"Agreement of the Verb in Tangut"[*]

K. B. Keping
Institut Vostokovedeniya, Leningrad

Translated and edited by L. Kwanten, University of Chicago

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In an earlier article entitled "Lexical Groups of Verbs and Subject-

Object Agreement in Tangut,"[I] we pointed to three auxiliary words as verbal

prefixes, namely 𗟻 *nga[2], 𗱕 *na[2] and 𗾈 *ni[2]. Although their original

function appears to be that of personal pronouns, in the texts investigated,[II]

they fulfill one and the same function, namely to make the verb agree in

person and number with the subject, and sometimes also with the object

(𗟻 *nga[2]). Verbal agreement with the subject or the object is associated

respectively with intransitive and transitive verbs.

Further research conducted by us showed that 1) if the intransitive verb

always agrees with the subject, the transitive verb, however, at times agrees

with the object and at times with the agent of action, and 2) that not only

𗟻 *nga[2] but also 𗱕 *na[2] can make the verb agree with the object.

The purpose of the present article is to formulate the rules of agree-

ment of the Tangut verb, in other words, the rules for the use of the

auxiliary words 𗟻 *nga[2], 𗱕 *na[2] and 𗾈 *ni[2].

Intransitive Verbs

With intransitive verbs (V^{intr}) there is generally a noun—this noun

has the function of the subject of an action (N^s): $N^s V^{intr}$. (Because of

space restrictions, the formation of N^s will not be examined here.)

V^{intr} with N^s indicating a pronoun of the 3rd person singular-plural does not receive any formulation, i.e. there is zero agreement $V^{intr}_{\emptyset}$. In those cases in which N^s represents a pronoun of the 1st or 2nd person singular, the verb can be followed by the auxiliary words 𧿴 *nga[2] and 𦩳 *na[2], respectively, making the verb agree with N^s. If, however, N^s represents a pronoun of the 1st or 2nd person plural then the auxiliary word 𦏈 *ni[2] makes the verb agree with N^s.

The paradigm of the conjugation of the Tangut V^{intr} is provisionally shown through the use of eight sentences in Russian, sentences that differ in the representation of N^s (i.e. 1st, 2nd and 3rd person pronouns single or plural, substantive single or plural). After each sentence is shown either the auxiliary word used or zero agreement (∅) which in Tangut corresponds to a sentence of the type: V^{intr} agrees with N^s.

1.	Я умираю	𧿴	*nga[2]	(I die...)
2.	Ты умираешь	𦩳	*na[2]	(You die...)
3.	Он/Она умирает	∅		(He/She dies...)
4.	Мы умираем	𦏈	*ni[2]	(We die...)
5.	Вы умираете	𦏈	*ni[2]	(You die...)
6.	Они умирают	∅		(They die...)
7.	Человек умирает	∅		(A person dies...)
8.	Люди умирают	∅		(People die...)

As can be seen, the pronouns of the 3rd person singular or plural, as well as substantives, singular or plural, are treated in the same manner without agreement with V^{intr} (zero agreement).

It should be pointed out, however, that after V^{intr}, the use of the auxiliary words 纵 *nga[2], 肞 *na[2] and 覔 *ni[2] is optional.

Transitive Verbs

With transitive verbs, (V^{tr}), two possible nouns can be used, one with the function of agent of action (N^a), the other with the function of object of action (N^o): $N^a \ N^o \ V^{tr}$. (As was the case with the intransitive verbs, the function of these nouns is not examined).

As was stated above, in the texts examined V^{tr} at times agrees with N^a, and at other times agrees with N^o. In order to investigate this problem, we have arranged the Tangut material in the following manner: 1) pronoun of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd person both singular and plural, and 2) substantives, singular and plural.

As in Tangut, subject and object cannot be expressed by one and the same person (when they do coincide the morpheme 訋 *in[1] is used, it has a reflexive function and is independent of the person), those type of sentences in which subject and object coincide, fully or partially, have been removed from the table. The exception are those instances in which the subject and the object are expressed by a pronoun of the 3rd person, singular or plural, or by a substantive, singular or plural, for example: "he-him", not himself but another; "servant-servants", not himself but others. In this manner we obtained 56 sentence types, each of which has been given, provisionally, in the table below by a Russian sentence with the verb "бить", "to strike." Some of the types obtained in this manner were not encountered in our material, for example, no. 3 "Я бью вас", no. 44 "Слуга бьет нас", etc.

