has one unmarked and four marked 2pp s/pl. morphemes, whereas Kham Tibetan has only one marked and one unmarked 2pp s/pl. form. In Naxi all five categories occurred in greetings, while in Kham only the unmarked form was observed. In Naxi sociolinguistic factors such as relative age affected the choice of a particular category, while in Kham age affected only the presence or absence of the unmarked form. The 2pp was used in a greater variety of situations in Kham than in Naxi. In Kham nonverbal gestures such as a bow clarified the degree of politeness expressed between greeters. In Naxi, the degree of politeness, solidarity or distance, was expressed first and foremost by linguistic means. In the following section we shall explore further the question of politeness as expressed by greetings.

2. *Forms of politeness*

In Tibeto-Burman, an initial encounter is expected to be sincere in order to be meaningful. Searle's (1969:64-65) claim that greetings are meaningless clichés seeking to communicate politeness rather than sincerity—which might hold true for English—does not hold true for Tibeto-Burman salutations. We have seen that Naxi and Kham Tibetan greetings are personal rather than cliché-like, conveying sincerity as well as politeness when appropriate. In this section we will focus on linguistic and/or paralinguistic politeness forms and their uses in initial encounters.

NAXI

Morphological politeness markers usually occurred in sentence-final position. Below is a table of some of the sentence-final politeness morphemes found in the town of Lijiang, Tacheng township and Baidi (enclave). Most had semantic as well as grammatical overlapping functions. The particles **la** (29), **me** (31), and **jə** (32) used in requests rendered the exchange less direct and thus more polite. In greetings that stated facts, **me** (30) rendered the tone of interaction more polite. These morphemes are all considered politeness markers, in an increasing degree from (29) to (32). We were not able to discern clearcut hierarchical differences between (32) and (33). In highly polite exchanges Baidi and Tacheng seemed to favour the suggestive politeness marker **ji** / **jə** (32), whereas Lijiang preferred **kamo** (33). Thus usage of these politeness morphemes was similar, though not identical in the three locations.

	<i>Lijiang</i>	<i>Tacheng</i>	<i>Baidi (enclave)</i>	
(29)	la	la		'solicit agreement'
(30) ¹⁶	me	me	mæ	'information'
(31)	me	me	me	'suggestion'
(32)	jə	jə	ji / jə	'kindly'
(33)	kamo	kame	ka	'please'

We observed the use of these markers mainly in the home and exceptionally on the street or the trail. These two situations will serve us as the basis for analysing cross-regional usages of politeness markers.

In the home, during morning encounters, phatic exchanges are minimal between working parents and grandparents. In families with elderly (retired) grandparents, phatic interaction was more likely to occur, yet not in a formal manner. Younger generations show great respect to their elders and, as their obliged caregivers, are socially more involved with them. Therefore, initial encounters with the older generation, even if directive, were marked by an attitude of respect and submission.

At a Lijiang farmer's home, the daughter-in-law would awaken her 72-year-old father-in-law with (34). If the grandfather did not want to get up he would say so. In Tacheng the grandfather was awakened in a similar fashion (35a). Notice in both situations the weakening of the command by **la**, a particle that solicits agreement. A request that had **lu** 'come' added, as in (35b), was considered either more or less directive depending on paralinguistic modifiers such as voice quality, or linguistic ones like **la** in (34) or **me** in (36). In (35b) the absence of a sharp voice conveyed a plea rather than an order. In (36) the particle **me** underlined the suggestive tone of the invitation. In (37), a daughter-in-law called her 69-year-old mother-in-law in the Dayan town (old sector of Lijiang) by using the suggestive mode. Example (37b), 'Would you mind getting up', was also found in Baidi (enclave).

- (34) NL G əŋo le tɕə lu la
 grandfather tea heat come POL
 'Grandfather, could you come brew the tea!' (on the
 hearth for the family)

¹⁶ There is a tonal difference between the modal particles (30) and (31): high for **me** 'information' and mid-rising for **me** 'suggestion'.

- (35) NT G (a) əŋo gə tu la (b) le tɕə lu
 grandfather up rise PO tea heat come
 'Grandfather, could you get up and come brew the tea?'

- (36) NT G əŋo le tɕə lu me
 grandfather tea heat come POL
 'Grandfather, would you mind brewing the tea?'

- (37) NL G (a) ha ə thv se; (b) gə tu me
 food PRT cook PRT up rise POL
 'The meal is ready. Would you mind getting up?'

In Baidi (as well as in Tacheng) it was the norm not to awaken elders. Some families however, if a situation demanded an early interaction, preferred the unmarked form (38) as an expression of their intimate relation. Others, as a sign of respect and distance, preferred the highly marked version with the politeness morphemes **ka** (38) or **jə** (39).

- (38) NB G əŋo gə tu le thu ± ka
 grandfather up rise tea drink ±please
 'Grandfather, get up, please, drink tea!'

- (39) NB G əŋo gə tu jə
 grandfather up rise POL
 'Grandfather, kindly get up!'

In the home a steady flow of interaction during the day renders phatic exchanges unnecessary. Greeting becomes appropriate, however, in at least two situations: (i) the return of a family member (from a trip/studies, etc.), (ii) an infrequent visit (of a relative, a friend, etc.).

In the first situation politeness markers were used only in Tacheng and Baidi. After school (40) and after a trip (41), a child and a father politely announced their arrival. Notice the modal particle **me** / **mæ** used to convey politeness. Again, as shown in the preceding section, the younger respectfully addresses the elder by a term of address, whereas the father, an elder himself, addresses the family in a more casual, direct manner.

(40) TN G ədzi leu tshi se me
 grandma back come PRT POL
 'Grandma, I have come back!'

(41) NB G le tshi ə mə
 back come PRT POL
 'I have come back!'

Where the second situation (encounters in the home) is concerned, we noticed politeness markers in all three localities when seldom seen visitors showed up. In Lijiang households (42) and (43) are typical greetings addressed to relatives arriving from far away. The relative in (42) is invited to rest in their home (see the use of *je* to reinforce the welcoming gesture and reduce the directness) after the host's inquiry about his health. Often, in a very polite manner, the relative will insist that he will not eat and that he will return home that very evening. Such an initial response is governed by implicit politeness rules, known by competent native speakers of the same speech community, who after two or three refusals know how to accept an invitation politely. Was this ritualistic manner of exchanging greetings borrowed from their Chinese neighbors? We believe so, since the more traditional countryside (Tacheng and Baidi) did not seem to practice such elaborate politeness exchanges. In (43) the low degree of politeness is marked by the choice of the particle and by the shortness of the invitation.

In Baidi our informants assured us that relatives are greeted very politely as in (44) and (45), yet in a direct manner, without repetitions. Example (44) is more formal with its two sentence final politeness markers, although (45), also highly polite, has an emotional connotation expressed by the exclamatory particle *o* that suggests solitariness rather than formality.

