Evidentials in Pingwu Baima

Katia Chirkova

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Abstract

This article provides a descriptive overview of the system of evidentiality in Baima, a Tibetic language spoken at the border of Sichuan and Gansu Provinces, China. The overview is based on first-hand fieldwork data on the variety of Baima as spoken in Pingwu County, Sichuan. It relies on elicited verb paradigms and verb forms occurring in a corpus of traditional stories. The Pingwu Baima evidentiality system is shown to be fairly unique in the Tibetic context in its lexical choices and etymological origins. It is argued to combine features generally found in the Central and Khams varieties (such as a separate egophoric receptive marker) with some unusual developments so far only attested in some Tibetic languages spoken in the border areas between Sichuan and Gansu (the homophony between the indirect evidential and the indefinite marker).

1. Introduction

Baima is a Tibetic language, spoken by approximately 10,000 people in three counties in Sichuan Province (Pingwu 平武, Songpan 松潘, Jiuzhaigou 九寨沟) and one county in Gansu Province (Wenxian 文县) in the People’s Republic of China. The Baima people call themselves /pe⁵³/ bod and they are known under the name of Dwags-po in Tibetan. In Pingwu, Songpan, and Jiuzhaigou, they reside in close proximity with Tibetan and Han Chinese groups, whereas in Wenxian, Han Chinese are the Baima’s only neighbouring ethnic group. Baima is considered a distinct language by its speakers and it is not mutually intelligible with the Tibetic varieties in its neighborhood.

Baima is little-studied. Linguistic accounts to date have essentially focused on the disputed status of Baima as either a Tibetic language (or a dialect of Tibetan in the Chinese linguistic scholarship) (Zhang 1994a, 1994b, 1997; Huang and Zhang 1995) or a Bodic

* This article builds on my earlier work on Baima evidentials (Chirkova 2008a). I would like to thank Ulatus for preparing an English translation of the original article under the auspices of the European Research Council funded project “Beyond Boundaries: Religion, Region, Language and the State” (ERC Synergy Project 609823 ASIA). Their translation was used as the basis for this study. I am grateful to M Li Degui for his help in checking and discussing the Baima examples cited in this paper.
language distinct from Tibetan (H. Sun 1980a, 1980b, 2003; H. Sun et al. 2007; Nishida and Sun 1990).\(^1\)

Baima is spoken in a multi-ethnic area, at the border of the historical provinces of Amdo and Khams of the Tibetan empire. This area is home to many language-like Tibetic varieties, such as Zhongu (J. Sun 2003a), Chos-rje (or Dpal-skyid) (J. Sun 2003b), Thebo (or Thewo) (Lin 2014), and Cone (or Chone) (Jacques 2014). In a recent classification of Tibetic languages by Nicolas Tournadre (2014: 121–123), these Tibetic varieties are grouped, together with Baima, into the Eastern section of the Tibetic family. Baima phonology and lexicon readily attest to the complex history of this language and to its intricate relationships with the neighboring Tibetic languages. Multiple sound correspondences between the phonological system of Baima and that of Old Tibetan, as reflected in standard Written Tibetan orthography (hereafter WT), suggest layers of loanwords from different Tibetic languages (Huang & Zhang 1995: 91–92; Chirkova 2008b). To give an example, WT ‘gr has two main reflexes in the basic lexicon of Baima: (1) /ndʐ/ as in /ndʐɔ̃³⁵/ ’grang ‘be full, be satiated with food’, and (2) /ndʑ/, as in /ndʑo³⁴¹/ ’gro ‘walk’. Of these, the former correspondence is typical of Kham Tibetans (respectively, /ndʑõ⁵⁵/ and /ndʑo⁵³/ in ‘Ba’-thang Tibetan, Huang et al. 1992: 605), whereas the second correspondence is characteristic of Amdo Tibetan (respectively, /dzɑχ/ and /ndʑo/ in bLa-brang Tibetan, Huang et al. 1992: 605). The linguistic influence of different donor languages is also detectable in Baima lexicon. For instance, Baima /ŋɡɔ²⁴¹nɑ⁵³ɲi⁵³/ ‘human beings, mankind’ is shared with Amdo

