THE PERSON AGREEMENT SYSTEM OF WOBZI LAVRUNG (RGYALRONGIC, TIBETO-BURMAN)[1]

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Abstract

This article offers a description of the person agreement system of Wobzi Lavrung, a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in Sichuan, China. The Lavrung language is still imperfectly described, and the aim of this paper is to contribute to the documentation of one of its dialects. The analysis follows the terminology proposed in Dryer (1986), Haspelmath (2005), Zuñiga (2006), and Malchukov et al. (2010). We discuss the inflectional affixes, the empathy hierarchy and the different types of transitive constructions in the language. Furthermore, the system under analysis is compared to related languages such as Rgyalrong and Rta'u.

1. Introduction

Wobzi[2] (native name: *bósʁæi* 'Tibetan language') is a dialect of the Lavrung language (Sino-Tibetan), spoken in Chuchen (Jinchuan) County, Rngaba (Aba) Prefecture of Western Sichuan, China. It is a polysynthetic language closely related to its geographic neighbours, the Rgyalrong dialects, and also shares surprising similarities with Rta'u, spoken some 130 kilometres away from the Wobzi villages. Previous accounts of the Wobzi dialect, as well as the Lavrung language, are rare;[3] Huang (2007) and Yin (2007) respectively give general descriptions on the Thugsrjechenbo (Guanyinqiao) and Njorogs (Yelong) dialects, and J.T.-S Sun (2000, 2007) notes a few examples in the 'Brongrdzong dialect. Huang (2007) also mentions that she preliminarily investigated the Wobzi dialect in 1990 and 2002, but only a minor portion of her data has been published.

In comparison with other Rgyalrongic languages, Wobzi presents both conservative and innovative features that are of interest from the point of view of historical linguistics and typology. This paper focuses on person marking in the verb, and is divided into three sections. First, we present some background information on various typological features of Wobzi that are relevant to the topic of the paper. Second, we describe person marking morphology, valency-changing derivations and alignment typology in Wobzi from a synchronic point of

[2] Referring to the dialect of the Wagu (娃姑) group (*ʁágu*) of Ere Sancun (俄热三村, 'Wobzi Third Village').

[3] This paper is the first publication on this language in English.

view. Third, we analyse the Wobzi data in comparison with previous scholarship on Lavrung and Rgyalrong languages.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1. Case markers

Case markers in Wobzi follow their hosts.

The agent NP of the transitive construction is marked with the ergative *ɣə*, as illustrated by example (1).

(1) *Intransitive*
 a. *tʂaɕî   æ-ndzədzâv si.*
    Bkrashis AOR-fall$_2$ ASRT
    Brkashis fell down.
 Transative
 b. *tʂaɕî   ɣə   mbrǽ dzî.[4]*
    Bkrashis ERG rice   eat$_1$
    Bkrashis eats rice.

Ergative marking on the noun phrase is optional when the host is an SAP agent.

Apart from the ergative marker, Wobzi has a variety of dative and locative markers, for instance, dative *kʰe*, possessive-dative *ji*, and locative *gə* 'inside', *tʰa* 'on the surface of'. These markers are probably ancient relator markers, some of them have cognates in related languages: *gə* 'inside' and *tʰa* 'on the surface of' are cognate to the possessed nouns *u-ŋgu* 'inside' and *u-taʁ* 'surface' in Japhug Rgyalrong.

Case markers will not be exhaustively described in this section; I will refer to them in glosses when necessary in the article.

2.2. Word order

Like other Rgyalrongic languages, Wobzi has strict verb-final word order, the agent generally precedes the patient; nominal arguments do not need to be overt, and the minimal sentence can be limited to an inflected verb.

2.3. The verb

Generally, a verb in Wobzi has two stems: Stem 1 the non-past stem and Stem 2 the past stem. Stem alternation is reflected by tone alternation (*dzî* 'eat$_1$' vs. *dzí* 'eat$_2$'), ablaut (*rǽ* 'say$_1$' vs. *râ* 'say$_2$'), aspiration alternation (*tô* 'arrive$_1$' vs. *tʰó* 'arrive$_2$') or suppletion (*vǽ* 'bring$_1$' vs. *zə́m* 'bring$_2$'). Some verbs have only one stem: *ntsʰə́* 'think', *jbâv* 'swell'. Some verbs have a third imperative stem: *vâ* 'go$_1$', *ɕə́* 'go$_2$', *ɕǽ* 'go$_3$'

Wobzi is strongly head-marking. The Wobzi verb exhibits mainly templatic morphology with an overwhelmingly prefixal system, as other Rgyalrongic languages such as Japhug (Jacques 2012a). A total of 11 prefixal slots and 2 suffixal slots are attested, which include

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[4] List of abbreviations: 1,2,3 (1st, 2nd and 3rd persons), sg (singular), du (dual), pl (plural). AOR (aorist), ASRT (assertive), ATB (autobenefactive), CAUS (causative), CONJ (conjunction), DAT (dative), DEF (definite), DET (determinant), DIR (directional prefix), ERG (ergative), IMP (imperative), INV (inverse), LOC (locative), NEG (negative), NMLS (nominaliser), NPST (non-past), PASS (passive), POSS (possessive), PROH (prohibitive), RCP (reciprocal), RFX (reflexive). DIR.AOR (prefix indicating both the direction and the tense), AOR.INV (prefix *u-* as a fusion of AOR. *æ-* and INV. *u-*).

