

THE DAAI PRONOUNS AND PRONOMINAL AGREEMENT
SYSTEM: ALTERNATE SETS AND FOCUS

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0. INTRODUCTION

Daai is a Southern Chin language, spoken by approximately 45 000 people in the townships of Matupi, Mindat, Kanpetlet and Paletwa in the Southern Chin Hills of Myanmar. The data for this paper¹ is based on the speech of a subgroup called “Yang”, who lives in the Kanpetlet township along the Pilog river.

In Daai², the agreement constituent of the verb phrase consists of pronoun-like elements, free morphemes that can function as separate units and can combine in a variety of combinations.

The verb phrase is complicated by a multitude of verbal auxiliaries. Most Daai verbs alternate between two stem forms, here referred to as ‘Stem A’ and ‘Stem B’. A complete account of this alternation goes beyond the limits of this paper. However, the alternation is triggered by factors relevant to the agreement system that will be mentioned below as it becomes pertinent to the discussion. The translation of the examples will show the usage of stem A or stem B. If the verb is marked with neither ‘A’ nor ‘B’, then it belongs to a verb class that does not show stem alternation.

Daai, like most Chin languages, is an ergative language. The subject of the transitive clause is marked with the ergative marker *noh*, the subject of the intransitive clause and the object of the transitive clause are unmarked.

This paper describes the interaction between pronouns within the noun phrases, functioning at clause level and the agreement constituent of the verb phrase.

1.PRONOUNS AND AGREEMENT IN THE INTRANSITIVE
CLAUSE

1.1. First person Pronouns and Agreement

There is only one set of pronouns for both intransitive and transitive clauses.

	1 st Person	2 nd Person	3 rd Person
Singular	Kei	nang	ah nih
dual exclusive	kei nih	nang nih	ah nih nih
dual inclusive	nih nih		
plural exclusive	kei nih-e	nang nih-e	ah nih nih-e
plural inclusive	nih nih -e		

Table 1. Free Pronoun Forms

Subject agreement forms are the same for both intransitive and transitive clauses.

	1 st Person	2 nd Person	3 rd Person
singular	kei	nah	(ah)
du/pl exclusive	kah nih	nah nih	(ah nih)
du/pl inclusive	nih		

Table 2. Subject Agreement Forms (Parenthesized forms are omitted under conditions discussed in Section 1.3.)

These two tables make the contrastive categories of the free pronoun set and the set of subject agreement form apparent, as they show that there is no dual/plural distinction found with subject agreement forms.

Example 1

- a. *Kei kah dong kti* I run/ran-B'
 NP:1S AGR:1S run• RL

- b. *Kah dong kti* 'I run/ran-B'

Example 2

- a. *Kei nih kah nih sit* 'We two (not you)
 NP:1EX.D/PL kkhai will go-B'

AGR:1EX.D/PL go FUT

- b. *Kei nih uōōng jah kah nih sit*
æōōng khai.
 NP:1EX.D/PL N̄ng and AGR:1EX.D/PL go FUT
 P̄ng

'We two, N̄ng and P̄ng, (not you)will go'

- c. *Kah nih sit* 'We two (not you)
 AGR:1EX.D/PL kkhai will go-B'
 go FUT

Example 3

- a. *Nih nih nih ngđi kti* 'We two stand/stood-B'
 NP:1IND/PL AGR:1IN.D/PL stand RL

- b. *Nih ngđi kti.* 'We two stand/stood-B'
 AGR:1IN.D/PL stand RL

Example 4

- a. *Kei nih-e kah nih ip kti-e* 'We (not you) sleep/slept-B'

as well as inclusive and exclusive within first person. Agreement forms are less rich, lacking the dual/plural distinction.

1.3. Third person

Example 7

- | | | | | |
|----|---------------|-------------|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| a. | <i>Ah nih</i> | <i>dong</i> | <i>kti</i> | ‘ He runs/ran-B’ |
| | NP:3S | run | RL | |
| b. | | <i>Dong</i> | <i>kti.</i> | ‘He runs/ran-B ’ |
| c. | <i>Bebe</i> | <i>dong</i> | <i>kti.</i> | ‘The older brother runs/ran-B’ |

