Stau (Ergong, Horpa)

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1 Introduction

The cluster of languages variously referred to as Stau, Ergong or Horpa in the literature are spoken over a large area from Ndzamthang county (in Chinese Rangtang 壤塘县) in Rngaba prefecture (Aba 阿坝州) to Rtau county (Daofu 道孚) in Dkarmdzes prefecture (Ganzi 甘孜州), in Sichuan province, China. At the moment of writing, it is still unclear how many unintelligible varieties belong to this group, but at least three must be distinguished: the language of Rtau county (referred as 'Stau' in this paper), the Dgebshes language (Geshizha 格什扎话) spoken in Rongbrag county (Danba 丹巴), and the Stodsde language (Shangzhai 上寨) in Ndzamthang. The people speaking these languages are all classified as Tibetans by the administration.

Research on these languages is still limited. No dictionaries or text corpora have yet been published. Stodsde is only known through a few articles (Sun 2000a and Sun 2007), Dgebshes by a grammatical sketch (Duoerji 1998). The dialects spoken in Rtau county have been investigated by several teams of scholars (Huang 1991, Sun & Tian 2013 and Jacques et al. 2014), but no detailed description of this language is available yet.

There is no consensus as to how these languages should be named. The present paper adopts the Tibetan names of these languages rather than the Chinese-based ones, since the Chinese names are transcriptions of the Tibetan ones.

The native speaker among the authors (Lobsang Nima) favours the name **rəsɲəske** for his language, but this name is not used by all speakers and we prefer the geographically-based name 'Stau'. The spelling with *St-* rather than *Rt-*, aside from being more pronounceable for the average Western reader, reflects better the local pronunciation of the county name **stɞwu**.

*Glosses follow the Leipzig glossing rules. Other abbreviations used here include: ALL allative, FACT factual/assumptive, IFR inferential evidential, INSTR instrumental, INV inverse, SENS sensory evidential. We would like to thank Randy LaPolla, Graham Thurgood and Nicolas Tournadre for useful comments on previous versions of this work.

Table 30.1: Consonantal phonemes in Stau

		Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental/Alveolar	Retroflex	Alveolo-palatal	Palatal	Velar	Uvular
Stop	voiceless	p		t			c	k	q
	aspirated	pʰ		tʰ			cʰ	kʰ	qʰ
	voiced	b		d			ɟ	g	
Affricate	voiceless			ts	tʂ	tɕ			
	aspirated			tsʰ	tʂʰ	tɕʰ			
	voiced			dz	dʐ	dʑ			
Nasal		m		n			ɲ	ŋ	
Fricative	voiceless		f	s	ʂ	ɕ		x	χ
	voiced		v	z		ʑ		ɣ	ʁ
Approximant		w					j		
Rhotic					r				
Lateral	sonorant			l					
	voiceless fricative			ɬ					
	voiced fricative			ɮ [ʒd]					

This spelling has already been used in English (see Wang 1970-1). Most of the data in this paper come from the Khang.gsar qʰərŋɐ dialect of Stau (in Chinese 孔色 Kongse), except for some Khroskyabs and G.yu.rong Horpa examples from Lai Yunfan's fieldwork.

For the group comprising all three languages (Stau, Dgebshes and Stodsde), we could adopt either Jackson Sun's (2000a) term 'Horpa', which has indeed been used for this area in the past, or the more specific 'Tre-Hor' (an unusual Tibetan name with the rare *tr-* initial cluster). The Chinese term Ergong 尔龚 used by scholars such as Sun Hongkai (1983), on the other hand, appears to lack any basis in the local languages.

As shown in section 8, there is evidence from verbal morphology and lexicon that Horpa languages form a subgroup within Rgyalrongic with Khroskyabs (previously known as 'Lavrung'), as these two branches present common innovations which are unlikely to represent parallel developments, and which are not shared with the core Rgyalrong languages (Japhug, Tshobdun, Zbu and Situ).

2 Phonology

Unlike Khroskyabs and Rgyalrong languages, tonal contrasts have not be reported in any variety of Stau.

2.1 Onsets

Table 30.1 presents the consonantal inventory posited for Stau. Unlike in Japhug or Tshobdun, there is no evidence for treating the prenasalized voiced stops as single phonemes in Stau.

Some dialects of Stau have contrastive aspirated fricatives (see Sun 2000b, Jacques 2011a). In the Khang.gsar dialect, the voiceless fricative phonemes are realized as aspirated in syllable-initial position without a cluster, and as unaspirated when they are part of a cluster. Thus, nə-sow 'I killed

him' is realized as [nəsʰow], while no such aspiration is observed in nə-fse 'he killed him' due to being in a cluster.

Voiced stops are almost absent word-initially in the Khang.gsar dialect of Stau. In the case of verbs, the voiced stop or affricate resurfaces when a prefix is added, as in the examples in Table 30.2 (the bare stem appears in non-finite and in factual forms).

