

SEKE PHONOLOGY: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THREE SEKE DIALECTS*

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Seke language is a member of the Tamangic group, which also includes Tamang, Gurung, Thakali, Manangba, Nar-Phu, and Chantyal.¹ The existence of this language has been reported in many articles, both ethnographical and linguistic.² However, there has not been much research on the language itself.³ Despite the fact that Fürer-Haimendorf (1975) already pointed out that this language is similar to Thakali (see also Gauchan & Vinding 1977:101), it is still often considered to be a dialect of the Tibetan language.⁴

The Seke language is spoken in five villages: Tangbe, Tetang, Chuksang, Chaile, and Gyakar, which are all located in the Upper Mustang, Nepal.⁵ The

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¹ 'Tamangic' is a term used by Michael Noonan (e.g., Noonan 1997, 1998, to appear a, to appear b, Noonan et al. 1998), and this seems to be now more widely used than 'Gurung branch' (Shafer 1955) or 'TGTm' (e.g., Mazaudon 1973b, 1978, 1996).

² E.g., Fürer-Haimendorf 1975 [1988:151]; Gauchan & Vinding 1977:101; Mazaudon 1978:158; fn.2, 1996, Ramble & Vinding 1987:8; 12, fn.11, Ramble 1993:287; 299, fn.2, 1997:502; Vinding 1979:203, 1988:172, 1998:24, 53-54, 67.

³ Notable exceptions are Vinding 1979 and Mazaudon 1996. A short description of Tangbe will be forthcoming in Honda, to appear.

⁴ For instance, the most recent publication of *Ethnologue* (the 14th edition) lists Seke as a dialect of Lopa, which is a dialect of Tibetan spoken in the Upper Mustang.

⁵ Among those five villages, Tetang is the biggest. According to my informants, whose figures may not be so accurate, there are about 70 houses (including about 20 houses for rent) in Tetang, and the population is 350-400. The second largest village is Chuksang, which has about the same number of houses, with a population of approximately 300. Tangbe is next, and the other two, Chaile and Gyakar, are the smallest. In Gyakar, there are about 30 houses (those where people still live number only 13), and the population is approximately 40-50. A significant number of the Seke-speaking people are now out of the villages, either permanently or temporarily, particularly in winter. Many of them live in Pokhara, and quite a large number are staying in foreign countries to earn income. This is particularly true for the Tangbe people. They form a large community in Jomsom, where there are about forty Tangbe households (Vinding 1998:24 notes "The first Tangbetan settled in Jomsom around the

Upper Mustang is divided into the Upper Lo and the Lower Lo, which is also known as Baragaon. The Seke-speaking area is situated in the upper part of Baragaon and is surrounded by Tibetan-speaking villages: to the north the Lopa speaking area (the Upper Lo), and to the south the Baragaon speaking area including Kagbeni, Jharkot, Muktinath. The Seke language is now spoken in the aforementioned five villages only, but presumably it was once spoken in other Baragaon settlements, too. Evidence for this was presented in Ramble 1997: "[there are] Se-skad toponyms in the Muktinath Valley, and what appear to be Se-skad residues in the dialects of certain villages ..." (Ramble 1997:504); "until the last generation -- and, in two cases, at the present time -- the language in which the territorial divinities of several Tibetan speaking villages were annually propitiated was not Tibetan but Se-skad" (*ibid.*). In fact, one of my Chuksang informants remembers that when she visited Khingar and Phalyak about 50 years ago, she found several old people speaking Seke.⁶

The term Seke is in fact a Tibetan word (WT *se-skad*) which is used by Tibetan-speaking people in the Upper Mustang to designate not only the dialects spoken in the aforementioned five villages, but also all of the non-Tibetan dialects spoken in the Thak Kola region. According to Ramble 1993:299, 1997:501, the designation extends even to Tamang, Gurung and Manangba.⁷ Since, however, there is no other name, I decided to follow anthropologists such as Michael Vinding who use this term to designate specifically the languages spoken in these five villages.

This paper deals with the speech of Tangbe, Tetang and Chuksang. Among them, Tangbe is the most divergent. My Tetang and Chuksang informants told me that it is much easier for them to understand Thakali dialects than the speech of Tangbe. It seems to me that this is primarily due to the innovative verb morphology of Tangbe. According to my Tetang, Chuksang and Gyakar informants, the speech of Chuksang and Chaile are basically the same, and the speech of Gyakar is also quite similar to these, although there are several minor differences. Therefore, the speech of the five villages can be divided into three groups: 1) Tangbe, 2) Tetang, 3) Chuksang, Chaile, Gyakar. This linguistic distinction corresponds to an ethnological tripartition described by Vinding 1979:203; that is to say, the members of those three groups do not ideally intermarry. It is said that the people of Gyakar used to form a distinct endogamous group, and this is probably why the speech of Gyakar is slightly different from Chuksang and Chaile.

beginning of the twentieth century ..."), and in Pokhara, where 200-300 Tangbe people are said to live permanently.

⁶ Exactly the same information is reported in Vinding 1998:54, fn. 45.

⁷ For more about the etymology of Se, see Ramble 1997.

Despite the differences among the three dialects, they share many common features. One of the most important features is that all three dialects preserve the old final velar stop relatively well. A number of lexical items appear to be Tibetan in origin, and it is often the case that these show irregular tonal correspondences among Tamangic dialects.

In this paper, I will describe the phonological systems of the Tangbe, Tetang and Chuksang dialects and examine the phonological correspondences, not only among them, but also with other Tamangic languages and dialects, particularly to three Thakali dialects spoken in the area geographically closest to where the Seke dialects are spoken, as well as to Western Tamang and Eastern Tamang, which Mazaudon (1996) postulates to be genealogically closest to Thakali.

2. TONE

Like all the other Tamangic languages except Chantyal (cf. Noonan et al. 1998:2, Noonan to appear a), all three dialects of Seke have a four-tone system. The basic character of the Seke tone system is not different from those of other Tamangic dialects. For those who are not familiar with Tamangic tone systems, see Mazaudon 1973a, 1973b, 1978; Hari 1969, Hari et al. 1970. The Tangbe tone system is described in Honda (to appear), which follows Mazaudon's (1973a, 1973b, 1978) analysis of the Risiangku dialect of Eastern Tamang and other Tamangic dialects.