Example 8

- | | | | | | | | |
|----|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------|------------|--------------|---|--|
| a. | <i>Ah nih nih</i> | | <i>lok</i> | <i>kti</i> | <i>xooi</i> | 'They (two) come/came-B' | |
| | NP:3D/PL | | come | RL | DU | | |
| b. | | | <i>Lok</i> | <i>kti</i> | <i>xooi.</i> | 'They (two) come/came-B' | |
| c. | <i>Mnaai jah Ngthang</i> | | <i>lok</i> | <i>kti</i> | <i>xooi.</i> | 'Mnaai and Ngthang come'/came-B' | |
| d. | <i>Ngbe</i> | <i>ngna</i> | <i>xooi</i> | <i>lok</i> | <i>kti</i> | <i>xooi</i> | 'The brothers(two) come/came-B' |
| | NP:older-brother | younger-brother | DU | come | RL | DU | |
| e. | <i>Ngma</i> | | <i>xooi</i> | <i>lok</i> | <i>kti</i> | <i>xooi</i> | 'The two brothers-in-law come/came-B' |

Example 9

- a. *Ah nih nih-e lok kti-e* ‘**They come/came-B’**
NP:3D/PL-PLM come RL-PLM
- b. *Lok kti-e.* ‘They **come/came-E**

Example 10

- | | | | | | | |
|----|----------------|--------------|-----------|---------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| a. | <i>Athoi-e</i> | | | <i>sit</i> | <i>ktie-e.</i> | ‘The young people go/went-B’ |
| | Youth-PLM | | | go/went | RL-PLM | |
| b. | <i>Kpami</i> | <i>kking</i> | <i>ni</i> | <i>ah nih</i> | <i>seh</i> | ‘Only men go/went-A’ |
| | NP:Men | just | only | AGR:3D/PL | go/went | |

Example 11

- | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|-----------------------|------------|-----|
| <i>Ah nih nih-a</i> | <i>seh</i> | <i>ni</i> | <i>ah</i> | <i>khỹh</i> | ‘Only their | cow | has |
| | <i>mse</i> | | | | disappeared-A’ | | |
| NP:3D/PL-
POS | cow | only | AGR:3S | disappeared | | | |

As for first and second and third person, the usage of the pronoun form is conditioned by the focus on clause level.

In the intransitive clause, the third person agreement is normally realized as zero, if the noun phrase consists of the pronoun form. If the noun phrase consists of a full noun, the agreement forms (**ah**, or **ah nih**) occur when the subject is followed by the particle, **ni** 'only', which indicates strong emphasis. In such cases the verb is represented by stem A and the tense particles **kti** (present/past realis) and **kkhai** (future realis) do not occur.

The occurrence of the third person agreement forms is more frequent in clauses that form parts of complex sentences, as in running narrative discourse, especially, if the noun phrase subject is omitted.

Example 12

Naan im **ah** pha be ʔng ah pu ta am ve ti.

Palace house AGR:3S arrive AUX-back when AGR:3S uncle as_for not live
AUX-any_longer

'When he arrived_back-A at the palace, his father-in-law did not live_ any longer-A.

Example 13

Moa **ah nih** ve u ʔng phi k̤h hjoɪ pai ɿ k̤i kti-e.

Jungle-LOC AGR:3PL stay PLM when also not lazy and work RL-
PLM

'While they live-A in the jungle they work without being lazy'

Whenever third person agreement occurs, the focus of the clause is removed from the verb phrase, the action. In the sentences above the focus is shifted to the locative phrase.

2. THE TRANSITIVE CLAUSE

2.1. Subject marking and agreement in the transitive clause

Example 14

a. Kei noh lou kah phyou kti 'I weed/weeded-B the field'

NP:1S ERG field AGR:1S weed RL

b. Lou kah phyou kti. 'I weed/weeded-B

c. Kei noh ni lou kah the field
phyoh.
NP:1S ERG only field AGR:1S 'I only weed/
weed weeded-A the field'

Example 15

- a. *Ah nih nih noh tui lak kti xooi.* **'The two fetch/fetched-B water'**
 NP:3D/PL ERG water fetch RL DU
Tui lak kti xooi. **'The two fetch/fetched-B water'**
- b. water fetch RL DU
- c. *Ah nih nih noh ni tui ah nih laak.* **'Only the two fetch/fetched-A water'**
 NP:3D/PL ERG only water AGR:3D/PL
 fetch
- d. *Ah nih nih-e noh ni tui ah nih 'laak' -u.* **'Only they fetch/fetched-A water'**
 NP:3D/PL-PLM ERG only water AGR:3D/PL
 fetch -PLM
- e. *Ah nih noh ni tui ah laak.* **'Only he fetches/fetched-A water'**
 NP:3S ERG only water AGR:3S fetch

