

CONTEMPORARY TRACES OF THE VERB SUFFIX *-s OF PROTO-TIBETO-BURMAN

Huang Bufan

Central University for Nationalities, Beijing

Translated by Wu Zhu

Central University for Nationalities

*and Chen Shuxian**

Summer Institute of Linguistics

1.0 INTRODUCTION

There existed in Proto-Tibeto-Burman (PTB) a verb suffix *-s. It was used to show that the action denoted by a verb has been performed or completed. The existence of this suffix can be seen in contemporary markers of the past tense, the *yǐxíng* aspect or the *wánchéng* aspect in many Tibeto-Burman (TB) languages in China.^{1,2}

Although *-s has disappeared from some TB languages, it is not surprising that most Qiangic languages have kept the element. This is because the Qiangic branch generally has much more inflectional morphology than other branches under the TB Group. Yet even in the Yi (or Loloish) branch of languages, which have little inflectional morphology and are analytic in structure, traces of the proto-suffix under discussion can still be found.

The modern descendants (or reflexes) of *-s take several forms with different grammatical meanings. It can be a single [s] by itself or a suffix-like syllable beginning with [s]. (All of these forms can hereafter be represented by “s(N(C))”, with the uppercase “N” and “C” denoting “nucleus” and “coda” respectively). In different languages, the s(N(C)) element can be an affix, a

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¹ Tibeto-Burman languages discussed in this paper are limited to those in China. The present writer's own fieldwork provides data for Muya (= Minyak), the Pumi spoken at Muli, and the Xia'erba and Balti varieties of Tibetan. Other linguistic data are taken from published sources (see References).

² Translators' note: *Yǐxíng* (literally, 'already-performed') and *wánchéng* (literally, 'complete') are the *pinyin* spellings of two Chinese terms. Both can be translated as 'perfective'. Generally speaking they are used interchangeably, according to the preference of individual fieldworkers and grammarians. But in some languages, e.g. Shixing (Huang and Renzengwangmu 1991:187-8) and Naxi (He and Jiang 1985:84), there is a contrast.

functional particle, or even a conjunction. As an affix or particle, it is a marker of tense, aspect, *qíngtài* (i.e. evidentiality), or *yǔqì* (i.e. mood or tone).³

2.0 FOUR TYPES OF REFLEXES FROM *-s

Based on their grammatical functions, the reflexes of *-s in various TB languages can be divided into four types: markers of tense or aspect, markers of modality, conjunctions, and nominalizers. The four subsections below will present examples of each type.

2.1 MARKERS OF TENSE OR ASPECT

This group includes the following TB languages: Tibetan, Jingpo, Qiang (spoken at Taoping), Shixing, Jinuo, Lahu, Naxi, Queyu, and Cangluo Menba. The s(N(C)) elements in these languages are markers of either the past tense or the perfective aspect. The data presented in this paper and the accompanying analyses concerning tense or aspect are taken directly from published descriptions as cited below. The present writer's comments on these analyses are added as necessary.

(i) In Classical Tibetan, verbs could take the suffixes *-s* or *-d*. Appearing only after roots ending in [n], [l], or [r], the latter was a morphophonemic variant of the former. Two examples are given below:

Tenses	Classical Tibetan	
	'to see'	'to change'
Past	b-lta-s	gjur-d
Present	lta	ḡgjur
Future	b-lta	ḡgjur

Here, *-s* and *-d* served as past tense markers. In addition, together with an inflectional change in the vowel of the verb root, they were also used to make up the imperative form, e.g. *lto-s* 'see <imperative>'.³

In most modern Tibetan dialects, *-s* and *-d* have already disappeared. (Suffixal *-d* disappeared earlier than *-s*; Tibetan manuscripts stopped using the former after the 10th century.) Their disappearance in some dialects has resulted in a change in the form of some past tense verbs, as shown by the following examples:

³ Translators' note: Later discussions in the paper will show the meaning of the two Chinese terms *qíngtài* and *yǔqì* as used by Prof. Huang.