Table 1. Wobzi verbal template

-11	-10	-9	-8	-7	-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2
sə̂-	*æ-, næ-, etc.*	*u-* *â-*	*mə-* *tə-* *ɕə-*	*zə̂-*	*ʁ-*	*N-*	*v-*	*s-*	*ʁjɛ̂-*	Noun	Verb	*-ŋ, -j, -n*	*-Ca/u*
Inflectional				Derivational						Stem		Inflectional	RDP

Prefixes:
-1 Incorporateon
-2 Reflexive *ʁjɛ̂-*
-3 Causative *s-*
-4 Causative *v-*
-5 Autobenefactive *N-*
-6 Intransitive-Reciprocal *ʁ-*
-7 Irrealis *zə̂-*
-8 Negative *mə-/mæ-/ma-*, prohibitve *tə-*, interrogative *ɕʰə/ə̂*
-9 Inverse *u-* Irrealis *â-*
-10 Directional-aspectual *æ-, næ-, kə-, nə, læ-, və-, rə*
-11 Progressive *sə̂-*

Suffixes:
1 Personal endings *-ŋ, -j, -n*
2 Reduplicated syllables

inflectional and derivational affixes, as well as incorporation. The verbal template is illustrated in Table 1.

This template can be partly illustrated by the following (elicited) example:

(2) n^{-10}-u^{-9}-ma^{-8}-$ʁ$- < N^{-5}-s^{-3}- > $jæ^{-2}$-$rzǒ^{0}$-$ŋ^{1}$
      AOR-INV-NEG-ATB-CAUS-RFX-*wash₂*-1SG
      He did not make me wash myself.

3. THE AGREEMENT SYSTEM

3.1. Overview

In this section, we focus on the personal agreement system of the Wobzi dialect, based on first hand data. As we will show in section 4, the system in question is the most innovative one amongst the documented Lavrung dialects.

Tables 2 and 3 present the agreement system of both intransitive and transitive paradigms in Wobzi. Generally speaking, the personal markers are suffixed to the verb stem, The inverse prefix *u-* (see section 3.3.1 for more details on its exact function) replaces the vowel of any directional prefix.

3.1.1. Remarks on the Phonology[5]

In open syllables, the affixation of first person suffixes leads to internal sandhi between the suffix and the stem-final vowel. Table 4 summarises the rules governing this phenomenon, illustrating the combinations affected by sandhi.

Table 2. Intransitive agreement

Person	Pronoun	Agreement
1SG	*ŋô*	*-ŋ*
1DU 1PL	*ŋgə̂ne, ŋgəɹî*	*-j*
2SG 2DU 2PL	*nú, nêne, nêŋɹi*	*-n* or *-ni* (IMP)
3SG 3DU 3PL	*ætə̂, ætə̂ne, ætə̂ɹi*	zero

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[5] For a more detailed overview of the Wobzi phonological system, see Lai (2013).

Table 3. Agreement in transitive verbs

		Patient			
		1sg	1pl	2	3
Agent	1sg			$\sum$-n	$\sum$-η
	1pl			$\sum$-n	$\sum$-j
	2	u-$\sum$-η	u-$\sum$-j		$\sum$-n
	3	u-$\sum$-η	u-$\sum$-j	u-$\sum$-n	u-$\sum$

Table 4. Vowel Sandhi with personal suffixes

		Suffixes	
		-η	-j
Verb Rhymes	-i		
	-e		————
	-$æ$		
	-a	-$a\eta$	-$æj$
	-a		
	-$æi$		
	-$ə$		-ij
	-u	-$o\eta$	
	-o		

The Wobzi phonology disallows final consonant clusters; therefore cluster reduction can be observed in closed syllables affixed with a personal suffix. In the case of first person suffixes, the original coda of the syllable is replaced by the personal suffix; the resulting open syllable undergoes internal sandhi as in open syllables.

(3) *jə̂v-ŋ* (sleep$_1$-1SG) → *jə̂-ŋ* → *jôŋ* 'I sleep'.

An alternative strategy reduces complex codas in segmental fusion. Two types of fusion are attested, both with the 2nd person suffix -*n*. First, a final oral consonant is nasalised by nasal suffixes: both *jə̂v-n* (sleep-2) → *jə̂m* and *jə̂n* would sound natural to native speakers; second, the rhyme -*əɣ* becomes -*əʸ* or -*u*: *sjə̂ɣ-n* (finish$_1$-2) → *sjə̂ʸ-n* or *sjú-n*. Wobzi differs in this regard from Situ Rgyalrong, where the second person -*n* is dropped whenever the verb has a coda. However the 1st person -*ŋ* suffix in that language merges with the stem. That is, a Situ Rgyalrong coda is nasalised in 1SG, not in 2SG. (Table 5).

The imperative suffix -*ni* differs from the second person -*n* suffix in that it does not cause cluster reduction.

(4) *jə̂v-ni* (sleep$_1$-IMP) → *jə̂vni* '(you, you two, you all) sleep'.