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\(^1\) Officially classified as Tibetans in the 1950s, the Baima advanced claims as an independent ethnic group in the 1960s and 1970s. The main arguments for an independent status included, on the one hand, linguistic differences between the Baima language and its neighboring Tibetic varieties and, on the other hand, major ethnographic differences between the Baima people and Tibetans. Baima generally adopted Chinese lifestyle and customs; they do not drink milk or use milk products, which are essential to the Tibetan diet; and they are not Buddhists, but practice indigenous animalist beliefs. In the 1970s, a group of PRC researchers conducted two surveys in the Baima areas and published two collections of papers, in which the Baima were claimed descendants of the ancient Di tribes, which set up influential kingdoms in the 3rd through the 6th centuries CE in the areas currently inhabited by the Baima. In the 7th century, the Di territories were occupied by Tibetans and the Di people are believed to have subsequently shifted to the form of Tibetan spoken by their invaders. Despite the conclusion that the Baima constitute a distinct ethnic group rather than a branch of Tibetans, they were never officially reclassified. See Chirkova (2007, 2008c) for an account of the controversy surrounding the ethnicity of Baima Tibetans and their purported link to the Di group as documented in the Chinese historical records.
mgo nag m(y)i,² while Baima /a³³li⁵³/ ‘cat’ may probably be linked to /le¹³le⁵³/ in Khams Tibetan (as in Sde-dge) (Huang and Zhang 1995: 104). Much like its phonology and lexicon, the grammatical organization of Baima is characterized by a complex, multi-layered structure, as discussed in this article in relation to the system of evidentiality. The present overview is based on first-hand fieldwork data on the variety of Baima as spoken in Pingwu County, which has the largest concentration of Baima speakers throughout all Baima-speaking areas. This overview relies on elicited verb paradigms (used as main illustrative examples throughout the article) and verbs forms cited from traditional stories (used to address the issues of occurrence frequency and co-occurrence patterns of different markers of evidentiality with various types of verbs).

2. Evidentials in Pingwu Baima: An overview

Pingwu Baima has a hybrid evidentiality system that combines (a) specification of speaker’s perspective towards the source of, and access to, information (egophoric vs. non-egophoric) and (b) specification of source of information (direct vs. indirect). The egophoric-non-egophoric distinction permeates the entire system, whereas the direct-indirect distinction is restricted to past time reference.³

The majority of Baima verbs have two stems: (1) non-past, corresponding to WT present and future stems, and (2) past, corresponding to WT past and imperative stems, as

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² For more on the expression mgo nag myi, see Hill (2013), who discusses the use of this formula in Old Tibetan texts.
³ Baima has no specialized marker of reported evidence. Reported speech is marked by the use of various forms of the default verb of speaking /dzo³⁴/. Consider the following examples:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{n}_i^{53} & \quad \text{n}_o^{213} \quad \text{dzo}^{341} \quad \text{d}_a^{33}. \\
\text{person} & \quad \text{exist} \quad \text{exist} \quad \text{PROG} \\
\text{‘There are reportedly people here.’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{k}^b\text{u}^{53} & \quad \text{gje}^{53}\text{pu}^{53} \quad \text{te}^{53} \quad \text{n}_i^{53} & \quad \text{n}_u^{53} & \quad \text{n}_d^{53} & \quad \text{u}_e^{53} \quad \text{d}_z\text{e}^{35} \quad \text{s}_a^{33}. \\
\text{LOG} & \quad \text{old.man} & \quad \text{DEF} & \quad \text{eye-3-see} & \quad \text{PFV.EGO.INT} & \quad \text{speak.PST} & \quad \text{PFV} \\
\text{‘[The demoness] said: “Have you seen my husband?” ’}
\end{align*}
\]

illustrated in Table 1. Non-past stems are mostly prenasalized and carry a falling tone (53/341), whereas past stems have a voiceless initial and carry the rising tone (35).

Table 1. Examples of past and non-past verb stems in Pingwu Baima

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pingwu Baima</th>
<th>Tibetan</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-past</td>
<td>Past / Imperative</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ko³⁵</td>
<td>ku²⁵</td>
<td>rko ba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ndzo³⁴¹</td>
<td>ndzu¹²¹³</td>
<td>'tsho ba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ndzu³⁴¹</td>
<td>tsu³⁵</td>
<td>'tshong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ta³⁵</td>
<td>ty³⁵</td>
<td>lta ba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mo³⁵</td>
<td>me³⁵</td>
<td>rmo ba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ndza³⁴¹</td>
<td>tše³⁵</td>
<td>dra ba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mbe³⁵</td>
<td>pe³⁵</td>
<td>'bod pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ṗn³⁵</td>
<td>Ṗny³⁵</td>
<td>nyo ba</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evidential markers that combine with non-past verb stems form a simpler system with a binary opposition between egophoric and non-egophoric (or factual) forms. Evidential markers that are used with past verb stems, on the other hand, are more numerous and manifest a richer system of contrasts between egophoric, factual, direct, and indirect (inferred) evidential categories. An overview of all markers is provided in Table 2.

