

Sangkong 桑孔 of Yunnan: Secondary "verb pronominalization" in Southern Loloish

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The Chinese linguist Li Yongsui has described (1991) a newly discovered language called Sangkong (saŋ⁵⁵qhoŋ⁵⁵), that evidently belongs to the "Bisoid" subgroup of Southern Loloish, close to Bisu, Phunoy, and Mpi.¹ Aside from the intrinsic value of the new lexical material Li provides, Sangkong has an extremely interesting syntactic property: a rudimentary system of "verb pronominalization", where the verb-phrase may contain either of two morphemes that refer to the person of the subject. In the case of the first person, this agreement morpheme is phonologically identical to the independent personal pronoun, ŋa⁵⁵ 'I'. The etymology of the non-first person marker, ze⁵⁵, is not so transparent, though we offer a theory about its origin below.

1.0 Sangkong phonology

1.1 *Initials*

p	pj	t	ts	tɕ	k	q	ʔ
ph	phj	th	tsh	tɕh	kh	qh	
mb	mbj	nd			ŋg		
m	mj	n		ɲ	ŋ		
			s	ɕ	x		h
w			l	ʐ			

--Note the absence of a simple voiced series.

--Note the single voiced fricative ʐ, which represents the merger of several sonorant and fricative proto-phonemes. (See below 5.1.)

¹The Sangkong people number fewer than 2000. They live in Jinghong County of Xishuangbanna, Yunnan, and were formerly grouped with the Hani nationality.

1.2 Rhymes

1.3 Tones

Open:	- V	55	high level
Nasal:	-VN	33	mid level
Constricted:	- \bar{v}	31	low falling
Stopped:	-VS	[35	high rising (sandhi tone)]

2.0 Sangkong and Proto-Lolo-Burmese

2.1 Initials

- (a) PLB *voiceless obstruents > SK voiceless aspirates
- (b) PLB *preglottalized obstruents > SK voiceless aspirates
- (c) PLB *voiced obstruents > SK plain obstruents
 *b → SK p *d → SK t *g → SK k
 /same as Bisu, Lahu, Burmese/
- (d) PLB *prenasalized obstruents > SK plain obstruents
 *ŋg → SK k (ka³¹ 'desiderative')
 *mb → SK p (pɔ³³ 'satiated')
- (e) PLB *simple nasals > SK prenasalized voiced stops
 *m → SK mb *n → SK nd *ŋ → SK ŋg
 /cf. Bisu: PLB *nasals > Bisu voiced stops/
- (f) PLB *complex nasals > SK simple nasals
 *ʔm/hm → SK m *ʔn/hn → SK n *ʔŋ/hŋ → SK ŋ
 /same as Bisu/

2.11 Some Loloish Manners of Articulation²

PLB	WB	Luquan	Lisu	Lahu	Akha	Bisu	Sangkong
*p	ph	ph	ph	ph	p/ph	ph	ph
*ʔb/ʔp	ph	p	p	p	p	ph?	ph
*b	p	b	b	p	b	p	p
*mb/*mp	p ~ b	m ^h p	b	b	b	p	p
*m	m	m	m	m	m	b	mb
*ʔm/*hm	hm	m	m	m	m	m	m

From top to bottom, these reflexes range from more stop-like down to more nasal-like. This arrangement is satisfying because identical reflexes of different *manners are contiguous in any vertical column (i.e. for any given language).³

As these manner-developments show, Sangkong definitely belongs in the "Bisoid" subgroup of Southern Loloish.

2.12 Rhymes

PLB		Sangkong
*-ak	→	- <u>a</u>
*-wak	→	- <u>o</u>
*-ok/-uk	→	- <u>o</u>
*-ik	→	- <u>ɿ</u> (constricted)
*-at	→	- <u>e</u>
*-wat	→	- <u>e</u> / - <u>ɿ</u> [FLOWER]
*-ap	→	-ap

²See Matisoff 1979:28.