(42) NL G damo* ku bi la bi tso mə.
 aunt (LW) foot well arm well certainly POL
 ha du mjə dzi ja ə cja la
 food some eat POL PRT rest POL
 'Aunt, you are healthy, aren't you? Please, have some
 food and do rest!' (at our place)

R bibi lele tso. ha dzi mə
 in good condition certainly food eat not
 bə, le u buu se
 will back go PRT
 ‘We’re certainly well. We can’t eat since we have to go
 back.’

(43) NL G duu ɕjə nuu la
 one rest while POL
 ‘Do stay with us for a while!’

(44) NB G abu jako ɕjə jə ka
 brother home rest POL please
 ‘Please, brother, kindly visit my home.’

R *The brother and his family enter.*

(45) NB G əgv le tshI mə o. gv jə
 uncle back come POL EXCL good wish POL
 ‘Uncle! Oh, you’ve come back! Good wishes to you !’

R ya, le tshI se
 yes back come PRT
 ‘Yes, I’ve come back.’

In (46) and (47) visitors enter as the host families are eating. According to the Asian sense of hospitality an invitation must follow. Example (46) is a joking exchange among friends. Notice the fabric of the joke, an imitation of a ‘gastronomic’ greeting¹⁷ [(46) Hs-G] popular among young/educated people; an exaggerated use of politeness markers usually reserved for more formal occasions where distance rather than intimacy is marked; and the absence of the ritualised refusal. In contrast, example (47) is a highly respectful invitation to join the meal. The recipient might have been an elderly person or a high status neighbor passing by for business. In both instances, (46) and (47), as expected, the invitation was rejected. The initial encounter can also occur

¹⁷ This gastronomic greeting is a semantic loan from Chinese (see §3 below).

across distances, as observed in homes guarded by a dog (48). The visitor calls her friend by name while politely requesting assistance with the dog. A polite invitation by the host follows.

(46) NL Hs-G ha ə dzɪ sɪ le
 food Q eat PRT Q
 'Have you eaten?'

Vi-R¹ ha du mə jə
 food some POL
 'Be kind and feed me!'

Hs-R dzɪ kamo
 eat please
 'Please, eat!'

Vi-R² dzɪ se
 eat PRT
 'I've eaten!'

(47) NL G ha dzɪ kamo
 food eat please
 'Please, eat with us!'

R ha dzɪ se
 food eat PRT
 'I've already eaten.'

(48) TN G uə tsha jako ə dzɪ le
 PRFX name home Q state Q

khɯ hu jə
 dog look after POL

'Utsha, are you at home? Kindly look after the dog.'

R	tshI	jə
	come	POL
	'Please, come in!'	

Finally in public places, on the street or the trail, greetings were direct and informal. There were occasional exceptions, e.g., an encounter recalled by a Lijiang farmer (49) and my observation of a woman's salutation on the trail in Tacheng (50). In both situations the politeness morpheme **la** was used to solicit an agreement from the elder recipients. In Baidi, our guide, an official, was similarly greeted by a young woman on her way up the trail. Here status rather than age must have motivated the use of the highly polite invitation.

(49)	NL	G	ənæ*	jako	ɕjə	lu	la
			grandma (LW)	home	rest	come	POL
			'Grandma, do come visiting me at my home!'				

(50)	NT	G	ŋa	ko	du	tʂæ	ɕə	lu	la
			my	home	one	time	rest	come	POL
			'Do come visiting me at my home!'						

R *Smiles and continues walking.*

(51)	NB	G	gə	tshI	ma?	the	le	ɕə	jɿ
			up	come	TQ	later	back	rest	POL
			'You're coming up, aren't you? Visit me when you return.'						

R	ya	the	na	le	lje
	yes	later	PRT	back	come
	'Yes, on our way back.'				

We conclude that a small number of greetings in Naxi are marked by a set of sentence final morphemes that express various degrees of politeness. We have grouped them into two categories, one representing the lower (weaker) degrees of politeness (29-31) and the other the higher (stronger) degrees (32-33). These forms are salient at home, though their occurrence is relatively low: (a) Most infrequently they occur in matutinal situations, and only when elders are

addressed; (b) also infrequently, upon the arrival of a family member; and c) slightly more often in encounters with visitors.

The weaker politeness forms are preferred by Lijiang and Tacheng in situations (a) and (b); by Tacheng especially in situation (b). For situations (a) and (c) Baidi (enclave) favoured the use of high politeness morphemes, especially when addressing an elder or a person of high status. Baidi speakers took a double stand in their addressing of elder family members: Some omitted the use of sentence final politeness markers as a sign of intimacy (38), while others used these markers to emphasize respect.

Finally, in public places the occurrence of sentence final politeness markers was minimal. This might have been due to more rapid speech and the fact that other, more noticeable politeness forms were available, such as terms of address or pronominal address forms, as explained in the preceding section.

KHAM TIBETAN

In Kham Tibetan, we isolated the use of two classes of politeness forms in greetings. First, the restricted class of politeness morphemes, often proposition-final, that included three independent forms; second, the large class of honorifics, mainly independent forms such as verbs and a few dependent forms like **la**, a nominal modifier. The former class expressed various degrees of politeness, tact or courtesy. The latter expressed, as a primary function, an attitude of respect, deference or submission to the recipient being treated as a social superior.

In the following table, politeness forms are presented hierarchically, starting with the weakest form of politeness (52) **su**, and ending with the highest honorifics, either verbal (55) or nonverbal (56). The marker in (52) has overlapping functions. In the position of the main verb, it functions as a command; following another verb it weakens the directness of the imperative proposition by indicating a function of invitation rather than that of an order. The markers (53) **tci** and (54) **ru** add politeness to ordinary greetings. In honorific salutations, they function as modifiers of verbal honorifics (55 V[h]), thus specifying further the tone of politeness. The Kham Tibetan dialect offers a menu of different honorifics, mostly verbs, from which a speaker chooses according to the topic of an honorable encounter. These V(h) either occur in isolation or with politeness markers (52) to (54). Finally, nonverbal honorific gestures (56) occur in isolation, as greeting emblems (independent symbols), or as modifiers of politeness or honorific morphemes, further detailing the degree of politeness verbalized by the interlocutors. Description of nonverbal politeness forms such as a fleeting eye contact, etc., will be reserved for a later, more detailed paper. Notice below, for sociolinguistic reasons, we have

separated the countryside into two varieties, the southern one (KXZ) and the northern one (KT) with respect to the centrally located town (KZ).

	KZ	KXZ/KT	KL (enclave)	
(52)	ʂu	ʂu	ʂu	invitation ('come')
(53)	tɕi	tɕi		'please'
(54)	ru	ru		'please'
(55)	V(h)	V(h)	V(h)	
(56)	NV(h)	NV(h)	NV(h)	

This rather complex high/polite language is characteristic of a society where the older generation and the lamaistic religion are still highly respected. We observed the use of such marked language (i) in the home, (ii) at the monastery, and less frequently (iii) in the street/at the hospital.