Tenses	Classical Tibetan	Lhasa Tibetan	Xia'erba Tibetan
Past	b-lta-s	[tɛ ⁵²]	[ta: ⁵³]
Present	lta	[ta ⁵⁵]	[ta ⁵³]
Future	b-lta	[ta ⁵⁵]	[ta ⁵³]

The verb 'to see' in Classical Tibetan and two modern Tibetan dialects

The disappearance of *-s* from Lhasa Tibetan has raised the vowel and produced a falling tone. On the other hand, the past tense suffix has been replaced by a contrast in vowel length in the Xia'erba variety of Tibetan.

(ii) A group of syllables in Jingpo beginning with [s], i.e. [sa] (1st person), [sin] (2nd person), and [sai] (3rd person), combine with other morphemes to make up what have been called "utterance-final particles".⁴ From the following paradigm (Liu 1984:62) and examples, we can see that the syllables in question indicate complete aspect (*wánchéng*).⁵

Person of the Subject	Singular		Plural	
	non-completive	completive	non-completive	completive
First	ŋ ³¹ ŋai ³³	śă ³ ŋai ³³	ka ⁷³¹ ai ³³	śă ⁵ ka ⁷⁵ ai ³³
Second	ŋ ³¹ tai ³³	śin ³³ tai ³³	mă ¹ tai ³³	mă ³ śin ³³ tai ³³
Third	ai ³³	śai ³³	ma ⁷³¹ ai ³³	mă ¹ śai ³³

khj³³ wa³¹ sai³³ 'He has gone back.' (p. 32)
he return

ŋai³³ mu³¹ śă³ŋai³³ 'I can [now] see it.' (p. 32)
I see

(iii) In the variety of Qiang spoken at Taoping, there are also past tense suffixes beginning with [s]. As an illustration, the paradigm for the verb 'to harvest, gather in' (Sun 1981:100) and some example sentences are given below:

⁴ "Utterance-final particles" (yǔwěizhùcí) carry a combination of grammatical meanings. Since Jingpo is like most other TB languages in being SOV, utterance-final particles can also be described as suffix-like elements appearing after the main verb of the sentence.

⁵ Translators' note: Syllables with a single tone numeral are unstressed syllables (Liu 1984:14). The syllable-initial consonant [s] is underlined for emphasis, not for any special phonetic attribute.

Person	Number	Tense		
		Future	Present	Past
First	Singular	kuə ⁵¹	kuə ³¹	ku ⁵⁵ -sa ³¹
	Plural	ku ⁵¹ -aɿ ³¹	ku ³¹ -aɿ ³¹	ku ⁵⁵ -si ³¹
Second	Singular	ku ⁵¹ -nə ³¹	ku ³¹ -nə ³¹	ku ⁵⁵ -so ³¹
	Plural	ku ⁵¹ -sɿ ³¹ -nə ³¹	ku ³¹ -sɿ ³¹ -nə ³¹	ku ⁵⁵ -sɿ ³¹ -nə ³¹
Third	Singular	ku ⁵¹	ku ³¹	ku ⁵¹ -i ³¹
	Plural	ku ⁵¹	ku ³¹	ku ⁵¹ -i ³¹

qɑ³¹thya⁵⁵ kuə²⁴¹ ku⁵⁵-si³¹ 'We have gathered in the wheat.' (p. 101)
 we wheat gather.in

no⁵⁵ kuə²⁴ ku⁵⁵-so³¹ 'You have gathered in the wheat.' (p. 100)
 you.SG wheat gather.in

Although the s(N(C)) in Taoping Qiang also indicates an action in the past, its function as a tense marker is much weaker than the s(N(C)) in Jingpo as an aspect marker. This is so for three reasons: (a) tense contrasts in Qiang are signified primarily by different tones of the verb root and only secondarily by the use of suffixes; (b) s(N(C)) is only used for the first and the second person, but not for the third; (c) the s(N(C)) syllable is also used for the present and the future tense of the second person. Since s(N(C)) no longer exists in the northern dialects of Qiang, we can assume that this element is in the process of fading out from Taoping Qiang as well.

