

# Egophoricity-Evidential System in Western Minyag

ཏཱ་མགོན་ལྷ་མོ་

Tamdrin Lhamo

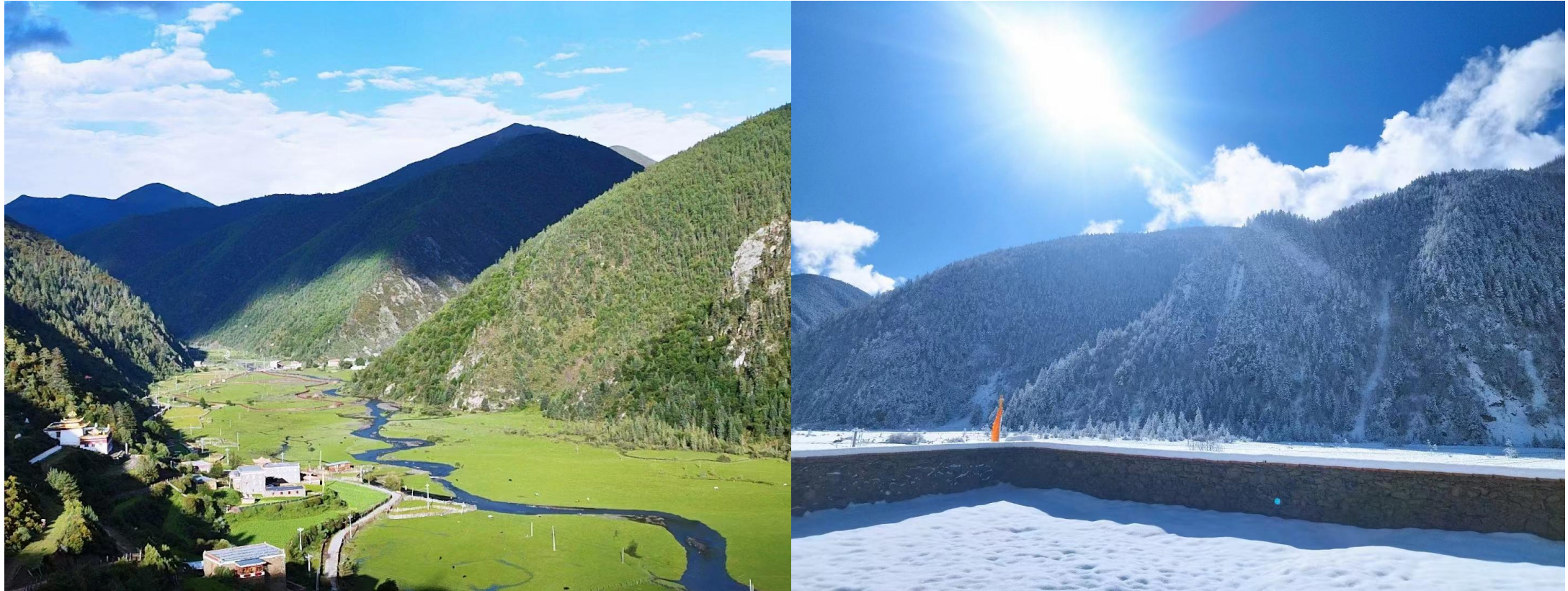
Nankai University

# Outline

- 1. About Western Minyag
- 2. Evidentiality in Western Minyag
- 3. Egophoricity in Western Minyag
- 4. Copulas with evidential meaning in Western Minyag

# 1. About Western Minyag

- Qiangic branch of Tibeto-Burman
- Relatively undescribed language
- Approximately 20,000 speakers of all ages
- Spoken in some towns in Kangding County, Sichuan Province, by ethnic Tibetans.



Chijixi village, photographed by me in 2023, July and 2024 February respectively.

## 2. Evidentiality in Western Minyag

- 2.1 The direct evidential marker *ra*
- 2.2 The indirect evidential marker *sə*
- 2.3 The reported evidential marker *tə pi* & *tə sə*

## 2.1 The direct evidential marker *ra*

- Visual access
- Auditory access
- Olfactory access
- Endopathic (personal experience or feeling),
- Knowing the process of an event,
- Grammaticalized from the motion verb ‘go’ .