In homes, initial encounters in the early morning were minimal for the same reason as with their Naxi neighbours (described above).¹⁸ School children, mothers and the elderly seemed to be the main targets. In the town and the countryside the tone was somewhat less direct [(57)/KT, (58)/KZ] than in the enclave (59)/KL where closeness rather than distance was emphasised (see similar comments on example 39 in the Naxi enclave). In all examples, the adults were addressed by their kin term, another sign of politeness; though in one family situated in the enclave, the grandmother was addressed by a Naxi loan (60), a definite result of the assimilating influence of the surrounding Naxi culture.

In one interesting exchange, we were sitting around the hearth for our breakfast when the youngest family member appeared. The grandmother gestured to the place next to her as she addressed the latecomer in a most respectful way (61). This example needs some further comments. It shows us that elder women tend to use more respectful language than younger ones, and that the Tibetan society highly treasures their children and often treats them like the kings and queens of the family. These invitations usually had a nonverbal response.

- (57) KT G ma ale ʂutʂa thõ ʂu
 mother now breakfast drink INV
 'Mother, do come and have your breakfast!'

¹⁸ In Xian Zhongdian no morning greetings were reported, or only a minimal one, i.e., the use of the kin term address.

(58) KZ G ama uŋ lā t̥sa ɕyi(h) ʂu
 mother up stand tea drink INV
 ‘Mother, get up and have your tea, please!’

(59) KL G ame je lō ʂu
 mother up stand INV
 ‘Mother, please get up!’

(60) KL G adze* t̥sa ɕyi(h) ʂu
 grandmother (LW) tea drink INV
 ‘Grandmother, please have some tea!’

(61) KL G zo(h) no + *gesture indicating where to sit*
 sit PRT
 ‘Please sit here!’

During the day at home, only special encounters were marked, either in town or the countryside. However the distribution of the use of different politeness markers was uneven: KZ was 58% honorifics (H) and 42% politeness morphemes (POL); KXZ was 70% H and 30% POL; KT was 45% H and 55% POL; KL 50% H and 50% POL. As we shall see later, all four localities have their own POL preferences. Differences will emerge as we specify further the use of the weaker POL forms.

As for Kham Tibetan, greetings are appropriate at (i) the return of a family member from a trip; (ii) a visit of seldom seen relatives, elder guests, etc.; and additionally, upon (iii) the visit of high clergy or high status visitors.

Only in the town (62) and north of Zhongdian (63) were wives reported to greet their returning husbands politely. Here, a question mode was used to reduce the directness of the statement. In these two instances the husbands did not response verbally. As observed elsewhere, greetings uttered among family members did not necessarily entail verbal responses. In the other localities, families were more informal and did not mark such an occasion by a greeting.

(62) KZ G t̥ɕy uŋ bei ru a nɛ
 you up reach PO Q PRT
 ‘Oh, you have returned, eh.’

- (63) KT G bi ru pe
 come POL Q
 ‘You have come back, eh.’

In situations where visitors appeared, we found some general patterns:

- (a) Elderly/high status persons had to be greeted first and with polite manners (64). My interpreter, a young man, showed the respect due to a relatively elder Tibetan speaker by using an appropriate kin term and an honorific. In a similar way, due respect was expressed to an elderly visitor (65).
- (b) In town and the nearby countryside, visitors also had to submit to politeness rules. Thus, a visitor announced her coming across distances in a polite way (use of *tci*). (The host’s invitation in 66/R was direct, yet emphatic, using the *o* imperative, which rendered it more familiar.) Similar requests were observed in other dog guarded homes, though some were more direct and unmarked (especially in KL).
- (c) Unusual visitors were welcomed differently. In the enclave our guide greeted the young host with example 68/G, a common way of announcing a visit after a meal time. The invitation 68/R addressed to all of us, though direct, was considered polite by locals.
- (d) The degree of politeness expressed to relatives reflected socio-geographical distance. In Zhongdian, relatives visiting from out of town were received intimately (19) or with respect (67), depending on the type of relationship between the parties. But as a rule, a tone of politeness was always present if the relatives had not seen each other for some time. In the enclave relatives were welcomed most politely. Visitors who decided to undertake this long trip by foot up a small mountain trail had to be received with respect (68).

- (64) KZ G *neŋe* ke diu *cu(h)* je
 grandfather PRT here come PRT
 ‘Grandfather, oh you have come!’

R *He nods.*

- (65) KL G *aŋi* tshu *čỹ(h)* *ciε* tsa *cy(h)* su
 aunt here come PRT/TQ tea drink INV
 ‘Auntie, you have come, eh. Please do have some tea.’

(66) KXZ G deida tshə kua tci wo
 name dog hold POL IMPV
 'Deida, please hold the dog!'

R uɿ ʂu o + *holds the dog*
 up come IMPV
 'Come up!'

R¹ ja wo ja
 yes IMPV yes
 'OK, yes!'

(67) KT G ake wõ ru pe
 uncle come POL Q
 'Uncle, ah you have come.'

(68) KL G tho tʂa a thy
 breakfast Q PRT
 'Have you had breakfast?'

R tʂa thõ ndo ʂu
 tea drink sit INV
 'We've drunk tea. Do come inside!'

Where high dignitaries were concerned, the visit of a lama was inevitably marked by high verbal and nonverbal gestures that reflected the interlocutor's attitude of deference. The higher the lama, the more elaborate were the greeting rituals which also had overlapping religious functions. In Zhongdian we were instructed that only the man of the house could address high lamas. The host would most politely meet the high guest at the gate, inviting him with both hands, palms up, to the first floor.¹⁹ The hostess would show her deference nonverbally inside the home, by using *NV(h)* gestures such as dropping her braided hair and bowing, with her hands together in front of her chin while evading the guest by standing on the side, posture directed toward the lama. The guest dignitary would respond with an affirming nod and a touch of the

¹⁹ In houses with two floors and a court with a proper gate, people lived upstairs, whereas the domestic animals occupied the ground floor downstairs.

believer's head, a sign of blessing. He would then be guided to the best seat, either closest to or facing the altar, depending upon the layout of the room. The same greeting could be addressed to a monk by either the host or the hostess. His relatively lower status would be marked by less honorific address terms and gestures (i.e., no bow, just a nod and offering the seat only with one hand, palm up). Also, the seat assigned might not be the best in the house.

Informants from the countryside claimed the same type of honorific behavior. However, our informants enlarged more on the religious aspect of rituals than did our town informants. It was claimed that a *koto* (a deep bow, touching the floor with both hands) was mandatory for a lama, while three prostrations were required for the incarnate Buddha. There was also a slight difference in the use of the politeness markers. KXZ (70) would use the politeness marker **tci**, KT (71) **ru**, and KZ (69), as expected, a mixture. In the enclave there was no contact with incarnate lamas. Nevertheless, lamas of lower status living nearby were honorably welcomed (72) and invited with both hands to sit at the best place inside, next to the altar. If a favor was asked, such as holding a funeral, then the lama would be greeted with a *koto*.²⁰ A higher degree of intimacy was marked by the choice of the term of address and a reduced number of politeness markers, i.e., *NV(h)* and *POL*.