(iv) In Shixing (Huang and Renzengwangmu 1991), [sɿ³³⁻⁵⁵] is the *yǐxíng* (i.e. perfective) aspect particle, for example:

thi⁵³ tɕh̥³³ sɿ⁵⁵ 'He has come.' (p. 188)
 he come YIXING

ŋɜ⁵⁵ sɿ⁵⁵ ti⁵⁵ sɿ³³ 'I have chopped the wood.' (p. 188)
 I firewood chop YIXING

[sɿ³³] is also used with [-wu⁵⁵] to represent the *wánchéng* (i.e. completive) aspect, for example:

ŋɜ⁵⁵ dzɜ³⁵ tsha³³-wu⁵⁵ sɿ³³ 'I have finished eating.' (p. 188)
 I eat finish WANCHENG

ni⁵⁵ dzɜ³⁵ tʃha³³-wu⁵⁵ a³³-ɕɿ³³?
 you.SG eat finish INTG.PRE-WANCHENG
 'Have you finished eating?' (p. 188)

(v) In Jinuo (Gai 1986), [sɔ³⁵] is the *wánchéng*; aspect particle, for example:⁶

kʰə⁴² zo⁴⁴ ɕɔ³⁵ a nœ³³ 'He has gone.' (p. 51)
 he leave PARTICLE

pu⁴⁴ lɔ³³ to⁴² ɕɔ³⁵ a nœ³³ 'The moon has come out.' (p. 51)
 moon emerge PARTICLE

(vi) In Lahu (Chang *et al.* 1986), [se³¹u³¹] is the *wánchéng* particle, for example:^{7,8}

lɔ³¹ li³¹ qai³³ se³¹ u³¹ 'The car has left.' (p. 69)
 car leave

sɿ⁵⁴ tʃhi³³ te⁵³ tɕe³¹ tʰy³³ pa¹¹ se³¹ u³¹
 tree this one CLF cut fall

'This tree has been cut down.' (p. 27)

(vii) In Naxi (He and Jiang 1985), [se³¹ ~ siə³³] is the *wánchéng* particle, for example:⁹

tʰu³³ tʃu³¹ siə³³ 'He has come.' (p. 55)
 he come

tʰu³³ khue³³mi³¹ xu³³ se³¹ 'He has gone to Kunming.' (p. 50)
 he Kunming go

⁶ Translators' note: Syllables with no tone numeral are unstressed (Gai 1986:10).

⁷ Chang *et al.* (1986) do not use the term "aspect", but in the section on "tense particles" [se^{2u}] is said to indicate that "an action has been *wánchéng* [i.e. completed]" (p. 51).

⁸ According to my own analysis of Black Lahu verb-particles, *šē* (here written *se*³¹) indicates the speaker's *regret*, while it is *ò* (here written *u*³¹) that has completive meaning. There is a homophonous particle *šē* that has *inchoative* meaning, appearing especially in NEG + V + *šē* constructions meaning 'not V yet'. There is also a cognate Burmese particle of similar meaning, WB *sē* (Mod. Bs. *θēi*). See Matisoff 1973:330-341. [Ed.]

⁹ He and Jiang (1985:84) do not use the term "aspect". According to them, [se³¹ ~ siə³³] indicates the *wánchéngmào* (completive state) and belongs to the group of *qíngmào* (literally, situation-state) particles. The meaning of *qíngmào* is different from what we mean by *qíngtài* (modality) in the present paper.

[se³¹ ~ siə³³] has acquired another grammatical meaning, namely, to indicate a “*kěndìng yǔqì* [definite mood/tonal]” (He and Jiang 1985:86), for example:

ŋə³¹ so³¹ ŋi³³ mə³³ lu³³ ʂe³¹ ‘I am not coming tomorrow.’
I tomorrow not come (p. 51)

u³³ le³³ u⁵⁵ bu³³ tɰ⁵⁵ ʂe³¹ ‘You can go [now].’ (p. 53)
you return go can

(viii) In Queyu (Wang 1991), there are two ways to signify the *yǐxíng* (i.e. perfective) aspect: (a) two suffixes [-u⁵⁵] and [-si³¹] together after the verb, or (b) either [ku⁵⁵-] or [ta⁵⁵-] before the verb but no [-u⁵⁵-si³¹] after it. For example:

