Ditransitives, applicatives, and gaps in Thulung verb paradigms

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Outline

- Basics of case-marking and verbal agreement

- Three-argument verbs: ditransitives and applicative-marked verbs

- Paradigm gaps: 2<>INCL

Thulung Rai

- one of 30-odd Kiranti languages
- Tibeto-Burman (Eastern Nepal)
- ca. 2000 speakers

- case-marking: person-based split ergative system
- indexation of both subject and object on verb

Split ergative system:

-ka (ERG) on 2PL and 3rd pronouns, and all nouns

-ø on other pronouns

-lai (DAT) on human primary objects ("indirect object in a ditransitive clause or a direct object in a monotransitive clause'')

1. go   ʌŋ-ŋu
   1SG   sleep-1SG
   I sleep

2. gu   ʌm
   3SG   sleep
   He sleeps

3. go   khlea jal-u
   1SG   dog   strike-1SG>3SG
   I strike the dog

4. gu-ka   khlea jal-ʉ
   3SG-ERG   dog   strike-3sg>3sg
   He strikes the dog

5. go   gu-lai   jal-u
   1SG   3SG-DAT   strike-1SG>3SG
   I strike him

6. gu-ka   go-lai   jal-ŋi
   3SG-ERG   1SG-DAT   strike -3SG>1SG
   He strikes me

Basics: verbal agreement suffixes

- Distinct non-past and past forms

- A and P both indexed via suffixes (A in vertical axis, P in horizontal)

- No explicit inverse marking (when P is higher in animacy hierarchy than A, according to 1>2>3), but order of morphs always has higher-ranked role first

- Presence of gaps

A/P	1SG	1DI	1DE	1PI	1PE	2SG	2DU	2PL	3SG	3DU	3PL
1SG						-ni	-nitsi	-nini	-u	-utsi	-umi
1DI									-tsi		-tsimi
1DE						-tsuku					-tsukumi
1PI									-i	-itsi	-imi
1PE						-ku				-ku(tsi)	-kumi
2SG	-ŋi		-tsiki		-ki				-na	-natsi	-nami
2DU	-ŋitsi		-tsiki		-tsiki				-tsi		-tsimi -nitsimi
2PL	-ŋini		-tsikini		-ki				-ni	-nitsi	-nimi
3SG	-ŋi	-sa	-tsiki	-sa	-ki	-na	-tsi	-ni	-u	-utsi	-umi
3DU	-ŋitsi	-satsi	-tsiki	-satsi	-kitsi	-natsi	-tsi	-nitsi	-tsi	-tsi	-tsimi
3PL	-ŋimi	-sa(tsi)mi	-tsikimi	-sami	-kimi	-nami	-tsimi	-nimi	-mi	-mitsi	-mi

Ditransitive verbs

	A	G	T			
7.	go	khotle-lai	dzam	**pheʈ-pu**	ma	**gwak-pumi**
	1SG	everyone-DAT	food	serve-1SG>3SG	CONJ	give-1SG>3PL

I serve food to everyone and give it to them.

pheʈ-pu
serve-1SG>3SG (A>T)
'indirective'

gwak-pumi
give-1SG>3PL (A>G)
'secundative'

NB. G: most goal-like; T: other most patient-like

Ditransitive verbs: indirectives

Verb agreement: A>T
Case marking: G marked with –lai and obligatorily present and marked; T generally unmarked

inanimate T:

8.   go   gana-lai   tsʌŋra   thyr-pu

    1SG   2SG-DAT   letter   send-1SG>3SG

    I send you a letter

animate T:

9.   go   gana-lai   kuʈyma   thyr-pu

    1SG   2SG-DAT   puppy   send -1SG>3SG

    I send you a puppy

BUT if human T it is marked with –lai (and G is not), and G is marked via a circumlocution involving a locative.

gana, 2SG, as G:

10.   *go   gana-lai   martin-lai   thyr-pu
        1SG   2SG-DAT   martin-DAT   send-1sg>3sg
        intended: I send Martin to you

11.   go   i:ma-ra   martin-lai   thyr-pu
        1SG   2SG.POSS-LOC martin-DAT   send-1SG>3SG
        I send Martin to your place

Case marking possibilities for indirectives

A	G	(T)
ERG/NOM	DAT	NOM
ERG/NOM	LOC	DAT

G must be present and case-marked, T optional and unmarked

T is marked on verb, G is not

Given the primary object marking, with G and P 'sharing' the marker -lai, indirective verbs and their agreement marking serve to distinguish P from G:

12.   oram   gana-lai   ghrok-pu
       this   2SG-DAT   throw-1SG>3SG
       I throw this at/to you

13.   go   gana-lai   ghro:-ni
       1SG   2SG-DAT   throw-1SG>2SG
       I throw you

Verb agreement: A>G
Case marking: G not necessarily overt, and not obligatorily case-marked with –lai; T unmarked

14.   go   (gana-(lai))   sãtso gwa:-ni
        1SG   (2SG-(DAT))   key   give-1SG>2SG
        I give you a key