- (69) KZ G kuzu(h) uɪ ɕỹi(h) ru ɕỹi(h) tci
 incarnate lama up come POL come POL
 + *directing with both hands, bow*
 'Incarnate Lama, please come up, please come!'

- (70) KXZ G tɕosõ(h)tɕɛzi(h) da je ɕun(h) tci
 High Lama PRT up come POL
 + *directing with both hands, palms up, 3 prostrations*
 'High Lama, please come up!'

R *Nods, touching head of believer.*

- (71) KT G tɕosõ(h)tɕɛ(h) da je ɕỹ(h) ru
 High Lama PRT up come POL
 + *palms up, 3 prostrations*
 'High Lama, please come up!'

²⁰ This is a loanword from Chinese (cf. Mandarin *kòutóu*, literally 'knock the head'), which has also passed into English as *kowtow*. [Ed.]

R *Nod, touching head of believer.*

- (72) KL G X + tshu ɕỹ(h) ɕiɛ gwā zuo(h)
 title/name here come PRT/Q up sit
 + *directing with both hands, palms up*
 'X—ah you have come! Please have a seat!'

R *Takes off his cap, sits on the mat.*

High status persons might receive the same honorific salutations as high status lamas. The nonverbal behavior would clarify the degree of respect expressed toward the visitor. North of Zhongdian high visitors (such as researchers) were politely and with great deference invited into the house (73). Notice the nonverbal honorifics, the right hand with palm up indicating the direction while nodding (74). Besides the absence of a title, this nonverbal gesticulation indicated the reduced degree of deference when compared to greetings of high lamas.

- (73) KT G uɯ ɕyn(h) ru
 up come POL
 + *gesture with hand, palm up, a nod*
 'Please, come up!'

R *We enter.*

- (74) KZ G sābə ɕyn(h) ʂu zo(h) tʂa ɕy(h) ʂu
 uncle come POL sit tea drink POL
 + *pointing to seat with one hand*
 'Uncle, please, come, sit and do have some tea!'

Politeness markers were seldom used in initial encounters in public places, such as the street or the Tibetan hospital. Again the standard of politeness varied from individual to individual. In town an infrequently seen friend was politely greeted with (75). On the trail in the enclave, an older lady, addressed by a Naxi loanword, is questioned about her destination (76). In town certain people felt that elders should not be asked direct questions as in (76). In spite of the *V(h)* they would have considered its content as inappropriate. However, we

observed that on the trail this question was a standard greeting (usually unmarked) indicating interest in the passer-by, who would then relate as much as desired of his/her journey's destination. As a sign of deference, high lamas in the street or on the trail were supposed to be avoided. There would not be any verbal greeting. Out in the countryside north of Zhongdian, we observed an elderly lady bowing most respectfully to a passing incarnate lama. Younger people just avoided him, whereas a few children reverently joined their hands near the face while avoiding direct contact with him.

- (75) KZ G wæra dzõ ne c̣yi(h) ẽ
 friend town in come TQ
 'Friend, you have come downtown, haven't you?'

- (76) KL G adzɛ* ka c̣y(h) ngu zi
 grandma (LW) where come go PRT
 'Grandma, where are you going?'

- R phe dzo ngo + *pointing with the chin*
 there quickly go
 'Over there!'

At the Tibetan hospital, initial encounters were minimally marked. Doctors were greeted by their title or name and title, if there was a greeting. Politeness forms were a rare phenomenon. Only once during three prolonged visits did I observe a verbal honorific initial encounter between doctor/nurse and patient: a nurse politely inviting a patient to sit (77). Within this clinical setting, my organizer was greeted by someone with **gela?** 'teacher'. Notice, however, that the dependent honorific **la?** is seldom used in Kham Tibetan.²¹ Otherwise, nonverbal contemporary honorifics prevailed. I observed several men shaking hands with doctors or friends: *NV(h)*.

- (77) KZ G zo(h) ru
 sit POL
 'Please, sit!'

²¹ See Feuerer 1996 on honorifics used in Lhasa.

We would like to end this section with a last setting, uniquely Tibetan, at the Songzhanling Monastery situated a few kilometers north of the town of Zhongdian. This was a place where nonverbal honorific greetings abounded. As an example, we describe an audience with the Incarnate Lama. The high lama, wrapped in his red monk's garb, sat elevated in the lotus position, bent slightly forward, receiving visitors for the bestowal of a blessing. Believers were waiting in a line outside the small sanctuary for their turn. Within a period of ten minutes, ten of them passed by the lama. Here are the rules —*NV(h)*— underlying the phatic event of an audience between the believer and the Incarnate Lama:

- | | | | |
|---------|-------------|---|---|
| (78) KZ | Believer NV | G | + removing head cover/lowering his/her braided hair
± removing shoes
+ 3 prostrations (flat outstretched on the ground)
+ approaching the Lama in forward bent position
+ bowing to him
+ hands joined near the face
+ eyes lowered |
| | Lama | R | + touching the head of the believer
+ uttering a blessing |
| | Believer | R | + offering a <i>kata</i> (white scarf) / money / or tea |

The phatic exchange took place in complete silence, a sign of deference and submission. These gestures symbolized the highest form of deference someone could offer to an addressee in an initial encounter. They are the equivalents of extra honorifics in the highly stratified Lhasa Tibetan dialect. Among all the ten believers, two persons, advanced in age, did not take off their shoes. Another variant was the degree of bowing by the believer. A Tibetologist, Wang Xiaosong, assured me that it indicated the degree of faith of a believer: the deeper the bow the stronger the faith.

In conclusion, we have shown that Kham Tibetan has a rich system of politeness markers, that we here divided into two categories, one representing the POL (52-54) signaling various degrees of propositional politeness in “low

language", or modifying various degrees of politeness in the honorific "high language". The other category (55-56) is composed of a larger class of honorific morphemes representing the high language. We have shown that honorifics were expressed by both verbal and non-verbal forms.

The verbal politeness forms, including both categories, were most commonly found in homes. They marked initial encounters with elders (occasionally small children), infrequent visitors (relatives, etc), or high status guests. Nonverbal honorifics, specifying various degrees of deference to high status visitors, were seldom used outside of monasteries. They match the dual honorific system found in Lhasa, differentiating between high and extra-high forms—*NV(h)*—respectively labeled as honorifics and extra-honorifics.

A closer look at POL form usage revealed a definite distributional pattern. The enclave preferred the use of (52) **su**, the country side south of Zhongdian (KXZ) favoured (53) **tei**, and north of Zhongdian (KT) (54) **ru**. In the heterogeneous town of Zhongdian situated between KXZ and KT, as expected, the two patterns were used equally. (In town, gestures and politeness markers were less "high" than in the countryside.)

One final word on the social aspect of POL markers. Sociolinguistic rules of respect existed in all studied regions. Age was one of the factors determining the choice of politeness form. Elders often, and occasionally small children, were greeted respectfully, with high language. It was expected that young people above fifteen years of age would initiate greetings towards their elders.