According to Mazaudon's analysis, the domain of the Tamangic tone is not the syllable but the phonological word, and there are four word-tone classes. She calls them tones 1, 2, 3 and 4, respectively. The four tones can be distinguished by their pitch contours. The phonetic values of the four tones vary from dialect to dialect. Using Chao Yuen-ren's tone letters, Mazaudon identifies the phonetic values of the four tones in eight Tamangic dialects as follows:

Tamangic Tone (Mazaudon 1978:165)

Tone	RI	TL	SA	GH	NG	TU	MA	SY
1	54	55/44	44	33	33	54	43	43
2	44	43	54	54	45	44/33	45	45
3	33/22	33/22	11	11	54	11	33/22	11
4	211	51	32	12	31	121	51	33/22

RI: Risiangku (Eastern Tamang), TL: Taglung (Eastern/Central? Tamang), SA: Sahu (Western Tamang), GH: Ghachok (Western? Gurung), NG: Ngawal (Manangba), TU: Tukche (Tamang Thakali), MA: Marpha (Mawatan Thakali), SY: Syang (Yhulkasompaimhi Thakali)⁸

⁸ I follow Michael Vinding 1998, who uses the terms 'Tamang Thakali', 'Mawatan Thakali', and 'Yhulkasompaimhi Thakali'.

Except in Taglung, Ngawal and Marpha, there is a major contrast between the two high tones (tone 1 and tone 2) and the two low tones (tone 3 and tone 4). Under the high tones, unaspirated stops and affricates that occur in word-initial position are usually realized as voiceless. Under the low tones, on the other hand, they are usually realized as voiced, and the vowel occurring in the word-initial syllable is pronounced with breathy voice. Because of those features, the high-low distinction is easy to hear.⁹ This is also the case for the three Seke dialects. For all of my Seke informants, the distinction between the high tones and the low tones is clear, and there is no confusion at all. The phonetic values of the four tones have not been measured in any dialects of Seke, but those in Tangbe can be inferred from the data provided by Mazaudon (1996) as follows:¹⁰

Tangbe Tone

Pitch contour

<i>High tone</i>	54	⁵⁴ mër 'tail'
	43	⁴³ krə 'head/hair', ⁴⁴³ tsho 'lake', ⁴³ nəp 'door', ⁴³ nəp 'snot', ⁴³ sə 'tooth'
<i>Low tone</i>	21	²⁰ də 'enemy', ²¹ təp ⁴⁴ gan 'needle-holder', ²¹ mē ^{fi} 'cow'
	11	¹¹ gi ^{fi} 'one', ¹¹ kje? 'work', ¹¹ go ^{fi} 'wheat', ¹¹ pre? 'eight', ¹⁰ bə ^{fi} p 'beer mash'

On the other hand, neither the distinction between the two high tones, nor the one between the two low tones can be so easily made. One of my Tangbe informants can differentiate those contrasts relatively well; nevertheless, the number of minimal pairs that she can identify is quite small. Similarly, in the speech of all of the other Seke informants, there are few such minimal pairs. For this reason, this paper uses the tone numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4 whenever it is possible to identify them; otherwise, the symbols ^H and ^L are used to represent the high tone (either tone 1 or tone 2) and the low tone (either tone 3 or tone 4), respectively.

3. SYLLABLE STRUCTURE

Like all other Tamangic dialects, the syllable structure in Tangbe, Tetang, and Chuksang can be represented as (C₁)(C₂)V(C₃), where C₁ is the initial consonant, C₂ is the medial consonant, V is a vowel (sometimes a long vowel) and C₃ is the final consonant.

⁹ In Taglung, Ngawal and Marpha, on the other hand, this high-low distinction is not so clear. In Taglung and Marpha, for instance, tone 4 is quite high (in both dialects tone 4 is 51) and, as a result, unaspirated stops and affricates occurring in the initial position of tone 4 words are usually realized as voiceless (cf. Mazaudon 1973b:86), e.g., Marpha [tim] (cf. Syang [di^{fi}m]) 'house'.

¹⁰ Some of the data provided in Mazaudon 1996 differ from my own fieldnotes (cf. Honda to appear, fn.5).

4. INITIAL CONSONANTS

The following system of contrasts can be recognized for word-initial consonants:

<i>Syllable Initial Consonant</i>					
<i>Tangbe</i>	p	t	T		k
	p ^h	t ^h			k ^h
				c	
				c ^h	
		s			h
	m	n			ŋ
		L	R		
		l	r		
				y	
<hr/>					
<i>Tetang, Chuksang</i>	p	t	T		k
	p ^h	t ^h	T ^h		k ^h
				c	
				c ^h	
		s			h
	m	n			ŋ
		L	R		
		l	r		
				y	

The feature of aspiration contrasts two series of stops and affricates. The aspirated retroflex stop /T^h/ is not found in Tangbe. It is found in only one word in Tetang and in eight words in Chuksang.

Voiced realizations of the unaspirated stops and affricate are all heard, but they are analyzed here as allophones of /p t T c k/ because the voicing feature is predictable from the tone under which they occur: i.e. under the high tones, the initial unaspirated stops and affricate are always voiceless, whereas under the low tones, they are always voiced.¹¹

There are two series of liquids, voiceless (/L/ and /R/) and voiced (/l/ and /r/). Voiceless liquids are also found in Thakali (all three dialects), Manangba, Nar-Phu (cf. Mazaudon 1996, Noonan to appear b), and Western Tamang (/R/ only). In many cases, the voiceless liquid /^hR/ found in Seke and Thakali corresponds to a retroflex /^hT/ in Manangba, Western Tamang, and Eastern Tamang.

¹¹ I owe this analysis to Taylor 1969, Hari 1969, Mazaudon 1973a and others. It is also possible to recognize the voiced series of the unaspirated stops and affricate as phonemes. This alternative analysis sacrifices economy (i.e., it is redundant), but for practical purposes it may be preferable (cf. Taylor 1969:4).

