VOWEL CORRESPONDENCES BETWEEN RIANG AND PALAUNG

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In my recent article on the comparison of Palaung dialects[1], I reconstructed the following ten vowels for 'Proto-Palaung' (P.): three front vowels *i, *e, *ɛ (~*iə); three back vowels *u, *o, *ɔ; and, four long and short central vowels *ŭ̈, *ɯ, *ă̈, *a. A comparison of Palaung and Riang has revealed that an essentially identical proto-system would account for the majority of regular correspondences of Palaung and Riang vowels. Thus, I reconstruct the following ten vowel system for 'Proto-Palaung-Riang' (P-R.) tentatively:

$$
\begin{array}{ccccc}
{}^*i & & & & {}^*u \\
{}^*e & {}^*\breve{\vartheta} & {}^*\vartheta & {}^*o & \\
& {}^*\varepsilon(\sim{}^*i\vartheta) & {}^*\vartheta & & \\
& {}^*\breve{a}, & {}^*a & &
\end{array}
$$

The data of Riang used for this study are the following: (1) Black Riang (BR.): Luce's article on Danaw[2], the translation of St. Mark[3], and a few words from Shorto's article[4]; and, (2) White Striped Riang (WR.): Luce's article on Danaw.

1. Front vowels

P-R. *i is preserved in both Riang and (Proto-) Palaung in all regular cases, though it has become diphthongized in some present dialects of Palaung as was discussed in my aforementioned article. In White Riang, it is long -i:- in most examples, except before -ʔ where it is always short -i-.

Examples

	BR.	WR.	P.	Ta.[5]
'hand'	ti?¯	ti?¯	*ti	tī
'jungle'	pri?`	pri?`	*bri	brī
'you (sg.)'	mi?`	mi?`	*mi	mī
'head'	kiŋ¯	ki:ŋ¯	*kiŋ	kīŋ
'navel'	kəndiŋ¯	-di:ŋ¯	*-diŋ	kạr-dīŋ
'conceal(?)'	bit	...	(*-bit)	kạn-bīt[6]
'year'	vwit`	vwi:t`	...	...

	BR.	WR.	P.	Ta.
'ripe, cooked'	s‘in⁻	s‘i:n⁻	*sin	s‘īn shīn
'bird'	s‘im⁻	s‘i:m⁻	*sim	s‘īm shīm
'nine'	tim⁻	ti:m⁻	*tim	t‘īm
'old'	trim⁻	tri:m⁻	*prim	prīm
'sweep'	pis⁻	pi:s⁻	*pis	pīr

A short -i- also occurs in White Striped Riang in a few examples such as the following:

	BR.	WR.	P.	Ta.
'return'	vwiŋ`	vwiŋ`	(*viŋ)	vēng vīng
'iron'	hir⁻	hir⁻	*hir	hīr
'mushroom'	tis⁻	tis⁻	*tis	tīr, tī-εr

It might be the reflex of a possible short proto-vowel P-R. *i. However, long and short -i:-, -i- occur also in Ra-ang (i.e. Luce's Palaung of Panku)[7], but there is no clear regularity in the correspondence with WR. -i:-, -i-.

(i)

	WR.		Ra.
'nine'	ti:m⁻	:	ti:m
'ripe, cooked'	s‘i:n⁻	:	si:n

(ii)

	WR.		Ra.
'bird'	s‘i:m⁻	:	sim
'old'	tri:m⁻	:	ă-prim
'sweep'	pi:s⁻	:	ɓIh, ɓIχ

(iii)

	WR.		Ra.
'mushroom'	tis⁻	:	ɗi:h, ɗi:χ

P-R. *e has become -ε- in Riang in all attested cases except before velars.