Comparison

Kham Tibetan society is more highly stratified than the neighboring Naxi society. This becomes evident when we compare the sociolinguistic aspects of their politeness markers. The Kham Tibetan society, highly religious, is rooted in a complex, hierarchically oriented Lamaist religion, whereas Naxi society, rather pragmatic in its approach, has been traditionally unattached to any religious hierarchy. As Kham Tibetans continue to show deference to their spiritual superiors, this attitude is mirrored in their use of highly coded verbal and nonverbal expressions in initial encounters. The Naxi, unattached to any religious hierarchical system, use today a relatively simple code of politeness where high language plays only a small role.

Putting differences aside, our samples indicate several shared characteristics: (1) Both societies employ a set of politeness markers that differentiate various degrees of politeness determined by age, relative status, kin relation and frequency of a visit. (2) The criterion of age seemed to compete with that of superior status. In ordinary daily encounters, age more often than any other criterion was the decisive factor in choosing the appropriate politeness

marker. For the Kham, however, status rather than age became the salient factor in encounters with religious leaders. (3) With regard to situational factors, the use of POL markers (without honorifics) was prevalent at home and to lesser degree in the street. Naturally, Kham Tibetan monasteries were a preferred place for the elicitation of polite/high language. (4) In both societies the distribution of particular POL forms evidenced regional patterns. Kham Tibetan, with its range of low and high politeness markers, showed the more intricate distributional patterns. Finally, insofar as it is possible to determine reliable trends from our sample, both enclaves appeared to use politeness patterns somewhat differently from the other localities.

3. Context-sensitivity of greetings

The study of our data has shown that a purely linguistic and paralinguistic analysis of initial encounters, although essential, could not always explain their usage. (This has required occasional commentaries in the preceding sections.) Besides the linguistic and paralinguistic elements, we had to incorporate into our analysis psycho-social and contextual components, treating them all as mutually inclusive aspects of meaning, each contributing to the interpretation of greetings and their usages. In the first section below we will compare contextual variables of two greetings in Naxi and Kham Tibetan: first an invitation to be seated; then 'gastronomic' greetings. In the second section we argue that contextual variables determine linguistic choices in initial interactions, be it within or across languages.

Contextual variables

The first ancient salutation, 'to be seated', is characterized by an identical propositional content in different Naxi and Kham dialects. The second set of greeting variables all share gastronomy related topics, and from now on will be called "gastronomic greetings." Besides variant interpretations and origins, a subset of them is used with the restriction that they are only used around mealtimes.

SIT-ON-UPPER-SEAT GREETING

We observed that, across the Naxi regions, and to a lesser degree in particular Kham Tibetan regions, certain guests were selectively addressed with the same polite greeting form: '(Please), sit on the upper (seat)!' It was the verbal modifier 'up' that conveyed linguistically a tone of politeness to the addressee, signaling to him his privileged assignment to an upper seat in the area reserved for selected guests. In Kham, the co-occurrence of + 'up' + V(h)

was obligatory, whereas final POL marking was optional in Naxi and Kham sentences. In spite of phonological and morphological variants within each language, examples (79) to (83) shared the same propositional content. Our paradigms include three Naxi and two Kham regions:

(79)	NB	G	gə up	nu in	ledzu sit	± je kindly
(80)	NT	G	gə up	nu in	dzi sit	
(81)	NL	G	gə up	dzi sit	kamo please	
(82)	KL	G	kwa up	zo(h) sit		
(83)	KXZ	G	khwa up	zuo(h) sit	ru POL	

The use of this invitation differed greatly between and within speech communities. Starting with the traditional Naxi enclave, Baidi, example (79) was addressed to male guests only (excluding younger boys), inviting them to sit up on the platform, more specifically near the altar. The platform, because of its proximity to the altar, was considered a sacred place of honor reserved for men and older boys. (Women and younger boys were appropriately pointed with a gesture to some humble seating place on the floor next to the platform.) If used by my host in Tacheng, a modern rural Naxi family without an altar, this greeting (80) implied that the guest, either an elder man or woman, was invited to sit on the platform where the hearth was, also a privileged place. In the old town of Lijiang, where households no longer had platforms, this expression (81) was usually addressed to the highest status guest (man or elderly woman) who was to be seated on the most honorable and/or most comfortable seat nearest the altar (of higher spiritual beings), if there was one.²² Notice that gender and age were the determining criteria in the conservative

22 Across language boundaries, in Chinese, "sit up" referred to the emperor's raised seat (an historical meaning partially lost across the centuries) and implied that the guest was to sit on the best seat available in the room.

Baidi and traditional families in Lijiang, whereas only age was considered in an untraditional family of Tacheng. As a rule, we could state that the semantic variability in this particular invitation in Naxi is linked to both gender and age within the context of traditional Naxi families, but to age only within the context of modern families. The response of the visitors was usually nonverbal, i.e., the guests would occupy their assigned seat.

In Kham Tibetan areas, this formal invitation was only found in the enclave and in the more traditional KXZ. In the enclave, lamas or elder people were thus invited to the best seat next to or facing the altar (82). Like their Naxi neighbors, KL houses had a raised central area with a hearth in the middle of the room and the altar in one of its corners. Seating places (mats or little stools) were arranged around the raised area. Unlike the Naxi, this greeting form expresses deference or respect and was only addressed to spiritual leaders or elders. In Zhongdian County, 'sit on upper seat' invitations were not common. Their houses had no platforms although they all had altars.²³ Only one household in the more traditional KXZ region reported that occasionally a lama would be welcomed with (83)²⁴ while directing him respectfully with both hands, palms up, to the best seat next to the altar.

Comparing contextual variables of the KL (82) greeting with those from nearby NT (i.e., 80), it appears that the Kham enclave made a semantic loan, using the same formal invitation as the Naxi for highly marked situations. As mentioned above, the Kham build their houses with raised hearths modeled on the local Naxi architecture. Even if they did not sit on the slightly raised area but around it, they still used the same verbal modifier suggesting an upper seat (now symbolising the best seat in relation to the altar). The language, however, was high (honorific) rather than low. With the KXZ, where contact situations with Naxi were rare, we believe that their modifier 'up' referred to a high lama's raised seat and implied that the spiritual guest was treated similarly by being assigned to the best seat in the house. This speculation demands further verification. In Naxi the assignment of the best seat depended on age and/or gender; in the Kham areas, on high spiritual status first, and then only on age (for the enclave). It follows that in Kham and Naxi, both linguistic features (high versus low language) and contextual features (i.e., spiritual status vs. age

²³ '... please, sit (h) ...' (74) would be the equivalent of (83) in Zhongdian County, addressed to high spiritual leaders where extralinguistic factors such as the seating arrangements and gestures specified the degree of deference.

²⁴ This was the only initial encounter in KXZ where the POL morpheme **ru** was used. As a first hypothesis, we suggest that this unique form is a result of contacts with religious dignitaries/monks from the largest monastery situated north of Zhongdian, which, like KT, preferred the use of the politeness morpheme **ru**.

and/or gender) reflected culture-specific patterns of politeness (or respect for the Kham).