The inverse marker *u*- causes vowel harmony when attached to the negative marker *mæ*-, compare: *æ-mæ-dzá-ŋ* (AOR-NEG-eat$_2$-1SG) 'I did not eat'; *u-ma-dzí* (AOR.INV-NEG-eat$_2$) 'He did not eat'.

Table 5. Vowel Sandhi in Wobzi and Situ Rgyalrong

	Wobzi: *jə̂v* 'sleep'	Situ Rgyalrong: *rjap* 'stand'
1SG	*jôŋ* < *jə̂v-ŋ*	*rjam* < *rjap-ŋ*
2SG	*jə̂m; jə̂n* < *jə̂v-n*	*tə-rjap* < *tə-rjap-n*
3SG	*jə̂v*	*rjap*

3.1.2 Transitivity and alignment

Transitivity: in some Rgyalrongic languages several independent morpho-syntactic tests can be used to discriminate between transitive and intransitive verbs. In Japhug (Jacques 2008), for instance, transitive verbs receive the 1/2 aorist -*t* suffix, the 3>3 direct aorist prefix *a-*, the progressive *asɯ-* and present non-past stem alternations, unlike intransitive verbs.

In this section, we propose several criteria to distinguish between transitive and intransitive verbs in Wobzi. From the point of view of verbal morphology, all transitive verbs can take the inverse marker *u-* in 3→3, 3→SAP and 2→1 scenarios; these verbs can further receive an argument marked with ergative *ɣə*. Morphologically transitive verbs in Wobzi can be identified unambiguously, unlike other related languages such as Qiang (LaPolla 2011).

Syntactically transitive verbs, which are compatible with the reciprocal prefix, are not always necessarily morphologically transitive. For instance, verbs such as *srí* 'look' and *ɣ̂r* 'help' are morphologically intransitive. These verbs do not take inverse *u-* or ergative *ɣə*, but they are compatible with the reciprocal prefix *ʁ-* (or its allomorph *χ-* followed by voiceless consonants). They agree invariably with S. Observe the examples below (the verbs are shown in the first place with the reciprocal form, indicating that they are syntactically transitive):

(5) *srí* 'look'
　　a. *ætə̂ne kə-χ-sri-srî.*
　　　　3DU DIR-RCP-look₁-look₁
　　　　They looked at each other.
　　b. *ftʂəskə̂　　　χəvə̂ mænívlama kʰe　 læ-srî　　tə*
　　　　Sprulsku from. afar Manilama　DAT AOR-look₂ NMLS
　　　　ɛə
　　　　CONJ
　　　　The Sprulsku looked at Manilama from afar.
　　ɣ̂r 'help'
　　c. *ætə̂ne kə-ʁ-ɣər-ɣ̂r.*
　　　　3DU　　 DIR-RCP-help₁-help₁
　　They two helped each other.
　　d. *nû　ŋa　kʰe　kə-ɣə̂-n　　　si.*
　　　　2SG 1SG DAT AOR-help2-2SG ASRT
　　　　You helped me.

Tsunoda (1985) proposed a hierarchy concerning the typology of verb transitivity in world languages. Verbs ranking higher on this hierarchy are crosslinguistically more likely to be transitive:

(6) i. Effective action >> ii. Perception >> iii. Pursuit >> iv. Knowledge >>
　　v. Feeling >> vi. Relation.

The fact that 'help' and 'look' are morphologically intransitive is not surprising since they rank lower in the hierarchy than effective action verbs.

In this article, I mainly focus on the morphological transitivity. Mismatching syntactically transitive verbs will be analysed as intransitive.

Alignment: observing the data in Tables 2 and 3, it appears that the Wobzi agreement pattern can be described as a type of hierarchical agreement (Nichols 1992; Siewierska 1998; for critiques of this terminology, see Witzlack-Makarevich et al. 2011; Bickel et al. 2012).

(7) *Intransitive*
    a. **ŋ̂ô** æ-vô̂-**ŋ**.
       1SG DIR-go$_1$-1SG   S
       I go up.
    Transitive
    b. **ŋ̂ô** ætɔ̂ næ-vdá-**ŋ**.
       1SG 3SG AOR-see$_2$-1SG   A
       I saw him.
    c. ætɔ̂ ɣə **ŋ̂ô** n-u-vdá-**ŋ**.
       3SG ERG 1SG AOR-INV-see$_2$-1SG   O
       He saw me.

The suffixal SAP person markers -*ŋ* (1sg), -*j* (1pl) and -*n* (2) are neutral as to syntactic roles: they are used with S (7a), A (7b) or O (7c) arguments. There is no overt third person suffix.

When both arguments are SAP, the suffixal slot is coreferent with O, a constraint similar to related languages such as Rgyalrong (Gong 2014) or Tangut (Jacques 2009: 18–19).

The *u-* prefix appears in 2 > 1, 3 > 1, 3 > 2 and 3 > 3 scenarios. Its distribution is similar to the Zbu and Situ inverse prefixes, the only difference being that in the latter two languages, there is a contrast in 3 > 3 forms between direct forms (without inverse prefix) and inverse forms (with direct prefix). In Lavrung, this contrast is neutralized, and the form corresponding to the original inverse form was preserved. Its distribution is studied in more detail in section 3.3.1.