## 2.1.1 *ra* marking visual source

|                |                   |             |             |             |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <i>wuzi-ʔe</i> | <i>wuɛtə</i>      | <i>khu,</i> | <i>ʔəmə</i> | <i>təsə</i> |
| over-ERG       | bend              | inside      | that        | some        |
| <i>ʔə̃</i>     | <i>ta-ra</i>      | <i>tə</i>   | <i>ŋə.</i>  |             |
| that           | <b>see-DIRECT</b> | say:1SG     | EGO         |             |

‘I said that I saw some of that in the bend over there.’  
(“Talking about Micha”, 153-155)

## 2.1.2 *ra* marking auditory information access

*tete, jeni təti-ra*  
just.now 1PL:INC talk:PL-DIRECT

‘We (just you and me) talked just now.’

(“Differences between farm and nomad people”, 50-51)



## 2.1.3 *ra* marking olfactory access

|                 |           |            |                |
|-----------------|-----------|------------|----------------|
| <i>ʔətsə-ʔe</i> | <i>zi</i> | <i>ndo</i> | <i>təne-ra</i> |
| (s)he-BEF       | pig       | pork       | smell-DIRECT   |

|           |             |           |               |
|-----------|-------------|-----------|---------------|
| <i>ŋə</i> | <i>tchi</i> | <i>mə</i> | <i>nbi-ra</i> |
| 1SG       | with        | NEG       | sit-DIRECT    |

‘S/he smelled pork and didn't stay with me.’

(offered by native speaker)

## 2.1.4 *ra* marking endopathic feeling

|                |              |                  |  |
|----------------|--------------|------------------|--|
| <i>natca</i>   | <i>tə-ji</i> | <i>təŋe-ra</i>   |  |
| whole          | one-CL:night | have.pain-DIRECT |  |
| <i>tə-po</i>   | <i>ni</i>    | <i>ngə</i>       |  |
| say-IMPERF:1SG | COP          | 1SG:DAT          |  |

‘I am saying that I had pain the whole night.’  
(“Conversation of Yi and Qu”, 1438)

## 2.1.4 *ra* marking endopathic feeling

*jəphəsi*                      *tsəkə*                      *mə*                      *kəzə*  
the.other.day                      from                      weather                      little

*ŋə*                      *nbə*                      *nuvə-ra*  
NEG                      comfortable                      make-:DIRECT

ʔə    di  
QM isn't.it?

‘From the other day, the weather is not very good, isn’t it?’  
(“Conversation of Ge and Rang”, 16)

## 2.1.5 the origin of *ra*

Evidential *-ra* is cognate with motion verb ‘go’.

*tə-zə-ji*                      *tchə ra-sə*                      *nənə.*  
one-CL:MAN-ERG    take    go-INFER                      morning  
‘Someone took it away in the morning.’

(“Interviewing Mulam”, 510)

## 2.2 The indirect evidential marker *sə*

- the access of information is inference.
- May originate from a 3<sup>rd</sup>-person agreement form of the perfective aspect auxiliary:

|          |          |          |          |        |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|--------|
| sØ       | si       | sy       | se       | sə     |
| PERF:1SG | PERF:1PL | PERF:2SG | PERF:2PL | PERF:3 |

## 2.2.1 Inference from auditory information

*ma*            *ngə-mi*            *təsə*            *yətʂə-sə*  
wild.bird hunt-NOM            some            come-INFER

*tə*            *ŋə*  
say:1SG EGO

‘I told (my sister) that there arrived some wild bird hunters.’ (Speaker heard someone call his name.)

(“First interview of Mulam”, 61)

## 2.2.2 Inference from visual information

*ti*            *nə*    *zəka*            *mə-sə*

anyone    also walk            **NEG-INFER**

‘No one walked.’ (Looked for footprints, but did not see any.)

(“First interview of Mulam”, 77)

## 2.2.3 Inference from past experience and memories

|            |           |           |                     |
|------------|-----------|-----------|---------------------|
| <i>tsə</i> | <i>zə</i> | <i>mə</i> | <i>ŋə-sə.</i>       |
| yak.hair   | TOP       | NEG       | right- <b>INFER</b> |

‘Not the yak hair.’ (Remembering and inferring what the clothes of Lolo people wear.)