Table 30.2: Neutralization of voiced stops in word-initial position

Bare stem	Meaning	Prefixed verb	Meaning
pərje	burn (it)	tə-bərje-sə	it burnt
te	do	nə-dej	do it !
tɕə	meet	kə-dʑõ	I met (him)
kə	wear	rə-gu	I wore it

Voiceless stop and affricate initials do not show any alternation, as for instance tɕi 'wear (hat)' → rə-tɕu 'I wore it'.

Nouns do not have any productive prefixes, and therefore apart from bəlɜ 'cheek', the only native word whose voicing is preserved word-initially, we have no way of ascertaining which nouns have underlyingly voiced initials.

The status of the voiceless labiodental fricative f is unclear. This sound is never found as a simple onset in native words (only in borrowings from Chinese). However, some clusters such as ʂf [r̥ɸʷ] (contrasting with rv), where f is the element closest to the vowel, are difficult to account for without positing an voiceless labial fricative phoneme.

In clusters with a nasal as a first element, only stops and affricates are attested, except for the cluster nɬ, which is in free variation with ntʰ.

2.2 Rhymes

There are ten vowels in the Khang.gsar dialect of Stau, six plain vowels (-i, -e, -a, -ə, -ɜ, -u), two velarized vowels (-oˠ, -aˠ) and two nasal vowels (-õ -ã).

The velarized vowels are almost exclusively attested in Tibetan loanwords (-oˠ and -aˠ correspond to Tibetan -og and -ag/-eg, respectively).

Only three codas are possible in Stau: -v, -r and -m (the latter attested only in Tibetan loanwords). In native words, the coda -r sometimes appears to correspond to -r in other Rgyalrongic languages (as in χtɕʰər 'sour', Japhug tɕur), but in other cases, such as spar 'be thirsty' (Japhug ɕpaʁ) or zdɜr 'cloud, be cloud' (Japhug zdɯm 'cloud'), there is no -r coda anywhere else in the family. A possible explanation is that the sensory evidential suffix -rə, whose vowel tends to be elided, has been reanalyzed as part of the stem in third person forms.

2.3 Vowel fusion

In order to account for vowel alternations observed in the verbal and nominal systems, Jacques et al. (2014) postulate a series of vowel fusion rules, summarized in 30.3 (the symbol C stands for either final -r or final -v).

Table 30.3: Vowel fusion in Stau

Stem \ Suffix	-w	-ã	-j
i	u	ã	i
e	ow	ã	ej
a	ow	ã	ej
ə	u	õ	i
ɞ	ow	õ	ej
əv	u	õ	iv
ər	u	õ	i
aC	ow	ã	ej
eC	ow	ã	ej
ɞC	ow	õ	ej

Vowel fusion cannot occur with the vowels -u, -oˠ, -aˠ, -õ and -ã and the rhymes ending in -m.

3 Verbal morphology

3.1 Intransitive conjugation

In the intransitive conjugation, the second and third person singular forms are in the bare stem, while first person (singular and plural) forms have a suffix -ã.

Following the rules of vowel fusion in Table 30.3, vowel fusion between the first person suffix -ã and the verb stem has different results depending on the vowel (and coda) of the verb stem.

Six classes of alternations are found in verbs with open syllables; class 6 includes verbs without alternation, whose rhyme can be any of -u, -oˠ, -aˠ, -õ and -ã:

Table 30.4: Vowel alternations in open-syllable intransitive verbs in Rtau

Meaning	look at	move	like	be full	be ill	be hot
1	scəqã	mbəɕã	rgã	fkõ	ŋõ	cʰu
1 (underlying)	scəqi-ã	mbəɕe-ã	rga-ã	fkə-ã	ŋɞ-ã	cʰu-ã
2/3	scəqi	mbəɕe	rga	fkə	ŋɞ	cʰu

There are two irregular verbs with intransitive morphology which have -ã in the first person instead of expected -õ (cf table 30.5).

Table 30.5: Irregular intransitive verbs in Stau

meaning	go	say
1	ɕã	jã
2/3	ɕə	jə

3.2 Transitive conjugation

The basic structure of transitive conjugations in Khang.gsar Stau can be illustrated by Table 30.6 (the columns represent the P and the rows the A). In addition to the first person suffix -ã , we find two additional suffixes (1SG→3 -w and 2→3 -j) and the inverse prefix f-/v- (the allomorphs are conditioned by the voicing of the onset). The only unmarked form in the paradigm is the 1→2 slot, a curious fact which however can be accounted for historically (see Jacques et al. 2014).

Table 30.6: The transitive conjugation in Stau

<table>
<tr><th>A \ P</th><th colspan="2">1SG 1PL</th><th>2</th><th>3</th></tr>
<tr><td>1SG</td><td rowspan="2" colspan="2"></td><td rowspan="2">Σ</td><td>Σ-w</td></tr>
<tr><td>1PL</td><td>Σ-ã</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td rowspan="2" colspan="2">v-Σ-ã</td><td></td><td>Σ-j</td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td colspan="2">v-Σ</td></tr>
</table>

The vowel fusion rules in Table 30.3 apply to all suffixed forms, as in the intransitive paradigms. No example of irregular vowel fusion has yet been discovered with transitive verbs.