Examples

(i)

	BR.	WR.	P.	Ta.
'fruit'	plε?⁻	plε?⁻	*ple	plē
'firewood'	k‘ε?⁻	k‘ε?⁻	*he	hē
'witch'	prε?`	prε?`	*bre	brē
'go out'	lε`	lε`	*leh	lē
'bear' (n.)	krεs⁻	krεs⁻	*kres	k‘rēr
'lay out'	pεl	...	*pel	pēr ('mat')

(ii)	BR.	WR.	P.	Ta.
'pig'	lekˋ	lekˋ	*lek	lĕ̆
'sky'	pleŋ⁻	pleŋ⁻	*pleŋ	plēng
'road'	rəndeŋ	...	*(rə) deŋ	(ra-)dēng

P-R. *e > BR. -ε- is attested also by Tai loanwords, such as 'ghost' BR. pʻεt < Shan pʻèt.

Contrastively, P-R. *ε before -ʔ[8] has become -e- in Riang.

	BR.	WR.	P.	Ta.
'earth'	kə̆teʔ⁻	kɤ̆teʔ⁻	*kətε	ka-tē̆
'new'	tənmeʔˋ	tɤnmeʔˋ	*-mε	kan-mē̆
'you (pl.)'	peʔ⁻	peʔ⁻	*pε	pe̊̄̆[9]
'take'	leʔ	...	(*lε)	lē̆

P-R. *ε before other consonants has become -iə-, transcribed in various ways in the original data, in both Riang and Palaung, and thus it might be better to reconstruct *iə for both Proto-Palaung-Riang and Proto-Palaung. For this problem, see my previous article, p. 202.

	BR.	WR.	P.	Ta.
'wing'	piεŋ⁻	piaŋ⁻	*piəŋ(<*pεŋ)	pyāng
'ginger'	kə̆sʻiεŋ⁻	kɤ̆sʻiaŋ⁻	*siəŋ(<*sεŋ)	sʻi-āng, sʻi-ō̱ng
'drink'	tiεŋ	...	*tiəŋ(<*tεŋ)	te-āng tyāng
'wither'	vwiεt	...	(*hviət(<*hvεt))	fi-ă̆t
'month'	kiεr⁻	kiεr⁻	*kiər(<*kεr)	kyār
'root'	riεsˋ	rıasˋ	*riəs(<*rεs)	ri-ā̱r

Similarly, I reconstruct P-R. *ʔiəŋ < *ʔεŋ < *ʔiər < *ʔεr for the following examples on the basis of the Proto-Palaung forms and the tone in Riang.

	BR.	WR.	P.	Ta.
'dung'	yaŋ⁻	yaŋ⁻	*ʔiəŋ(<*ʔεŋ)	i-āng̣
'chicken'	yεr⁻	yεr⁻	*ʔiər(<*ʔεr)	i-ā̱r

However, P-R. (*piəm <) *pyam should be reconstructed for the following example for the morphological reason:[10]

'kill'	piεm⁻	pyam⁻	(*piəm(<*pyam))	pyā̱m

2. Back vowels

The correspondences of the back vowels are more or less similar to those of the front vowels.

P-R. *u in most cases did not change in either Riang or (Proto-)
Palaung, though it has been diphthongized in some cases in Palaung.

Examples

	BR.	WR.	P.	Ta.
'towards'	tsu	...	*ǰu	jū
'sick'	s'u?⁻	s'u?⁻	*su	s'ū
'curry'	s'ə̆tu?⁻	s'ɤ̆tu?⁻	*tu	tū
'village'	pru?`	pru?`	*ru	rū
'hair'	huk⁻	huk⁻	*huk	hu
'rain'	tsuŋ`	tjuŋ`	(*ǰuŋ)	jūng
'deaf'	lut⁻	lu:t⁻	*hlut	hlu (cf. Ra.lUt)
'quail'	rə̆kut`	rə̆ku:t`	(*-gut)	Ra. ə̆gu?
'urine'	num	num`	*hnum	hnūm (v.)
'bathe'	hum⁻	hu:m⁻	*hum	hūm
'wind'	kur⁻	kur⁻	*kur	k'ūr
'skin'	hur⁻	hu:r⁻	*hur	hūr
'seven' (tə̆)	pul⁻	—tə̆pul⁻	*pul	pūr
'foam'	bus⁻	bus⁻	*bus	būr
'take off'	puic/puc/	...	*puc	pū-ɛt

