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

Helga Hartmann

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 paper\(^1\) is based on the speech of a subgroup called “Yang”, who lives in the Kanpetlet township along the Pilong river.

In Daai\(^2\), 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1(^{st}) Person</th>
<th>2(^{nd}) Person</th>
<th>3(^{rd}) Person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>Kei</td>
<td>nang</td>
<td>ah nih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dual exclusive</td>
<td>kei nih</td>
<td>nang nih</td>
<td>ah nih nih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dual inclusive</td>
<td>nih nih</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plural exclusive</td>
<td>kei nih-e</td>
<td>nang nih-e</td>
<td>ah nih nih-e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plural inclusive</td>
<td>nih nih -e</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1. Free Pronoun Forms**

Subject agreement forms are the same for both intransitive and transitive clauses.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st Person</th>
<th>2nd Person</th>
<th>3rd Person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>singular</td>
<td>kei</td>
<td>nah</td>
<td>(ah)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>du/pl exclusive</td>
<td>kah nih</td>
<td>nah nih</td>
<td>(ah nih)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>du/pl inclusive</td>
<td>nih</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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  
kkhai  will go-B

NP:1EX.D/PL AGR:1EX.D/PL go FUT

b. Kei nih

wōōng jah  
kah nih  
sit  
khai.

NP:1EX.D/PL ᴰng and AGR:1EX.D/PL go FUT ᴰng

‘We two, ᴰng and ᴰng. (not you) will go’

c.  
Kah nih  
sit  ‘We two (not you)

AGR:1EX.D/PL kkhai will go-B’

Example 3

a. Nih nih  
nih  
ngdiği  
kti  ‘We two stand/stood-B’

NP:1IND/PL AGR:1IN.D/PL stand RL

b.  
Nih  
ngdiği  
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’

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NP:1EX.D/PL- AGR:1EX.D/PL sleep R
PLM ip L-
P L M
b Kah kt 'We (not you) sleep/slept-B'
nih i-
e.c. Kei nih athoi-e kah nih ip kti-e. 'We young people (not you) sleep/slept-B'
d NP:1EX.D/PL youth-PLM AGR:1EX.D/PL sleep RL-PLM
  Athoi kah nih ip kti-e.
  Youth AGR:1EX.D/PL sleep RL-PLM

1.2. Second person pronouns and agreement

Example 5
a. Nih nih-e Nih sit kkhai-e. 'We will go-B'
    NP:1IN.D/PL-PLM AGR:1IN.D/PL go FUT-PLM
b. Nih sit kkhai-e. 'We will go-B'

Example 6
a. Nang nih-e nah nih ngshut kti-e. 'You sit/sat'
    NP:2D/PL-PLM AGR:2D/PL sit RL-PLM
b. Nah nih ngshut kti-e. 'You sit/sat'
c. Nang nih asang-e nah nih ngshut kti-e. 'You leaders sit/sat'
    NP:2D/PL leader-PLM AGR:2D/PL sit RL-PLM
d. Asang nah nih ngshut kti-e. 'You leaders sit/sat'
    Leader AGR:2D/PL sit RL-PLM

For the first and second person the agreement form (exemplified in (1) by 'kah'
AGR:1S) is an obligatory constituent of the clause and generally precedes the verb.
The pronoun forms (exemplified in (1) a. by 'kei' NP:1S) are optional. If the noun
phrase consists of a full noun, the pronoun form for first and second person can co-
occur with the noun or can be omitted. See also examples (4) c. and d., (6) c. and d.
The key to the presence or absence of the pronoun form is found in the focus at clause level. If the subject is in focus, the pronoun form is used. Where the pronoun
form is omitted, the focus recedes to the verb phrase, moving the emphasis from
agent to action, even if the noun phrase, realized by a full noun, is present (see
examples (4) d. and (6) d.). Pronouns distinguish singular, dual, and plural number
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. Ah nih  dong  kti  ‘He runs/Ran-B’
   NP:3S run RL

b. Dong  kti  ‘He runs/Ran-B’

c. Bebe  dong  kti  ‘The older brother runs/Ran-B’