Types not encountered were omitted from the table below but a unified,

continuous numbering of the types has been maintained.

Below, we present a table of sentence types with V^{tr}. After each type

is indicated either the auxiliary word or the symbol of zero agreement

reflecting Tangut usage; the noun with which $\overline{V}^{tr}$ agrees has been underlined.

1.	Я бью тебя	毘	$*na^2$	(I strike you)
2.	Я бью его/ее	涎	$*nga^2$	(I strike him/her)
5.	Я бью слугу	涎	$*nga^2$	(I strike the servant)
7.	Ты бьешь меня	涎	$*nga^2$	(You strike me)
8.	Ты бьешь его/ее	毘	$*na^2$	(You strike him/her)
10.	Ты бьешь их	毘	$*na^2$	(You strike them)
11.	Ты бьешь слугу	毘	$*na^2$	(You strike the servant)
12.	Ты бьешь слуг	毘	$*na^2$	(You strike the servants)
14.	Он/Она бьет тебя	毘	$*na^2$	(He/She strikes you)
19.	Он/Она бьет слугу	∅		(He/She strikes the servant)
20.	Он/Она бьет слуг	∅		(He/She strikes the servants)
21.	Мы бьем тебя	毘	$*na^2$	(We strike you)
24.	Мы бьем их	荒	$*ni^2$	(We strike them)
25.	Мы бьем слугу	荒	$*ni^2$	(We strike the servant)
26.	Мы бьем слуг	荒	$*ni^2$	(We strike the servants)
27.	Вы бьете меня	涎	$*nga^2$	(You (pl.) strike me)
31.	Вы бьете слугу	荒	$*ni^2$	(You (pl.) strike the servant)
32.	Вы бьете слуг	荒	$*ni^2$	(You (pl.) strike the servants)

39.	Они бьют	слугу		∅	(They strike the servant)
40.	Они бьют	слуг		∅	(They strike the servants)
41.	Слуга бьет	меня	得能	*nga[1]	(The servant strikes <u>me</u>)
42.	Слуга бьет	тебя	段	*na[2]	(The servant strikes <u>you</u>)
43.	Слуга бьет	ето/ее		∅	(The servant strikes him/her)
47.	Слуга бьет	слугу		∅	(The servant strikes the servant)
48.	Слуга бьет	слуг		∅	(The servant strikes the servants)
49.	Слуги бьют	меня	得能	*nga[2]	(The servants strike <u>me</u>)
50.	Слуги бьют	тебя	段	*na[2]	(The servants strike <u>you</u>)
54.	Слуги бьют	их		∅	(The servants strike them)
55.	Слуги бьют	слугу		∅	(The servants strike the servant)
56.	Слуги бьют	слуг		∅	(The servants strike the servants)

From the table it is possible to derive the following three rules:

1) The verb never agrees with a pronoun of the 3rd person singular/plural, and with a substantive singular/plural;

2) When the sentence contains a pronoun of the 1st or 2nd person singular/plural, the verb agrees with the pronoun regardless of the pronoun's function within the sentence;

3) When the sentence contains two pronouns of the 1st or 2nd person singular/plural, the verb agrees with the pronoun that fulfills the function of object.

It needs to be pointed out that, as was the case with V^{intr}, the use of the auxiliary words 得能 *nga[2], 段 *na[2] and 范 *ni[2] is optimal with V^{tr}.

In concluding the section on transitive verbs, we should indicate

eptions to the general rules of agreement for the verb.

The first exception is verbs with an action of giving and taking.

h these verbs, besides N^a and N^o there generally occurs another noun

ch has as its function that of addressee of the action N^{adr}, thus

$N^o \ N^{adr} \ V^{tr}$.

When N^{adr} is a noun or a pronoun of the 3rd person singular/plural,

V^{tr} agrees with N^a. When N^{adr} is a pronoun of the 1st or 2nd person

gular, V^{tr} agrees with N^{adr}, i.e. N^{adr} functions as N^o with transitive

bs.