The f- / v- prefix appears in 2/3→1, 3→2 and 3→3 forms. Its presence in 2→1 precludes an analysis as a third person agent marker, and it is best to treat it as an inverse marker (see section 8). The inverse prefix does not occur with verb stems containing an initial cluster, or with monosyllabic verbs with the coda -v such as kʰev 'scoop (water)' or ɕev 'take out (of a pile)'.

3.3 Other dialects

Some dialects of Stau have person marking systems that are remarkably different from the one described above. In the G.yu.rong (ʁjɯrõ) variety of Stau, for instance, we find the paradigms indicated in Table 30.7.

In comparison with Khang.gsar, the G.yu.rong dialect presents both innovative and conservative features. Khang.gsar is more conservative in hav-

Table 30.7: Person indexation in the G.yu.rong dialect

A \ P	1SG	1PL	2	3
1SG			Σ-n	Σ-ŋ
1PL				Σ-j
2	v-Σ-ŋ	v-Σ-j		Σ-n
3			v-Σ-n	v-Σ
INTR	Σ-ŋ	Σ-j	Σ-n	Σ

ing a special marker -w for 1SG→3, distinct from 3→1SG, whereas G.yu.rong, like Khroskyabs and Rgyalrong languages, has the suffix in 1SG intransitive, 1SG→3 and 2/3→1SG forms. G.yu.rong on the other hand preserves a distinction between first singular (-ŋ) and plural (-j) in all forms.

3.4 Orientation and negative prefixes

In Stau, orientation prefixes come in two series (Table 30.8), the -ə series for imperative and perfective/evidential, and the -í- series for interrogative and irrealis forms. A few verbs such as vdɜ 'see' ste 'finish' or si 'know' never appear with any orientation prefix even in the perfective.

Table 30.8: Orientation prefixes in Stau

Direction	Perfective / Imperative	Interrogative / Irrealis
Up	rə-	rí-
Down	nə-	ní-
North	kə-	kí-
South	ɣə-	ɣí-
No direction	tə-	tí-

There are three negative prefixes in Stau: the past negative ma-, non-past mí-, and the prohibitive di-. The prohibitive is used with an orientation prefix, as in nə-di-f-se-ã (nədifsã) PFV-PROHIB-INV-kill-1 'don't kill me'. The past negative can be used with the orientation prefix (see 1) or without it. In both cases, the negative appears after the orientation prefix, the reverse order of the one found in Rgyalrong languages.

(1) e-cʰe nə-ma-və-w
one-CL PFV-NEG-do-1SG→3
I did not do anything.

3.5 Derivational morphology

The only denominal prefix in Stau is s-/z-, cognate to Japhug sɯ-/sʏ-/ɕɯ- (on which see Jacques 2014: 14-17). It derives transitive verbs, illustrated by the examples in Table 30.9. While the original semantics of this prefix was likely 'use X' and 'cause sb. to have X' as in Japhug, in Stau the semantics of the denominal verbs is largely unpredictable, and results from semantic shifts ('use a staff' → 'hit with a staff' → 'hit').

The only denominal verb shared by Stau, Khroskyabs and Japhug is smi 'give a name' (in Japhug sʏrmi). When the stem of the base noun has an initial cluster, addition of the s-/z- denominal prefixes causes dropping of the preinitial consonant to make the word conform to the phonotactics of the language (thus rmi → smi, not *srmi, an impossible cluster in Stau).

In at least one case (smi 'hurt'), in addition to the s- causative, we observe unexplained vowel alternation.

Table 30.9: Denominal verbs in Stau

Base noun	Meaning	Denominal verb	Meaning
pəc^{h}a	staff	zbəc^{h}a	hit
rmi	name	smi	give a name
ɣme	wound	smi	hurt

Stau has a few examples of anticausative verbs with voiced onsets (Table 30.10). The anticausative verbs derive from the transitive ones (not the opposite direction of derivation, see Jacques 2012a). There are two irregular forms in this table. The first one concerns the pair ftɕə vs dʑə 'melt (tr/it)', as the f- element of the transitive verb has no equivalent in the anticausative one. Interestingly, the same irregularity is found in the cognate pair in Japhug (ftʂi vs ndzi). As for the second one, ftʂə vs brə (instead of *(v)dzə) 'wake (tr)/wake up (intr)', it appears to be unique to Stau.

Unlike Rgyalrong languages, anticausative derivation in Stau is attested in verbs with fricative initial consonants (as in zəla 'fall').