³For a similar arrangement of the Tai consonantal series with respect to tonal developments, see Gedney, 1970/1989. It should also be noticed that the order in which the consonantal mutations (a) through (f) are listed reflects the presumed actual sequence of changes: first I (a/b), then II (c/d), then III (e), then (IV) f.

*-am	→	-am
*-an	→	-an or -e [see below]
*-aŋ	→	-aŋ
*-oŋ	→	-oŋ (?)
*-uŋ	→	-uŋ (?) ⁴
*-um	→	-em
*-əy	→	-u
*-ew	→	-ɸ
*-a	→	-a
*-ya	→	-ja
*-wa	→	-o
*-u	→	-u
*-ul	→	-u
*-i	→	-e
*-ay	→	-e
*-ey	→	-i

2.13 Tones

PLB *1	>	SK 55
PLB *2	>	SK 31
PLB *3	>	SK 33 ⁵
PLB *HS	>	SK 33c
PLB *LS	>	SK 31c

Sangkong has the Loloish tonal split in stopped syllables (see Matisoff 1972), despite the relative well-preservedness of syllable-final consonants: more proof, if any were needed, that this split was conditioned by the syllable-*initial* consonant group.

⁴SK contrasts -oŋ and -uŋ, though this has not been firmly established for PLB; maybe SK data will prove crucial here, e.g.: 'finger' 1_a³¹ nuŋ⁵⁵ vs. 'belly' u³¹ poŋ³³.

⁵Words in this tone are sometimes pronounced with constriction, e.g. 'egg' -u³³.

3.0 Bisoid pronouns and ST pronominal allofamy

3.1 Sangkong personal pronouns⁶

	<i>Singular</i>		<i>Dual</i>	<i>Plural</i>
	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Object</i>		
1st pers.	ŋa ⁵⁵	ŋa ³³ la ³³⁷	a ⁵⁵ ŋ _i ³¹	Excl: a ⁵⁵ ŋaŋ ³¹ Incl: ho ³³ ŋaŋ ³¹
2nd pers.	naŋ ⁵⁵	naŋ ³³ la ³³	na ⁵⁵ ŋ _i ³¹	naŋ ³³ kun ³³
3rd pers.	thaŋ ⁵⁵	thaŋ ⁵⁵ la ³³ thi ⁵⁵ ŋ _i ³¹		thi ⁵⁵ kun ³³

3.2 Bisu personal pronouns⁸

	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Dual</i>	<i>Plural</i>	<i>Collective</i>
1st pers.	ga	gaj	gu	guhmu ~ guʔi
2nd pers.	na ~ naŋ	naj	no ~ noŋ	noŋhmu ~ noŋʔi
3rd pers.	ja ~ jaŋ	jet	jo ~ joŋ	joŋhmu ~ joŋʔi

3.3 Open, palatally-suffixed, and nasal-suffixed variants of pronouns in Sino-Tibetan

Evidence from these Bisoid languages, when added to data from other branches of ST, suggests that the pronouns for all three persons have been suffixable by palatal and/or nasal elements at various times and places in the family. Even if the basic allomorph of the 2nd person pronoun was *naŋ, this final nasal seems to have been treated as a separable element by many languages. It is tempting to set up a quasi-paradigm as follows (though it must be admitted that the semantic increment provided by the "suffixal" elements is unclear and inconsistent across languages:

⁶See Li 1991:20.

⁷The accusative particle la³³ is optional with object pronouns.

⁸Adapted from Beaudouin 1991:l.82.