As can be seen in the above examples, White Striped Riang has a long/
short contrast -u:- vs. -u- which might be the reflex of an original
contrast *u: vs. *u (cf. *i). Another possibility of an original short
*u could be seen in the following example, however, where Riang -u-
corresponds to a Proto-Palaung short *ə̆.[11]

| 'fishing net' | rup | ... | *-rə̆p | ra-rạp -rö̆p |

However, a more convincing evidence is lacking in either case to recon-
struct a short *u.

P-R. *-uñ shows a different correspondence as in the following:

| 'ant' | priñ` | pruiñ` | *bruñ | brị̄ng (cf. Ra.brun) |

P-R. *o seems to have been stable even before -? in Riang, though
it has changed in various ways in the Palaung dialects other than Ta-ang.
It is not attested by many examples, however.

Examples

	BR.	WR.	P.	Ta.
'husked rice'	ko?⁻	ko?⁻	*-ko	ra-kō
'stone'	...	s'ɤ̆mo?`	*mo	mō
'pot'	klo?⁻	klo?⁻	(*klo)	klō

	BR.	WR.	P.	Ta.
'four'	(kə̆)pon⁻	kəpUn⁻	*phon	pʻōn
'water'	om⁻	om⁻	*ʔom	ōm
'barking deer'	pos⁻	pos⁻	*pos	pʻōr
'above'	tākol	...	(*-gol)	ra-gōr, -gōl
'dove'	ploe	...	(*-ploy)	a-plō-ε

However, it has become -ɔ- in Riang in one case, i.e. before -h, as attested in the following example:

| 'flower' | pɔ⁻ | pɔ⁻ | *poh | pōh |

The correspondence of P-R. *ɔ in Riang is parallel to that of P-R. *ε(~iə): it has become -o- before -ʔ,[12] and -uə- before other consonants. P. *ɔ, to which it corresponds, has been diphthongized in various ways in Palaung dialects as was discussed in my previous article.

Examples

(i)	BR.	WR.	P.	Ta.
'paddy'	ŋo?⁻	ŋU?⁻	*hŋɔ	hngǭ
'dog'	sʻo?⁻	sʻo?⁻	*sɔ	sʻǭ
'I'	o?⁻	o?⁻	*ʔɔ	ǭ

(ii)	BR.	WR.	P.	Ta.
'salt'	sʻuɑk⁻	sʻuɑk⁻	(*sɔk)	sʻǫ̆
'rainbow'	pərñuɔŋˋ	pɣrñuɑŋˋ	(*-yɔŋ)	par-yōng
(?)'behind'	puat	...	(*pɔt)	pwǫ̆t 'away'
'child'	kuan⁻	kuan⁻	*kɔn	kwǭn
(?)'eat(rice)'	sʻuam⁻	sʻuam⁻	(*sɔm)	sʻǭm[13]
'heart'	-kə̆nuas⁻	-kɣ̆nuasˋ	*nɔs	nu-ār
'six'	tual⁻	tual⁻	*tɔl	tǭr
'fly' (n.)	ruəiˋ	ruəIˋ	*rɔy	ru-waī ru-wǭi
'three'	(kə)we⁻,	kə̆wɑi⁻	*ʔɔy	u-āi
	-wəi⁻,-wai⁻			

3. Central vowels

The four-way contrast of the central vowels in Proto-Palaung-Riang is more easily reconstructed than that of Proto-Palaung. I tentatively reconstruct them as P-R. *ə̆, *ə, *ă, *a, which corresponds to P. *ɯ̆, *ɯ, *ă, *a respectively, as reconstructed in my previous article. However, as there is no particular reason either synchronically or diachronically to reconstruct the non-low central vowels as *ɯ̆, *ɯ rather than *ə̆, *ə for Proto-Palaung, I will use *ə̆, *ə for both P-R. and P. in this paper.