Table 30.10: Anticausative verbs in Stau

Base verb	Meaning	Anticausative verb	Meaning
səla	cause to fall	zəla	fall
p^{h}re	break (tr)	bre	break (it)
fk^{h}e	cut down	vge	break away, off
ftʂə	wake (tr)	brə	wake up
ftɕə	melt (tr)	dʑə	melt (it)

There is a causative s-/z- prefix in Stau attested in a few verbs, but

unlike in Rgyalrong languages, it is not productive. Table 30.11 provides a representative list of verb pairs. The phonological alternations attested with the s-/z- prefix are much less complex than those attested in Stodsde (Sun 2007) or in Khroskyabs (Lai 2014). However, the causative forms are not always predictable from the underlying base form: for instance, the causative form of voiced initial verbs can be either voiced (zgə 'put clothes on') or voiceless (spərje 'burn (tr)'), and that of voiceless initial verbs can be aspirated (sqʰə 'extinguish').

Table 30.11: Causative verbs in Stau

Base verb	Meaning	Causative verb	Meaning
lə	boil	zɮdə	boil (tr)
cʰu	hot	scʰu	cook
rŋi	borrow	sŋi	lend
qə	go out (fire)	sqʰə	extinguish
tʰi	drink	stʰi	give to drink
kə / -gə	wear	zgə	put clothes on
nə	burn (it)	snə	burn (tr)
pərje / -bərje	burn	spərje	burn (tr)

Some Tibetan loan verbs, borrowed in pairs, should be distinguished from the native causative pairs (mbjer 'be pasted on' vs zɟwer 'paste' from Tibetan ʁbʲar and sbʲar).

In addition to the prefix s-/z-, there is one example of a causative ɣ prefix in the pair ndʑi 'learn' → ɣʑi 'teach'. This may be a fossilized allomorph of the causative prefix (in Khroskyabs the corresponding pair is ndzé 'learn', ldzê teach' with l- allomorph of the causative prefix).

The s-/z- has semantic effects that are sometimes better described with terms other than 'causative'. There is one example of applicative s- prefix: qʰe 'laugh' → sqʰe 'laugh at. In addition, we find nənɞ 'smell (intr)' → snəsnɞ 'smell (tr)' (not 'cause to have a smell'; notice how the causative prefix takes part in the reduplication of the base form), whose semantics can be described as 'tropative' (X → 'find, consider to be X' see Jacques 2013).

The causative prefix s-/z-, unlike its cognate in Core Rgyalrong languages, is not productive anymore, and the only productive way to express causation is a synthetic construction with the auxiliary xtʂʰə 'let' (see example 17 below).

There is little evidence of incorporation in Stau, unlike in Japhug (Jacques 2012b) or Khroskyabs (Lai 2013b, Lai 2015). Only two examples have been found: rvatɕa 'carry on shoulders' (which incorporates the noun rva 'shoulders and upper back') and mbarji 'stride over' (with pa 'a step').

3.6 Existential verbs

As previously noticed by Huang Bufan (1991: 38), as in most languages of the area (Huang Chenglong 2013), Stau has several existential verbs depending on the nature of the S.

The verb **stʰə** is used to refer to movable things, that have been put at a particular place, as in example (2).

(2) **ŋi** **xtse** **əʑi** **stʰə?**
1SG:GEN soup where exist
Where is my soup? (The louse and the flea, 08)

The verb **xi** is used with objects that are fixed in place or plants that have grown on the ground.

(3) **akəstɞmba-j** **zgɞrɟu** **qʰi** **nə-xi-sə** **ŋə-rə**
Akhu.stonba-GEN windows near PFV-exist-IFR be-SENS
(The big watnut tree) was near Akhustonba's window. (Akhustonba and the walnut tree, 08)

For animates (humans and animals), **ci/ɟi** is employed. It is the only existential verb to be compatible with person marking, in particular in the progressive construction, which combines a non-finite verb form with the existential **ci/ɟi**, as in (4).

(4) **ŋa** **təqʰi** **tɕa** **zʁdə-sə** **ci-ā**
1SG here tea boil-NMLZ exist-1SG
I am boiling some tea here. (Akhu stonba and the horseman, 19)

The verb **tə/də** is used for all other cases, in particular abstract concepts, but also appears with concrete object which cannot be put into any of the preceding categories.

(5) **kʰakʰa** **kʰarma** **rdʑi** **ɕatsa** **tə-rə** **ʑəgu** **ŋaɲɟi**
other animals footprints many exist-SENS however 1PL:GEN
xə-j **rdʑi** **de,** **ŋaɲɟi** **aʑɔ-w**
hybrid.tak-GEN footprints DEM 1PL:GEN mother's.brother-ERG
taʸtaʸ **χa** **kɔ-rə**
clearly understand understand-SENS
Although there were footprints of many other animals, our uncle could distinguish the footprints of our hybrid yak. (The hybrid yak, 22-23)

4 Noun phrase

4.1 Structure of the noun phrase

Noun phrases in Stau follow the template given in (6), as illustrated by example (7).

(6) NOUN-ADJ-NUM+CL-DEM

Stau has a set of classifiers with numeral prefixes, which present morphophonological alternations and differ from free numerals. For instance, the numeral 'one' is ru, but the prefix 'one' on classifiers is a-, e-, or ə- (the distribution of the three allomorphs in not completely predictable synchronically).