The ergative marker *ɣə* cannot be used with SAP as in (7)b, except in the 2 → 1 scenario:

(8) *nû* *(ɣə)* *ŋ̂ô* *n-u-vdá-ŋ.*
    2SG ERG 1SG AOR-INV-see$_2$-1SG
    You saw me.

3.2. Intransitive Construction

By definition, an intransitive verb takes only one argument (S). In Wobzi, some action verbs like *jɔ̂v* 'sleep', *mumû* 'move (itr.)', *ʁbɔ̂lə* 'cry', as well as all stative verbs, such as *vɣî* 'be full', *mó* 'be hungry' and *scɔ̂t* 'be happy', are of this type. These verbs do not necessarily imply a recipient/experiencer at the semantic level, accordingly, they can be classified as proto-typical intransitive verbs.

3.2.1. Intransitive verbs with additional argument

A number of morphologically intransitive verbs present an additional argument indicating the recipient/experiencer, which cannot be indexed on the verb. For example, motion verbs that require a locative argument, such as *vɔ̂* 'go' and *vjî* 'come'; existential verbs like *dɔ̂* 'be there' and *ɟè* 'be there (human)'; copulae *ŋ̂æ* 'be' and *máɣ* 'be not'; intransitive action verbs implying two participants, which are syntactically transitive as mentioned in 3.1.2, like *srî* 'look' and *ɣɔ̂r* 'help'. Without exception, the S triggers agreement on these verbs. The additional argument receives a postposition unless it is a nominal predicate or the locative nominal of motion and existential verbs. Table 6 summarises the sub-categories of intransitive verbs with a few examples.

Table 6. Intransitive verbs with an additional argument

Type	Form	Meaning	Postposition
Motion	*vâ*	go	Locative *gə* 'in', *tʰa* 'on' etc. or zero
	vjî	come	with place nouns such as *mbærkʰæ̂m*
	rbjǽ	arrive	"Barkhams', *łâsa* 'Lhasa', etc.
	svâ	arrive	
Existential	*də́*	be there (general)	
	jê	be there (human)	
	dzâɣ	be there (immobile)	
	kʰû	be in sth.	
Copula	*ŋǽ*	be	None
	máɣ	be not	
Other	*srí*	look	Dative *kʰe* and possessive-dative *ji*
	ɣâr	help	
	χpá	be resistant (stative)	
	nscâr	be afraid (stative)	
	nʁæ̂i	be tired (stative)	

3.2.2. Intransitive verbs in ʁ- and ʁjæ-

The intransitive prefix *ʁ-* and the reflexive *ʁjæ-* form intransitive verbs whose S has atypical semantic roles.

Passive: The passive is formed by directly prefixing *ʁ-* to a transitive stem. In such construction, the S is actually the semantic patient:

(9) *ŋô   æ-ʁ-vdá-ŋ.*
   1SG AOR-PASS-see₂-1SG
   I have been seen.

Reciprocal: reciprocal derivation combines the affixation of *ʁ-* with reduplication of the verb stem. The agreement suffix is generally affixed to the second syllable of the reduplicated form, while it is possible to mark both syllables, therefore, the form for 'we see each other' can be either *ʁ-vde-vdê-j* (ITR-see-see-1pl) or *ʁ-vde-j-vdê-j* (ITR-see-1pl-see-1pl).

Reflexive: the reflexive derivation is built by prefixing *ʁjæ̂* to transitive verb stems. The S of reflexive verbs is never marked with the ergative though semantically the S corresponds both to the agent and the patient. As in Japhug (see Jacques 2010), the reflexive is an intransitive derivation.

(10) *ʁgêsær tə   næ-ʁjæ-sprí   rə-ŋǽ.*
   Gesar   DEF AOR-RFX-change₂ DIR-be₁
   Gesar metamorphosed himself.

3.2.3. Possessor raising

Verbs with possessor raising: unlike core Rgyalrong languages, such as Zbu or Japhug, we do observe in Lavrung some instances of possessor raising, whereby the verb agrees with the possessor of the S rather than with the S itself. Verbs with possessor raising often designate human intrinsic characteristics and experience (longevity, age, emotion).

(11) *câɣ ɕʰə (**ŋô**) lû   **kə-dâ-ŋ**   si   ɛə*
   now CONJ 1SG year AOR-old₂-1SG ASRT CONJ
   ætə̂ cʰəmtsʰ ôŋ tə   ɣə   n-u-sqʰlâ-ŋ   ɛə...
   DET family   DEF ERG AOR-INV-let.out₂-1SG CONJ
   Now I am old, that family expelled me.

Table 7. Verbs with possessor raising

Verb	Meaning	Nominal	Meaning	Verbal	Meaning
cɥî zê	be young	*cɥî*	tooth	*zê*	small
lû vɟî	be old	*lû*	year (Tib.)	*vɟî*	come
tsʰê sráɣ	be of long life	*tsʰê*	life (Tib.)	*sráɣ*	long
sjâr rkʰô	be angry	*sjâr*	heart	*rkʰô*	cold
sjâr cʰæ̂	be audacious	*sjâr*	heart	*cʰæ̂*	big
sjâr zê	be timid	*sjâr*	heart	*zê*	small
sʰêm zdə̀ɣ	be sad	*sʰêm*	heart (Tib.)	*zdêɣ*	painful (Tib.)
sʰêm scə́t	be happy	*sʰêm*	heart (Tib.)	*scə́t*	joyful (Tib.)