G is marked through verbal agreement, and can occur without case-marking:

15. gu-ka   u:ma   tsɵttsɵ-mim(-lai)   tsʌkleʈ   gwak-tʉmi
     3SG-ERG   3SG.POSS   child-PLU(-DAT)   chocolate   give-3SG>3PL.PST

16. go   ŋa:waŋa:mi(-lai)   rja:-mu   si:-pumi
     1SG   elder(-DAT)   write-INF   teach-1SG>3PL
     I teach the elders to write

If G is animate but of low status, it tends not to be marked; speakers even resort to creating a compound (essentially incorporating G into the T) more naturally than using a the case marker -lai

17.   go   bwa-dzam   gwak-pu
       1SG   pig-food   give-1SG>3SG
       I give pig-food
       intended: I give the pig food

T is typically inanimate, but animate, even human, T's are possible. T is unmarked in those scenarios (no competition for –lai as there was with indirectives):

18.   go   gana-lai   kuʈyma   gwa:-ni
        1SG   2SG-DAT   puppy   give-1SG>2SG
        I give you a puppy

19.   go   a:ma   dzaumotsǝ   hanum   mytsy-lai   gwak-pu
        1SG   1SG.POSS   daughter   other   person-DAT   give-1SG>3SG
        I give my daughter to that person (eg. in marriage)

Case-marking possibilities for secundative verbs:

A	G	T
ERG/NOM	(DAT)	NOM
ERG/NOM	(NOM)	NOM
ERG/NOM	incorporated	NOM

Verb agreement: A>G

Ditransitive verbs: variation in agreement

Complicating division between secundatives and indirectives is that in reality many speakers fail to index all the categories--most notably, the number of the P (or G or T)—of the arguments
→ both secundative and indirective verbs look the same

20. gu-ka   u:ma   tsəʈʈsə-mim-lai   tsʌkleʈ   gwak-tʉ(mi)
     3SG-ERG 3SG.POSS   child-PLU-DAT   chocolate   give-3SG>3(PL).PST
     He gave his children chocolate

Suggestive of blurring of the contrast between these verb types for some speakers.

Applicative suffix -sa, used to add argument to verb

21.   tsɵttsɵ-ka   sʌŋ   khʌl-lʉ
        child-ERG   wood fetch-3SG>3SG.PST
        The child fetched wood.

22.   tsɵttsɵ-ka   sʌŋ   u:ma   mam-lai   khʌl-saʈ-ɖʉ
        child-ERG   wood 3SG.POSS   mother-DAT fetch-3SG>3SG.PST
        The child fetched wood for his mother

   Verb agreement marks A and the additional argument

Can be used with some ditransitive verbs, without the semantic distinction between 'simplex' and applicative being clear:

ditransitive

23.   tsɵʈtsɵ-ka   mam-lai   pap   kor-rʉmi
        child-ERG   mother-DAT father   fetch-3SG>3PL.PST
        The child fetched father for mother

ditransitive plus applicative

24.   tsɵʈtsɵ-ka   mam-lai   pap   kor-saʈ-ɖʉmi
        child-ERG   mother-DAT father   fetch-APPL-3SG>3PL.PST
        The child fetched father for mother

Possibility for case-marking of additional argument:
a) not overtly expressed
b) genitive -ku (+/- pronominal possessive marking)
c) 'dative' –lai (only available for transfer verbs; cf ditransitives)

a) not overtly expressed:
25.   gu-ka   me   tukisa:le-ŋa   tsar-saʈ-ɖʉ
       3SG-ERG   that   spool.thread-INT   throw-APPL-3SG>3SG.PST
       She threw that spool of thread (for/to someone)

b) through possessive marking

26.   u:ma   sʌŋ   khotle-ka   phar-saʈ-toko
       3SG.POSS   wood all-ERG   share.work-APPL-1PE>3SG
       We all share the work of carrying back his wood (for him)

27.   go   i-se:r   sen-sa-ni
       1SG   2SG.POSS-lice kill-APPL-1SG>2SG
       I will kill your lice for you

Possessive marking as means of encoding additional argument when -lai is used for P, making it inaccessible for G:

28. go   inima   tsɵttsɵ-lai   ɖʉlʉmtsa-ka   jal-sa-nini
    1SG   2SG.POSS   child-DAT   stick-INSTR   hit-APPL-1SG>2PL
    I hit your child for you with a stick

Similar to indirective verbs which used locative marking when –lai was needed for animate T

c) through dative marker -lai:

29.   mam-ka   tsɵttsɵ   ʈel-ka   klʌ:-mi
          mother-ERG   child   oil-INSTR   rub-3PL>3SG
          The mother rubs her child with oil.

30.   mam-ka   tsɵttsɵ-lai   ʈel   klʌm-sa-mi
          mother-ERG   child-DAT   oil   rub-APPL-3PL>3SG
          The mother rubs her child with oil.