ŋa¹³ tɕhi⁵⁵-u⁵⁵-ʂi³¹ ~ ku⁵⁵-tɕho⁵⁵ ‘I have eaten.’ (p. 58)
I eat-SUF-SUF PREF-eat

tse¹³ tɕhi⁵⁵-u⁵⁵-ʂi³¹ ~ ku⁵⁵-p-tɕhi⁵⁵ ‘He has eaten.’ (p. 58)
he eat-SUF-SUF PREF-PREF-eat

There may be a difference in meaning between the two constructions illustrated above. There is one sentence in Wang (1991) that uses [-si³¹] after the progressive suffix:

ŋa¹³ tɕho⁵⁵-ʒo⁵⁵-ʂi³¹ ‘I am eating.’ (p. 58)
I eat-PROG-SUF

The exact meaning of [-si³¹] can only be ascertained with additional data from further fieldwork.

(viii) The *yǐxíng* (i.e. perfective) aspect in Cangluo Menba (Zhang 1986) is marked by two variants, i.e. [-ci] and [-tci⁵⁵], which probably originate from *si < *s. For example: ¹⁰

ro⁷¹³ ju¹³ tɕam¹³-ci mo?
he wine drink INTG.PARTICLE
‘Has he drunk some wine?’ (p. 76)

tɕaŋ¹³ jaŋ¹³ then⁵⁵ joŋ¹³-khe⁵⁵-wa tɕor⁵⁵ mar¹³ ci
I last year very one fall.ill
‘Last year I was seriously ill.’ (p. 76)

¹⁰ Translators’ note: Syllables with no tone numeral are unstressed (Zhang 1986: 11-12).

2.2 MARKERS OF EVIDENTIALITY

This group includes the following TB languages: Jiarong, Daofu, Pumi (spoken at Muli), Muya (=Minyak), and Nusu (one of the languages used by the Nu people). The category of evidentiality involves the following contrasts:

- a) if the speaker is conscious of his or her own action or not;
- b) if a proposition is based on eye-witness perception or not (“non-eyewitness” is used when reporting what other people have said, or when inferring from the effects or results of an action);
- c) if the proposition is new or relatively old knowledge/information.¹¹

As shown below, the s(N(C)) of the past tense and the perfective aspect is often intertwined with the category of evidentiality. It is therefore probable that the s(N(C)) of evidentiality originates from that of tense and aspect.

(i) In Jiarong (Lin 1993), the suffix [-s] indicates first person self-consciousness or third person eye-witness perception for intransitive verbs in the past tense. For example:

ŋa nɐ-rmɐ-ŋ-s

I PAST-sleep-1ST.PERSON

‘I have fallen asleep.’ [Self-conscious] (p. 234)

wəjo nɐ-rmɐ-s

he PAST-sleep

‘He has gone to bed.’ [Eye-witness] (p. 234)

Looking further at the following data, we can see that the past tense is primarily marked by the prefix [na-]. The suffix [-s], as well as the alternation of the vowel from [a] to [ɐ] in the prefix, serves to indicate the self-conscious or the eye-witness mode.

rmɐ -ŋ ‘(I) am going to bed.’ [Future tense]

ko- rmɐ -ŋ ‘(I) am sleeping.’ [Present tense]

ŋa na- rmɐ -ŋ ‘I have fallen asleep.’ [Past tense] [Self-**un**conscious]

wəjo na- rmɐ ‘He has gone to bed.’ [Past tense] [Non-eyewitness]

ŋa nɐ- rmɐ -ŋ -s ‘I have fallen asleep.’ [Past tense] [Self-conscious]

wəjo nɐ- rmɐ -s ‘He has gone to bed.’ [Past tense] [Eyewitness]

¹¹ For detailed discussion of evidentiality in TB, please refer to Huang (1991c).

