SINO-TIBETO-AUSTRONESIAN: AN UPDATED AND IMPROVED ARGUMENT

Laurent Sagart

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SINO-TIBETO-AUSTRONESIAN:
AN UPDATED AND IMPROVED ARGUMENT

L. Sagart
CNRS, Paris, France

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Sino-Austronesian, version I
(Sagart 193, 1994)
1. Blust's higher AN subgrouping
2. Austronesian reconstructions by Dempwolff and Blust. MP material deemed essential.
3. only Chinese and Austronesian related
4. sound correspondences between final syllable of AN words and Chinese
   monosyllables.
5. some morphology
6. criticisms: too little basic vocabulary; Tibeto-Burman outside the relationship.

Sino-Austronesian, version II

1. East Coast Linkage (ECL) is one primary branch of PAN; Malayo-Poynesian forms
   one clade within ECL.
2. all Austronesian reconstructions either include Formosan material or are based on
   Formosan exclusively. MP material not essential.
3. Tibeto-Burman is reintegrated: relationship is between Sino-Tibetan and
   Austronesian.
4. some modifications in the sound correspondences; in addition, initial consonant of
   "lost" penultimate syllable of AN words governs Chinese syllable type.
5. more morphology
6. more basic vocabulary
Higher AN subgrouping (adapted from Ho 1998)

Support for ECL: six innovations shared exclusively by PMP and Formosan East Coast languages

- PAN *C => *t (Siraya, Bunun, Amis, Kavalan, Basay-Trobiawan, PMP: Ferrell 1969)
- PAN *N => *n (Kanakanabu, Bunun, Amis, Kavalan, Basay-Trobiawan, PMP: Ho 1998)
- 'bird' PAN *ayam replaced by *manuk (Basay-Trobiawan, PMP)
- 'banana' PAN *belbel replaced by *pu(n)ti (Basay-Trobiawan, PMP: Li 1992:277)
- 'to count' PAN *supeR replaced by *bilang (Kavalan, Basay-Trobiawan, PMP: Li 1992:277)
- * pang-V instrumental construction (Amis, PMP: Starosta 2001)

Some PAN and PECL reconstructions

body hair
PAN gumuN ‘body hair’. Puyuma (Cauquelin 1991) gumul 'body hair, feather'; Saisiat (Ogawa and Asai 1935:6) komol ‘public hair’. The analogy of PAN *kumis ‘beard’ may or may not have played a role in the reflexion of PAN *g- as k- in the Saisiat form (the Saisiat reflex of PAN g- is uncertain).

bone
PAN kukut ‘bone’. Dempwolff reconstructed UA *kukut ‘joint, articulation’ based on corresponding forms in Javanese and Ngaju Dayak. Add Favorlang ‘o’ot ‘bone’ (PAN *k goes to zero in Favorlang).

foot
PAN kakay 'foot'. Atayal kakai, Sediq qaqay, Thao kakai, all 'foot' (Ferrell 1969).
**palm of hand**
PAN dapa 'palm of the hand', consisting of Blust's PWMP (1980 # 112) Da(m)pa 'palm of the hand, sole of the foot' plus Atayal (Egerod 1980) rapa? 'palm of the hand'.

**horn, antler**
PAN (q)uRuŋ 'horn/antler': Pazeh ŋuxúŋ; Sediq uruŋ (Ferrell 1969), oloŋ (Pecoraro 1977); Yami ŋurúŋ, all 'horn' (Pazeh, Sediq and Yami forms cited from Ferrell 1969: 136); add Kanakanabu ta?uruŋu, Saaroa tauruŋu 'pygmy deer' (Tsuchida ms), both with prefixed ta- and final echo vowel; Long Nawang uheng, Uma Juman hueng 'horn, antler'.

Note: Blust (1973) reconstructed PAN *(q)uReng 'horn, antler', based on the Pazeh, Sediq and Yami forms above, plus reflexes in two WMP languages: Long Nawang uheng, Uma Juman hueng 'horn, antler'. I reconstruct /u/ in the final syllable because Formosan and Extra-Formosan languages belonging to three primary branches (Pazeh-Sediq; Kanakanabu-Saaroa; and Yami) agree on /u/. I assume the Long Nawang and Uma Juman forms exhibit a secondary (WMP) u > o dissimilatory change; Blust's decision to reconstruct /e/ in the last syllable reflects the greater weight given Extra-Formosan languages in his practice.