'swell'	TA ^H Rāŋ-, TE ^H Raŋ-, CH ^H Raŋ-, SY ^H Raŋ-, MA ² Raŋ- (G), TU ² Rāŋ-, NG ^H Taŋ-, SA ² Taŋ-, RI ² Taŋ-
'sweat'	TA ^H Ruk, TE ^H Ruk, SY ^H Ru, MA ² Ru (G), NG ^H Tu, SA ² Tu:, RI ² Tu:
'thread'	TA ^H Rup, TE ^H Rup, CH ^H Rup, SY ² Ru (M), MA ² Ru (M), TU ^H Rup (M), NG ² Tu (M), SA ¹ Tup, RI ² Tup

*TA (Tangbe), TE (Tetang), CH (Chuksang)

The correspondences are, however, not regular, and even within the Seke dialects there are variations:

'get up, stand up'¹²

TA ^HRer-, TE ^HRe-/^Hre-, CH ^Hri-, SY ^HRe-, MA ^Hrai-, ²re- (G), TU ²re-, NG ^HRe-, SA ³Re:- 'get up (itr)' (cf. SA ²rap- 'stand', RI ²rap- 'stand')

Another voiceless liquid /^HL/ found in the Seke dialects corresponds to /^H/ in Western Tamang, Eastern Tamang, and the other Tamangic dialects that do not have /L/. Note that even within the Seke dialects there are variations between /^HL/ and /^H/ . In this respect, Tetang and Chuksang always go together.

/L/ found in TA, TE, CH, SY, MA, TU

'god'	TA ^H La, TE ^H La, CH ^H La, SY ^H La, MA ¹ La(G), TU ^H La 'idol', SA ¹ la, RI ¹ la (cf. TIB lha)
'moon'	TA ^H Lāni, TE ^H Lani, CH ^H Leni, SY ^H La ¹ tini, MA ² La ³ tini (G), TU ^H La ³ tiŋi, SA ² lanyi

/L/ found in TA, TE, CH, SY

'radish'	TA ^H Lau, TE ^H La(y)e, CH ^H Lawi, SY ^H Lapu, MA ¹ läpu (G), TU ¹ lapu, SA ¹ lapu (cf. TIB la-phug)
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/L/ found in TE, CH, SY, TU

'learn, teach'	TA ^H lop-, TE ^H Lop-, CH ^H Lop-, SY ^H Lo-, MA ¹ lo- (G), TU ² Lap-, SA ¹ lot-, RI ¹ lop- (cf. TIB slob-pa)
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/L/ found in TE, CH, SY

'ladder'	TA ^H li, TE ^H Le, CH ^H Le, SY ^H Li, MA ² li (G), TU ¹ liTi
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¹² The tone of SA ³Re:- 'get up' is questionable; cf. *rhe:h-pā* (Hale ed. 1973:80). The latter could be a mistake because on page 16 it says "Lax vowels do not follow either aspirated stops or the voiceless segments, *rh*, *wh*, or *h*" (lax vowels are indicated by *h* following a vowel).

‘tongue’ TA ^Hle, TE ^HLe, CH ^HLe, SY ^HLe, MA ²le (G), TU ^Hle, SA ²le, RI ²le:

/L/ found in TA, SY, TU

‘be hot’ TA ^HLap, TE ^Hlap, CH ^Hlap, SY ^HLo-, MA ²lo- (G), TU ^HLap, SA ¹lep- ‘heat’, RI ¹lep

/L/ found in TA, SY

‘month’ TA ^HLa, SY ^HLa, MA ²la (G), TU ^Hla, SA ²la, RI ²la(:)

In the following putative cognate sets, /L/ is found in Syang (and Tukche), but not in the Seke dialects.

/L/ found in SY, TU

‘steam’ TA ¹lāŋpo, TE ^Hlawā, CH ^Hlaŋpa, SY ^HLām, MA ^Hlāŋpu, TU ²Lāŋma, RI ¹hlaŋmo (cf. TIB rlaŋs-pa)

/L/ found in SY only

‘snake-god’ TA ^Hlu, TE ^Hlu, CH ^Hlu, SY ¹Lu, MA ^Hlu, TU ^Hlu, SA ¹lu, RI ¹lu (cf. TIB klu)

‘face’ SY ²Li, MA ²li (G), TU ^Hli, SA ²li:, RI ²li: (cf. TA ^Hŋoton, TE ^Hŋoton, CH ^Hŋoton < TIB)

5. VOWELS

All three Seke dialects have six vowels as follows:

i	u
e	o
ā	a

As in all three Thakali dialects, where /ā/ is recognized as a phoneme, /ā/ in the Seke dialects quite regularly corresponds to a long vowel /a:/ in Western and Eastern Tamang (cf. Mazaudon 1973b:88).

The status of vowel length is marginal. It is evident that phonetically long vowels have resulted from the loss of the final consonant. This is probably why the long vowels are unstable and elusive. In this paper, long vowels are recognized only to account for morphological alternations of certain types of verbs and nouns. For instance, a long vowel is recognized for TA ²tā: ‘what’ because its morphological alternations, e.g., ²tāk-ce ‘by what’, make it clear that its original “heavy” syllable structure is still kept. For TE, CH ^Htā ‘what’, on the other hand, no such alternation is found (cf. TE, CH ^Htā-ce ‘by what’). We can thus surmise that its original syllable structure has been lost, although a long vowel is often heard phonetically.