Example 16

- a. *Mnaai Pa noh ngnam-e ah jah hmuh.* **'Mnaai Pa sees/saw-A the villagers'**
 Mnaai Pa ERG village-PLM AGR_{sub}:1S
 AGR_{obj}:1/3PL see/saw
- b. *Mnaai Pa noh ah jah hmuh.* **'Mnaai Pa sees/saw-A them'**
 Mnaai Pa ERG AGR_{sub}:3S AGR_{obj}:1/3PL see/saw

Example 17

Ah nih nih-e noh vok-e ah nih jah hmu- u. **'They see/saw-A the pigs'**
 NP:3D/PL-PLM ERG pig-PLM AGR_{sub}:3D/PL
 AGR_{obj}:1/3D/PL see-PLM

The subject of the transitive clause is marked with ergative marker *noh*. The subject agreement forms are the same as in the intransitive clause.

There is yet another option to manipulate focus at clause level, through using the particle *ni* 'only, just', indicating strong emphasis, which was already mentioned in 1.2. In the transitive clause, third person subject agreement is more frequently realized than in the intransitive clause. Subject agreement is not an obligatory constituent of the transitive clause.

2. 2. Object agreement in the transitive clause

ObjectAgr	1 st person	2 nd person	3 rd person
singular	nah	ning	ah
dual/plural	jah	ning jah	jah

Table 3. Object Agreement Forms

This table shows that there is neither a dual/plural nor an inclusive/exclusive distinction in the object agreement forms.

Example 18

- a. *Ah nih noh kei nah ɛk kti* 'He looks/looked-B at me'
 NP_{sub}:3S ERG NP_{obj}:1S AGR_{obj}:1S look RL
- b. *Kei nah ɛk kti.* 'He looks/looked-B at me'
- c. *Ah nih noh nah ɛk kti.* 'He looks/looked-B at me'
- d. *Nah ɛk kti.* '(He)looks/looked-B at me'

Example 19

- a. *Ngnam-e nih nih jah hmuk kti-e.* 'The villagers see/saw-B us two.'
 NP_{sub}:village-PLM NP_{obj}:1IN.D/PL AGR_{obj}:1/3D/PL see RL-PLM
- b. *Nih nih jah hmuk kti.* 'They see/saw-B us two'
- c. *Jah hmuk kti-e.* '(They) see/saw-B us/them'

Example 20

- a. *Mnaai Pa noh kei nih-e jah hmuk kti.* 'Mnaai Pa sees/saw-B us (not you)'
 Mnaai Pa ERG NP_{obj}:1EX.PL-PLM AGR_{obj}:1PL see
- b. *Mnaai Pa noh jah hmuk kti.* 'Mnaai Pa sees/saw-B us/them'
- c. *Mnaai Pa noh kei nih-e ah jah hmuh.* 'Mnaai Pa sees/saw-A us'.
 Mnaai Pa ERG NP_{obj}:1EX.PL-PLM AGR_{sub}:3PS AGR_{obj}:1PL see

Example 21

- Kei noh kah ning hmuk kti.* 'I see/saw you'
 NP:1S ERG AGR_{sub}:1S AGR_{obj}:2S see/saw RL
- Kah ning hmuk kti.* 'I see/saw you'

Example 22

- a. *Ngnam sa noh nang nih ning jah ngjak kti.*
 NP_{sub}:village son ERG NP_{obj}:2D/PL AGR_{obj}:2D/PL hear RL
 'The villager hears/heard-B you two'
- b. *Ngnam sa noh ning jah ngjak kti.*

'The villager hears/heard-B you (PL)

c. *Ning jah ngjak kti.* (Somebody) **hears/heard-B**
you (PL)'

Example 23

a. *Nngnam-e noh ye pa-e ah nih jah hmuh-u .*
NP_{sub}:village-PLM ERG enemy big-PLM AGR_{sub}:3D/PL AGR_{obj}:1/3D/PL see/saw-PLM
'The villagers see/saw-A the enemies'

b. *Nngnam-e noh ah nih nih-e ah nih jah hmuh -u.*
NP_{sub}:village- PLM ERG NP_{obj}:3P.D/PL- PLM AGR_{sub}:3D/PL AGR_{obj}:1/3D/PL see/saw-PLM

The villagers see/saw-A them.