In the texts we investigated, the following types of sentences involving

bs to give/to take were found:

Я даю меч тебе	哭	*na^2	(I give the sword to <u>you</u>)
Я даю меч ему/ей	𧿆	*nga^2	(I give the sword to him/her)
<u>Я</u> даю меч им	𧿆	*nga^2	(<u>I</u> give the sword to them)
Я даю меч слугам	𧿆	*nga^2	(<u>I</u> give the sword to the servants)
Ты даешь меч <u>мне</u>	哭	*na^2	(You give the sword to <u>me</u>)
<u>Ты</u> даешь меч ему/ей	哭	*na^2	(<u>You</u> give the sword to him/her)
<u>Ты</u> даешь меч им	哭	*na^2	(<u>You</u> give the sword to them)
<u>Ты</u> даешь меч слуге	哭	*na^2	(<u>You</u> give the sword to the servant)
<u>Ты</u> даешь меч слугам	哭	*na^2	(<u>You</u> give the sword to the servants)
Слуга дает меч слуге	∅		(The servant gives the sword to the servant)

No Tangut sentences were encountered in which verbs of giving and taking

as N^o pronouns of the first and 2nd person singular/plural (for example,

I will hand you over to the enemy); thus we could not determine rules

of agreement in this particular case.

The second exception is when N^o is accompanied by a possessive

determinative of the 1st and 2nd person singular (for example,

"the servant strikes my servant"). In that case, contrary to what

can be expected from the rules for N^a and N^o, the V^{tr} does not receive

zero agreement $\emptyset$ for this sentence belongs in those of type 39 mentioned

above, i.e. "the servant strikes me." Thus, the agreement takes place

according to the possessive determinative of the object.

The following types of sentences in which N^o has a possessive

determination of the 1st or 2nd person singular were encountered:

1. Слуга бьет <u>моего</u> слугу 𝕫   *nga^2 (The servant strikes <u>my</u> servant)

2. Слуга бьет <u>твоего</u> слугу 𝕫   *na^2 (The servant strikes <u>your</u> servant)

3. Мы бьем <u>твоих</u> слуг 𝕫   *na^2 (We strike <u>your</u> servants)

4. Вы бьете <u>моих</u> слуг 𝕫   *nga^2 (You (pl.) strike <u>my</u> servants)

5. Слуга бьет его слугу $\emptyset$ (The servant strikes his
(someone else's) servant)

It is possible that an indication of the plurality of the possessive

determinative is also reflected in the form of V^{tr}. A sentence, which

can be assigned to the category "You (pl.) strike our servants," was

encountered in which V^{tr} was followed by the auxiliary word 𝕫 *ni^2.

This case, however, is ambiguous as it is not known whether or not the

auxiliary word 𝕫 *ni^2 indicates a plurality of N^a or of N^o.

It should be pointed out that in sentences with such a possessive determinative for N^o, it is also possible for V^{tr} to be in agreement with N^a, i.e. sentences of the type "You (pl.) strike my servant" can on the basis of agreement be equated with sentences of the type "You (pl.) strike the servant."

As in all other cases, however, the agreement when there is a possessive determinative for N^o is not required.

Regretfully, because of space restrictions, Tangut examples of the sentence types mentioned cannot be presented in this article.

Notes

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Kul'tury Narodov Vostoka, Ak. Nauk. SSSR, Institut Vostokovedeniya
Leningradskoe Otdelenie, Moscow, 1977, pp. 169-173.

[1]K. B. Keping, "Leksiceskie gruppy glagolov i sub'ektko-ob'ektnoe soglasovanie v
tangutskom yazika," Pis'mennye Pamjatniki i Problemy Kul'tury Narodov
Vostoka, Ak. Nauk. SSSR, Institut Vostokovedeniya Leningradskoe Otdelenie,
no. 2, Moscow, 1975, pp. 59-63 /translated by J. Matisoff, "Subject and
Object Agreement in the Tangut Verb," Linguistic Studies of the Tibeto-
Burman Area, Vol. 2, no. 2, 1976, pp. 219-231/

[2]The material for this investigation were Chinese secular works translated
into Tangut.