	<i>Open</i>	<i>With -y</i>	<i>With -N</i>
<i>1st Pers.</i>	*ŋa	*ŋay	*ŋaŋ
<i>2nd Pers.</i>	*na	*nay	*naŋ
<i>3rd Pers.</i>	*ta		*taŋ
(PLB) ⁹	*za	*zay	*zaŋ ʃ *yaŋ

*Exemplifications in selected languages***Chinese***1st person:*

<i>Open:</i>	我	ngá/ngâ	[GSR 2a]
	吾	ngo/nguo	[GSR 58f]
<i>With -N:</i>	印	ngâŋ/ngâŋ	[GSR 699a] ¹⁰

3rd person:

<i>Open:</i>	他	t'â/t'â	[GSR 4c'] 'another' ¹¹
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Mirish*1st person:*

<i>With -N:</i>	Mishmi ŋaŋ; Miji naŋ ¹²
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Jingpho*1st person:*

<i>With -y:</i>	ŋāi ¹³
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2nd person:

<i>Open:</i>	na
<i>With -N:</i>	naŋ

⁹No single root for '3rd person' may be reconstructed for PTB or PST. As in other language families, ST/TB 3rd person pronouns are related to demonstratives and deictic words like 'other'.

¹⁰My colleague Ting Pang-Hsin has kindly supplied me with a quote from the Shi Jing:

印須我友 (Mand. aŋ xu wo you) 'I'm waiting for my friend.'

¹¹This word is now the ordinary 3rd person pronoun in Mandarin.

¹²Personal communication, Jackson Tianshin Sun.

¹³I now believe that this same morpheme underlies the unique Jingpho form for the numeral 'one', with secondary falling tone: 1əŋāi. See Matisoff, to appear.

person, the marker ηa^{55} appears in the predicate (1); otherwise, the marker ʒe^{55} is used (2):

- (1) ηa^{55} $na\eta^{33}$ la^{33} $po\eta^{31}$ $t\phi h\emptyset^{55}$ ti^{31} $thap^{33}$ pi^{31} $la(\eta)^{35}$ ηa^{55}
 I you OBJ sugar one packet give come 1 P
 I'll give you a packet of sugar.
- (2) a^{31} $sa\eta^{35}$ $na\eta^{33}$ la^{33} $so\eta^{31}$ ʒe^{55}
 NAME you OBJ seek non-1 P
 Asang will look for you.

If the verb is negated, the agreement markers are ηe^{55} for first person (3) and ηi^{55} otherwise (4):¹⁷

- (3) ηa^{55} $ha\eta^{31}$ a^{31} $t\text{sa}^{31}$ $su\eta^{31}$ ηe^{55}
 I rice NEG eat YET 1 P/NEG
 I haven't eaten yet.
- (4) thi^{55} kun^{33} a^{31} $t\text{sa}^{31}$ $su\eta^{31}$ ηi^{55}
 they NEG eat YET non-1 P/NEG
 They haven't eaten yet.

As (1) and (2) illustrate, in the absence of an overt aspect/mood morpheme in the VP, the sentence tends to be interpreted as expressing a *future intention* ¹⁸, as also in (5) and (6):

- (5) ηa^{55} $na\eta^{33}$ la^{33} $so\eta^{31}$ la^{55} $le(\eta)^{33}$ ηa^{55}
 I you OBJ seek come 1 P
 I'll come to look for you.
- (6) a^{55} $na\eta^{31}$ $ha\eta^{31}$ $t\text{sa}^{31}$ ηa^{55}
 we rice eat 1 P
 We're going to eat. / *Wǒmen yào chī fàn.*

These person markers themselves have nothing to do with aspect, since they are equally compatible with various aspectual morphemes, including pi^{55} 'perfective' (as in Exs. 7-10), ηan^{31} 'progressive' (11), and la^{55} or le^{55} 'come; inchoative; change-of-state' (12-14):

¹⁷Somehow the η - of the 1st person form seems to have infected its paradigm-partner.

¹⁸Li Yongsui (p.17) refers to this as *jiāngxíngtǐ*.