In (11), one might expect *dár* 'be old' to agree with its S, *lû* 'year' in the phrase *lu dár*, that is, *lû kə-dár instead of *lû kə-dá-ŋ* above. However, agreement occurs with the possessor *ŋó* '1SG'.

In general, possessor raising appears in idiomatic expressions, and speakers are not necessarily conscious of the meaning of each component. Table 7 lists this category of verbs in our data.

Verbs without possessor raising: unlike Tangut and Jinghpo (Jacques 2008: 211–212, citing Kepping and Dai), in which possessor raising is a common phenomenon, the Wobzi verb does not always undergo this process. In this case, the possessor must be marked with the possessive *ji*, and the possessee governs the agreement:

(12) a. *ŋæ̂-ji   sjâr   rə-ŋə̂m.*
         1SG-POSS heart NPST-hurt₁
         My heart hurts.
     b. *nû-ji   gáv   jbə̂v.*
         2SG-POSS foot swell₁
         Your foot is swollen.

Any attempt to say the sentences in (12) with possessor raising will be considered ungrammatical: *ŋô sjár rə-ŋô-ŋ; **nû gáv jbə̂-n*.

3.3. Transitive Construction

3.3.1. Inverse

The prefix *u-* cannot be analysed as a third person agent marker (since it appears in 2 > 1), and is best analysed as an inverse marker.

The use of inverse *u-* is related to the empathy hierarchy (Silverstein 1976; DeLancey 1981) of Wobzi, in which the SAP arguments rank higher than the non-SAP ones, and the first person tops the second person in the SAP domain:

(13) SAP (1>2) > non-SAP (3)

Zúñiga (2006) proposes to extract from such hierarchy three scenarios: mixed (core direct: SAP→3, core inverse: 3 → SAP), non-local (3↔3') and local (SAP ↔ SAP).

Inverse *u-* appears in 2 → 1 and 3 → SAP scenarios, already exemplified earlier in (7)c and (8). As for clauses exhibiting a non-local scenario, it must be present. This differs from prototypical inverse as exemplified by Rgyalrong languages such Situ (DeLancey 1981), Tshobdun (Sun & Shi 2002), Japhug and Zbu. In these four languages, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic factors determine whether the inverse marker appears or not in 3→3 scenarios. The inverse form never occurs when a human acts upon an inanimate entity (see 14a) and must appear in the reverse situation (14b).

(14) a. *tʂɐɕî   kə   skutséʔ nɐ-ɐ-tɕʰóv   ki*
      bkrashis ERG *stone*   AOR-DIR-smash$_2$ NVIS
      Bkrashis smashed a stone.

    b. *tʂɐɕî   skutséʔ tə-wə-xsâv   ki*
      *bkrashis stone   AOR-INV-hit$_2$ NVIS
      A stone hit Bkrashis.

<div align="right">(Ngyaltsu Zbu examples in Gong 2014)</div>

In the above examples, the inverse marker *wə-* appears when the semantic agent (stone) is non-human and the patient (Bkrashis) is human. Human referents rank higher than inanimate ones in Zbu, therefore inverse must be applied in the situation of (14)b.

In Wobzi, such distinction is absent, and the inverse marker occurs in all 3→3 scenarios, even when the A is human and the O is inanimate.

(15) *tʂaɕî   ɣə   rgəmé râɣ n-u-tɕʰə̂v   si.*
     bkrashis ERG *stone   one* AOR-INV-smash$_2$ ASRT
     Bkrashis smashed a stone.

3.3.2. Role of animacy in transitive clause

Even though Wobzi has generalised the inverse marker to all non-local scenarios, animacy still plays a role in the language.

Transitive verbs such as *sʰá* 'kill', *stʰærvá* 'scratch (itch)', *rjû* 'nourish', etc. have animate arguments in both agent and patient positions; while transitive verbs like *tʰê* 'drink', *zbrê* 'blow (instrument)' have true animate agents and inanimate arguments in the patient position.

Moreover, inanimate agent-like arguments are preferably excluded from the transitive pattern. For instance, the transitive construction in (14)b can hardly be translated into Wobzi with a transitive clause; the best way to express the corresponding meaning is to use the intransitive verb *nî* 'fall', thus, (16)a sounds much more natural than (16)b:

(16) a. *rgəmé râɣ tʂaɕî-tʰa   næ-ní   si.*
      *stone   one Bkrashis-*LOC DIR.AOR-fall$_2$ ASRT
      A stone hit Bkrashis. (A stone fell at Bkrashis.)

    b. *rgəmé râɣ ɣə   tʂaɕî   n-u-cʰô   si.*
      stone   one ERG *Bkrashis* AOR-INV-open$_2$ ASRT
      A stone hit Bkrashis. (A stone broke Bkrashis)

3.3.3. Ditransitive constructions

Malchukov et al. (2010: 1) give the following definition of a ditransitive construction: a ditransitive construction is 'a construction consisting of a ditransitive verb, an agent argument (A), a recipient-like argument (R), and a theme argument (T)'.