P-R. *ə̆ corresponds to -ə- regularly, and -ɛ- after a palatal, in Riang; for the correspondences in Palaung, see my previous article.

Examples

	BR.	WR.	P.	Ta.
'cow, ox'	mə̆kˋ	...	*mə̆k	mŭk
'tree'	təŋ¯	tɤŋ¯	*tə̆ŋ	tīng, tōng
'flesh'	...	yɤŋˋ	*yə̆ŋ	yīng
'bamboo'	rəŋ¯	rɤŋ¯	*hrə̆ŋ	hrīng
'fasten'	rət	...	(*rə̆t)	rat̪, rat
'he,she,it'	(hn?¯)	ɤn¯	*?ə̆n	ān
'to plant'	pəksˈəm¯	pɤsˈɤm¯	*sə̆m	sˈā̪m sˈō̪m
'medicine'	sˈə̆nəm¯	sˈɤ̆nɤmˋ	*sənə̆m	sˈa̪-nā̪m
(?)'rot'	kˈəm¯	kˈɤm¯	(*?ə̆m)	ā̪m
'to fly'	pər¯	pɤr¯	*pə̆r	pər̪
'green'	ñɛr	...	*ñə̆r	nyār̪
'star'	sˈəkməiñˋ	sˈɤkmɤiñˋ	*səmə̆ñ	sa̪-mīng
'snake'	həiñ¯	həiñ¯	*hə̆ñ	hīng̪
'shoot'	pəiñ¯	pəiñ¯	*pə̆ñ	pīng̪

P-R. *ə has become -ɔ- in Riang as I have mentioned in my previous article.

Examples

	BR.	WR.	P.	Ta.
'foot'	tsɔŋˋ	tjɔːŋˋ	*jə̆ŋ	jŭng
'hole'	bɔŋ	...	*bəŋ	bŏng
'dig'	kɔŋ	...	*kəŋ	kŭng kūng
'short'	-dɔt	...	*dət	dŏt[14]
'get'	bɔn¯	bɔn¯	*bən	bŏn
'might'	-sˈəm¯	-sˈɔm¯	*-səm	rīn-sˈŏm
'heart,mind'	pˈɔm	...	*phəm	pˈŏm
'porcupine'	rəŋkɔs¯	rɤnkɔs¯	*-kəs	i-kŭr
'ten'	(sˈə̆)kɔl¯	sˈə̆kɔl	*kəl	kŏr
'vomit'	hɔl¯	hɔl¯	*həl	hŭr
'lac'	trɔic¯	trɔit¯	*krəc	krŏt

P-R. *ă and *a correspond to Riang -a- (sometimes -ɛ- after palatals) and -ɑ- respectively.

Examples

*ă̆	BR.	WR.	P.	Ta.
'bite'	kak`	kak`	*găk	gă
'horse'	mə̆raŋ`	mɤraŋ`	*m-bră̆ŋ	brāŋ
'thatch'	plaŋ⁻	plaŋ⁻	*plă̆ŋ	plā̆ŋ, plōŋ
(?)'near'	t‘at	...	*dă̆t	dat
'five'	(k)han⁻	k‘an⁻	*phă̆n	p‘an
'heavy'	kə̆tsan`	kɤtjɛn`	*jan	jān
'die'	yam`	yam`	*yă̆m	yă̆m
'egg'	tam⁻	tam⁻	(*-tă̆m)	ka-ṭām
'swell'	as⁻	as⁻	*ʔă̆s	ār
'charcoal'	kərc‘as⁻,	kɤrtjɛs⁻	*kəsă̆s	ka-s‘ār
	kərtsas⁻			
'fire'	ŋal`	ŋal`	*ŋă̆l	ngār
'mortar'	pal⁻	pal⁻	(?)*pă̆l	pār
'needle'	pənlaic`	...	*-lă̆c	pan-lɛ̆
'sharp-pointed'	paic⁻	paIt⁻	*pă̆c	pɛ̆