6. INITIAL CONSONANT CLUSTERS

There are four consonants that can fill the C₂ position: *r*, *l*, *y* and *w*. Possible combinations of C₁ + C₂ that have been found so far are listed below:

Initial Consonant Clusters

Tangbe

	p	p ^h	m	t	t ^h	s	n	L	l	R	r	c	c ^h	y	k	k ^h	ŋ	h
y	+	+	+	+	(+)	+	+	-	+	-	-	+	+	-	+	+	-	-
r	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
l	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
w	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(+)	-	-	-	-	-

Tetang

	p	p ^h	m	t	t ^h	s	n	L	l	R	r	c	c ^h	y	k	k ^h	ŋ	h
y	+	+	+	(+)	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	+	+	-
r	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-
l	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
w	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Chuksamg

	p	p ^h	m	t	t ^h	s	n	L	l	R	r	c	c ^h	y	k	k ^h	ŋ	h
y	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	+	+	-
r	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-
l	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
w	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(+)	-	-	-	-	-

As far as the velar stop + *r* cluster is concerned, Tangbe is the most innovative. While Tetang and Chuksamg preserve most, but not all, of the old velar stop + *r* clusters, Tangbe has lost the cluster by losing *r*.¹³

'head' ¹⁴	TA ^h ka, TE ^h kra, CH ^h kara, SY ^h kyā, ² kyā (M), MA ² kyā (M), ² kyā (G), TU ^h Ta, SA ¹ kra, RI ¹ kra (M)
'cry'	TA ¹ kā:-, TE ^h krā-, CH ^h krā-, SY ¹ kyā-, MA ¹ kyā- (G), TU ² Tā-, SA ¹ kra:-, RI ¹ kra:-
'climb'	TA ² ke:-, TE ^h kre-, CH ^h kre:-, SY ^h kaī-, MA ¹ kai-, TU ² Te-, SA ¹ kret-, RI ¹ krat-
'roast'	TA ¹ kḥāŋ-, TE ^h kḥraŋ-, CH ^h kḥraŋ-, SY ^h kḥyāŋ-, MA ^h kḥyāŋ-, TU ² Tḥāŋ-, SA ² kḥraŋ-

¹³ The old velar + *r* cluster has also been completely lost in all three Thakali dialects (cf. Mazaudon 1996:107).

¹⁴ Cf. TA ⁴³krə (Mazaudon 1996).

‘wash’	TA ^h k ^h u-, TE ^h k ^h (r)u-, CH ^h k ^h ru-, SY ² k ^h u-, MA ² k ^h u- (G), TU ² T ^h u-, SA ² k ^h ru-, RI ² k ^h ru-
‘bite’	TA ¹ k ^h er-, TE ^h k ^h re:-, CH ^h k ^h re:-, SY ^h k ^h ai- ‘chew’, MA ^h k ^h ai-, SA ¹ k ^h rap-, RI ¹ k ^h rap-
‘be hungry’	TA ^h k ^h en-, TE ^h k ^h en-, CH ^h k ^h en-, SY ¹ k ^h an-, MA ² k ^h en- (G), RI ¹ k ^h ren-

As shown above (cf. CH ^hkara ‘head’), the old **kr* cluster is often broken down in Chuksang by the insertion of an epenthetic vowel. There are two more examples showing this development:

‘field’	TA ² ke, TE ^h kre, CH ^h kiri, SY ^h le, MA ¹ le (G), TU ^h ke
‘lower back, waist’	TA ² ke, TE ^h kre, CH ^h kere, SY ¹ kae (M), MA ¹ kae (M), TU ^h Te, NG ¹ kre (M), GH ¹ kre (cf. SA ¹ keppa, RI ¹ ke:)

As in the other Tamangic dialects except Western Tamang, Eastern Tamang, and Nar-Phu (cf. Mazaudon 1996:107), the velar stop + *l* cluster is lost in all three dialects of Seke. In Tangbe and Tetang, the cluster changed into a single consonant (*k* or *ŋ*) before /i/ (e.g., ‘feces’, ‘snow’), and to *ky* elsewhere. This type of development is also found in Tukche (Tamang Thakali). On the other hand, Chuksang lost the cluster by the disappearance of the velar, as in Syang and Marpha.

‘feces’	TA ¹ ki, TE ^h ki, CH ^h li, SY ^h li (M), MA ¹ Li (M), TU ^h ki, SA ¹ kli, RI ¹ kli
‘snow’	TA ^h ŋin, TE ^h kiŋ, CH ^h liŋ, SY ^{L?} Lim, ⁴ lim (M73b), MA [?] Liŋ, ⁴ lin (G), (M), TU ⁴ kin, SA ⁴ kliŋ, RI ⁴ kliŋ
‘place’	TA ^h kyā, TE ^h kyā, CH ^h lā, SY ⁴ lyā (M), MA ⁴ lyā (G), (M), TU ³ kyā, SA ⁴ kla:, RI ⁴ kla
‘play’	TA ^h kyāŋ-, TE ^h kyāŋ-, CH ^h lāŋ-, SY ^h lyāŋ-, MA ² lyāŋ- (G), TU ² kyāŋ-, SA ¹ klaŋ-
‘buy’	TA ³ kyu-, TE ^h kyu-, CH ^h li-, SY ⁴ li-, MA ^h li- (G), TU ⁴ kyu-, SA ⁴ klu-, RI ⁴ klu-
‘throw away’	TA ¹ kyā:-, TE ^h kyā-, CH ^h Lā-, SY ^h Lyā-, MA ^h Lyā-, TU ² kyā-, SA ¹ kla:-, RI ¹ kla:-

Tangbe is also the most innovative with respect to the *mr* and *ml* clusters. In Tangbe these clusters are preserved only in ^h*mrām* ‘box’ and ^L*m̥la* ‘husked uncooked rice’, while in Tetang and Chuksang we can find more examples of them.

‘weed’	TA ² mā, TE ^h mrā, CH ^h mrā, SY ^h mrā, MA ² mrā (G), TU ^h mrā, SA ² mrā RI ² mra
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'female, woman, wife'

TA ^hmiŋ, TE ^hmrɪŋ, CH ^hmrɪŋ, SY ^hmun, MA ²mrɪn
(G), TU ^hmrɪn, SA ¹mrɪŋ, RI ¹mrɪŋ

'black'

TA ²māŋ, TE ^hmraŋ, CH ^hmlāŋ, SY ^hmlaŋ, MA ^hmlāŋ,
²mlaŋ (G), TU ^hmlāŋ, SA ²mlaŋ, RI ²mlaŋmlaŋ-

'forget'

TA ²me:-, TE ^hme:-, CH ^hmle(:)-, SY ^hmle-, MA ²mle-
(G), TU ²mle-, SA ²mlet-, RI ²mlet-

cf. 'see'

TA ¹māŋ-, TE ^hmaŋ-, CH ^hmāŋ-, SY ^hmraŋ-, MA ^hmrāŋ-,
¹mraŋ- (G), TU ²mrāŋ-, SA ¹mraŋ-