(ii) In Daofu (Huang 1991a), the suffix [-si] indicates first person self-**un**consciousness or third person non-eye-witness perception for the *yǐxing* (i.e. perfective) aspect. For example:

ŋa du ɣə-tu -si.
I poison YIXING drink

‘I have [unknowingly] taken the poison.’ (p. 36)

məq^{hi} nə-qi -si
rain YIXING fall

‘It has rained.’ [Inferred from the wet ground] (p. 36)

Compare with the following:

ŋa ɣrə ɣə-tu ‘I have drunk some water.’ [Self-conscious]

maq^{hi} nə-qi ‘It has rained.’ [Eye-witness] (p. 36)

(iii) In Pumi (spoken at Muli), the suffixes [-si³¹] and [-sɔ̃³¹] indicate non-eye-witness perception and first person self-**un**consciousness respectively. For example:

tsɔ̃⁵⁵ be⁵⁵ k^{hə}³³-dzu⁵³ -si³¹
he meal YIXING eat

‘He has eaten.’ [Non-eye-witness]

tsɔ̃⁵⁵ a³³ be⁵⁵ tɕi³³ xiɐ̃⁵³-dzɿ, a⁵⁵ tɕi³³-sɔ̃³¹⁻⁵³
he I OBJ speak let-PROG I speak

‘Since he let me speak, I have spoken.’ [Self-**un**conscious] ¹²

Compare with the following:

tsɔ̃⁵⁵ be⁵⁵ k^{hə}³³-dzu⁵³
he meal YIXING-eat

‘He has eaten.’ [Eye-witness]

a³³ zä⁵⁵ phɿⁱ⁵⁵ k^{hə}³³ thē³¹
we.two wine YIXING drink

‘We two have (drunk the wine and) gotten married.’ [Self-conscious]

¹² Translators’ note: The superscript hyphen in [sɔ̃³¹⁻⁵³] signifies a tone sandhi from 31 to 53.

“Non-eye-witness” in Pumi means that the speaker did not see the action itself, but he or she may see the result of the action. [-si³¹] is used in the following sentences because the process denoted by the verb cannot be observed meticulously:

ŋæ⁵⁵ tɕi⁵⁵ nə³³-biæ³¹-ɕi³¹ ‘Your house has collapsed.’
your house down.fall

bɰ³⁵ tɕi³³-ɕi³¹ ‘The sun has come out.’
sun come.out

(iv) In Muya (=Minyak, Huang 1985 and 1991b), when the verb is in the *wánchéng* (i.e. completive) aspect, the following suffixes are used to indicate self-**un**consciousness of the action or inference about what has just happened (i.e. that the speaker is a non-eye-witness of the action itself):¹³

Persons	Singular	Plural
First	-sø	-si
Second	-sy	-se
Third	-sə	-sə

For example:

v⁵⁵tsə³³ phə³³la⁵⁵ khu³³ tu³⁵ nɐ⁵³- tə⁵⁵-sø³³ tɕə³³
this bowl inside poison WANCHENG put.into NOMINALIZ.

thɐ⁵⁵-mə⁵³ tsə³³ kə³³, ŋe³⁵ fiæ³³-ndzɐ⁵³-sø³³
WANCHENG-forget afterwards I.myself WANCHENG-eat

‘I have forgotten that poison was put into this bowl, and I have eaten [the contents].’ [Self-**un**conscious] (Huang 1991c:28)

mə⁵³ nə³³-qɰɐ⁵³-sə³³
rain WANCHENG-fall

‘It rained.’ [Non-eye-witness] (Huang 1991c:28)

Compare with the following:

¹³ In Huang 1985 and 1991b, I used the term *qīnyàn yǔqì* (personal-experience + mood) and defined it as “emphasizing that the action is seen by the speaker ...” (1985:71 & 1991b:118). This wording is imprecise because the speaker does not see the action itself, but the results or effects of the action. I gave a better definition in Huang (1991c), and renamed *qīnyàn yǔqì* as *qíngtài fānchóu* (evidentiality + category). Example sentences given below are from Huang (1991c), with the misprints there corrected.