*a				
'tongue'	tɑk⁻	(tak⁻)	*-tak	kar-tā(Shorto/-taʔ/)
'armpit'	yɑk`	-yɑk`	*yak	yă̆, i-ă̆
'tooth'	rɑ:ŋ⁻	raŋ⁻	*hraŋ	hrāŋ
'house'	kɑŋ`	kɑŋ`	*gaŋ	gāŋ
'hot'	tɑt¹⁵	...	*tat	tāt
'Burmese'	(mə̆ran`)	mɤran`	*m-bran	brān
'blood'	nɑm⁻	nɑ:m⁻	*hnam	hnām
'cry'	yɑm`	yɑm`	*yam	yām
'laugh'	...	kɤ̆ña:s`	*kəñas	(Ra. kă̆ñah)
'hill culti-vation'	mɑr`	mɑr`	*mar	mār
'two'	(kə̆)ʔɑr⁻	kə̆ʔɑr⁻	*ʔa(?)	ā
(?)'before'	ac	...	(*-ʔat<-ac(?))	ra-ă̆t
'ask'	mɑiñ⁻	mɑiñ⁻	*hman(< hmañ(?))	hmān
'eye'	ŋɑi`	ŋɑi`	*ŋay	ngāī
'tiger'	rə̆wɑi`	rɤvwɑi`	*rəvay	ra-vāī

Riang -a-, -ɑ- both occur before -ʔ, both corresponding to Proto-Palaung
*a. Thus Proto-Palaung-Riang might have had the *-ă̆ʔ : -aʔ contrast.
However, Black Riang and White Striped Riang do not always coincide, and
a final solution should seem to await comparison with other Palaungic
languages.

(i)	BR.	WR.	P.	Ta.
'mother'	maʔ`	maʔ`	*ma	mā
'fish'	kaʔ⁻	kaʔ⁻	*ka	kā
'leaf'	laʔ⁻	laʔ	*hla	hlā

(ii)	BR.	WR.	P.	Ta.
'sesamum'	ləkŋaʔ˞	lɤ̆ŋaʔ˞	*ləŋa	la̧-ngā

(iii)				
'monkey'	waʔ⁻	vwaʔ⁻	*hva	fā

(iv)				
'eight'	(pər)taʔ⁻	pərtaʔ⁻	*ta	tā
'spade-blade'	plaʔ⁻	plaʔ⁻	*pla	plā

A similar problem occurs with *-ah : -ah (cf. my previous article, p. 210), but it is always -a in Riang.

'hundred'	pərya˞	pərya˞	*pəryah(?)	pa̧-ri-āh
'say'	da	...	*dah(?)	dā̧h
'destroy'	ya	...	*yah(?)	yāh

NOTES

1 Mitani (1977).

2 Luce (1965).

3 *Rə̆-oe Rak Tsən Markɔs* (St. Mark in Riang-Lang, 1950).

4 Shorto (ed., 1963).

5 I.e. Ta-ang, which is the standard dialect of Palaung, cited from Leslie Milne, *A Dictionary of English-Palaung and Palaung-English* (1931).

6 'stop up, obstacle'

7 Luce, op. cit.

8 And probably before *-h originally, though no good example was attested for P-R. *-εh.

9 But see Mitani, op. cit., p. 201.

10 Cf. *yam 'die'.

11 I.e. *ǔ in my previous article.

12 And probably before *-h originally.

13 'steamed rice for monks'. Another possible cognate P. *hɔm, Ta.hɔ̄m 'eat' is better semantically, but Riang s- does not regularly correspond to Palaung h-.

14 BR.təkdɔt 'shorten'; Ta.dö̃t 'short, as of skirt and sleeves'

15 'to warm oneself'

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