- (7) ηa^{55} $na\eta^{33}$ la^{33} $mja\eta^{55}$ pi^{55} ηa^{55}
 I you OBJ see PERF 1P
 I have seen you.
- (8) wa^{31} $tha\eta^{55}$ $tsha^{31}$ la^{31} la^{33} $mja\eta^{55}$ pi^{55} ze^{55}
 pig that tiger OBJ see PERF non-1P
 That pig saw a tiger.
- (9) $\eta a^{55}/ho^{33}$ $na\eta^{31}$ py^{33} tso^{33} pi^{55} ηa^{55}
 I/ we hit middle PERF 1P
 I/we hit the mark. / *Wǒ(men) dǎ zhòng le.*
- (10) $tha\eta^{55}/thi^{55}$ kun^{33} py^{33} tso^{33} pi^{55} ze^{55}
 s/he/ they hit middle PERF non-1P
 S/he/they hit the mark. / *Tā(men) dǎ zhòng le.*
- (11) $tha\eta^{55}$ po^{31} lo^{31} ky^{33} ηan^{31} $\eta g\gamma^{55}$ ze^{55} 20
 he book read PROG COP non-1P
 He's reading a book.
- (12) ho^{33} $na\eta^{31}$ mbw^{31} la^{55} ηa^{55}
 we good COME 1P
 We're going to get better.
- (13) qo^{33} $s\eta^{55}$ le^{55} ze^{55}
 millet yellow COME non-1P
 The millet is getting yellow.
- (14) $na\eta^{55}/tha\eta^{55}$ $ma\eta^{31}$ la^{55} ze^{55}
 you/ he old COME non-1P
 You/he are/is getting old.

Combinations of more than one aspectual morpheme seem freely to co-occur in the VP before a person-marker, e.g. EXPERIENTIAL + PERFECTIVE (15, 16), or INCHOATIVE + PERFECTIVE (17, 18):

¹⁹Due to a font problem, this paper cannot distinguish between the voiced velar fricative η and the back unrounded vowel with a similar symbol. Position in the syllable always makes it clear which is meant, however.

²⁰Notice that a newer copula, $\eta g\gamma^{55}$, may now co-occur with the older one (ze^{55}), now bleached of copular meaning.

- (15) ηa^{55} $ha\eta^{31}$ $t\text{sa}^{31}$ sa^{33} pi^{55} ηa^{55}
 I rice eat EXPER PERF 1P
 I've already eaten.
- (16) $thi^{55}kun^{33}$ $ha\eta^{31}$ $t\text{sa}^{31}$ sa^{33} pi^{55} ze^{55}
 they rice eat EXPER PERF non-1P
 They've already eaten.
- (17) ηa^{55} mbu^{31} tse^{55} le^{55} pi^{55} ηa^{55}
 I good pass COME PERF 1P
 I'm better already.
- (18) $a\eta^{33}si^{31}$ $mi\eta^{33}$ tse^{55} le^{55} pi^{55} ze^{55}
 fruit ripe pass COME PERF non-1P
 The fruit is ripe already.

So far all these examples have contained an explicit personal pronoun in a NP which shares with the person-marker in the VP the function of pointing to the subject of the sentence. However, the presence of a person-marker in the VP often makes subject pronouns redundant, so they are omissible without loss of clarity, as in (9a) and (10a), which are pronounless (indeed NP-less) variants of (9) and (10) above:

- (9a) $p\eta^{33}$ $ts\text{o}^{33}$ pi^{55} ηa^{55}
 hit middle PERF 1P
 I/we hit the mark. / *Wǒ(men) dǎ zhòng le.*
- (10a) $p\eta^{33}$ $ts\text{o}^{33}$ pi^{55} ze^{55}
 hit middle PERF non-1P
 S/he/they hit the mark. / *Tā(men) dǎ zhòng le.*

Even when an object-noun is present in sentence initial position, it often cannot be misinterpreted as the subject if a person-marker occurs in the VP, as in (19):

- (19) wa^{31} $l\eta^{33}$ la^{55} pi^{31} ηa^{55}
 pig fat COME CAUS 1P
 I let/made the pig get fat.