ŋi⁵³ fiæ³³-ndzɐ⁵³ rɑ³³
I WANCHENG-eat PARTICLE

'I have eaten.' [Self-conscious] (Huang 1991c:28)

mə⁵³ nɑ³³ qhɐ⁵³ rɑ³³
rain WANCHENG fall PARTICLE

'It rained.' [Eye-witness] (Huang 1991c:27)

(v) In Nusu (Sun and Liu 1986:84), [sa⁵⁵] is classified as a "yǔqì zhùcí", i.e. mood (or tone) particle. It is used at the end of an indicative sentence to convey a "kěndìng" (definite) mood/tone, in contrast to [ɑ³¹] for the unmarked mood/tone.¹⁴ For example:

a⁵⁵ŋi³¹ ŋɑ³⁵du³¹ dāi³⁵ u³¹ khĩã³⁵ du⁵⁵ bwe³¹ ku³¹ sa⁵⁵
today we paddy.field that CLF dig finish WANCHENG
'Today we have finished digging up that patch of paddy field.'
(pp. 84-5)

If the above sentence ends with [ɑ³¹] instead of [sa⁵⁵], then it will be in the unmarked mood. [sa⁵⁵] can be used not only after a verb in the *wánchéng* aspect, but also after a verb in the future aspect. For example:

zue⁵⁵ phǎi⁵³ iɔ³⁵ zɑi³⁵ bwe³¹ ku³¹ sa⁵⁵,
charcoal kiln make finish WANCHENG
a⁵⁵ŋi³¹ ŋɑ³⁵du³¹ zue⁵⁵ phaɪ⁵³ gua³⁵ sa⁵⁵
today we charcoal burn FUTURE
'The charcoal kiln is done; today we will start making charcoal.'
(p. 84)

2.3 CONJUNCTIONS

There exist phonologically similar conjunctions having the form of s(N(C)) independently in Achang, Yi and Lisu.¹⁵ These conjunctions are used to link up either two verb-like elements or two clauses. If it is two verblike elements, the second conjunct is the complement of the first. If it is two clauses, the second clause further elaborates on or adds to the meaning of the first clause. Since these conjunctions often immediately follow a verb denoting an already

¹⁴ *Yǔqì zhùcí* (mood/tone particles) belong to the category of *yǔqì*, which is different from and yet similar to the meaning of the category of *qíngtài* (evidentiality). This is so because the eyewitness contrast also entails the difference between the *kěndìng* (definite) and the unmarked mood/tone.

¹⁵ The function words in Achang and Yi under consideration are both called *jíegòu zhùcí* (structural particle) in Dai and Cui (1985:57) and Chen *et al.* (1985: 140).

performed action, they probably originate from the ancient element **-s*. If this hypothesis is true, then these conjunctions carry a grammatical function more distantly related to verbs; in other words, they are more independent from the verb than the affixes and particles discussed in the last two sections.

(i) In Achang (Dai and Cui 1985), [sɿ³¹] links up a verb or predicative adjective with its complement:

te²⁵⁵ sɿ³¹ xə³¹ 'to be painful from being hit' (p. 57)
hit painful

tʂha³¹ sɿ³¹ ɳɔ³¹ 'to differ or miss by much' (p. 57)
differ, miss a lot

ai³¹ za³¹, kʒai⁵⁵ sɿ³¹ ɲɔŋ³¹ pɔ³¹
oh boy speak wrong PARTICLE

'Oh boy, I said something wrong!' (p.61)

(ii) Similarly in Yi (Chen et al. 1985), [si²¹~⁴⁴] or [si³³ni²¹] links up a verb or predicative adjective with its complement, for example:

tʂu³³ kʰu³³ si⁴⁴ dzu³³ a²¹ hi⁵⁵ o⁴⁴
salty eat not able PARTICLE

'This is too salty (for eating).' (p. 141)

tʂɿ³³ he³³ma⁵⁵ kʰa⁵⁵ si²¹ m(u)³³du³³ ʂu⁴⁴ a²¹ yu²¹ o⁴⁴
he heart happy solution find not PARTICLE PARTICLE

'He is extremely happy [i.e. so happy that there is nothing to do about it].' (p. 141)

hi⁵⁵ hi³³ si³³ ni²¹ ʃɿ³³li³³ dʒe³³ o⁴⁴
stand-stand foot sore PARTICLE

'The legs are sore from having stood for so long.' (p. 140)