GASTRONOMIC GREETINGS

One of the most popular informal greetings across China used in homes (to visitors) or in the street (to friends/acquaintances, etc.) is **chi le ma?** 'Have you eaten?' We were astonished to find versions of this gastronomic greeting in Naxi and to a lesser degree in Kham Tibetan.²⁵ Our examples will indicate linguistic variations that were rooted in cultural differences. Again, contextual features will be linked to linguistic features for a better understanding of the regional meanings of gastronomic greetings. As in the preceding example, the paradigm below will group only topic-specific greetings (or parts of greetings) possibly seen elsewhere. Terms of address and responses will be excluded. The examples represent two Naxi (NL, NT) and, although unevenly, four Kham (KZ, KXZ, KT, KL) regions.

In both linguistic areas, these greetings were used in homes when guests arrived and in public places such as the street. We will demonstrate how variations are context sensitive, first in Naxi, then in Kham Tibetan.

NAXI

Around meal times Lijiang inhabitants—the younger more than the elder—would address their friends in the street with (84), the equivalent of the Chinese greeting **chi le ma?** 'Have you eaten?' We suspect that this greeting form is a semantic loan from Chinese,²⁶ the language of education, work, and the mass media. It could also be used by visitors when entering a friend's home or by hosts to their visiting neighbors. We were thus greeted by factory workers who were sharing some food before starting to work. The question in (84) took on the function of an indirect invitation, as did (85), when addressed to visitors or family members returning from a trip. Around supper time, we observed our Lijiang hostess salute with (84) her husband who had just returned from a long trip. During morning hours, relatives in Tacheng sometimes responded politely with a gastronomic inquiry—(85)NT—to their host's invitation to stay for a while at their home. In this example, the underlying function of the inquiry was to show concern about the host's well-being. (In the past people often lacked food.) Other variations, such as (86), were found in homes. This was a typical morning invitation commonly addressed to the eldest male member of the house. It was his responsibility to prepare the butter tea cherished by all high plateau peoples. The use of (87) and (47) were polite invitations to guests at

²⁵ This greeting is actually in wide use throughout East and Southeast Asia, e.g., in Lahu (ᵛ cā ò lâ). [Ed.]

²⁶ See Hong 1985.

any time of the day. Besides food, tea was offered to guests in general, while wine was most likely offered to male guests.

- (84) NL ha ə dzɪ sɪ le
 food Q at PRT Q
 ‘Have you eaten?’
- (85a) NL za tɕæ* / tɕu ə dzɪ se jə
 breakfast (LW)/ supper Q eat PRT POL
 ‘Have you eaten breakfast/supper?’
- (85b) NT le nv ə dzɪ se
 tea bread(?) Q eat PRT
 ‘Have you eaten breakfast?’
- (86) NL/NT le tɕə lu la / me
 tea heat come POL
 ‘Could/would you come brewing the tea!’
- (87a) NL le duu khua jə
 tea one bowl POL
 ‘Please, drink tea!’
- (87b) NT zɿ duu tɕər thuu la
 alcohol one cup drink PO
 ‘Do drink a cup of wine!’

KHAM

Kham gastronomic greetings were found in public places as well as in homes. The “low” version of (88) was used informally among peers or acquaintances met along the road in the countryside, as a sign of camaraderie. Its usage, like that of (91), was not subject to temporal restrictions. Around mealtimes more specific greetings could be employed, (89) for breakfast and (90) for lunch, although they were not commonly used greeting modes. The inquiries in (89)KZ and (90)KZ were used by my collaborators in the street as they met each other after breakfast or lunch on the way to my hotel. These

greetings may be semantically modeled on Chinese for the same socio-cultural reasons explained above for the Naxi (see comments on 84).²⁷ In homes the low version of (88) and/or (90) turn into a more informal invitation for a cup of special yak-butter tea and/or some food to visitors with whom a familiar/intimate relation is cultivated. Some elders, lamas or a rare visitor would be greeted respectfully with the marked V(h) version of (88). The informal version (89)KL was used as an invitation to us, and in a different setting, as a response to the hostess' welcome (90)KL.

In example (89) lunch (lit. meaning half (day) \pm tea in KZ)²⁸ is drunk in KZ and eaten in the enclave. This requires a word of explanation about Kham Tibetan meals. In the past and still at times today in the Kham Tibetan countryside, butter tea was served for the morning and midday meals with the main staple called *tsampa* (barley flour pap mixed with butter tea). The tea is the dominant ingredient of both meals, which would explain the use of the verb 'drink' rather than 'eat'. In the enclave we were served butter tea for breakfast and lunch besides other foods. Their use of the verb 'to eat' for lunch appears again to be a semantic loan. Finally, (91), another invitation with various usages, could be used in homes or in public, but mainly to male visitors. G (91) was observed on the road near Zhongdian. Our driver stopped as his friend, on an oncoming police motorcycle, also came to a halt. Our driver jumped out of the car with a bottle in his hand, inviting his buddy to a drink, therein clearly demonstrating a sincere initial encounter.

(88)	KL/KZ	t̤sa	thō / ɕyi(h)	± su
	KXZ	tea	drink / drink	INV
		'Have some tea, please!'		

(89a)	KZ	ce t̤sa	thō	a	thy
		mid-tea	drink	Q	PRT
		'Have you had your lunch?'			

(89b)	KL	dza	th̥sa	a	th̥y
		half	eat	Q	PRT
		'Have you had your lunch?'			

²⁷ To be adequately addressed, this potentially complex question requires a larger sample among the educated younger Zhongdian population.

²⁸ Notice the different terms for 'breakfast' in the G 'Have you had your breakfast?': KT/KZ **su t̤sa** (thō a thy)? 'grain tea (drink Q PRT)' and KL **tho t̤sa** (a thy)? 'food tea (Q PRT).'

- (90a) KZ se t̥sha ʂu
 food eat INV
 ‘Come eat!’
- (90b) KL je sa ʂu
 food eat INV
 ‘Do come inside and eat!’
- (91) KZ ara thō̃ ʂu
 wine drink INV
 ‘Do have some wine!’

We conclude that the gastronomic greetings in both languages tend to be informal rather than formal, and contemporary rather than traditional. More specifically, the inquiries used around mealtimes in both Naxi and Kham Tibetan suggest in part semantic borrowings from Chinese (and possibly from Naxi for the KL). Such greetings have been used by a relatively educated segment of the population in heterogeneous locations including the towns of Lijiang and Zhongdian. In the more homogeneous Kham enclave, its users seemed to be the younger generation, raised in a bilingual environment (Tibetan and Naxi) and school system (Chinese and oral Naxi). These borrowings are characteristic of a people in contact with other ethnicities.

Other variations that were not borrowings revealed culture specific features: In Naxi the eldest male of the house was invited to prepare the tea; in Kham homes he (and/or others) was to drink the already prepared tea. Among Naxi, the ‘drink tea’ greeting was restricted to the home, whereas for Khams, this greeting had a very wide range of use; (88) was common, pronounced to just about any person throughout the day. Other invitations were gender sensitive. The Naxi invited males more than females for a drink at home, a pattern also observed in Kham regions where alcohol was offered to a male on the road as a sign of camaraderie. This demonstrated that such greetings were genuine invitations.