Note: Dempwolff had reconstructed "Ur-Austronesisch" *suŋu 'horn'. Tsuchida (1976:165) reconstructed another form in the same meaning: "Proto-South-Formosan" *seŋuŋ, with reflexes in Saaroa, Saisiat and Paiwan. He regarded Dempwolff's *sunu as a metathesized form of his own *seŋuŋ. Both *seŋuŋ/sunu and *(q)uRuŋ appear to have been PAn words; their referents must have been different, perhaps as 'horn' (hollow, permanent, non-branching) vs. 'antler' (solid, shed annually, branching).

**chicken**
PAN kuka 'chicken, fowl': Paiwan koka, Rukai (Taramakau) koka, Siraya kuka.

Note: several Formosan languages have prefixed elements ta-, tari-, taru-, toro-: Siraya takuka, tahuka, Rukai (Maga) torokuka, Kanakanavu tariku:ka, Saaroa torokooka, etc.

Note: Li (1992: 271; 1993:305) reconstructed "Proto-Formosan" *teRakuk, based on Bunun, Puyuma, Kavalan and Amis forms, and interpreting Tsou tro?ua, Kan tarikuka and Saaroa turukuuka as containing a suffixed formative -a of no particular function. The forms reflecting teRakuk, without final -a, are found exclusively in languages of the East coast, a well-known diffusion zone. It is more natural to suppose that a word for 'chicken' something like *teRakuk was reanalyzed as containing root -kuk 'sob, cackle', and was for that reason changed to Li's *teRakuk in a language of the East coast; and that the word then spread to other East coast languages. The alternative is to suppose that a suffixed -a of unknown nature was added to teRakuk independently in proto-Tsouic, in Taramakau Rukai, in Siraya and in Paiwan.

**cave, hole**
PAN b[e]luŋ 'cave, hole'. Paiwan beruŋ 'hole', Tsou (Tung) fêño 'cave, hole', Pazeh waruŋ 'cave, hole'.
cloud
PAN (root) -qem 'cloud': Amis to?am 'clouds' (Fey 1986); Rukai (Budai) əmə:ma 'cloud' (Tsuchida ms); Bunun lohom (Ogawa and Asai 1935), luhum (Nihira 1983) 'cloud'; this root also includes a WMP word *q-al-emqem reconstructed here on the basis of a cognate set first assembled by K. Wulff (1942, No 53): Sundanese halömöm 'overcast', Ceb. ?alum?um 'for the sky to be overcast'.

to carry
PECL baba 'carry on back'. Dempwolff reconstructed baba 'to bring along' (incl. several items meaning 'to carry on back'). Add Amis fafa 'to carry on back' (child), Basai baba 'carry on back', Trobiawan uvava 'id.'.

to cut off, short
PAN [p]utul 'short'. Dempwolff reconstructed *puTul 'break off, cut off'. Add Bunun m-putul 'short' (ma-stative prefix), Seediq butul 'short' (Ferrell 1969:366; expect putul in Seediq).

to drown, disappear
PAN Nemes 'to drown, disappear'. Dempwolff reconstructed *lemes 'to drown, immerse'. Add Puyuma (Cauquelin 1991) lemes 'disappear, destroy, to end'.

to fall
PAN (root) -luR 'to fall'. Dempwolff reconstructed quuluR 'drop slowly' (Tg 'fall'). Add Atayal (Egerod) tarui < taluR 'to fall down', with prefixed ta- 'agentless action'.

to follow
PECL d[u]NuR 'to follow'. Blust (1980 #109) reconstructed (3) duluR 'accompany, go together with'. Add Siraya dmyllough 'to follow' (Adelaar 1999:321), equivalent to d-m-ilux (with short i) in Adelaar's restored notation.

to put together
PECL puluN 'to gather', consisting of Dempwolff's puluN 'to gather', plus Ami polon 'all, all together' (Fey 1986; the examples include verbal uses as 'to gather, get together'.)

to speak, say
PAN kawaS₁, kaw(a)kawaS₁ 'speak, say'; Pazeh ka:kawas 'speak, say' (Ferrell 1969: 313), Basai makaukawas 'say', kawakawase 'story', Trobiawan kawas 'story'.