(First interview of Mulam, 1790)



## 2.2.3 Inference from conversation

*zəzə*      *kəji*      *tələ*      *thuxi-sə.*  
fairly                      much      one                      need-**INFER**

‘It’s fairly much needed (when hunting).’  
(the interviewer’s knowledge about the hunting is based  
on this conversation)

(“Second Interview of Mulam”, 406-407)

## 2.2.4 Inference from story/tale or tradition

|            |           |             |                  |
|------------|-----------|-------------|------------------|
| <i>tce</i> | <i>mə</i> | <i>ndzə</i> | <i>və-sə.</i>    |
| son        | NEG       | have        | light.verb-INFER |

‘(They) don't have a son.’ (known from tales of the Tşana family)

(“Talking about reincarnation”, 137)

## 2.3 The reported evidential marker *tə pi* & *tə sə*

- hearsay
- are used after a finite clause (sentence)
  
- *tə pi* refers to **oral** report
- *tə sə* refer to **written** report

## 2.3.1 Example of *tə pi* (oral hearsay source)

|                     |             |               |              |           |
|---------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|-----------|
| <i>pəvə</i>         | <i>məti</i> | <i>tɕotɕi</i> | <i>tɕoŋi</i> | <i>ti</i> |
| this.year           | calf.of.yak | eleven        | twelve       | about     |
| <i>jindzy-ra</i>    |             | <i>tə-pi.</i> |              |           |
| birth -EVIDL:DIRECT |             | say-IMPERF:3  |              |           |

‘It is said that this year eleven or twelve yak calves were born.’

(“Conversation of Ge and Rang”, 52)

## 2.3.2 example of *tə sə* (written hearsay source)

A: *tʃhəji*      *khu* *ʔezə*      *tə-sə*.  
letter      in      what      **say-PERF:3**  
‘What is written in the letter?’

B: *nɐ-le*                      *yəzi*                      *tə-sə*.  
2SG-DAT                      come                      **say-PERF:3**  
‘It is written that you (need to) come.’

(offered by native speaker)

### 3. Egophoricity in Western Minyag

- Egophoric marker  $\eta\theta$
- **Restricted to first person subjects**
- *Primary function of ‘volitionality’, secondary of ‘personal knowledge’*
- When used after imperfective auxiliary, means ‘I/we will do something’
- When used after verb, means ‘I/we did something’

### 3.1 imperfective auxiliary+*ŋə*

|              |            |             |            |            |
|--------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| <i>tʂəpə</i> | <i>və</i>  | <i>tʂhə</i> | <i>po</i>  | <i>ŋə,</i> |
| Lama         | be         | CAUS        | IMPERF:1   | EGO        |
| <i>yədʒə</i> | <i>po</i>  |             | <i>ŋə.</i> |            |
| send         | IMPERF:1SG |             | EGO        |            |

I will let him be a Lama, I will send him (to a monastery)

(“Talking about reincarnation”, 146-147)

### 3.1 verb+ηθ

|            |           |              |                 |             |               |
|------------|-----------|--------------|-----------------|-------------|---------------|
| <i>ndo</i> | <i>zə</i> | <i>zənbə</i> | <i>tchãtsho</i> | <i>tsə,</i> | <i>nəxəxə</i> |
| meet       | and       | leather      | whole           | the         | dig.out       |

|               |               |           |               |
|---------------|---------------|-----------|---------------|
| <i>tsəkə,</i> | <i>thəphə</i> | <i>ηθ</i> | <i>ʔəkhə.</i> |
| then          | throw:1SG     | EGO       | there         |

‘I dug out the meet and leather then threw it there.’  
(“Interviewing Mulam”, 727-729)



## 4. Copulas with evidential meaning in Western Minyag

- *ti* new information
- *ni* information based on well-known fact or common sense

## 4.1 example of *ti*

|                    |              |            |              |            |
|--------------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| <i>otsə nbu</i>    | <i>tsimu</i> | <i>tɕə</i> | <i>tɕ-zɕ</i> | <i>khə</i> |
| this mountain peak | river        | one-CL     | exist        |            |

**ti**

COP:NEW

‘There was a river at the peak of mountain.’

## 4.2 example of *ni*

|             |            |              |            |              |            |
|-------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| <i>otsə</i> | <i>nbu</i> | <i>tsimu</i> | <i>tɕə</i> | <i>tɕ-zɕ</i> | <i>khə</i> |
| this        | mountain   | peak         | river      | one-CL       | exist      |

*ni*.

**COP:FACT**

‘There was a river at the peak of mountain.’

ཐུགས་རྗེ་ཆེ།

Thank you all





Thank you my native language teachers.

# References

[1] Bai, Junwei. 2019. A Grammar of Munya, Ph.D. thesis, James Cook University.

[2] Sun Jackson T.-S. (孙天心) . Evidentials in Amdo Tibetan. Bulletin of the Institute of History and Philology[J], Academia Sinica. 1993,63(4):945-1001.

[3] Tournadre N, LaPolla R J. Towards a new approach to evidentiality: Issues and directions for research[J]. Linguistics of the Tibeto-Burman Area, 2014, 37(2): 240-263

ཐུགས་རྗེ་ཆེ།

Thank you all