By combining contextual features such as age, gender, status (education), relation between interlocutors and situations (including time and location), the semantic makeup of gastronomic greetings becomes evident.

Linguistic choices

In the first part of this final section we will examine linguistic choices within a code, such as the switching to or borrowing from another code. In the

second part we will highlight contexts that entailed the use of a non-native (or second) code, i.e. *borrowing*²⁹ (from Chinese or Naxi) or *switching* into Chinese.

Within Naxi and Kham Tibetan, we have found evidence of lexical switching or borrowing in at least five areas: (i) economics, (ii) politics, (iii) education, (iv) health, and (v) family. The loans were mainly lexical, although grammatical switching was also observed.

1) *Economics*. In both towns, Lijiang and Zhongdian, work was often referred to by a lexical loan signifying 'work'. The semantic scope of this term refers to a working situation relatively new to these once agricultural and nomadic peoples. In urban areas traditional physical farmwork has been replaced by factory labor, office work, etc., introduced and partially administered by the Chinese government. This explains specific lexical borrowings in urban settings, such as (92) and (94) from nationality clothes factories, as well as (93)³⁰ addressed by a mother to the daughter returning home from office work.

- (92) NL səbæ* tshi se læ
 work (LW) come PRT TQ
 'You have come to work, eh!'

- (93) NL cja* bæ* se læ
 finish (LW) work (LW) PRT TQ
 'Finished work, eh?'

- (94) KZ tchy sambaŋ* jy wõ ʔæ ?
 you work (LW) PRT come TQ
 'You have come to work, eh?'

2) *Politics*. The contemporary governmental structures on the high plateau have been implemented, as elsewhere in the country, by the central government of China. As expected, titles of government officials are Chinese loans in Naxi, such as (95)NT used in the Naxi township of Tacheng (see 16). These loans are relatively recent and make up for the lack of existing concepts. Kham Tibetans are less inclined to use such Chinese loans, since a pool of ranks

²⁹ See the section on loans in Naxi by Pinson (1997)

³⁰ See note on (23). Notice also the switching to the Chinese word order (S)VO.

(titles) in Tibetan are available to them, as in (95)KZ. Within formal settings officials were greeted by their titles. In informal settings, such as on the street, or among colleagues, these government employees were called by kinship terms (often loanwords) or even addressed by their names if personally known. This extension of kinship terms to non-kin persons had the goal of marking solidarity rather than distance or power. Relative seniority was thus marked within the dyad. (96)NL could be used by a young child showing respect or an elder person indicating care. (96)KL/KZ used by an adult would indicate respect to an elder. Notice (96)KL found in the Tibetan enclave. This time we are in the presence of a demographically conditioned Naxi (rather than a Chinese) loan.

- | | | |
|-------|----|--------------------------------------|
| (95a) | NT | cjætsæ (LW)
'county governor' |
| (95b) | KZ | p̃ymə / guan (LW)
'governor' |
| (96a) | NL | susu (LW)
'uncle' |
| (96b) | KL | apu (LW)
'(paternal) grandfather' |
| (96c) | KZ | nene (LW)
'grandmother' |

3) *Health*. Both Naxi and Kham Tibetans possess their own traditional medical practices. The Tibetans (including Khams) especially have their own highly developed and internationally recognized medical system. In spite of these traditions, a contemporary health system that combines western and Chinese medical practices has been implanted. Observing initial encounters between patients and Naxi doctors in NL/NT and Tibetan doctors in the traditional Tibetan Hospital of Zhongdian, we noticed that in clinical settings greetings were absent or reduced to the doctor's title ± name (98), or even less often to a kinship term. In Lijiang, a middle aged woman greeted the doctor's assistant with (97). Most of the greetings at the Lijiang hospital contained only the title (a loanword). Patients who were less shy and more knowledgeable added the doctor's name. We were told that those who did not greet were

regular patients of the clinic, so that the regularly occurring event made greeting unnecessary. In Zhongdian, greetings rarely occurred in clinical settings. Such greetings that did occur were minimal, using the loan title as in Lijiang, or (mostly by elders) the Tibetan equivalent. We observed other nonverbal salutations in NT and KT: some smiled and nodded at the doctor, and in KZ one man heartily shook the doctor's hand. This latter, typically masculine greeting gesture, as explained above, has been borrowed from the West.

- (97a) NL asisi (LW)
 'uncle'
- (98a) NL ± tɕæ (LW) / jise (LW)
 'Jiang doctor'
- (98b) KL i:se (LW) / memba
 'doctor'

4) *Education*. In Naxi regions formal instruction has been predominantly in Chinese with the exception of a few bilingual programs at the elementary level, one of them in Tacheng. In contrast, Kham Tibet is covered by bilingual programs, especially in country schools. In spite of the implantation of a new Tibetan middle school in Zhongdian, urban parents hesitate to send their children to Tibetan programs because of the low demand for Tibetan on the job market where Chinese is dominant. Naxi and Kham parents in general value Chinese education above native instruction. Though terms exist for 'teacher' in both languages, teachers or scholars are constantly addressed by the Chinese title, in Naxi (i.e., 99NL) more frequently than in Tibetan.³¹ For example, in Zhongdian, our organizer, a Tibetologist, was respectfully greeted with (99)KZ by an elder (monk) in the Tibetan hospital as *gela?* and by a younger man in the street as *laosə* (LW). In both situations the encounter was solidified by a hearty handshake. In example (6) we saw the infiltration of Chinese within the Naxi home, where the designation of a school activity *sonje* (LW) 'homework' (to be done in Chinese of course) is borrowed from Chinese. The principal of a

³¹ For the Naxi higher learning in Chinese has been introduced by the Chinese government, but not so for the Tibetans. Higher learning in classical Tibetan, religious texts, and medicine has been part of Kham's religious monastic traditions. Still today monasteries possess important libraries of sacred texts, printed partially in local monastic printing stores. Though many of these ancient texts are recent reproductions, they bear witness to a rich, ancient *literary culture*. *Only the elite has profited from such traditional instruction; China has opened up education to the general population.*

bilingual school in Zhongdian is respectfully called by a relatively new title **xiazaŋ** (LW) 'principal / master' (see 21).