to sleep
PAN (root) -zem 'close the eyes, sleep'. Based on NW Formosan (ma)-qizem 'sleep' (Saisiat ma?erəm 'sleep', Pazeh ʔidəm, ma-ʔidəm 'sleep': Ferrell 1968:90) plus WMP ke(zZ)em 'close the eyes' (Blust 1973) and WMP peZem 'close the eyes' (Blust 1973), dbl. of the preceding.

to ruin

broad
PAN (root) -baŋ 'broad', consisting of 'candidate root' -baŋ 'broad' (Blust 1988:73), based on 3 WMP items (probably including Dempwolff's baŋ 'broad, wide' and Blust's PWMP lak(e)baŋ 'broad, wide'), plus Atayal (Egerod) labaŋ 'broad', Sediq (Li 1981) llabaŋ 'wide'.

hot
PECL qaiŋet 'hot'. Dempwolff reconstructed qaŋet 'hot' (Dempwolff 1929); 'warm breath' (Dempwolff 1938). Add Siraya (Matthew Gospel) aŋet 'fever' (Adelaar, p.c., 1999).

old
PAN (root) -daŋ. Dempwolff reconstructed guDaŋ 'adult, grown-up'. add Puyuma iDaŋ 'old' (inferred from maranai DaiDaŋ 'oldest, Huang 2000a: 49); Rukai maraDaŋ 'old' (Ferrell 1969).

thick

loincloth
PAN sabuk 'loincloth'. Dempwolff reconstructed sabuk 'loincloth'. Add Atayal (Egerod 1980) habuk 'loincloth'; Taroko (Pecoraro 1977) xabuk 'belt'. Cf. also Paiwan ibuk 'man's upper garment', m-ibuk 'to wear' (Ferrell).

to bury, tomb
PAN (root) -buN 'to bury, cover with earth'. Blust (1988) reconstructed a root -bun 'heap, pile, cover with earth; collect, assemble', based on MP evidence, including Dempwolff's ta(m)bun 'heap of earth'. Add Atayal (Egerod) ?bul 'to bury; tomb'; Mayrinax g-um-bul 'to bury'. This Atayal evidence indicates that the root was -buN at PAN level, changing regularly to -bun in MP.

Sino-Tibeto-Austronesian lexical comparisons

In italics: words in Swadesh's 100-words list; in bold caps: words in Yakhontov's 33-words list.
I! V! F! T! S! irregular Initial, Vowel, Final, Tone, Syllable type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>basic vocabulary</th>
<th>PAN or PECL</th>
<th>Old Chinese</th>
<th>Tibeto-Burman</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. body hair</td>
<td>gumuN</td>
<td>眉 *mu[ r] (eyebrow)</td>
<td>mul (Moshang kemul)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <strong>BONE</strong></td>
<td>kukut</td>
<td>骨 *kut</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. brain</td>
<td>punuq</td>
<td>脳 *nu?</td>
<td>(s-)nuk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. elbow</td>
<td>siku(H2)</td>
<td>肩 *t-r-ku?</td>
<td>Gyarong tkru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. female breast</td>
<td>numuH1</td>
<td>乳 *no?</td>
<td>nuw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. foot</td>
<td>kakay</td>
<td></td>
<td>kriy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. <strong>head</strong></td>
<td>quuluH1</td>
<td>頭 *hlu?</td>
<td>Lushai lu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. palm of hand</td>
<td>dapa</td>
<td>抉 *pa</td>
<td>pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. pus</td>
<td>nanq</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tib. rnag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. mother</td>
<td>ina(-q)</td>
<td>女 *nra? (woman)</td>
<td>m-na</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11. **EGG**

qiCeluR

卵  

*Ca-lo[r]?

twiy < t-l- ?

12. **HORN, ANTLER**

(q)uRung

角  

"k-rok

rung=rwang

13. leech

Limatek

蛇  

*tik

P-Loloish lay 1/2 'python'

14. snake

SulaR

蟒  

*m-la[r]

15. worm

[ ] Julej

蟒  

*tin? F?

16. cloud, cloudy

-qem

陰  

*êim

Bur. um'

17. earth

-taq

土  

*tha?

Tib. 'dag pa 'mud'

18. moon

qiNaS

s-la

la I!

19. **SALT**

siRaH

卤  

*ra? S!