Object agreements for all persons, including third person, are obligatory constituents of the transitive clause. This statement seems contradictory considering the examples (14) and (15), where we find objects, but no object agreements. I see three possible explanations:

There is no object agreement for inanimate objects.

This theory can be contradicted by some rare examples I found in my collection of narrative texts:

Example 24

Asuñngta nngnam sa-e noh mpa shui shak sun mo-a
Then NP_{sub}:village PLM son- ERG NP_{obj}:Burmese clothes DEM forest-LOC
ah nih jah tha-in mjoh
AGR_{sub}:3D/PL AGR_{obj}:3D/PL put-AUX.INT RSP

'Then the villagers put-B the Burmese clothes away in the jungle'

Example 25

Klak nah jah na- pñi kkhai ni
NP_{obj}:properties AGR_{sub}:2S AGR_{obj}:3D/PL DIR.AUX- carry FUT EMP

'You will go ahead and carry the things'

In (24) and (25) we find object agreement for the inanimate objects 'clothes' and 'properties'. That leads to a second possible explanation:

Object agreement might be optional for inanimate objects. Whether or not they trigger agreement may depend upon their prominence in the text.

A third possible explanation:

The examples 14 and 15 are not 'pure' transitive clauses

Though (14) and (15) seem to be SOV clauses, they are very likely not 'pure' transitive clauses. These examples are simplified sentences taken from narrative texts. The two verbs 'phyoh/phyou' 'to weed', and 'laak/la-' 'to fetch', occur frequently with other objects, and also with no object at all. But in the above mentioned examples the combinations of objective and verb may have taken the function and meaning of a verb phrase. We have the

well-known example from Burmese and also from many Chin languages, where the verb phrase ‘eat’ is mostly realized as ‘eat rice’.

Here are other examples of transitive clauses without object agreement:

Example 26

a. *Kei noh ni vok kah hmuh.* ‘**Only I** saw-A the pig/pigs’

NP:1S ERG only pig AGR_{sub}:1S see

b. *Vok ni kah hmuh.* ‘I see/saw-A only **the pig/pigs**’

NP_{obj}:pig only AGR_{sub}:1S see

Again it is the particle *ni*, which causes the irregularity of the normal agreement pattern. Here we see that it can combine with the subject noun phrase, as well as with the object noun phrase, with the result being the same: the omission of the object agreement particle. This is somehow the reverse of what *ni* brings about in (10) b., (11) a., (15) c. to e., where it causes the realization of the subject agreement for the third person. These observations lead to speculations about the actual role of *ni*. It is possible, that *ni* is sometimes not only a particle indicating focus, but an indicator that the structure, which looks on the surface like a transitive clause, could be actually a relative clause, especially considering that in all of these examples, verb stem alternation takes place (see Lehman:1996). So it may be possible to translate (26) in the following way:

It was me, who saw the pig/pigs.

It was the pig/pigs, that I saw.

The same kind of interpretations may also apply for (10) b., (11) a., (14) c., (15) c. to e. This is of course a hypothesis and needs further investigation. My reason for including this speculation here is to suggest a possible solution for irregularity in the agreement pattern.

3. The Ditransitive Clause

The object agreement forms in Table 3 are also used for indirect object agreement.

Example 27

a. *Kei noh nang ̃n ui kah ning peet ni*
g

NP _{sub} :1	ER	NP _{Iobj} :2	to	NP _{obj} :do	AGR _{sub} :1	AGR _{Iobj} :2	give/gav	EM
S	G	S		g	S	S	e	P

‘I give/gave-A the dog to you’

b. *Nang ̃ng ui kah ning peet ni.*

‘I give/gave the dog to **you**’

c. *Ui kah ning peet ni.*

‘I give/the **dog** to you’

Example 28

a. *Nang nih noh Kei ̃ng meh kkeih nah nih*

NP _{sub}	ERG	NP _{Iobj} :1S	to	NP _{obj} :dried	AGR _{sub} :2D/PL
:2D/PL				meat	

nah pek kti.