(7) mbroʸcʰə ke cʰe ə-lɞ ci-rə
nomad.dog very big one-CL exist:ANIM-SENS
There was a huge nomad dog. (The hybrid yak, 70)

4.2 Case

There are six case postpositions in Stau: the ergative -w, the genitive -j, the instrumental -kʰa, the dative -gi, the locative/superessive -tɕʰa, the allative -ʁa and the comitative -pʰa.

The ergative and the genitive merge with the last word of the preceding noun phrase, and the regular vowel fusion rules seen in Table 30.3 apply. Table 30.12 presents examples of ergative and genitive forms of some common nouns.

Table 30.12: Vowel fusion in Rtau nouns

base form	meaning	ergative	genitive
kəta	dog	kəta-w → kətow	kəta-j → kətej
vdzi	man	vdzi-w → vdzu	vdzi-j → vdzi
xə	hybrid of yak and cow	xə-w →xu	xə-j → xi

The first and second person pronouns (ŋa 1SG, ɲə 2SG) do not have ergative forms (except in hybrid indirect speech, see below), as illustrated by example (8), where the noun waqi-w 'the rabbit' takes the ergative while the pronoun ŋa remains invariable in exactly the same context.

(8) ŋa zəŋɞ qe-w tə-jə-sə ŋə-rə.
1SG first shoot-1SG→3 PFV-say-IFR be-SENS

tɕʰəge, waqi-w zəŋɞ tə-f-qe-sə ŋə-rə.
then rabbit-ERG first PFV-INV-shoot-IFR be-SENS

He said 'I will (you) shoot'. Then, the rabbit shot him first. (the rabbit and the tiger, 21-22)

Some morphologically intransitive verbs, such as **rga** 'like' take an ergative argument, as in 9, where the experiencer is in the ergative, and the stimulus in the dative case, but the verb only agrees with the argument marked in the ergative. Thus, in example (9), the verb is zero-marked, because the ergatively marked argument **tə-w** is third person (see Table 30.4).

Morphological and syntactic transitivity in Stau should thus be treated separately as they do not necessarily match for all verbs.

(9) **tə-w** **ŋa-gi** **rga-rə**
he-ERG I-DAT like-SENS
'(S)he likes me.'

All postpositions above can occur in the argumental structure of some verbs, including the instrumental **-kʰa** and the comitative **-pʰa**, which are selected by the verbs **mkʰɞ** 'need, want' (see 10) and **tɕə/dʑə** 'meet' respectively.

(10) **ŋa** **rji-kʰa** **mí-mkhɞ-ã**
1SG horse-INSTR NEG:N.PST-want-1
I don't want a horse.

5 Nominalization

All productive nominalization markers in Stau are suffixes. They are commonly used to build relative and complement clauses.

We find the agentive nominalizer **-ŋkʰə**, that can be used with intransitive (**ɕə** 'go' → **ɕə-ŋkʰə** 'the one who goes') as well as transitive verbs (**rə** 'buy' → **rə-ŋkʰə** 'buyer'). The verb loses all person morphology (including the inverse prefix **v-** - note that the finite third person form of **rə** 'buy' is **v-rə** 'he buys') and only the negative prefixes can be added.

The nominalizer **-lə** can be used with transitive verbs to designate the patient of the action, as in **fɕe** 'tell' → **fɕe-lə** 'things that have been told' or **ŋgə** 'eat' → **ŋgə-lə** 'food'. Alternatively, it can build action nominals with either transitive or intransitive verbs, as in example (11).

(11) **ɲə-ɲə** **nə-vi-lə** **de** **tə-mpʰjə-sə** **ŋə-rə**
2-PL DOWN-go-NMLZ:P/ACTION DEM PFV-be.late-IFR be-SENS
You arrived there too late (=your arrival there was late; Akhu stonba and the Walnut tree, 34).

The suffix **-re** is used for locative nominalization, as in **rkʰə** 'put in' → **pʰjodzə rkʰə-re** (money put.in-NMLZ:LOC) 'wallet, place one puts money in'.

It also appears with stative existential verbs such as tə 'be there, exist' → tə-re (be.there-NMLZ:LOC) 'the place where (it) is'.

Finally, -sce is the marker of instrumental nominalization, as in ra 'write' →ra-sce 'pen, the thing one uses to write'.

Relatives in Stau are always built using one of these four suffixes. The S/A argument is relativized with -ŋkʰə, the P argument with -lə, and oblique arguments or adjuncts with the other two suffixes.

In relative clauses with relativized P, the agent of the relative can be marked either with the ergative or the genitive. In example (12), it is possible to say akəstɞmba-w with the ergative -w instead.

(12) [akəstɞmba-j fɕe-lə] de vdẽ-ndzə̨?
Akhustonba-GEN tell-NMLZ:P/ACTION DEM be.true-SENS
Does Akhustonba tell the truth? ('It is true what Akhustonba says', Akhu stonba and the Walnut tree, 25)

6 Complementation

Most complement clauses have a non-finite verb, suffixed with the -lə or -re nominalizer.