(iii) In Lisu (Xu *et al.* 1986), [sɿ⁵⁵] is used to link up two verb phrases or clauses, for example:

ko⁴⁴ ku⁴⁴ gi³³ sɿ⁵⁵ se⁴⁴ tʂɿ³¹ du³¹
hill in go medicine dig

'to go into the hills to trowel up medicinal herbs' (p. 70)

e⁵⁵ bo⁴⁴ ka⁵⁵ thi³¹ thu³⁵ zu⁴⁴ la³³ sɿ⁵⁵, tho³¹ yu³¹
he pen one CLF get come book

kua⁴⁴ dʒi³³ dʒi³³ bo⁴⁴ nie¹³
 on seriously write PROG

'After fetching a pen, he is/was seriously writing it down in the book.' (p. 70)

2.4 NOMINALIZERS

The s(N(C)) elements in Daofu, Muya, Jingpo, Achang and the Balti variety of Tibetan can also derive nouns from verbs. Since this s(N(C)) follows a verb in the *yǐxíng* or *wánchéng* aspect in Daofu and Muya, the nominalizing function is likely to be a new usage originating from PTB *-s.

(i) Examples from Jingpo (Liu 1984) are as follows:

ʃa ⁵⁵ -ai ³³	'things to eat'
ʃa ⁵⁵ -ʂai ³³	'things having been eaten' (p. 35)
ʃǎ'ʒin ⁵⁵ -ai ³³	'things to learn'
ʃǎ'ʒin ⁵⁵ -ʂai ³³	'things having been learnt' (p. 35)

(ii) Examples from Daofu (Huang 1991a) are as follows:

vəɾəɾo	rə-xa	ʂi	vdzi
below	YIXING-come		person

'person who came up here from down below' (p. 41)

tʰə	ŋa	də-ntɕʰu	ʂi	ŋu	rə
that	I	YIXING-hear		be	PARTICLE

'That is what I have heard.' (p. 41)

(iii) Examples from Muya (Huang 1991b) are as follows:

khɯ ⁵⁵	-ŋu ⁵⁵	'to have fried'
khɯ ⁵⁵ -ŋu ⁵⁵	ʂə ³³	'things having been fried' (p. 123)
ndo ⁵³		'to hear'
tho ³³ -ndo ⁵³	ʂə ³³	'what (he) has heard' (p. 123)

(iv) Examples from Achang (Dai and Cui 1985) are as follows:

ŋɔ ⁵⁵	pʒat ⁵⁵	ʂɿ ³¹	ma ³¹	ŋu ⁵⁵
I	snap		not	want

'I do not want those that are broken.' (p. 71)

ŋɔ ⁵⁵	ʒə ³⁵	ʂɿ ³¹	tʰau ⁵⁵	ŋen ³¹	ŋe ⁷⁵⁵	ne ⁷⁵⁵
I	come		that	day	be	PARTICLE

'It was on the day that I came.' (p. 68)

(v) In the Balti variety of Tibetan, which has preserved comparatively more elements from Classical Tibetan, the past tense suffix -s also has the nominalizing function, for example:

laŋ-s	'rising; standing'
graŋ-s	'being cold'
mbris	'pen' (< fibri 'write')
bdzik-s	'destroying; destruction'

3.0 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The previous section has pointed out modern traces of the PTB verb suffix *-s in many TB languages. We will end this paper with the following three remarks. First, these traces provide new evidence for cognate relationships in the TB family. Second, linguistic elements for basic grammatical notions (such as tense and aspect) are similar to the basic vocabulary of nouns and verbs in their ability to resist obsolescence. Naturally this does not mean that these elements will always stay the same over time. In individual languages, they may take on forms and meanings unlike the proto-form to different degrees. Third, in synthetic TB languages, which are generally closer to the original structure of PTB, the s(N(C)) is a suffix, but in analytic TB languages it is a particle or conjunction. This reflects the developmental trend from a synthetic to an analytic grammatical structure within the TB family.

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