Bur. lang 'to be light'

20. sunlight

siNaj

陽  

*lang

g-liy

21. water

daiNum

溺  

*t-hlim? (liquid, juice)

22. wind

bali

Jingpo kin31, luN33

23. cave, hole

b[en]lung

裂  

*s-hwat-s S!

24. **YEAR**

kawaS

ba

25. carry

baba

? PS *waaw F!

26. chew

paqpaq

嚼  

*m-pa?-s

27. close, shut

kupit

閉  

*pit

28. cut off, short

[p, b]utul

斷  

*to[r, n]?

Lepcha tultul

29. dig

-kut

塌  

khut, 擤  

*m-k(h)ut

Jingpo kot

30. drown, disappear

Nemes

消  

*met

mit 'extinguish' (fire)

31. fall

-luR

*lo[r]?

32. flow > water, river

qaluR 'to flow'

水  

*hu[r]?

(twater, river)

twiy < t-l-, twiy 'to flow'

33. follow

duNuR

隨  

*s-lo[r]

34. grasp, embrace

-kep

夾  

*m-kep, *s-kep, *k-r-ep

35. hold sth in fist/mouth

gemgem (in fist)

合  

*gim (in mouth)

gam 'put into mouth'

36. hunt

qaNup

獵  

*Ca-lap

37. lick

dilaq

舐  

*m-le?

m-lyak

38. meet

Cebung

逢  

*bung S!

? PS pung 'assemble'

39. open

-kaq

啓  

*he?

Jingpo kha < -k 'parted, open'

40. put together

pulung

同  

*long

41. ruin, damage

r[i]bas

損  

*bet-s

42. scrape I

kuSkus

括  

*k-r-ot

43. scrape II

ku[Ct][ku[Ct]

括  

*k-r-ot

44. sink

-neb

 Kut  

kut

45. sleep

-zem

寢  

*tshim?

Tib. gizim, Dhimal dzjim

46. **speak, say**

kawaS

話  

*a-mkw-r-at-s; 口  

*wat

S!

Tib. s-nyam-pa 'to think'

47. think

nemnem

念  

*nim-s

Tib. s-nyam-pa 'to think'

48. vomit, spit

utaq

吐  

*tha?

(m)-tuk V!

49. wash

basuq

溼  

*br[u]?

Lushai shuk, Luoba cuk

50. wrap around (belt)

-kes

締  

*ket

51. bent, crooked

-kuk

彎  

(N-k)kh(ro)k

kuk

52. broad

-bang

扁  

*bang

53. curled, bent

-kul

捲  

*N-k(h)ro[r, n]

kuar (PS)

54. dark

-lem

暗  

*lirn?, *hlim?

BL wiy

55. far

ma-dawiN

高  

*wa[r, n]?

V!

Bur. kaw: (heavy tone) 'rise up, swell, bulge'

56. high, tall

-kaw

高  

*kaw

57. hot

qa(i)nget

熱  

*nget

58. old, adult, grown up

-dan

長  

*drang?

59. sharp

Cazem

[660a]  

*tsim
60. thick -tul  
61. THIS di  println ti:ri I?  

**cultural vocabulary**

1. husked rice beRas  
2. grain of cereal -may  
3. chicken kuka  
4. cage, enclosure kurung  
5. broom CapuH  
6. stopper, plug seNseN  
7. to bury, tomb -buN 'to bury'  
8. loincloth, robe sabuk  
9. to plait, braid -pid  
10. to shoot panaq  