Example 8

a. Ah nih nih  lok  kti  xooi  ‘They (two) come/came-B’
   NP:3D/PL come RL DU

b. Lok  kti  xooi.  ‘They (two) come/came-B’

c. Mnaai jah Ngthang  lok  kti  xooi.  ‘Mnaai and Ngthang come/came-B’

d. Ngbe  ngna  xooi  lok  kti  xooi  ‘The brothers(two) come/came-B’
   NP:older-brother younger-brother DU come RL DU

e. Ngma  xooi  lok  kti  xooi  ‘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-B’

Example 10

a. Athoi-e  sit  ktie-e.  ‘The young people go/went-B’
   Youth-PLM go/went RL-PLM

b. Kpami  kking  ni  ah nih  seh  ‘Only men go/went’
   NP:Men just only AGR:3D/PL go/went

Example 11

Ah nih nih-a  seh  ni  ah  khỸh  ‘Only their cow has 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 *ng* 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 *ng* phi *Ìh* hjo pai Í *kk*í 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 phyoh *kti* ‘I weed/weeded-B the field’

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

b. Lou kah phyoh kti. ‘I weed/weeded-B the field

NP:1S ERG only field AGR:1S

Example 15

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The two fetch/fetched-B water

The two fetch/fetched-B water

Only the two fetch/fetched-A water

Only they fetch/fetched-A water

Only he fetches/fetched-A water

Example 16

Mnaai Pa sees/saw-A the
Mnaai Pa ERG village-PLM AGRsub:1S see/saw

Mnaai Pa sees/saw-A them
Mnaai Pa ERG AGRsub:3S AGRobj:1/3PL see/saw

Example 17

They see/saw-A the
NP:3D/PL-PLM ERG pig-PLM AGRsub:3D/PL pigs'
AGRobj: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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ObjectAgr</th>
<th>1st person</th>
<th>2nd person</th>
<th>3rd person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>singular</td>
<td>nah</td>
<td>ning</td>
<td>ah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dual/plural</td>
<td>jah</td>
<td>ning jah</td>
<td>jah</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 ūk kti 'He looks/looked-B at me'
   NP\text{sub:3S} ERG NP\text{obj:1S} AGR\text{obj:1S} look RL
b. Kei nah ūk kti. 'He looks/looked-B at me'
c. Ah nih noh nah ūk kti. 'He looks/looked-B at me'
d. Nah ūk 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\text{sub:village-PLM} NP\text{obj:1IN.D/PL} AGR\text{obj:1/3D/PL} see RL-
   PLM
b. Nih nih jah hmuk kti. 'They see/saw-
   B us two'
   Jah hmuk kti-e. '(They)
   see/saw-B us/them'

Example 20

a. Mnaai Pa noh kei nih-e jah hmuk 'Mnaai Pa
   kti. Mnaai Pa ERG NP\text{obj:1EX.PL-PLM} AGR\text{obj:1PL} see
   RL
b. Mnaai Pa noh jah hmuk kti. 'Mnaai Pa
   sees/saw-B us/you'
   Mnaai Pa ERG NP\text{obj:1EX.PL-PLM} AGR\text{sub:3PS} AGR\text{obj:1PL} see
   
Example 21

Kei noh kah ning hmuk kti. 'I see/saw you'
   NP:1S ERG AGR\text{sub:1S} AGR\text{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\text{sub:village} son ERG NP\text{obj:2D/PL} AGR\text{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

    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’

    NP_sub: village- ERG NP_obj AGR_sub: 3D/PL AGR_obj: 1/3D/PL
    PLM 3P.D/PL- see/saw-PLM
    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

Asuwingt’a ngnam sa-e noh mpa shui shak sun mo-a
Then NP_sub: village son- ERG NP_obj: Burmese DEM forest-
PLM clothes

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- pki 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/laa’ ‘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>sub:1S</sub> see