The most interesting cases demonstrate that these person-markers are not simple "agreement" morphemes, but rather have

evidential significance. The two markers can each occur in a sentence having a third person subject, but with a concomitant difference in evidential value. If the "normal" non-1P morpheme ʒe^{55} is used, the sentence has an impersonal, general declarative sense:²¹

- (20) $\text{laŋ}^{55}\text{pa}^{55}$ me^{33} $\text{laŋ}^{55}\text{t}\text{ɕho}^{31}$ qo^{33} ʒe^{55}
 paddyfield LOC water have *non-1P*
 There's water in the paddyfield.

If, however, the 1P morpheme ηa^{55} is used, the sentence is still grammatical, but there is an evidential increment of meaning: there is a claim that the statement is based on firsthand, personal knowledge:²²

- (21) $\text{laŋ}^{55}\text{pa}^{55}$ me^{33} $\text{laŋ}^{55}\text{t}\text{ɕho}^{31}$ qo^{33} ηa^{55}
 paddyfield LOC water have *1P*
 There's water in the paddyfield.[and I see it with my own eyes].

Similarly:

- (22) $\eta\text{a}^{31}\text{loŋ}^{33}$ ηe^{33} $\text{ten}^{55}\text{ne}^{55}$ $\text{t}\text{ɕaŋ}^{55}$ ηa^{55}
 fishpond inside fish exist *1P*
 There are fish in the fishpond.
 /personal knowledge: $\text{q}\bar{\text{i}}\text{n } \text{z}\bar{\text{h}}\bar{\text{i}}/$

- (23) thaŋ^{55} ti^{31} tha^{55} zi^{33} tse^{55} pi^{55} ηa^{55}
 s/he one time come EXPER PERF *1P*
 S/he has already come once.
 /personal knowledge: $\text{q}\bar{\text{i}}\text{n } \text{z}\bar{\text{h}}\bar{\text{i}}/$

5.0 Etymology of Sangkong ʒe^{55}

5.1 Sources of SK initial ʒ -

Sangkong ʒ - reflects several different PLB resonant and sonorant initials:²³

²¹Called *yí-bàn chénsù* by Li Yongsui (p. 32).

²²Called $\text{q}\bar{\text{i}}\text{n } \text{z}\bar{\text{h}}\bar{\text{i}}$, $\text{q}\bar{\text{i}}\text{n } \text{j}\bar{\text{i}}\bar{\text{a}}\text{n}$, or $\text{qu}\bar{\text{e}} \text{z}\bar{\text{h}}\bar{\text{i}}$ by Li Yongsui (*ibid.*).

²³Cf. the discussion of Loloish resonantal reflexes in Matisoff 1969:171-9. The Lahu reflexes of PLB $*\text{y}$, $*\text{r}$, $*\text{w}$, $\text{C}-\text{š}$, and $*\text{z}/\text{ž}$ are /y/ , ɽ , v , š , and y/ , respectively.

(a) SK ζ ← PLB *y-

HOUSE	ζim^{55}	←	*yim ¹
TAKE	ζu^{55}	←	*yu ¹
SLEEP	ζu^{31}	←	*yup ^L
SEED	$a\eta^{33}\zeta\sigma^{31}$	←	*yəw ²

/cf. Lahu $\gamma\hat{o}$ /

POTATO $\zeta a\eta^{31}\zeta i^{35}$

/cf. Lahu $\gamma\hat{a}\gamma\hat{i}-\gamma\hat{i}-\check{s}\hat{i}$ (DL 1269) and Bantawa yak 'taro'/

(b) SK ζ ← PLB *r-

BONE $a\eta^{33}\zeta\sigma^{31}$ ← *rəw²

/cf. Lahu $\gamma\hat{o}$ /

STAND ζap^{31} ← *ʔrap^L [TSR #175]

(c) SK ζ ← PLB *w-

BLOOM/FLOWER $\zeta\sigma^{33}$ ← *s-wat^H

ELDER SIBLING $a^{31}\zeta u^{31}a^{31}\eta i^{55}$ 'relatives'