Dryer (1986) notices that there is a cross-linguistic preference of marking the recipient-like NP (usually the indirect object, IO) to the direct object NP (DO) in ditransitive constructions. He proposes to regroup the patient of a monotransitive verb and the recipient/beneficiary of a ditransitive verb into a new category, namely the PRIMARY OBJECT (PO), whereas the direct object of a ditransitive verb the SECONDARY OBJECT (SO). Haspelmath (2005) uses the terms INDIRECTIVITY for languages exhibiting DO/IO distinction and SECUNDATIVITY for those with PO/SO distinction.

Malchukov et al. (2010) summarise three types of ditransitive alignments: SECUNDATIVE (R=P), INDIRECTIVE (T=P) and NEUTRAL (T=P=R), and exemplify them with the sentences below:

(17) a. *Secundative Alignment (R = P)*
   (Uuma)   Niisi aningaasa-nik   tuni-vaa.
   (that.ERG) Nisi   money-INSTR.PL   give-IND.3SG- > 3SG
   'He gave Nisi money.' (West Greenlandic, Fortescue 1984: 193, 88)
   b. *Indirective Alignment (T = P)*
   Ich   gab   dem   Kind   den   Apfel.
   I.NOM   gave   the.DAT   child   the.ACC   apple
   'I gave the child the apple.' (German)
   c. *Neutral alignment (T = P = R)*
   O   ko   ma   la   a   gane.
   he   give.PERF   me   FACTUAL   DEF   book
   'He gave me the book.' (Dagaare, Bodomo 1997: 41-42)

I hereafter use the framework of these authors to discuss the Wobzi ditransitive construction. The neutral alignment is inexistent in Wobzi, while the other two alignments, secundative and indirective, are actually attested.

3.3.4. Secundative verbs

The ditransitive verbs *ldzê* 'teach', *bâ* 'give (food)' and *sŋí* 'lend' agree with the indirect object rather than the direct one, their aorist paradigms are presented in Table 8 (the aorist prefix being *nə-*), accompanied by example (18).

(18) a. *nû   ɣə   ŋâ-kʰe   bódzədə   n-u-ldzá-ŋ.*
   2SG ERG 1SG-DAT Tibetan AOR-INV-teach₂-1SG
   You taught me Tibetan.
   b. *nû   ɣə   ŋâ-kʰe   jvâ   n-u-bʊ́-ŋ.*
   2SG ERG 1SG-DAT tsampa AOR-INV-give.food₂-1SG
   You gave me some tsampa (to eat).
   c. *nû   ɣə   ŋâ-kʰe   kapâ   râɣ   n-u-sŋâ-ŋ.*
   2SG ERG 1SG-DAT book one AOR-INV-lend₂-1SG
   You lent me a book.

In (18), 1sg suffix -*ŋ* is coreferent with the R of the verb instead of T: R=P, hence these verbs show secundative alignment.

3.3.5. Indirective verbs

Whether a verb is secundative or indirective does not seem to be predictable. Some ditransitive verbs show indirective alignment with T = P:

Table 8. Aorist paradigms of ldzê 'teach', bâ 'give (food)' and sŋí 'lend'

Local		Mixed				Non-local
1→2	2→1	1→3	2→3	3→1	3→2	3→3
nə-ldzé-n	*n-u-ldzá-ŋ*	*nə-ldzá-ŋ*	*nə-ldzé-n*	*n-u-ldzá-ŋ*	*n-u-ldzé-n*	*n-u-ldzé*
nə-bâ-n	*n-u-bʊ́-ŋ*	*nə-bʊ́-ŋ*	*nə-bâ-n*	*n-u-bʊ́-ŋ*	*n-u-bâ-n*	*n-u-bâ*
nə-sŋî-n	*n-u-sŋâ-ŋ*	*nə-sŋâ-ŋ*	*nə-sŋî-n*	*n-u-sŋâ-ŋ*	*n-u-sŋî-n*	*n-u-sŋî*

Table 9. Aorist paradigms of kʰá 'give', fsè 'lead' and ráe 'say'

Local		Mixed				Non-local
1→2	2→1	1→3	2→3	3→1	3→2	3→3
nə-rŋâ-ŋ	nə-rŋî-n	nə-rŋâ-ŋ	nə-rŋî-n	n-u-rŋî	n-u-rŋî	n-u-rŋî
næ-fsâ-ŋ	næ-fsê-n	næ-fsâ-ŋ	næ-fsê-n	n-u-fsê	n-u-fsê	n-u-fsê
æ-rô-ŋ	æ-râ-n	æ-rô-ŋ	æ-râ-n	u-râ	u-râ	u-râ

(19) *nû ɣə ŋâ-kʰe kapâ râɣ nə-kʰá-n.*
2SG ERG 1SG-DAT book one AOR-give₂-2SG
You gave a book to me.

The form *nə-kʰá-n* is 2→3, not 2→1, in which case **n-u-kʰá-ŋ* would be expected (this form is not grammatical). Other examples of this kind include *rŋí* 'borrow' (IO with postpositoned *kʰe*), *fsé* 'lead' (IO with *ji*) and *ráe* 'say' (stem2 *râ*, IO with *kʰe*). (Table 9).