As can be seen in Tetang ^hmraŋ 'black', there is a unique development in this dialect, where the voiced lateral *l* of other dialects is often found as *r* in the C₂ or C₃ position. This has also been observed in the speech of one of the Tangbe informants. Some additional examples:

C₂ position

'seed'

TA ^lplu/^lpru, TE ^lpru, CH ^lplu, SY ^lplu, MA ⁴plu
(G), TU ⁴plu, GH ⁴plu, SA ⁴plu, RI ⁴plu

'cooked vegetables, side dish'

TA ^hplā, TE ^hprā, CH ^hplā, SY ^hpla, MA ⁴plā (G)

'be pierced'

TA ⁴po-, TE ^lpro-, CH ^lplo-, SA ⁴plo:-, RI ⁴plo:-

'be rich'

TA ³po-/³pro-, TE ^lpro-, CH ^lplo-, SY ^lplo-, MA
⁴plo- (G), TU ⁴plo-

'be weak (e.g., wine, spirits)'

TA ²pāŋ-, TE ^hpraŋ-, CH ^hplem-/^hplaŋ-, SY ^hplen-,
MA ^hplaŋ-

'be cold, icy'

TE ^lprā-, CH ^lplā-, SY ⁴plā-, MA ³plā-

C₃ position

'err'

TA ^lcyol-, TE ^lcor-, CH ^lcol-, SY ^lcol-, MA ^lcol-,
TU ³col- (cf. TIB ^ldzol-pa 'fault, error, mistake')

'be soft'

TA ^lpol-, TE ^lpor-, CH ^lpol-, SY ^lpol-, TU
⁴popal- (cf. TIB ^lbol-po 'soft')

7. RIMES

Consonants that can occur in the syllable final, or C₃ position, are, in all of the three Seke dialects, /-p, -k, -m, -n, -ŋ, -l, -r/. What is the most important feature to note is that all three dialects have a relatively large number of words with syllable final *-k*. The final *-k* also exists in the Risiangku dialect of Eastern Tamang, but the number of the words with it appears to be much smaller.¹⁵

¹⁵ In Mazaudon 1973a, we can find only about twenty words with final *-k*, which include ^ltik 'what' and ⁴kik 'one'.

Some of the Seke examples with final *-k* are listed below. This list may include loan words from neighboring Tibetan dialects. It seems, however, unlikely that this is the case for all of them.

	TA	TE	CH	SA	RI
'cave'	^H u	^H u	^H uk	¹ u:	¹ u:
'one'	^L ki	^L ki:/ ^L kik	^L ki	⁴ ki:	⁴ kik
'sheep'	⁴ kyu	^L kyuk	^L kyuk	⁴ kyu:	⁴ kyu
'six' ¹⁶	^L Tu	^L Tuk/ ^L Tu:	^L Tuk	⁴ Tu:	⁴ Tu
'what' ¹⁷	² tā:	^H tā	^H tā	² tā:	¹ tik
'broom'	^H p ^h yāk	^H p ^h yā	^H p ^h yā	² p ^h ya:	² p ^h ya:
'buffalo' ¹⁸	^L maya	^L maik	^L maik	² maki	² mahi
'hand' ¹⁹	² yā:	^H yā	^H yā	¹ ya:	¹ ya:
'sweat'	^H Ruk	^H Ruk		² Tu:	² Tu:
'friend' ²⁰	^L rok	^L ro	^L ro	³ ro:	³ ro
'sheath' ²¹	^H syuk	^H syuk	^H syuk		¹ syup ²²
'move'	^H kok-	^H ko-	^H ko-		
'tie'	² k ^h i:-	^H k ^h ik-	^H k ^h ik-		² k ^h i:-
'sneeze'	^H k ^h ik-	^H k ^h i-	^H k ^h i-	¹ k ^h ir-	
'cook'	^L cuk-	^L cuk-	^L cuk-	⁴ cu:-	⁴ cu:-
'bite'	³ ci(:)-	^L cik-	^L cik-	³ ci:-	³ ci:-
'be pleasant'	^H c ^h uk-	^H c ^h uk-	^H c ^h uk-	¹ c ^h u:-	¹ c ^h u:-
'need to, must'	¹ tok-	^H to-	^H to-	¹ to:-	¹ to:-
'lift'	^H t ^h ik-	^H t ^h i-	^H t ^h i-	¹ t ^h i:-	
'carry'	^H nāk-	^H nā-	^H nā-	² na:-	
'sleep'	⁴ nuk-	^L nok-	^L nuk-	² nu:-	⁴ ŋu-
'pour'	^H yuk-	^H yuk-	^H yuk-		
'knit, weave' ²³	^H ra(k)-	^H rā-	^H rā-	² ra:-	² ra:-

¹⁶ Cf. TIB *drug*.

¹⁷ Cf. TA ²⁷taāk-ce 'by what'.

¹⁸ Cf. TIB *ma-he*.

¹⁹ Cf. TA ^Hyaāk-se 'by hand', ^Hyaāktu 'bracelet', ^Hyaāk-siŋ 'fingernail', ^Hyaāk-syu(:) 'glove'.

²⁰ Cf. TIB *grog*s, *rog*.

²¹ Cf. TIB *shub*s.

²² M73b.

²³ Cf. TIB *bzhugs-pa*.