/lit. "older and younger siblings"; cf. Lahu a-vî-a-ni, ò-vî-ò-ni/

(d) SK ζ ← PLB *C-š

EASY/CHEAP ζa^{55} ← *C-ša¹

/cf. Lahu ša/

(e) SK ζ ← PLB *z or *ž

EXCREMENT/RUST/BLIGHT $\zeta a\eta^{31}$ 'excrement' ← *z/ž aη²

/cf. Lahu $\gamma\hat{o}$ 'rust; rot; blight'; cognate to WT gśaη, bśaη 'shit' ← PTB *g-/b-šaη

5.2 Sources of the Sangkong rhyme -e

Sangkong -e (similarly to Lahu -e)²⁴ has several sources, including *-i, *-ay, and *-at (with constriction of the vowel), and perhaps *-an²⁵:

PLB *-at → SK -e (→ -ɛ after a SK palatal)

HUNGRY	*nwat	→	SK mbe ³¹
BITE	*tsat	→	SK tshɛ ³¹
SPIRIT	*nat	→	SK nde ³¹
KILL	*sat	→	SK se ³¹
ALIVE	*dat	→	SK te ³¹
FLOWER	*s-wat	→	SK ʒɛ ³³

PLB *-an → SK -e

STIR/MIX	*pan	→	SK phe ³¹
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PLB *-i → SK -e

RED	*ni	→	SK ne ⁵⁵
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PLB *-ay → SK -e

TEN ²⁶	*tsyay	→	SK tshɛ ⁵⁵
GO	*ay	→	SK e ⁵⁵
RELATIVIZER	*way	→	SK e ⁵⁵

5.3 The copular etymon *way ɣ *ray as the source of Sangkong e⁵⁵ and ʒe⁵⁵

²⁴See Matisoff 1985, passim.

²⁵SK does have the rhyme -an, but the two best examples, LOUSE and DHOLE (see Appendix) descend from etyma in *-ar and *-al, respectively. If ordinary *-an really became SK -e, perhaps we will have to claim that the rhymes *-ar and *-al survived into Proto-Loloish after all. The interesting etymon *san ɣ *sat 'pour, spill, scatter (as seed)' also appears with SK -an [see Appendix].

²⁶For a discussion of this "still puzzling etymon", which shows vowel gradation, see Matisoff 1985 #73.

Among its other functions, the Lahu particle **ve** is a nominalizer and a relativizer. I have shown (1985) how **ve** descends from a copular morpheme, PTB ***way**, that has an equally well-attested allofamic variant ***ray**.

The Sangkong relativizer **e⁵⁵** appears directly cognate to Lahu **ve**, and the two particles show identical syntactic behavior:

laŋ⁵⁵pa⁵⁵ tha³³ e⁵⁵ mbaŋ³³
 field plow REL person
 'the person who plows the field'
 /cf. Lahu: ti-mi tháy **ve** cho/

qha⁵⁵ tsa³¹ mbu³¹ e⁵⁵ aŋ³³si³¹
 most eat tasty REL fruit
 'the fruit that tastes the best'
 /cf. Lahu: a-cí cá mè **ve** í-šī/

This finally gives us the clue to the etymology of the SK non-3rd person marker **ze⁵⁵**. We have seen that SK **z-** can come from ***r-**, and that one of the sources of SK **-e** is ***-ay**. I wish to claim that **ze⁵⁵** is from the abstract copular morpheme ***ray**, which seems semantically quite appropriate for sentences where the 1st person is out of the picture. This use of an abstract copula-like element ensures that the verbal event is stated in its most evidentially neutral, declarative aspect²⁷ -- in sharp contrast to those utterances where the 1st person is elevated to the center of attention by the copying of a personal pronoun onto the verb-phrase.

It is interesting to note that both allofams of the copula have distinct reflexes in both Sangkong and Lahu:

	*way	×	*ray
Sangkong	e⁵⁵		ze⁵⁵
Lahu	ve		ɣ̥²⁸ 'bunch; group (Clf)'

²⁷Cf. the use of Lahu **ve** in non-embedded sentential nominalizations.