AGR_{iobj}:1S give RL

'You (two) give/gave-B dried meat to me'

b. *Kei ʔng meh kkeih nah nih nah peet.* 'You two gave the dried
NP_{iobj}:1S to NP_{obj}:dried meat AGR_{sub}:2D/PL meat **to me**
AGR_{iobj}:1S give

c. *Meh kkeih nah nih nah peet.* 'You two gave the **dried meat to me**'

d. *Meh kkeih nah nih nah peet kti.* 'You two **gave** the dried meat to me'

In the ditransitive clause, subject agreement and object agreement for the indirect object, seem to be obligatory with first and second person subjects and first and second person indirect objects. The direct object seems to require no pronominal agreement. If the indirect object is realized by a noun phrase, then it is usually followed by post position *ʔng* 'to, at'.

Example 29

Paai noh nu ʔng nga ah peet. **'Father gives/gave-A the fish to mother'**
NP_{sub}:father ERGNP_{iobj}:mother to NP_{obj}:fish mother'
AGR: ? give

If subject and indirect object are both third person singular, only the agreement particle '*ah*' occurs. My informant could not enlighten me as to whether this is subject agreement or indirect object agreement.

Example 30

Mai pai noh miin sa ah nah peet. 'Aunt gives/gave-A me a
NP_{sub}:aunt ERG NP_{obj}:cat_little AGR_{sub}:3S AGR_{iobj}:1S kitten'
give

With a third person singular subject and a first person singular indirect object, the agreement forms for subject and indirect object are both realized.

Example 31

Ah sa na-eʔng phi hnampo ah jah mbei. 'He also feeds bananas to his
NP:POSS child-PLM to also banana **children**
AGR_{sub}:1S AGR: ? feed

It also seems that with a third person singular subject and a third person plural indirect object, both agreement forms are realized. But we cannot be completely sure whether the plural object agreement form *jah* refers to the object or to the indirect object. Examples like this do occur occasionally.

In the following example (31), *jah* can only refer to the object ('rice and meat'), since the indirect object is singular.

Example 32

Sisi noh nana ʔng buh 'The older sister **feeds rice and**
jah meh jah mbei kti **meat** to the younger brother'
 NP:sister ERG younger_brother to rice and
 meat AGR_{obj}:3PLfeeds/fed

4. NUMBER MARKING

4.1. Plural marking

4.1. 1. The plural marker '-e'

The plural marker '-e' occurs in the noun phrase with plural subjects and plural objects of all persons, following the noun. If the noun phrase consists of a pronoun form only, '-e' is attached to the pronoun. If the noun phrase consists of a pronoun and a full noun, -e is attached to the full noun. If the pronoun form is omitted in the intransitive clause, the noun phrase is not marked by -e, though a full noun may be present.

The plural marker -e' also marks the verb phrase of the sentence final clause if stem B of the verb is realized, and follows the verb phrase particles 'kti' or 'kkhai'. It seems to belong to the agreement system.

Example 33

Ah nih nih-e noh vok-e jah hmuk kti-e. 'They see/saw-B
 NP: 3PL-PLM ERG pig-PLM AGR_{obj}:3PL see RL-PLM pigs'

In this clause where the focus is rather evenly balanced, there is plural agreement between the subject, the object and the verb phrase.

4.1.2. The plural marker '-u'

The plural marker -u occurs in the noun phrase only as a marker of possessive noun phrases. It does not co-occur with the pronoun form but only with agreement forms, and it is not attached to the agreement particles but to the full noun. It is backgrounding the pronoun possessor and putting the noun into strong focus. See also (57) b.

Example 34

Ah nih na-u B Lun noh ta.... ah ti. 'As for their **younger brother B**
 AGR :3P brother-PLM B Lun ERG as_for Lun, he said-A...
 AGR :1S said...

Possessive object noun phrases can also be marked with -u.

Example 35

Asun noh nih meh kkeih-u 'That one takes-A all our
ah seh ei pih. **dried meat** away.'
 NP:DEM ERG AGR:1IN.PL meat dried-PLM
 AGR:3S take RFL all

The plural marker -u marks the verb phrase of the sentence final clause if stem A is realized. It is an obligatory constituent of urgative and imperative clauses.

Example 36

Kei-a tia nih ve vai -u. 'Let us live-A according to
 NP:1S-GR word-GR AGR:1IN.PL live FUT.IRR- my word'
 PLM

Example 37

Kh kyap-u-a. 'Don't cry-B'
 Not cry-PLM-IMP

In non-final clauses, plurality of the verb phrase is always marked with *-u*, regardless of the verb stem used.