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

   NP<sub>obj</sub>:pig only AGR<sub>sub:1S</sub> 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>sub:1</sub> ER NP<sub>obj:2</sub> to NP<sub>obj</sub>:do AGR<sub>sub:1</sub> AGR<sub>obj:2</sub> 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>sub</sub> ERG NP<sub>obj:1S</sub> to NP<sub>obj</sub>:dried AGR<sub>sub:2D/PL</sub> meat

:2D/PL
You two gave the dried meat to me'

b. Kei سجن meh kkeih nah nih nah peet. 'You two gave the dried meat to me'
NP_obj:1S to NP_obj:dried meat AGR_sub:2D/PL
AGR_obj:1S give

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

Meh kkeih nah nih nah pek 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 잉 'to, at'.

Example 29

Paai noh nu سجن nga ah peet. Father gives/gave-A the fish to
NP_sub:father ERG NP_obj: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_obj: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-سجن 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 'ng 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 AGRobj: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 'khai'. 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 AGRobj: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 ñih. 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 urgentive and imperative clauses.

Example 36
Kei-a tia nih ve vai-u. ‘Let us live-A according to my word’
NP:1S-GR word-GR AGR:1IN.PL live FUT.IRR-PLM

Example 37
Kh kyp-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
Hnisli noh meh phi phu-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 mei-a kphi ni-û. ‘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 kǝh 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 ngǝ

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 hl ham ngǝ ‘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 ngǝ. ‘I, Yok Ui Yok, will come’
NP:1S Yok Ui Yok come FUT 1M

Example 44
Kei noh ning khe ngǝ she ... ‘I overtake you and...
NP:1S ERG AGRobj: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 kkhŷk kti. ‘Your (plur) house has disappeared-B’
   NP:2P-PLM-GR house disappeared RL
b. Nah nih im u kkhŷk 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
overly 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
DH 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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Bibliography


Endnotes

1 I am indebted to Paulette Hopple and to Austin Hale, for their advice and help in the analysis of the Daai Chin pronominal agreement system about seven years ago. It is my own shortcoming, that their help and efforts did not result in any published paper sooner.

2 The 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 Nààng Kùùi. 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 Nààng Kùùi, 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 Nààng Kùùi. All of the examples used in this paper have also been re-checked with U Nààng Kùùi 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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THỊ (T) VÀ THẾ (ASP) NHƯ LÀ SỰ CHIẾU XẠ CHỨC NĂNG TRONG CÁC NGÔN NGỮ KHÔNG Có THỊ
(TÔM TẤT)

Arthur Holmer

Khi miêu tả các ngôn ngữ ở Đông Nam Á người ta thường cho rằng các ngôn ngữ này không có thi (của dòng tự). Theo quan điểm của loại hình học cú pháp với một khuôn Nguyên lý—và—Thống số, điều này có nghĩa là những ngôn ngữ như thế cùng 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 thế, khác nhau về cách phân bố và chức năng cú pháp (le đứng sau dòng tự 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 quan thảo, bài viết này gợi ý là đặc trưng của các ngôn ngữ “không có thi” không phải là ở chỗ không có thi hiểu theo nghĩa thông thường, mà bởi vì T được bao gồm trong Asp chủ không phải ngược lại. Sau đó, người viết cho rằng những gì được quy cho thi trong các ngôn ngữ phương Tây là kết quả của sự kết hợp hai đặc trưng đó lập: đặc trưng quan hệ với T như là một phạm trù chức năng (khả năng hành động do dòng tự 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 phần biệt, tức cách cấu tạo từ láy trong tiếng Hán tự dòng rồi ra: le đứng sau dòng tự là một dấn chúng cụ của T — cái không thể trực tiếp thời gian thực; trong khi đó le cuối cùng để là một dấn chúng về thế — cái có thể chỉ thời gian thực.

Đặt ngang bằng le đứng sau dòng tự với T có thuận lợi hơn trong việc giải thích hiện dĩ về tác động qua lại giữa sự phụ định và le trong tiếng Hán, trong khi thuận tiện cho việc so sánh trực tiếp giữa cú pháp của các ngôn ngữ có thi và các ngôn ngữ không có thi.