²⁸As explained in Matisoff 1985:59, synchronic Lahu does not tolerate the syllable ***ɣe**, so the regular reflex of ***-ay** after ***r-** is **-ɣ̥**. See also ***s-ray** > Lh. **hɣ̥** 'pluralizer'.

6.0 The Akha evidential system

In an illuminating series of articles in the early 1970's, Sören Egerod analyzed a system of Akha sentence particles that encode such dimensions of meaning as "1st person prime mover" vs. "non-1st person prime mover" and "visual knowledge" vs. "non-visual knowledge". The 1st person particle indicating visual knowledge is $\eta\grave{a}$ (with some tonal variants), obviously related to the independent pronoun $\eta\acute{a}$ ~ $\eta\grave{a}$ 'I', which contrasts with the non-visual particle $nj\grave{a}$, as in:

$g\grave{a} \eta\grave{a}$ 'he loves her (I have seen signs)'
 $g\grave{a} nj\grave{a}$ 'he loves her (I have heard/felt signs)'²⁹

A more detailed treatment of Sangkong sentence particles than is to be found in Li Yongsui's article would undoubtedly reveal many more points of similarity with the Akha evidential apparatus.

7.0 The Lahu benefactive system³⁰

Lahu has a systematic dichotomy between *3rd* and *non-3rd* person beneficiaries of verbal actions (as opposed to the Akha/Sangkong *1st* vs. *non-1st* person marking). The basic distinction here is outer-directed vs. inner-directed action, as is obvious from the full verbal meanings of the grammaticalized markers of the distinction:

3rd person marker: $p\grave{i}$ (V_v) /'give' as full verb/

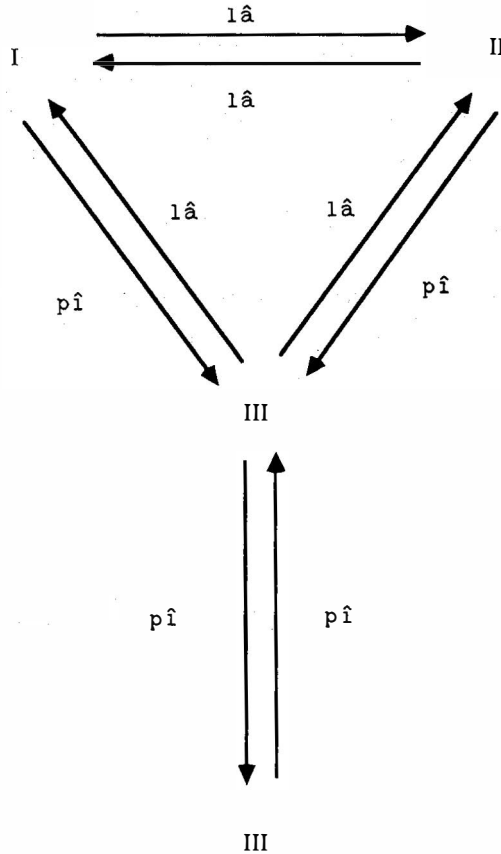
non-3rd person marker: $l\acute{a}$ (P_v) / \times $l\grave{a}$ (V) 'come'/'

See Figure I.

²⁹The Akha verb $g\grave{a}$ 'love' is cognate to SK $k\acute{a}$ ³¹ and the Lahu desiderative particle $g\acute{a}$ (see Appendix).

³⁰See Matisoff 1973:325.

Figure I. The Lahu Benefactive System



8.0 Conclusions

A controversy has been simmering in Tibeto-Burman circles as to whether the pronominal agreement systems that have achieved great complexity in, e.g. the languages of E. Nepal reflect an original TB/ST feature, or whether (as I believe) they have developed secondarily and independently in various branches of the family. The fact that the germs of pronominalization have been found in a Loloish language (a branch of TB that had hitherto been thought to be free of the phenomenon) does not, in my view, constitute evidence for the existence of a reconstructible system of pronominal concord at the PTB level -- in fact quite the contrary! It shows that the marking of agreement in the verb is something which can evolve naturally and independently through the operation of certain information-packaging strategies in verb-final languages.