The modal verb rə 'be able' is an example of the first type. As shown by example (13), where the verb of the complement clause scəqi-lə is in non-finite form, suffixed with -lə, while rə takes person and TAM marking.

(13) tɕʰəge ŋa le rõsa scəqi-lə
then 1SG TOP immediately look.at-NMLZ:P/ACTION
ma-rə-w-sə
NEG:PFV-be.able-1SG→3-IFR
I was not able to notice it immediately. (The hybrid yak, 52)

This type of complement is also found with the phasal complex predicate ŋgɞ ftsu 'start', borrowed from Tibetan ɴgo btsugs 'start' (see example 14).

(14) ŋa zɮdə-lə ŋgɞ kə-ftsu-w
1SG boil-NMLZ:P/ACTION start PFV-start-1SG→3
I started boiling it.

The locative nominalizer -re appears for instance in combination with ɮdi 'come' to express the meaning 'be ready to, have almost ...', as in 15.

(15) ste-re ɮdi-ã
finish-NMLZ:LOC come-1
I have almost finished.

Other types of non-finite complement clauses are also attested. The verb ʁɞ 'help' takes a complement clause whose main verb is marked with the suffix -ʁɞ (homophonous with the bare stem of the verb, and probably derived from it), as in 16. No other verb can occur with this type of complement clause.

(16) tə-w ŋa-gi tɕədə de zɮda-ʁɞ kə-ʁɞ-ã
3-ERG 1SG-DAT book DEM read-CONV PFV-INV:help-1
He helped me reading this book.

In the synthetic causative construction, the verb xtʂʰə 'let' takes a complement verb in bare stem form, without any person or TAM marker, and no nominalization or converbial suffix. Example (17) illustrates this construction (in this example, the inverse -f-/-v- cannot surface due to the initial cluster). If the verb in the complement clause is intransitive, its S is coreferent with the P of xtʂʰə 'let'; ifit is transitive, its A is coreferent with the P.

(17) [e-ʑe nə] tə-xtʂʰə-ã
one-moment rest IMP-INV:CAUS-1
Let me rest a moment. (The hybrid yak, 48)

Finite complement clauses are found with both phasal auxiliary verbs such as ste 'finish' (as in 18; note that in this case, only the verb in the complement clause receives person indexation), and in reported speech.

(18) [ɲəqʰej xtse ŋa tə-tʰi-w] ste-sə
2SG:GEN soup 1SG PFV-drink-1SG→3 finish-IFR
I drank up your soup. (The louse and the flea, 9)

Stau presents an extreme case of hybrid indirect (or semi-direct) speech (Aikhenvald 2008, Tournadre 2008).

When the original speaker is different from the current speaker, the reported utterance will only be identical to the original utterance if the current and original speaker and addressee are not referred to in it. Thus, in example (19), the reported utterance is identical to the original one (example 20).

(19) tʂaɕi-w$_i$ ŋa-gi jə-rə ge [tə-w$_j$ dzɻma de
Bkrashis-ERG 1SG-DAT say-SENS LNK 3SG-ERG Sgrolma DEM
nə-f-se-sə] jə-rə
PFV-INV-kill-IFR say-SENS
Bkrashis$_i$ told me (that) he$_j$ (≠ Bkrashis) had killed Sgrolma.

(20) tə-w dzɻma de nə-f-se(-sə)
3SG-ERG Sgrolma DEM PFV-INV-kill(-IFR)
He killed Sgrolma.

A different situation is observed when the original speaker refers to himself (in the first person) in the original utterance, as illustrated by (21) and (23). The reported utterance keeps the verb form of the original utterance (example 22), but the first person pronoun is replaced by the logophoric pronoun ədə. Like the first person pronoun ŋa, the logophoric ədə does not take the ergative marker.

(21) tʂaɕi-w$_i$ ŋa-gi jə-rə ge [ədə$_i$ dzɻma de
Bkrashis-ERG 1SG-DAT say-SENS LNK LOGOPHORIC Sgrolma DEM
nə-se-w] jə-rə
PFV-kill-1SG→3 say-SENS
Bkrashis$_i$ told me that he$_i$ had killed Sgrolma.

(22) ŋa dzɻma de nə-se-w
1SG Sgrolma DEM PFV-kill-1SG→3
I killed Sgrolma.

(23) [ədə-gi mbjoᵛmbjoᵛ tɕa gə tə-f-kʰɞ-ã, tɕa gə
LOGOPHORIC-DAT quickly tea INDEF IMP-INV-give-1 tea INDEF
tə-f-kʰɞ-ã,] jə-rə
IMP-INV-give-1 say-SENS
He said 'Give me some tea, give me some tea.' (The hybrid yak, 39)

When the current speaker was referred to as a third person in the original utterance, a different type of mismatch occurs, illustrated by example (24). The verb preserves the form of the original utterance (example 20), but the third person pronoun is replaced by the first person ŋa. In addition, in this case the pronoun takes the ergative flagging -w of the original utterance, although SAP pronouns normally do not take ergative suffixes.