Example 38

Hn̄sñ-e noh meh phi pñi-u l im-a lobe kti-e.
 NP:hunter-PLM ERG meat also carried-PLM and house-LOC come-AUX-back RL-PLM
 The hunters also carried-B the meat and arrived_ back-B home.

In the sentence above, we find the subject marked by the plural marker *-e*, the first verb phrase by the plural marker *-u*, and the sentence final verb phrase by *-e*.

4.2. Dual marking

4.2.1. The dual marker *xooi*

While the plural marker *-e* occurs with plural subjects of all persons, the dual marker *xooi* occurs only with third person dual subjects. In contrast to the plural marker *-e*, the dual marker *xooi* does not co-occur with pronoun forms, nor with names, but marks only proper nouns. In the possessive noun phrase it can also mark agreement forms. See (57) c.

The dual marker *xooi* is also a compulsory part of the verb phrase and it's occurrence in the verb phrase very similar to that of the plural marker *-e*. It marks verb phrases of sentences final clauses, occurs only if stem B of the verb is realized and follows the verb phrase particles *kti* and *kkhai*.

Example 39

Ngma xooi lok kti xooi. 'The two brothers-in-law come/came-B'
 NP :brother-in-law DU come RL DU

4.2.2. The dual marker *ni-*

The dual marker *ni-* does not occur in noun phrases, but is a compulsory part of the verb phrase. Its pattern of occurrence is similar to that of the plural marker *-u*. It is an obligatory constituent of exhortative and imperative clauses.

Example 40

Meih meih-a kñi ni-ð. 'Work diligently, will you!'
 Diligently diligently-GR work DU-EXH

In non-final clauses, verb phrases with dual subjects are always marked with *ni-* regardless of the verb stem used.

Example 41

Ah nih nghmaak sun ḳỵh ei tong ni-l am kyum lo be dat ni.
 AGR:3DU brother-in-law DEM fear RFL AUX-very DU-and not come_down
 AUX-back dare DEM
 'They (dual) feared their older brother-in-law too much and did not dare to come down again'

In contrast to the plural marker *-u*, the dual marker *ni*-is never found as the last particle of a sentence final verb phrase.

4.3. First person marker *ng̃*

In addition to plural and dual markers, there is a first person marker *ngü*. In negative clauses the use of *ngü* is compulsory.

Example 42

Am ei ḥl ham *ng̃* 'I do not yet want to eat'
 not eat want yet 1M

This first person marker *ngü* occurs also in positive clauses, but not as an obligatory constituent. Although it's occurrence is not predictable, it seems to indicate an additional focus on the first person.

Example 43

Kei Yok Ui Yok lo *veeng ng̃*. 'I, Yok Ui Yok, will come'
 NP:1S Yok Ui Yok come FUT 1M

Example 44

Kei noh ning khe *ng̃-she* ... 'I overtake you and...'
 NP:1S ERG AGR_{obj}:2S overtake 1M-and...

The usage of *ngü* also causes a change in other particles of the verb phrase. The particle *kkhai*, indicating future, is replaced by *veeng*. The particle *lü*, connecting non-subordinated clauses, is replaced by *she*.

5. POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS

It is of interest to note, that the free pronouns as well as the subject agreement forms are both used as possessors in the possessive noun phrase. So the subject-clause relation appears parallel to the possessor-noun phrase head relation as far as the choice of morphological forms is concerned.

When the possessor is drawn from the pronoun set as in (45) a., the possessor is in focus. When the possessor is drawn from the set of agreement forms the possessed noun head is in focus, as in (45) b.

This distinction holds for all persons and numbers of the paradigm.

Example 45

a. Kei- a im sa-a vek kti. 'My house is over there'

b. NP:1S -RM house over-there-LOC.M is RL

Example 46

a. *Nang nih-e-a im kkh̃k̃k̃ kti.* 'Your (plur) house has disappeared-B'
NP:2P-PLM-GR house disappeared RL

b. *Nah nih im u kh̃k̃k̃ kti.* 'Your (plur) **house** has disappeared'

The usage of the plural marker *-u* is an additional possibility of focusing upon the possessed noun. In contrast to this, the usage of the dual marker *xooi* is foregrounding the dual possessor.