In fact the Sangkong "agreement markers" do not necessarily refer narrowly to the agent of the sentence, but may have a more general *evidential* value. If, e.g., the speaker is making a statement that reflects his own personal knowledge, he may use the 1st-person marker even though the sentence may contain a 3rd-person subject. This makes Sangkong "verb pronominalization" look much more like the person-based evidential system of particles described for Akha (Egerod 1973, 1974; Hansson 1976), or the person-based benefactive morphemes found in Lahu (see above, 6.0, 7.0).

The origins of this rudimentary system of verb pronominalization are perhaps to be sought in "evidential afterthoughts", sentence-tags like "..., *I know* or "..., *I guess* " for first person involvement, vs. "..., [*and that's the way he/it/you*] *is/are*" for neutral, objective statements.

9.0 Appendix: Some interesting Sangkong cognates:

PTB	PLB	WBurmese	Lahu	Sangkong
	'be in a place/be there/existential copula'			
	*dʒaŋ ¹		cò	tɕaŋ ⁵⁵
	'wolf/dhole/wild dog'			
*kywal			vè	han ⁵⁵
	/see Matisoff 1985, #17; the -n in the SK form might be due to rhinoglottophilia after the initial h-; cf. 'four' un ⁵⁵ ~ xun ⁵⁵ (Lahu ô ~ ôn)/			
	'louse'			
*sar		sân (Tone *2)	še (*1)	san ⁵⁵ (*1)
	'snow/ice/frost'			
	*hŋ--		ŋə	ŋe ⁵⁵
	/firm cognate, but proto-vocalism uncertain/			

PTB PLB WBS Lahu Sangkong

'weave'
 *g-rak^L rak ɣà? (< *rak) ɲga³¹ (< *ɲak)
 /this complicated root had an unstable initial; even the four
 allofams set up in TSR #192 do not tell the whole story; Bisu has
 gā, also < *ɲak/

'teach'
 *ʔna^{1/2} hma (< *1) mā (< *2) ma²¹ (< *2)

'field'
 *hya¹ ya hɛ laŋ⁵⁵ ɸa⁵⁵
 /the 1st syll. of the SK form means 'water'; the Bs. and Lh. forms
 refer to non-irrigated swiddens/

'temporal'
 *ta^{1/2} thâ (< *2) tha⁵⁵ (< *1)
 /the Lahu form is a temporal unrestricted particle; the SK is a
 time-classifier/

'love/desiderative'
 *ŋga² gâ (Pv) ka³¹ 'love; want'

'send (things)'
 *sa^{2/3} šā (< *2) sa³³ (< *3)
 /Akha [ILH] sɟha (< *3); contra Matisoff 1988:1173, this is NOT a Tai
 loanword, and has nothing to do with Tai sòŋ 'send' (miscited as sàŋ
 [ibid.]!)

'dry in the sun'
 *ʔ-rap^L hú hap³¹
 /both Lahu and SK reflect a preglottalized prototype; contrast
 STAND/

'stand'
 *ʔ-rap^L rap hú zap³¹
 /see TSR #175]; WB and SK both reflect an allofam with plain
 liquid, *rap)/

'easy'
 ša za⁵⁵
 /Akha sa[˘] ; why voicing in SK?/

PTB PLB WBS Lahu Sangkong

'shit'

*g/b-šaq *zaŋ²/^{*}žaq² yô zaŋ³¹
 /the Lahu form means 'rust; rot; blight'; cognate to WT gšaq,
 bšaq 'shit'/

'scatter seed'

*swan^{1/2} swan/swân šē san³¹
 /Lahu šē? 'spill, pour' reflects the allofam *sat. Chinese has
 cognates of both the nasal- and stop-finalled allofams: OC 散
 *sân and 撒 *sât (see Matisoff 1985:#40); the proto-
 variation in the final may account for SK -an rather than -e/

'go'

*ay¹ e (Pv) e⁵⁵
 /see Matisoff 1990/

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