**sound correspondences**

**initial consonants (PAN final syllable initial : Chinese root initial : TB)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAN</th>
<th>Chinese root</th>
<th>TB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-p-</td>
<td>p(h)- : p-</td>
<td>palm of hand, chew, plait, close, broom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-t-</td>
<td>t(h)- : t-</td>
<td>leech, earth, vomit, thick, short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-k-</td>
<td>k(h)- : k-</td>
<td>elbow, bone, chicken, dog, high, curled, crooked, dig, grasp, wrap around, scrape I, scrape II, open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-q-</td>
<td>-q- : 0-</td>
<td>cloud(y)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-b-</td>
<td>b- : (p-)</td>
<td>carry, broad, loincloth, meet, tomb, ruin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-d-</td>
<td>d- : d-</td>
<td>old, this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-g-</td>
<td>g- : g-</td>
<td>hold in fist or mouth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-m-</td>
<td>(h)m- : m-</td>
<td>body hair, drown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-n-</td>
<td>n- : n-</td>
<td>brain, breast, pus, mother, think, shoot, sink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ŋ-</td>
<td>-ŋ- : ŋ-</td>
<td>hot,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-N-</td>
<td>(h)N- : l-</td>
<td>hunt, water, follow, sunlight, moon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-l-</td>
<td>(h)l- : l-</td>
<td>head, snake, head, flow, lick, put together, fall, wind, cave, worm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-R-</td>
<td>r- : r-</td>
<td>horn, salt, husked rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-w-</td>
<td>(h)w- : w-</td>
<td>year, far, say</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-s-</td>
<td>s- : ?</td>
<td>wash, stopper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-z-</td>
<td>ts- : ?</td>
<td>sharp, sleep, wink</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**final consonants (PAN final consonant: Chinese root final consonant : TB)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAN</th>
<th>Chinese root</th>
<th>TB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-0-</td>
<td>-0 : -0</td>
<td>palm of hand, chicken, carry, this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-k-</td>
<td>-k : -k</td>
<td>leech, crooked, loincloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-t-</td>
<td>-t : -t</td>
<td>bone, hot, dig, close</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-p-</td>
<td>-p : ?</td>
<td>hunt, grasp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ng-</td>
<td>-ng : -ng</td>
<td>put together, broad, cage, meet, sunlight, cave, old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ng-</td>
<td>-ng : -k</td>
<td>horn, stopper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-m-</td>
<td>-m : m/-p</td>
<td>water, think, hold in fist or mouth, dark, cloud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-H₁₂-</td>
<td>-H₁₂ : -0</td>
<td>head, female breast, elbow, salt, broom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-q-</td>
<td>-q : -k</td>
<td>brain, pus, earth, lick, vomit, chew, shoot, wash, open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-l-</td>
<td>-l : [r]</td>
<td>curled, thick,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-R-</td>
<td>[r] : -y</td>
<td>dog, snake, egg, flame, flow, fall, follow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-S-</td>
<td>-t : -0</td>
<td>say, year, scrape I, moon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-s-</td>
<td>-s (a~t)</td>
<td>husked rice, drown, wrap around, ruin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-N-</td>
<td>[r] : -y~l</td>
<td>body hair, far, tomb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**vowels (PAN last vowel: Chinese root vowel)**
null
**sV-Verb > valency increaser**
A prefix PAN Si- : OC s- : TB s- allows a verb stem to take into its argument structure a NP standing for a 'third' participant with situational roles such as causer, beneficiary, instrument, etc. The Austronesian Si-V construction is known as 'Instrument focus' but its semantics are considerably more complex. Huang (1991) characterizes the Si- construction in Atayal as 'circumstantial voice'. She notes (1991:45) that one characteristic of circumstantial voice is 'increased transitivity'. I cite here examples with a transitive/causative character, because the semantic difference between prefixed and non-prefixed forms can be apprehended directly through simple lexical glosses.

AN Si-Verb > 'transitive/causative'
Atayal ɲuˌnú? 'to be afraid' : s-ɲuˌnú? 'to frighten'
Paiwan k/m/avuL 'beg' : si-kavuL 'cause someone to beg'
Bunun ma-bahliv 'to buy' : is-bahliv 'to sell'

Old Chinese s-Verb 'transitivizing'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old Chinese</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>￨￨ b-m-lun-s &gt; zywinH 'to be pliant, obedient'</td>
<td>￨￨ *b-s-lun &gt; zwin 'to tame'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>￨￨ *b-m-lik 'to eat'</td>
<td>￨￨ *b-s-lik-s 'to feed'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TB s-Verb 'transitivizing'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TB</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>￨￨ bar 'to burn, catch fire, be ignited'</td>
<td>￨￨ s-bar-pa 'to light, to kindle, to inflame'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>￨￨ rong 'to see'</td>
<td>￨￨ s-rong 'to show'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>￨￨ gi 'be afraid of, fear'</td>
<td>￨￨ si-gi 'frighten'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proto-Loloish1 (C)-no2 'to awake'</td>
<td>￨￨ s-ŋ-no2 'to awaken' (tr.)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**pV-Verb 'causative'**
A verbal prefix **pV- making causatives out of noncausatives is widely attested in TB and in AN. It has not been observed in Chinese.