On the other hand, all three Seke dialects have lost the old final **-t*, which is preserved only in Western Tamang and Eastern Tamang. The disappearance of **-t* had a fronting effect on the preceding vowel:

	TA	TE	CH	SA	RI
'cram into'	² <i>c^h(w)i:-</i>	^H <i>c^hi:-</i>	^H <i>c^h(w)i:-</i>	² <i>c^hup-</i>	² <i>c^hut-</i>
'pick up'	^L <i>ti:-</i>	^L <i>ti:-</i>	^L <i>ti:-</i>	⁴ <i>tut-</i>	^{3/4} <i>tut-</i>
'let go, send'	¹ <i>pi:-</i>	^H <i>pi:-</i>	^H <i>pi-</i>	² <i>pit-</i>	² <i>pit-</i>
'language, voice' ²⁴	¹ <i>ke:</i>	^H <i>ke</i>	^H <i>ke</i>	² <i>ket (Hr)</i>	² <i>kat</i>
'right'	² <i>ke</i>			¹ <i>ket</i>	¹ <i>ket</i>
'work'	^L <i>ke</i>	^L <i>ke</i>	^L <i>ke</i>		⁴ <i>kyat</i>
'eight'	⁴ <i>pre</i>	^L <i>pre</i>	^L <i>pre</i>	⁴ <i>pret</i>	⁴ <i>prat</i>
'louse'	² <i>sye</i>	^H <i>sye</i>	^H <i>si</i>	² <i>syet</i>	² <i>syat</i>
'weigh, measure'	^H <i>ke:-</i>	^H <i>ke:-</i>	^H <i>k(w)e:-</i>	² <i>kop-</i>	² <i>kot-</i>
'climb'	² <i>ke:-</i>	^H <i>kre-</i>	^H <i>kre:-</i>	¹ <i>kret-</i>	¹ <i>krat-</i>
'fight' ²⁵	² <i>c^he:-</i>	^H <i>c^he:-</i>	^H <i>c^he:-</i>	¹ <i>c^het-</i> ² <i>c^hep-</i>	² <i>c^hat-</i>
'chew'	² <i>nye:-</i>	^H <i>nye:-</i>	^H <i>nye:-</i>	² <i>nyet-</i>	¹ <i>nyat-</i>
'forget'	² <i>me:-</i>	^H <i>me:-</i>	^H <i>mle(:)-</i>	² <i>mlet-</i>	² <i>mlet-</i>
'kill'	² <i>se:-</i>	^H <i>se:-</i>	^H <i>se:-</i>	¹ <i>set-</i>	¹ <i>sat-</i>
'weed'	^H <i>sye:-</i>	^H <i>sye:-</i>	^H <i>sye:-</i>	² <i>syot-</i>	

²⁴ Cf. TA. ^H*kec-ce* 'in a language'.

²⁵ SA ¹*c^het-* 'quarrel', ²*c^hep-* 'fight'.

APPENDIX: SWADESH 100 WORD LIST²⁶

	TA	TE	CH	SY	TU
1. I	H _ɣ a	H _ɣ a	H _ɣ a	H _ɣ a	H _ɣ a
2. thou	L _ɣ ya(-ca)	L _ɣ ya L _ɣ ki-mi	L _ɣ ya	L _ɣ ki	⁴ k _ɣ āŋ
3. we (incl)	L _ɣ na(-ca)	L _ɣ na(-ca)	L _ɣ a/i(-mi)(-ca)	L _ɣ naŋ	⁴ ŋy āŋ (pl)
(excl)	H _ɣ ni(-ca)	H _ɣ ji(-ca)	H _ɣ ji(-mi)-ca	H _ɣ ni	H _ɣ ji (du)
4. this	H _ɣ cu	H _ɣ cu	H _ɣ cu	H _ɣ cu	H _ɣ cu
5. that ²⁷		H _ɣ ca		H _ɣ ca	H _ɣ ca
	H _ɣ ucyu	H _ɣ ucu	H _ɣ ucyu		
	H _ɣ tyu/ ^H Tyu	H _ɣ te	H _ɣ te	H _ɣ t _ɣ ā	
6. who	H _ɣ su	H _ɣ su	H _ɣ su	² su	H _ɣ su
7. what	²² tā:	H _ɣ tā	H _ɣ tā	H _ɣ tā	H _ɣ tā
8. not	L _ɣ ā	L _ɣ ā	L _ɣ ā	L _ɣ a	² ā-
9. all	L _ɣ yom	L _ɣ yom	L _ɣ yom	L _ɣ yom	⁴ yom
	⁴ kāŋmo	L _ɣ kaŋpu	L _ɣ kaŋpa ²⁸		
10. many	L _ɣ tena	L _ɣ tena	L _ɣ tena	L _ɣ tana	³ tana
11. one	L _ɣ ki	L _ɣ ki:/L _ɣ kik	L _ɣ ki	L _ɣ kwi	⁴ Ti
12. two	L _ɣ ni	L _ɣ ni	L _ɣ ni	L _ɣ ni	⁴ ŋi
13. big	² thyo-/ ² thē-	H _ɣ thē-	H _ɣ tho-/H _ɣ thē-	H _ɣ thyo-	¹ tho-
14. long	L _ɣ riŋ-	L _ɣ riŋ-	L _ɣ riŋ-	L _ɣ rum-	³ rim-
15. small	H _ɣ cyāŋ-	H _ɣ cyāŋ-	H _ɣ cyāŋ-	H _ɣ cyāŋ-	² cyāŋ-
16. woman	H _ɣ miŋ	H _ɣ mriŋ	H _ɣ mriŋ	H _ɣ mun	H _ɣ mrin
17. man	H _ɣ pyuŋ	H _ɣ piŋ	H _ɣ piŋ	H _ɣ pyuŋ	H _ɣ pyuŋ
18. person	L _ɣ mi	L _ɣ mi	L _ɣ mi	L _ɣ mi	³ mi
19. fish	L _ɣ nya-H _ɣ syā	L _ɣ nya	L _ɣ nya ²⁹		
				H _ɣ tarŋā	² tarŋa
20. bird	H _ɣ nim _ɣ ā	H _ɣ nim(y)ā	H _ɣ nimā	H _ɣ nemyāŋ	¹ nemyā
	L _ɣ cya		L _ɣ cya ³⁰		
21. dog	H _ɣ nakyu	H _ɣ nikyu / ^H nyukyū	H _ɣ nyukyū	H _ɣ nakyu	¹ nakyu
22. louse	² sye	H _ɣ sye	H _ɣ si	² sye	H _ɣ sye
23. tree	L _ɣ tuŋ	L _ɣ tuŋ L _ɣ tuŋpu	L _ɣ tuŋ L _ɣ tuŋpa	⁴ tuŋ	⁴ Tuŋ

²⁶ The data from Tangbe, Tetang, Chuksang, and Syang are all my own, and that of Tukche is, as stated above, based on Hale ed. 1973.