Case marking of additional argument is sensitive to semantics of verb:
-lai only used for G when there is a transfer (mental or physical)

31.   *mam-ka   tsɵ-lai   khlʉsikhop   bʌ-saʈ-ɖʉ
        mother-ERG child-DAT   shoe   tie-APPL-3SG>3SG.PST
        intended: Mother tied the shoes for the child

32.   mam-ka   tsɵ-ku   khlʉsikhop   bʌ-saʈ-ɖʉ
        mother-ERG child-GEN   shoe   tie-APPL-3SG>3SG.PST
        Mother tied its shoes for the child.

Verb agreement issues:
As with ditransitives, variation in marking of additional argument on verb

33. gu-ka   ŋa:mi-tsip-lai   tukisa:le-ŋa   tsar-saʈ-ɖʉtsimi
    3SG-ERG   old.woman-DU-DAT   spool.thread-INT   throw-APPL-3SG>3DU.FORM.PST
    She threw the thread to the two elder women

A: -ɖʉ   G: -tsi (dual) -mi (plural = formal)

Possible verb forms for 33:
tsarsaʈɖʉtsimi
tsarsaʈɖʉmi → not marking number of G
tsarsaʈɖʉtsi → not marking formality of G

Gaps in 2<>INCL slots of verbal paradigm

Reflexive forms 1>1, 2>2: reflexive paradigm with different suffixes

Not the case for 2<>INCL, which are empty slots in paradigms of all Kiranti languages: 1st person non-singular <> 2nd person which is part of that entity
(Very) difficult to elicit: pragmatically utterable scenarios not easy to come by

A/P	1SG	1DI	1DE	1PI	1PE	2SG	2DU	2PL	3SG	3DU	3PL
1SG						-ni	-nitsi	-nini	-u	-utsi	-umi
1DI									-tsi		-tsimi
1DE						-tsuku					-tsukumi
1PI									-i	-itsi	-imi
1PE						-ku				-ku(tsi)	-kumi
2SG	-ŋi		-tsiki		-ki				-na	-natsi	-nami
2DU	-ŋitsi		-tsiki		-tsiki				-tsi		-tsimi / -nitsimi
2PL	-ŋini		-tsikini		-ki				-ni	-nitsi	-nimi
3SG	-ŋi	-sa	-tsiki	-sa	-ki	-na	-tsi	-ni	-u	-utsi	-umi
3DU	-ŋitsi	-satsi	-tsiki	-satsi	-kitsi	-natsi	-tsi	-nitsi	-tsi	-tsi	-tsimi
3PL	-ŋimi	-sa(tsi)mi	-tsikimi	-sami	-kimi	-nami	-tsimi	-nimi	-mi	-mitsi	-mi

Different strategies to 'get around' the gap

a) –ku la:gi, 'for the sake of'

34.   gana   i:tsima   la:gi   kamso   ɖym-na
       2SG   1DI.POSS   sake   song   play-2SG>3SG
       You will play a song for us

b) Reflexive forms

35.   gutsi ko: hopmam-ŋa   je   phʌ-sin-tsi
          1DI   one   such.as-INT   clothes   dress-REFL-1DI
          Lit. We dress ourselves in the same clothes
          Intended: Dress us in the same clothes

36.   gutsi chatta-ka   rim-sin-tsi
          1DI   umbrella-INSTR   cover-REFL-1DI
          We cover ourselves with the umbrella
          Intended: you covered us both with the umbrella

c) changing the reference to 2>1SG:

37.   gana   golai   wakha   lamdi-beʈ-ŋi
        2SG   1SG-DAT   slowly   walk-CAUS-2SG>1SG.PST
        You made me walk slowly
        intended: you slowed us down

d) intransitive verb which is semantically related

38.   *gana gui-lai   sen-ki
        2SG   1PI-DAT   kill-2SG>1PI
        intended: You will kill us all
        (scenario: driver driving dangerously)

→ 39.   gana   me-dzɵpa   gari   thɵn-na   ma:la gui   si-i
        2SG   NEG-good   car   drive-2SG>3SG.PST   COND 1PI   die-1PI
        If you drive the car so badly, we will die

Sometimes, examples look like they generate the intended form:
40.   gana   gutsi-lai   pheʈ-na
        2SG   1DI-DAT   serve-2SG>3G.PST
        You served us (food).

But actually indirective verb, with the T (which could be dzam, 'food'), unexpressed and the agreement on verb 2SG>3SG as opposed to 2SG>1DI

In verb suffix paradigm, the column for inclusive P's has 3>INCL forms which feature morpheme –sa (no other Kiranti language has -sa here)

Originally an applicative?
Synchronically clearly not: APPL + sa on same verb:

41.   gu-ka   naŋlo-ra   gutsi-lai ritsi   hʌm-sa-sa
       3SG-ERG   winnow-LOC   1DI-DAT   sour.fruit   spread-APPL-3SG>1DI
       She spreads fruit on the basket for us.

Very hypothetical proposal for mechanism of APPL → 3>INCL :
inverse forms tend to be the same whether A is 2 or 3;
for scenarios where the A=2 slots (ie 2>INCL) are empty, a form is
created using applicative

Thank-you!

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