Here are the examples of the verbs in Table 9:

(20) a. *nû ŋâ-kʰe pîr nə-rŋî-n tə nə-tə-cʰí-ni.*
2SG 1SG-DAT pen AOR-borrow₂-2 DEF IMP-PROH-lose₁-IMP
Be careful not to lose the pen you borrowed from me.

b. *nû ŋɛ̂-ji ʁovzî rə-vâ-ri tɕʰî tə næ-fsê-n.*
2SG 1SG-DAT Wobzi DIR-go₁-LOC way DEF AOR-lead₂-2
You showed me the way to Wobzi.

c. *nû ŋâ-kʰe fɕɛ̂zomipa râɣ æ-râ-n tə nə-rmʉ́-ŋ si.*
2SG 1SG-DAT secret one AOR-say₂-2 DEF AOR-forget₂-1SG ASRT
I forgot the secret you told me.

Jacques (2010) also mentions similar contrastive treatments for *mbi* 'give' (Wobzi *bâ*), *kʰo* (Wobzi *kʰá*) 'pass' and *ti* 'say' in Japhug.

4. LAVRUNG COMPARISON

In this section, I will focus on three other Lavrung dialects: Thugsrjechenbo (based on personal investigation and Huang 2007), Njorogs (Yin 2007) and 'Brongrdzong (personal investigation).

4.1. Intransitive

As the suffixes of the intransitive paradigm are the same as those of the transitive one, I will first present the Lavrung intransitive agreement (Table 10).

Except for Wobzi, which exhibits number contrast only in 1st person (SG vs PL), all the other three dialects distinguish the three numbers of 1st and 2nd persons, and Njorogs further distinguishes those of the 3rd. The Njorogs dual suffixes differ from those of other Lavrung languages and could possibly be borrowed from neighbouring Situ Rgyalrong dialects. Therefore, Thugsrjechenbo and 'Brongrdzong are the probably more conservative dialects in this regard.

In Wobzi, the merger of 1DU and 1PL into *-j* and the generalization of *-n* of the 2nd person are independent innovations. The unification of the suffixes within a person is called (EXTENDED) HORIZONTAL HOMOPHONY in Cysouw (2003); in his hierarchy, he showed that the marking of a lower ranking person entails that of the higher one(s) (Cysouw 2003: 300). This is the case of Wobzi: only 1st person is marked with plural, 2nd and 3rd that rank lower, do

Table 10. Lavrung intransitive paradigms

Person	Wobzi	Thugs	'Brong	Njorogs
1SG	*-ŋ*	*-ŋ*	*-ŋ*	*-ŋ*
1DU	*-j*	*-ɣ*	*-ɣ*	*-itɛ*
1PL	*-j*	*-j*	*-j*	*-i*
2SG	*-n*	*-n*	*-n*	*-n*
2DU	*-n*	*-r/-l/-z*	*-s*	*-ntɛ*
2PL	*-n*	*-ɲ*	*-ɲ*	*ĩ*
3SG	zero	zero	zero	zero
3DU	zero	zero	zero	*-ĩtɛ*
3PL	zero	zero	zero	*-ĩ*

not bear any distinctive markings in number. If the loss of dual is frequent to world languages, the fusion of all the numbers in 2nd person looks unusual according to Cysouw's database. Kwamera can be such a case, in which 2nd person is marked with *ik-* in all three numbers (Lindstrom & Lynch, 1994; Cysouw 2003).

4.2. Transitive

The transitive agreement in Thugsrjechenbo and 'Brongrdzong is similar to that of Wobzi, but with additional dual suffixes. The inverse marker, cognate to Wobzi. *u-*, appears as *ə-* in both dialects. Table 11 presents the paradigm. The Njorogs paradigm is shown in Table 12.

Yin (2007) describes the potential inverse affix *i-* as an ablaut vowel of the directional-aspectual prefix for the 3rd person agent. As no examples of 2→1 forms with directional-aspectual prefix is found in her work, it is not possible at the present stage to decide whether *i-* should be analysed as an inverse prefix or a third person agent marker in this dialect. The correspondence *u*:: *ə*:: *i* between the three dialects is unparalleled elsewhere in the vocabulary, it may be that these prefixes are not direct cognates. Double number marking is found in 3du→SAP scenarios, attested in Yin (2007: 125):

(21) a. *aines ŋo ɣdo-ŋ-tɛ.*
       3DU   1SG   hit-1SG-DU
       They two hit me.
   b. *aines nəjo ɣdo-n-tɛ.*
       3DU   2SG   hit-2SG-DU
       They two hit you.