²⁷ While TA ^Hucyu, TE ^Hucu, CH ^Hucyu all mean 'that (close to the addressee)', TA ^Htyu/^HTyu, TE ^Hte, CH ^Hte all mean 'that (far from both from the speaker and the addressee)'.

²⁸ Cf. TIB gaŋ, gaŋ-ba, gaŋ-po.

²⁹ Cf. TIB nya.

³⁰ Cf. TIB bya.

24. seed	^L plu/ ^L pru	^L pru	^L plu	^L plu	⁴ plu
25. leaf	³ pā	^L pā	^L pā	^L pā	³ pā
26. root	^H caha	^H cawa ³¹	^H riŋ		
				^L pri	³ pri
27. bark	^H p ^h eko	^H p ^h iko	^H p ^h iko	¹ p ^h i	^H p ^h i
28. skin	³ Ti	^L Ti	^L Ti	³ Ti	³ Ti
29. flesh	^H sya	^H sya	^H sya	^H sya	^H sya
30. blood	² kā	^H kā	^H kā	² kā	^H kā
31. bone ³²		^H nak ^h i	^H nukri	^H naki	² naTi
	^L rikko	^L ruwa	^L ruwa ³³		
32. grease	² chj	^H chj	^H chj	^H chj	^H chj
33. egg	^H na- ^H p ^h um	^H p ^h um	^H p ^h um	² p ^h um	^H p ^h um
34. horn	^H ru	^H ru	^H ru	^H ru	^H ru
35. tail	² mer	^H mesin	^H misin	¹ me	^H me
36. feather	^H cham	^H cham	^H cham	^H cham	
					³ muy
37. hair	^H cham	^H cham	^H cham	^H cham	^H cham
38. head	^H ka	^H kra	^H kara	^H kya	^H Ta
39. ear ³⁴	^L na	^L nā	^L na	^L na	³ na
	^L nep(y)āŋ	^L nap ^h an	^L nyuwan		
40. eye	^H mi	^H mik ³⁵	^H mi	² mi	^H mi
41. nose	² na	^H nak ^h i	^H na	¹ na	^H na
42. mouth	^H suŋ	^H suŋ	^H suŋ	^H suŋ	^H suŋ
43. tooth	² sa	^H sa	^H sa	¹ so	^H sa
44. tongue	^H le	^H le	^H le	^H le	^H le
45. fingernail	^H yā k-sin	(^H yā-) ^H sim	^H yā k-sin	^H yā-c ^h in	^H yā-sin
46. foot	^L pale	^L pale	^L pale	^L pale	³ pale
47. knee	^H pui	^H pui	^H pui/ ^H p(y)i	^H pukyā	³ pale ² puTi
48. hand	² yā:	^H yā	^H yā	^H yā	^H yā
49. belly	¹ p ^h o	^H p ^h o	^H p ^h o	¹ p ^h o	^H p ^h o
50. neck	^H k ^h are	^H k ^h are	^H k ^h ari	^H k ^h ari	^H k ^h ā
51. breasts	?	?	^L nyoko	³ nye	³ nye

³¹ Cf. TIB *rtsa-ba*.

³² In Tetang, *Hnak^hi* is used for 'bones of animals', while *Lruwa* is used for 'bones of human beings'. According to my Chuksang informants, this used to be the case for CH *Hnukri* and CH *Lruwa*, but the distinction is no longer retained.

³³ Cf. TIB *rus-pa*, *rus-khog*.

³⁴ TA *Lna*, TE *Lnā*, and CH *Lna* are not used alone but always with a verb, e.g., 'to hear'.

³⁵ Cf. TIB *mig*.

52. heart	^H tiŋ	^H niŋ ³⁶	^H tiŋ	^H tin	^H tin
					^H sam
53. liver	^H c ^(h) impo	^H c ^h impa	^H c ^h impa ³⁷		
54. drink	^H thuiŋ-	^H thuiŋ-	^H thuiŋ-	⁴ nye	⁴ nye
55. eat	^H ca-	^H ca-	^H ca-	² thuiŋ-	² thuiŋ-
56. bite	³ ci(:)-	^L cik-	^L cik-	^H ca-	¹ ca-
57. see	¹ māŋ-	^H māŋ-	^H māŋ-	³ ci-	³ ci-
58. hear ³⁸	^H ther-	(^L na) ^H the-	(^L na) ^H thi-	^H mraŋ-	² mrāŋ-
59. know ³⁹	^H ser-	^H sye-	^H si-	¹ the-/ ¹ thai-	² the-
60. sleep	⁴ nuk-	^L nok-	^L nuk-	² sye-	² sye-
61. die	^H si-	^H si-	^H si-	⁴ nu-	⁴ nu-
62. kill	² se:-	^H se:-	^H se:-	^H si-	² si-
63. swim	^H kyal ^H la-	^H kyan ^H pu:-	^H kyal ^H puŋ-	¹ sai-	² sai-
64. fly	^L pik-	^L priŋ-	^L pir-/ ^L pyur-	² say-	² say-
65. walk	⁴ pra-	^L pra-	^L pra-	^H kyal-	² kyal-
66. come	^H kha-	^H kha-	^H kha-	^L pyur-	³ pyur-
67. lie	^H e ^H la-	^H e ^H la-	^H ye ^H la-	⁴ pra-	⁴ pra-
				^H kha-	¹ kha-
				² ye ^H la-	³ ral-
68. sit	^H Tu-	^H Tu-	^H Tu-		¹ Tu-
69. stand ⁴⁰	^H Rer-	^H Re-/ ^H re-	^H ri-	^H Tu-	² qāŋ-
70. give	^H pin-	^H pin-	^H pin-	^H Re-	² qim/n-
71. say	^L pi-	^L pi-	^L pi-	^H pin-	² pim/n-
72. sun	^L tini	^L tini	^L tini	^L pi-	³ pi-
73. moon	^H Lāni	^H Lani	^H Leni	^L tini	³ tiŋi
74. star	^H sar			^H La ^L tini	^H La ³ tiŋi
		^H karma	^H karma ⁴¹	^H sar	^H sar
75. water	^H kyu	^H kyu	^H kyu		
76. rain	^H nam	^H nam	^H nam	^H kyu	^H kyu
77. stone	^H yumpu	^H yukpa	^H umpā	² nam	^H nam
				^H yum	² yumpā

³⁶ Cf. TIB snyiŋ.