AN: pa-Verb 'causative'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AN</th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amis kaŋ 'eat'</td>
<td>pa-kaŋ 'feed'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puyuma kan 'to eat'</td>
<td>pa-kan 'to feed'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atayal biru 'to write'</td>
<td>p-biru 'to let write'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thao kan 'eat'</td>
<td>pa-kan 'cause to eat, feed'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TB: *pV-Verb 'causative'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TB</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jingpo: ran 'be separated'</td>
<td>pə-ran 'to separate'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boro: ɡonŋ 'to bend' (intr.)</td>
<td>bo-khonŋ 'to make bent'</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mikir:  thi 'to die': pe-thi 'to kill'
Angami Naga: vo 'to go': pe-vo 'to cause to go'
Tib.:  zu 'to dissolve' (intr.), b-izu 'cause to dissolve'
Yi-Wuding:  dżi11 'to dissolve': pe33-dżi11 'cause to dissolve'.
Gazhao:  kho53 'to become curved': py35-kho53 'to bend (trans.)'

**m- intransitive**

AN m-/-um- + transitive verb > intransitive verb
The Austronesian 'Actor Focus' (AF) marker is a nasal affix m- (prefix) or -um- (infix) depending on root shape; in Starosta's ergative interpretation of AN grammar (Starosta 1991, 1994), all verbs in Actor Focus are intransitive, and the function of m-/-um- is to derive intransitive verbs from transitive verbs. Constructions in which AF verbs (marked with m-/-um-) take both a patient and an agent are antipassive (pseudo-transitive): such sentences translate naturally into transitive sentences in accusative languages. For that reason, French or English translations fail to capture the intransitive character of verbs marked with m-/-um-.

This intransitive character of AF verbs appears from the fact that their situational patient, if there is one, is encoded in an oblique case, genitive or locative.

TB m-Verb > intransitive
In Gyarong and Xide Yi, this prefix is a nasal which takes the place of articulation of the root initial. Examples (Lin Xiangrong 1993: 193 for Gyarong; Dai Qingxia 1998:86 for Xide Yi):

Gyarong  ka-tSop 'to set fire to': kə-ndʒop 'to catch fire'
         kə-p’ek 'to split open': kə-mbæk 'to be rent'
         kə-tč’op 'to break': kə-ndzop 'broken'
         kə-klük 'to wipe off': kə-ngłük 'to fall'
Xide Yi  ti55 'to suspend' (tr.): ndi55 'to be suspended' (intr.)
         tu55 'to burn' (tr.): ndu55 'to burn' (intr.)
         po31 'to roll' (tr.): mbo31 'to roll' (intr.)
         tči55 'to pull off' (tr.): ndzi55 'to fall off'
         to33 'to give to drink': ndo31 'to drink'

In these examples, the N- prefix has voiced a following voiceless stop. In many TB languages (such as Tibetan, Kiranti, Bahing, Vayu and Bodo-Garo), the nasal element has been lost and only voicing of the root initial remains. Preceding initials other than voiceless stops, however, the intransitive prefix maintains itself as m- (WT), ma- (Jinpo), mV- (Boro), and prefixed forms are easy to detect outside of minimal pairs. Examples (Wolfenden 1929:30 for WT and Jinpo, Bhattacharya 1977: 184, 328-330 for Boro):

WT  m-gu-ba 'to rejoice, be glad'
    m-nar-ba 'to suffer, be tormented'
    m-nam-ba 'to smell (intr.), stink'
    m-nal-ba 'to sleep'
    m-nab-ba 'to dress oneself'

2 Gyarong ka-, kə- and kə- are verb prefixes for controllable (ka-, kə-) and non-controllable (kə-) actions.
Kachin
- ma-nam 'to smell' (intr.)
- ma-den 'to grow, to expand'
- ma-ni 'to laugh'

Boro
- mō₂-nam₁ 'to spread smell'
- mō₂-zom₁ 'close the fist'
- mɪ₂.ni₂ 'to laugh'

The original form of the intransitive prefix was therefore m- or ma-, with a variant N- before voiceless stops.