Table 11. Transitive Paradigm of Thugsrjechenbo-'Brongrdzong

			Patient		
			1	2	3
Agent	1			*∑-n/r(s)/ɲ*	*∑-ŋ/ɣ/j*
	2		*ə-∑-ŋ/ɣ/j*		*∑-n/r/ɲ*
	3		*ə-∑-ŋ/ɣ/j*	*ə-∑-n/r(s)/ɲ*	*ə-∑*

Table 12. Transitive Paradigm of Njorogs

		Patient		
		1	2	3
Agent	1		*∑-n/ntɛ/ĩ*	*∑-ŋ/itɛ/i*
	2	*?-∑-ŋ/itɛ/i*		*∑-n/ntɛ/ĩ*
	3	*i-∑-ŋ/itɛ/i*	*i-∑-n/ntɛ/ĩ*	*i-∑-zero/ĩtɛ/ĩ*

The dual marker *-tɕ* in (21) is coreferent with the 3DU agent, hence a second marking of number on the verb. This kind of double marking is found in several Rgyalrongic languages, such as Japhug, Tshobdun and Zbu (Gong 2014), but restricted to 3DU, 3PL→1SG. The exact formation of double number marking is language specific, its origin may be due to the language's structure of the personal suffixation, as Gong further argues that personal markers are actually not placed in the same suffixal slot. His theory fits well the Njorogs case, as there is a clear boundary between the dual marker and the real personal markers.

5. FINAL REMARKS

Compared to other Lavrung dialects, the Wobzi agreement shows significant development in that it simplifies the system by dropping all the dual markers and the distinction of number in 2nd and 3rd person.

In comparison with the closely related Rgyalrong languages, Lavrung as a whole presents a number of preservations and innovations. Lavrung lost all the personal prefixes attested in Rgyalrong: the 2nd person prefix *tə-/tɯ-* and the portmanteau prefix *kə-/kɯ-* (Jacques 2012b).[6] On the other hand, Lavrung preserves the 2nd person suffix *-n* that is lost in almost all Rgyalrong dialects, except for Situ (Gong 2014). The Rgyalrong intransitive paradigm and the representative Japhug transitive paradigm (only showing the singular and the plural for reading convenience) are illustrated in Tables 13 and 14.

Inverse marking is also worth noticing. Lavrung does not distinguish direct/inverse in the non-local scenario like the Rgyalrong dialects, and it unexpectedly preserves the inverse rather than the direct 3→3 form. The generalisation of non-local inverse comes in pair as the Rta'u

Table 13. Rgyalrong intransitive paradigm

	Japhug	Ngyaltsu Zbu	Tshobdun	Situ	Lavrung
1SG	∑-*a*	∑-*aŋ*	∑-*aŋ*	∑-*ŋ*	∑-*ŋ*
1DU	∑-*tɕi*	∑-*tɕə*	∑-*tsə*	∑-*tʃʰ*	∑-*ɣ*
1PL	∑-*ji*	∑-*jə*	∑-*jə*	∑-*j*	∑-*j*
2SG	*tɯ*-∑	*tə*-∑	*tə*-∑	*tə*-∑-*n*	∑-*n*
2DU	*tɯ*-∑-*ndzi*	*tə*-∑-*ⁿdzə*	*tə*-∑-*ndzə*	*tə*-∑-*ntʃʰ*	∑-*r*
2PL	*tɯ*-∑-*nu*	*tə*-∑-*ɲə*	*tə*-∑-*nə*	*tə*-∑-*ɲ*	∑-*ɲ*
3SG	∑	∑	∑	∑	∑
3DU	∑-*ndzi*	∑-*ⁿdzə*	∑-*ndzə*	∑-*ntʃʰ*	∑
3PL	∑-*nu*	∑-*ɲə*	∑-*nə*	∑-*ɲ*	∑

Table 14. Japhug transitive paradigm

		Patient						
		1	1PL	2	2PL	3	3PL	3'
Agent	1					∑-*a*	∑-*a-nu*	
	1PL			*ta*-∑	*ta*-∑-*nu*	∑-*i*		
	2	*kɯ*-∑-*a*	*kɯ*-∑-*i*			*tɯ*-∑		
	2PL	*kɯ*-∑-*a-nu*	*kɯ*-∑-*i*			*tɯ*-∑-*nu*		
	3	*wɣ*-∑-*a*						∑
	3PL	*wɣ*-∑-*a-nu*	*wɣ*-∑-*i*	*tɯ-wɣ*-∑	*tɯ-wɣ*-∑-*nu*			∑-*nu*
	3'					*wɣ*-∑	*wɣ*-∑-*nu*	

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[6] The presence of dental prefixes in South Kiranti, Chepang, Jinghpo, and Kukichin (DeLancey 2011, 2013) suggests that the second person *tə-* in Rgyalrong languages is an archaism and that it was lost in Lavrung.
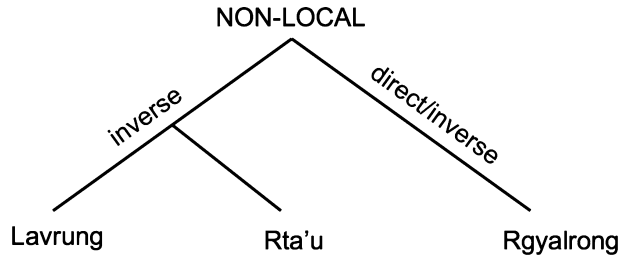
Figure 1. The loss of direct 3→3 forms

cognate inverse *v-* (Jacques et al. 2013; Sun & Tian to appear) is also used throughout the non-local scenario. This is probably a common innovation within Lavrung and Rta'u, and reflects a split between them and Rgyalrong dialects, as illustrated in Figure 1.

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