(24) tʂaɕi-w jə-rə ge [ŋa-w dzɻma de
Bkrashis-ERG say-SENS LNK 1SG-ERG Sgrolma DEM
nə-f-se-sə] jə-rə
PFV-INV-kill-IFR say-SENS
Bkrashis said that I had killed Sgrolma.

We see that in Stau hybrid indirect speech verb forms and case marking represent the point of view of the original speaker, but everything else, including pronouns, represent that of the current speaker.

7 Evidentiality

Like most languages of the Tibetan cultural area, the Stau verbal system has evidential markers, in particular the sensory evidential -rə and the past inferential -sə.

The sensory -rə is generally used to express a non-past state or an action that the speaker is directly witnessing, be it by vision or by other senses. Thus, sentence (25) can be uttered by someone who sees (or feels, in a car) the state of the road.

(25) tɕe ke rcɞ gə ŋə-rə
road very bad INDEF be-SENS
It is a bad road.

The sensory -rə is not used in objective (i.e., based upon external observation) statements about the speaker himself: in 26, the verb ŋə-ã cannot take the suffix -rə. It is also not used with third person referents when the speaker considers the statement to belong to generally accepted 'encyclopaedic' knowledge.

(26) ŋa ke mbjoʸ ɲɟəra-ŋkʰə gə ŋə-ã
1SG very be.fast run-NMLZ:S/A INDEF be-1
I am a fast runner.

On the other hand, as with the Tibetan sensory ɴdug (see Tournadre & LaPolla 2014), -rə can be used to express endopathic sensations, knowledge (27) or desire (28) with the first person.

(27) ŋa sə rdʑi-ʁa tɕʰu χa
1SG TOP trace-ALL anything understand(1)
mi-gɞ-ã-rə
NEG-understand(2)-1-SENS
Me, on the other hand, I do not understand anything about tracking (animals) (The hybrid yak, 17)

(28) ŋa tɕa tʰi-sɲə pre-rə
1SG tea drink-want want-SENS
I want to drink tea.

The inferentiall -sə indicates that the speaker learnt of the facts in question second-hand (hearsay) or guessed them from indirect evidence, as in sentence (29).

(29) tʂaɕi-w dzɣma de nə-f-se-sə
Bkrashis-ERG Sgrolma DEM PFV-INV-kill-IFR
Bkrashis killed Sgrolma.

A perfective sentence without the suffix -sə is used if the speaker has first-hand authoritative knowledge of the events described. For instance, 30 can only be said by someone who witnessed the crime.

(30) tʂaɕi-w dzɻma de nə-f-se
Bkrashis-ERG Sgrolma DEM PFV-INV-kill
Bkrashis killed Sgrolma.

A verb in the inferential can be combined with the sensory form of the verb ŋə 'be' to form the narrative compound tense (see 31), which is specifically used to tell stories. It is the most common verb form in narratives and other traditional stories.

(31) tʂaɕi-w dzɻma de nə-f-se-sə ŋə-rə
Bkrashis-ERG Sgrolma DEM PFV-INV-kill-IFR be-SENS
Bkrashis killed Sgrolma.

8 Classification

There is clear evidence from morphology and lexicon that Stau and Khroskyabs languages constitute a subgroup within Rgyalrongic (evidence for the Rgyalrongic subgroup itself is presented in Sun 2000b).

First, both Stau and Khroskyabs languages have generalized the inverse forms in the non-local scenario and completely lost the direct 3→3' forms (Lai 2013b, Jacques & Antonov 2014, Lai 2015), a puzzling feature that is unlikely to be an independent innovation.

Second, Stau and Khroskyabs lost the nominalization prefixes found in Core Rgyalrong languages. Only indirect traces of the prefixes remain.

An example of such a trace is the noun ɣʝi 'hole, orifice' in Khanggsar Stau, ʁʝô in Wobzi Khroskyabs, both cognate to Japhug -ɣɲɟɯ '(its) hole, opening', which derives from ɲɟɯ 'open (intr)', the anticausative of cɯ 'open (a door)'.

In Japhug, ɣ- is an irregular allomorph of the nominalization prefix kɯ-, found in a handful of examples (Jacques 2014: 4-6). Although the ɣ- element in Stau and ʁ- in Khroskyabs are not analyzable anymore (the forms ɣʝi and ʁʝô are synchronically unmotivated), this example and others (see Jacques 2012b: 1228-9) suggest that nominalization prefixes used to exist in Stau and Khroskyabs, and were later replaced by innovative suffixes.

These suffixes, probably originally generic relator nouns, are partially shared between Stau and Khroskyabs (see Table 30.13), in particular the S/A nominalizer -ŋkʰə and the oblique nominalizer -re. Although contact cannot be excluded as a factor in the development of these suffixal systems, no discussion of Rgyalrongic subgrouping can neglect these data.