(99a)	NL	lasu (LW)	(99b) KZ	laoṣə (LW) / gegã / gela?(h)
		'teacher'		'teacher'

5) *Family*.³² We have observed that the use of Naxi and to a lesser degree Kham Tibetan is undergoing changes in urban centers at the lexical and grammatical levels. During the lunch break, in a courtyard of teacher homes we observed younger colleagues greeting each other in a language marked by lexical loans. Example (100) was a friendly confirmation-seeking greeting. The Chinese loan **phəjə*** 'friend' (LW) according to Pinson (pers. comm., 1998) covers a slightly different semantic field than its Naxi equivalent. Its use could thus be justified. Utterance (101) is an example of grammatical code switching, where the Chinese question particle **ma** stands for the Naxi equivalent **le**. Such code mixing has become a rather common phenomenon in Lijiang among the younger generation. It can only be explained in extralinguistic terms, mainly the frequent exposure to and use of Chinese. Their Kham Tibetan neighbors were more linguistic 'purists'. Nevertheless, in initial encounters, as mentioned before, they also used borrowed kinship terms, e.g., **nene*** 'grandmother' (LW) in (96)KZ used by an old lady and (96) and (97) in Naxi. (96)KL as well as (60)KL **adze*** 'grandmother' (LW) are Naxi loans easily traced back to this enclave's contact situation. The area of kinship loans is beyond the objectives of this paper, although without a doubt it needs further investigation.

(100)	NL	wu	ke	phəjə*	læ ?
		you	PRT	friend (LW)	TQ
		'This is your friend, eh?'			

(101)	NL	ha	dzi	ma* ?
		food	eat	Q (LW)
		'Have you eaten?'		

In this section we have pointed out how language has changed in various areas of society, in urban centers more so than in the countryside, and more

³² We are using the term 'family' in a large sense, including interactions in the home, among friends or colleagues, and in public places such as the street, the school court, etc.

among the young than the old. We attribute this change to the dominant presence of the Chinese language in school, at work, and in the mass media. Borrowings of Chinese titles have occurred in politics, education, and medical settings, where they designate new institutional positions. Kinship loans were also found across language boundaries. Clear loans have been observed in the Kham enclave, where Naxi kinship loans reflect their demographic situation, intermarriages and frequent Naxi contacts. For the Naxi, in urban homes and public places, language mixing among the younger and more educated has become acceptable. In this group, initial interactions are now often marked by lexical loans and grammatical switching. Contextual features help us to better understand the use of Chinese loans, in terms of socio-cultural desirability and the effect of peer pressure. They are a tribute to the high prestige of the donor language. Finally, it appears that Naxi greetings are more infiltrated by loans than Kham Tibetan.

BILINGUAL SETTINGS

In this final section we will comment on the use of language in bilingual greeting situations. We have chosen the bilingual school situations where we observed greeting patterns in the classroom. Let us briefly explain the bilingual school situation among the Naxi and the Khams.³³

In the eighties, a new educational policy was promulgated by the Central Government, encouraging the development of bilingual education in minority regions. As a response, two pilot projects were set up in the Naxi regions, one of them in the Tacheng township, a remote homogeneous farming region where preschool children were monolingual Naxi speakers. Due to this program's high success, it has become part of the Yilong District elementary school's curriculum. In Kham Tibetan areas 26 bilingual programs were instituted at the primary level, although mostly in rural regions. Today Zhongdian has its own bilingual Tibetan middle school, Tibetan teacher training and Tibetan medical training schools which are attracting a predominantly rural student population.

Greeting clichés (fixed stereotyped forms, Knuf 1990:114) were the exception rather than the norm in the Tibeto-Burman communities we visited. However they were present in the KZ classroom we observed, as a daily greeting routine practiced between teacher and students at the beginning of

³³ Unlike Tibetan, Naxi has a unique literary tradition based on an ancient (though limited) pictographic writing system. Presently, a modernized, phonetically based writing system is contributing to the spread of literacy in rural areas, for adult and elementary education. For example, two biliteracy pilot projects at the elementary level have produced a first set of textbooks and literacy texts in this new Naxi writing (Feurer 1996b). A newspaper, called Naxi New Phonetic Writing Newspaper, is now published in the new script by the Nationality Languages Commission of Lijiang County.

Tibetan lessons. The students, standing up, would greet their teacher as in (102).

- (102) KZ G gəgæ yabu!
 teacher good
 'Teacher, you are good!'
- R lodzo tsho debo ʂɿ do!
 student PL good down sit
 'Good students, sit down!'

The identical greeting routine (+ address + declarative phrase) was used in the Naxi classroom, where Naxi was taught, only this time the greeting was in Chinese. (We were informed that this greeting routine was practiced all across China.) Greeting within the classroom was an artificial act for the Kham and the Naxi where generalized formal education along Chinese lines had been introduced not too long ago.

These examples show the impact Chinese has had, directly and indirectly, on the educational practices in both of these bilingual schools. In the bilingual Naxi school, the choice of a Chinese greeting routine during a formal native language class showed the dominant role Chinese played at school. In Kham bilingual programs, particularly in Tibetan classes, Tibetan was used throughout, with the expectation that these native language skills would lead to a career in Tibetan. Yet despite this favorable attitude toward formal Tibetan expressed by a segment of the rural population, Chinese played a dominant role in the town of Zhongdian where students preferred instruction in Chinese. We want to close this section on an alarming note. We observed in Kham and Naxi urban homes that when the parents greet their young children after school, many no longer use their native tongue, but switch to Chinese to facilitate their children's integration into the Chinese school system. Among the Naxi, elder persons lament the younger generation's speaking skills: "They don't know anymore how to speak good Naxi."

CONCLUSION

This paper is an exploratory study. We are aware that most of the conclusions drawn need to be empirically verified in more detail. In this sense, the data will hopefully serve as a basis for further investigations. We have shown at both the linguistic and paralinguistic levels that certain greetings in both Naxi and Kham Tibetan are characterized by politeness markers. Kham

Tibetan used a more highly stratified system of verbal and nonverbal politeness markers (including honorifics) than Naxi, as a result of the widespread influence of Tibetan Buddhism.

We also sought to show that the Kham Tibetan language does possess high language used by young and old, despite sustained claims to the contrary. Some Tibetans maintain that among ordinary Kham Tibetans politeness forms are not used.³⁴ We hope to have corrected such erroneous opinions by demonstrating the complex patterns of verbal and nonverbal politeness markers in greetings used by Kham Tibetans of Zhongdian County.

We have confirmed the general belief that language usage in urban centres is less stable as a result of political, economic, educational and social change. We also demonstrated that the Kham Tibetan population of Zhongdian County was more conservative in its language maintenance than the Naxi, due to its impressive cultural (literary) heritage and its geographic isolation. In urban settings, however, patterns of language maintenance and shift were similar to their Naxi neighbors.

In this paper we have illustrated how two languages share common sociolinguistic strategies to accomplish different effects in phatic encounters that are meaningful, sincere, and highly personal (unlike in English), and how varying socio-cultural pressures have led to their maintenance or a possible shift. In urban settings we observed an increased shift to Chinese in parent-child initial encounters. Will this tendency be reversed as the Naxi and Kham Tibetan peoples learn to live in a bilingual context where codes take on different (diglossic) functions? Only time and further research will tell.

³⁴ Personal communication of the Tibetologist Professor Lu from Beijing (1992), who believed that Kham Tibetans did not possess a high language. In 1986 and 1995, while Feuerer was in Lhasa, the local population would judge the Kham Tibetans to be impolite on the basis of dialectal differences (see also Feuerer 1996a:50).

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