Example 47

a. *Ah nih nih-a im pyoih kti.* '**Their** (dual) house is ruined'
NP:3D-GR house collapsed RL

b. *Ah nih im-u pyoih kti.* 'Their (dual) **house** is ruined'
AGR:3D house-PLM collapsed RL

c. *Ah nih xooi-a im pyoih kti.* 'The house belonging to **the two of them**
AGR: 3DU-GR house collapsed RL is ruined'

6. Conclusion

In summary, the Daai pronominal agreement system presents an interesting case study of a complex agreement system, which shows both subject and object agreement. The object agreement system shows considerably less distinction than the subject agreement system. Characteristic features, common with most Chin languages, are that the first person is most overtly and distinctively marked and the third person least so.

Appendix—Abbreviations used

1M first person marker
1S first person singular
3S third person singular
AGR agreement
AUX auxiliary
D/PL dual/plural
DIR directive
DU dual marker
EMP emphasis
ERG ergative
EX' exclusive
EXH exhortative
FUT future
IN inclusive
INT intensifier

LOC locative
NP noun phrase
PLM plural marker
POS possessive
RFL reflexive
RL realis
RSP reported speech
URG urgative

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Endnotes

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²The Daai Chin data used for this analysis has been collected since 1975. It mainly consists of a large corpus of texts that had been recorded and transcribed first by my late husband U Chaing So, then by U Ling So and U Nääng Kùüi. A compilation of write-up's about the Daai Chin Agricultural and Ceremonial Cycle, that is still in the process of being edited by U Nääng Kùüi, has proved to be a valuable additional resource. Many of the examples used are taken from original texts and have been simplified for the purpose of this paper. They are complimented by data elicited from U Nääng Kùüi. All of the examples used in this paper have also been re-checked with U Nääng Kùüi in the last few months. I am very much indebted to him and want to acknowledge his patience and enthusiasm with gratefulness.

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THÌ (T) VÀ THỂ (ASP) NHƯ LÀ SỰ CHIẾU XẠ CHỨC NĂNG TRONG CÁC NGÔN NGỮ KHÔNG CÓ THÌ

(TÓM TẮT)

Arthur Holmer

Khi miêu tả các ngôn ngữ ở Đông Nam Á người ta thường cho rằng các ngôn ngữ này không có *thì* (của động từ). Theo quan điểm của loại hình học cú pháp với một khung Nguyên lý–và–Thông số, điều này có nghĩa là những ngôn ngữ như thế cũng không có sự chiếu xạ chức năng T, hoặc sự chiếu xạ chức năng như thế nhất thiết phải là một kiến tạo thuộc nội bộ lý thuyết mà không có cơ sở thực tế của ngôn ngữ.

Đồng thời khi phân tích về tiếng Hán ta thấy rằng hai chiếu xạ chức năng có quan hệ với thể, khác nhau về cách phân bố và chức năng cú pháp (*le* đứng sau động từ và *le* kết thúc mệnh đề). Do vậy, nên xác lập một quan hệ tương ứng giữa hai phạm trù này với hai phạm trù T và Asp đã được xác nhận trong nhiều ngôn ngữ khác nhau.

Trên cơ sở dữ liệu tiếng quan thoại, bài viết này gợi ý là đặc trưng của các ngôn ngữ “không có thì” không phải là ở chỗ không có *thì* hiểu theo nghĩa thông thường, mà bởi vì T được bao gồm trong Asp chứ không phải ngược lại. Sau đó, người viết cho rằng những gì được quy cho *thì* trong các ngôn ngữ phương Tây là kết quả của sự kết hợp hai đặc trưng độc lập: đặc trưng quan hệ với T như là một phạm trù chức năng (khả năng hành động do động từ có liên quan với khung thời gian), và đặc trưng liên quan tới độ cao cấu trúc quan hệ của yếu tố chức năng (khả năng chỉ trực tiếp thời gian thực). Một khi hai đặc trưng này được xem xét phân biệt, tư cách của hai tiểu từ này trong tiếng Hán tự động rơi ra: *le* đứng sau động từ là một dẫn chứng của T – cái không thể trực chỉ thời gian thực; trong khi đó *le* cuối mệnh đề là một dẫn chứng về thể – cái có thể chỉ thời gian thực.

Đặt ngang bằng *le* đứng sau động từ với T có thuận lợi hơn trong việc giải thích giản dị về tác động qua lại giữa sự phủ định và *le* trong tiếng Hán, trong khi thuận tiện cho việc so sánh trực tiếp giữa cú pháp của các ngôn ngữ có *thì* và các ngôn ngữ không có *thì*.