**Chinese N-transitive verb > intransitive verb**

Like Tibetan and other TB languages, Middle Chinese (mid-first millennium CE) has some contrasting pairs of transitive verbs with voiceless stop initials and intransitive verbs with voiced stop initials:

- MC khjowk ‘to bend’ (tr.) : gjowk < *Nkh- ‘bent, curved; bend the body’
- trjuwngH ‘to hit, place in the middle’ : drjuwngH < Ntr- ‘to be in the middle’

That the voiced embers of these pairs earlier had prenasalized initials is shown by Miao-Yao. Proto-Miao-Yao (Wang and Mao 1995) borrowed some of these forms from Late Old Chinese (before MC), with prenasalization and no voicing: *Nkhok ‘curved’, *ŋŋkŋA ‘middle’.

Evidently Chinese had the same intransitive prefix N- as Gyarong and Xide Yi.

**pV-Noun > Verb**

**AN: pa-Noun > Verb**

Atayal: suzit 'a whistle' : p-suzit 'to whistle, blow an instrument'

Taroko: bais 'husband, wife, mate' : p-bais 'to form a pair'

Amis: sual 'words, speech' : pa-sual 'to tell, explain'

Paiwan: tutu 'milk' : pa-tutu 'to feed milk'

Puyuma: tigami 'letter' : pa-tigami 'write a letter'

Thai: apuy 'fire' : p-apuy 'start a fire'

**TB: pV-Noun > Verb**

Burm. rum 'gathering place' : p-rum 'assemble, crowd together'

Tib. žo 'milk' : b-žo-ba 'to milk'

Mikir: chor 'pair' : pa-chor 'to marry' (trans.)

**Chinese p-Noun > Verb**

Perhaps, from Wuxiang 武鄉 a Jin dialect of Shanxi:

pa-suř 'to card, comb'

Where suř is etymology the same word as 梳 shu/MC srjo 'a comb'.

**Verb-en > 'thing Verb-ed/thing to be Verb-ed'**

**PAN Verb-en > 'thing Verb-ed/thing to be Verb-ed'**

Atayal: niq 'eat' : niq-un 'eaten thing'

Paiwan: kan 'to at' : kan-en 'food'

Amis: aŋık 'to sweep' : aŋık-en 'place to sweep'
TB Verb-n > 'thing Verb-ed'

Tib. za-ba 'to eat': zan 'food, fodder, pap, porridge'.
   skyi-ba 'to borrow': skyin-pa 'a thing borrowed, a loan'
   rdzu-ba 'to misrepresent, to delude, to falsify': rdzun-pa 'falsehood, fiction, lie'

**Sa-Verb > instrument of action

**-ar- distributed action/object; distributed object.
This infix was inserted between the root initial and first vowel of a stem. Attached to verbs of action it indicated that the action was distributed in time (occurring over several discrete occasions), or in space (involving several agents/patients/locations); attached to stative verbs it was simply intensive; attached to nouns it indicated a referent distributed in space, i.e. having double or multiple structure.

AN -ar- distributed action/object; intensive

Old Chinese s-Verb > instrument of action

Old Chinese

**-ar- distributed action; distributed object.
This infix was inserted between the root initial and first vowel of a stem. Attached to verbs of action it indicated that the action was distributed in time (occurring over several discrete occasions), or in space (involving several agents/patients/locations); attached to stative verbs it was simply intensive; attached to nouns it indicated a referent distributed in space, i.e. having double or multiple structure.
ICAL9, Canberra, January 8-11, 2002

Malay
ketap 'to bite teeth': k-er-etap 'to bite teeth repeatedly'

TB -r- distributed action/object

Burm.
pok 'a drop (of liquid)': prok 'speckled, spotted'
phu 'to protuberate': pru 'to protuberate, as the eyes'
prwak 'to boil up and break, as boiling liquid': pwak 'id'
khwe 'curve, coil': khwe 'surround, attend'

Kachin
hpun [p'bun31] 'of pimples, to appear on the body': hprun [p'hun31] 'pimples, on the body; to appear on the body, of pimples'

Chinese -r- distributed action/object; intensive.

Fuzhou
nia?13 'to blink': nia?13-li?13 'to blink repeatedly'
tsi?13-li?13 'to turn, rotate, as a machine': tsi?13-li?13 'to rotate in alternating directions, as an electric fan'
pau21?13 'to protrude': pau21?13 'to protrude much'
tsii?13 'to stare': tsii?13-li?13 'to stare fixedly'
t?13 'pile or stack of (paper)': t?13 'a pile of paper, irregularly stacked'

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