The suffix -ŋkʰə in Stau and Khroskyabs is reminiscent of Tibetan -mkʰan, which has the same use in some modern languages, but this is likely to be a coincidence (words with the rhyme -an in Classical Tibetan never corresponds to words -ə in Tibetan loanwords in Stau).

Table 30.13: Nominalization suffixes in Stau and Khroskyabs

	Stau	Khroskyabs
S/A	-ŋkʰə	-pɑ, -ŋkʰə
P, action	-lə	-spi
locative	-re	-ri
instrument	-sce	-ri

Third, both Stau and Khroskyabs present a type of verbal reduplication unattested elsewhere, whereby the replicated syllable appears after the base, and its rhyme is replaced by -ɑ (Lai 2013a). This process is productive is Stau and Khroskyabs (for instance ŋgə 'eat' → ŋgəŋga 'eat all kinds of things').

Fourth, Stau and Khroskyabs languages share several lexical isoglosses which distinguish them from Core Rgyalrong languages, as illustrated by the data in Table 30.14. In these examples Khroskyabs and Stau differ from Japhug (and other Sino-Tibetan languages) and in some cases are clearly innovating. In the case of nouns like mkʰə smoke' for instance, the innovation is the replacement of the simple root by a compound comprising the original root and another element (fire+smoke → smoke, a well-attested unidirectional semantic change, see Urban 2011).

Table 30.14: Potential lexical innovations

	Stau	Khroskyabs	Japhug
heart	zjar	sjûr	tɯ-sni
smoke	mkʰə	mkʰə́	tʁ-kʰɯ
be big	cʰe	cʰǽ	wxti
bread	ləkʰi	lækʰí	qajɣi
writing	tɕədə	dʑədə́	tʁscoz
wind	χpərju	χpə̂rju	qale
skin	tɕədʑa	dʑədʑû	tɯ-ndzi̯
water	ɣrə	jdə̂	tɯ-ci
experience	zdar	zdûr	rɲo
general classifier	ə-lɞ	ə̂-lo	tɯ-rdoʁ
human classifier	a-ʁi	ə̂-ʁæi	tɯ-rdoʁ
exist (animate)	ci/ɟi	ɟê	tu
exist (be put on)	stʰə	stî	tu

Stau and Khroskyabs are also characterized by a series of retentions not shared by Core Rgyalrong languages. Although these do not provide evidence for the Stau-Khroskyabs branch, they are nevertheless worth mentioning.

First, Stau and Khroskyabs have two distinct roots for 'year', one with the numeral prefixes (-fku) and the other in year ordinals (-və). Wobzi Khroskyabs -dju corresponds to Thugsrjechenbo -dɣu and is related to Stau -fku (the velar stop underwent lenition in Khroskyabs languages). Japhug and other Core Rgyalrong languages, on the other hand, have the root -xpa / -pa everywhere.

A root suppletion in the noun 'year' cognate with the one in Khroskyabs and Stau is found in Tangut, Lolo-Burmese and Naish (see Jacques & Michaud 2011), showing that Core Rgyalrong languages are innovative here.

Table 30.15: Year ordinals in Rgyalrongic languages

	Stau	Khroskyabs	Japhug
one year	e-fku	ə̂-dju	tɯ-xpa
two years	ɣnə-fku	jnə̂-dju	ʁnɯ-xpa
three years	xsɞ-fku	çsô-dju	χsɯ-xpa
last year	javə	aχpî	japa
this year	pəvə	pîvi	ɣɯjpa

Second, Khroskyabs and Stau preserve the prohibitive dental prefix (tə- in Wobzi Lai 2013b: 130-1, di- in Stau) that does not exist in Rgyalrong languages (which instead have a prohibitive form ma-).

Third, orientation prefixes are placed *before* the negation in Stau and Khroskyabs, while they appear after it in Rgyalrong languages. Since the order negation-orientation is also found in related languages such as Tangut and Pumi (Jacques 2011b), Rgyalrong languages are most probably innovative here.

Although Stau clearly belongs to the Rgyalrongic branch of Sino-Tibetan, it presents interesting commonalities with Tangut, in particular the case marking system, as shown in Table 30.16.

Table 30.16: Case markers in Stau, Khroskyabs and Tangut

Stau		Khroskyabs		Tangut	
-w	ERG			猴 ŋwu^{2}	INSTR
-j	GEN	-ji	GEN	俤 .jij^{1}	GEN, antiergative
-ʁa	ALL	-ʁɑ	LOC	粗 ɣa^{2}	LOC
-tɕ^{h}a	LOC			豏 tɕ^{h}jaa^{1}	LOC
-k^{h}a	INSTR			猜 k^{h}a^{1}	in the middle of

Among these markers, the only potential cognate in Core Rgyalrong languages is the locative -i found in Situ (which appears in the predicative possessive construction, see Lin 1993: 328). This is one area where Stau

is more conservative than Core Rgyalrong languages, which have borrowed their ergative and genitive markers from Tibetan (see Jacques 2016).

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