³⁷ Cf. TIB mchin-pa.

³⁸ In Honda (to appear), the Tangbe form is listed as ^HtheC- where C stands for an unspecified consonant. This is to differentiate *r* final stems, such as ^Hthur- 'to touch', from verb stems like ^HtheC- 'to hear' (compare their infinitive forms, [^hur-ba] and [^hep-pa]). In this paper, this kind of abstract notation is avoided, and all of the Cs are replaced with *r* because the Cs are always realized as *r* when no verb suffix follows the stem, e.g., ^hthe-Ø '(sb) did not hear'.

³⁹ In Honda (to appear), the Tangbe form is listed as ^HseC-.

⁴⁰ Cf. TU ²re- 'get up'. TA, TE, CH, SY forms all mean 'stand, get up'. In Honda (to appear), the Tangbe form is listed as ^HReC-.

⁴¹ Cf. TIB skar-ma.

78. sand	^L pemo	^L pema	^L pema ⁴²	^H sape	² sape
79. earth	¹ sa	^H sa	^H sa	¹ sa	^H sa
80. cloud	^L mo		^H mu	³ mo	³ mo
		^L mutiŋ	^H mutiŋ		
81. smoke	^H mik ^h u	^H meu	^H muku/ ^H miku	² muk(w)i	² miku
82. fire	¹ me	^H me	^H me	¹ mi	^H me
83. ash	^H mepā	^H meppā	^H mepprā	^H nyā prā	^H me-prā
84. burn		^H kro-	^H kro-		
	¹ k ^h āŋ-	^H k ^h raŋ-	^H k ^h raŋ-	^H k ^h yāŋ-	² T ^h āŋ-
	^H lum-	^H lum-	^H lum-	^H lum-	² luŋ-
85. path	^L kyam	^L kyam	^L kyam	⁴ kyam	⁴ kyam
	^L kyalam	^L kyalam	^L kyalam		
86. mountain	³ kaŋ	^L kaŋ	^L kaŋ	^L kāŋ	³ kāŋ
		^L ka			
87. red	^H ola	^H ola	^H ola	^H ola	² ola
88. green	^L cyaŋ ku	^L cyaŋ ku	^L cyaŋ ku	^L cyaŋ ku ⁴³	
					^H pin
89. yellow	^H ur			^H ur	^H ur
		^H sepu	^H seru ⁴⁴		
90. white	^H tar	^H tar	^H tar	^H tar	^H tar
91. black	² māŋ	^H mraŋ	^H mlāŋ	^H mlaŋ	^H mlāŋ
92. night	^L mince	^L mince	^L minche	^L mun	³ ŋonā
93. hot	² c ^h a-	^H c ^h a-	^H c ^h a-	² c ^h a-	² c ^h a-
	^H Lap	^H lap	^H lap	^H Lo-	^H Lap
94. cold ⁴⁵	^H sim	^H sim	^H sim	^H sim-	^H sim
	² k ^h āŋ-	^H k ^h āŋ-	^H k ^h āŋ-	^H k ^h āŋ-	
95. full	^H nāŋ	^H naŋ	^H naŋ	¹ nāŋ	
					² kāŋ- ⁴⁶
96. new	^H sam-pa	^H sam-pa	^H sam-pa	^H sam(-)	² sam-
97. good		^L se-	^L se-	^L sa-	³ sa-
	^L ca-				
98. round	^H p ^h ol(t)ŋ	^H p ^h oltonŋ	^H p ^h oltonŋ	^H p ^h oltonŋ	² p ^h oltonŋ
				^H kirtiŋ	
	^L kir	^L kir	^L kir	^L kir	
99. dry	^H k ^h ar-	^H k ^h ar-	^H kar-	^H k ^h ar-	² k ^h ar-
100. name	^H min	^H min	^H min	¹ min	^H min

⁴² Cf. TIB *bye-ma*.

⁴³ < TIB *ljaŋ-khu*, *ljaŋ-gu*.

⁴⁴ Cf. TIB *ser-po*.

⁴⁵ Tangbe *Hsim* and *2k^hāŋ-*, for instance, mean 'be cold (of water, foods)' and 'feel cold (weather, sensation)', respectively.

⁴⁶ Cf. TIB *khaŋs-pa*.

SOURCES OF THE DATA

The data used in this paper are from the following sources:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Tangbe (Seke) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My own data collected from two informants at Jomsom and Pokhara. All forms were double-checked by the two informants. |
| Tetang (Seke) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My own data collected from one informant at Pokhara. All forms were double-checked by the same informant. |
| Chuksang (Seke) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My own data collected from two informants at Pokhara. All forms were double-checked by one of the informants. |
| Syang (Thakali) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My own data collected from three informants at Syang and Pokhara. All forms were double-checked by one of the informants. • Mazaudon 1973b forms indicated by (M73b). • Mazaudon 1978 forms indicated by (M). |
| Marpha (Thakali) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My own data collected from one informant at Jomsom. • Georg 1996 for those indicated by (G). • Mazaudon 1978 for those indicated by (M). |
| Tukche (Thakali) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hale ed. 1973. |
| Ngawal (Manangba) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My own data collected from one informant at Kathmandu. • Mazaudon 1978 for those indicated by (M). |
| Ghachok (Gurung) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glover, Glover and Gurung 1977. |
| Sahu (W. Tamang) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hale ed. 1973. • Hari 1970 for those indicated by (Hr). |
| Risiangku (E. Tamang) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mazaudon 1973a. • Mazaudon 1973b for those indicated by (M73b). • Mazaudon 1978 for those indicated by (M). |
| Tibetan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jäschke 1881 [1995]. |

All of the forms except those from my own data are modified according to phonemic notations adopted here. Note that vowels /a/ and /ʌ/ in Mazaudon 1973b, 1978 are written here as *ǣ*/ and /a/, respectively. Raised H and L represent high tone (either tone 1 or tone 2) and low tone (either tone 3 or tone 4), respectively.

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