Table 2: Evidential markers in Pingwu Baima

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4 A small number of (high frequency) verbs have three stems: in addition to the non-past and past stems, they also have a separate imperative stem. Verbs with three stems mostly use suppletive forms. Examples include: (1) ‘walk, go’: present/future: /ndzo³⁵/ gro and /ndzi³⁵/ mchi, past /te³⁵/ chas, imperative /su³⁵/ song; (2) ‘come’: present/future /wu³⁵/ 'ong, past /ue³⁵/ 'ongs and /cy³⁵/ byung, imperative /su³⁵/ shog; (3) ‘make’: future/present /zo³⁴¹/ bzo ba, past /ce³⁵/ byas, imperative /tgi¹³⁵/ gyis; (4) ‘speak’: future/present /dzo³⁴¹/ zlo, past /dz³⁵/ bzas, imperative /dz³¹³/ zlos. Finally, some verbs have only one stem, e.g. /kʰi³⁵/ ‘lead, conduct, bring along’, WT 'khrid pa, khrid, /pe³⁵/ ‘sleep’, WT nyal ba, nyl; /tsʰa³⁵/ ‘look for’, WT 'tshal/’tshol-ba, btsol, tshol.

5 Baima does not have evidentiality distinction in the present progressive and uses one and the same progressive marker /da/ sdo? with all types of subjects and verbs. Compare the following examples: /nɑ³⁵ sɔ³⁵ ndu³⁵ da³³/ ‘I am eating.’ vs. /kʰu³³nɛ³⁵ sɔ³⁵ ndu³⁵ da³³/ ‘He is eating.’; /nɑ³⁵ kʰi³⁵ da³³/ ‘I am sick.’ vs. /kʰu³³nɛ³⁵ kʰi³⁵ da³³/ ‘He is sick.’; /nɔ³⁵ mbu³³ da³³/ ‘It is raining.’

The majority of evidentials can occur in isolation and have etymological tones. Of those evidentials that do not occur in isolation, /i³⁵/ is consistently realized with the high falling tone, whereas /e³³/ and /a³³/ are pronounced with a short, mid-pitch tone, notated here as “33” (neutral tone).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb stem</th>
<th>Egophoric</th>
<th>Marker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-past</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prospective</td>
<td></td>
<td>/i⁵³ kyis?⁶</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durative (stative)</td>
<td></td>
<td>/zy³⁴¹ yod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiential</td>
<td></td>
<td>/tʃʰa⁵³ /zy³⁴¹ cha? yod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Egophoric</td>
<td>Egophoric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>intentional</td>
<td>receptive (centripetal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>/uc³³ ?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

The basic organization of the system is as follows. Egophoric markers are prototypically used in the following two cases:

(i) with first person subjects in statements, in which the speaker is the willful instigator of a situation. Examples include:

(1) /ŋa³⁵ /ŋɔ⁵³ /i⁵³.  /ŋa³⁵ /ndzi⁵³ /i⁵³.
1SG buy,N-PST PRSP.EGO 1SG walk,N-PST PRSP.EGO

‘I will (definitely) buy (it). I will (definitely) walk.’

(2) /ŋa³⁵ /ŋɛ³⁵ /zy³⁴¹.
1SG sleep DUR.EGO

‘I am sleeping.’

⁶ The prospective egophoric marker /i⁵³/ does not appear cognate to the egophoric equational copula yin in Standard Tibetan. According to regular correspondence rules, Pingwu Baima equivalent to yin is /zi³⁴¹/ (cf. Pingwu Baima /zy³⁴¹/, WT yod). The form /zi³⁴¹/ occasionally occurs as an egophoric (equational/attributive) copula in traditional stories, as in /kʰu⁵³ /ndo³³ mbu⁵³ /zi³⁴¹/ ‘I am fat.’ (where /kʰu⁵³/ is a logophoric pronoun). The default equational copula in the spoken language is /re²¹³/, as in /ŋa³⁵ /b⁵³ pe³⁵ re²¹³, wu³³le⁵³ /cço³³-sa⁵³ re²¹³/ ‘I am a teacher, he is a student.’ (/cço³³-sa⁵³/) is a loanword from Mandarin Chinese, 学生 xuéshēng). The prospective egophoric marker /i⁵³/ may be cognate to the prospective marker kyis (or one of its allomorphs, gvis, gis, ‘is or s) (cf. Nagano 1995; Häsler 1999: 168, 184–186).
mushroom this eat.N-PST EXP.EGO
‘I have eaten this type of mushrooms (in the past).’

(ii) with second person subjects in direct questions. This use conforms to the “anticipation rule” in Tibetic languages, whereby the speaker anticipates the access/source available to the hearer and selects the evidential marker accordingly (Tournadre and LaPolla 2014: 245). Consider the following examples:

4) tɕʰø⁵³ ndu³⁵ ia⁵³?
   2SG drink PRSP.EGO.Q
   ‘Will you drink?’

5) tɕʰø⁵³ so³⁵ ndu³⁵ mbɔ³³ ua³³?
   2SG food drink CMPL PFV.EGO.INT.Q
   ‘Have you eaten?’

Non-egophoric markers are used:

(i) with non-first person subjects in statements and third-person subjects in questions, as in the following examples:

6a) tɕʰø⁵³ / kʰu₃³⁵ni⁵³ ɲɔ⁵³ re²¹³.
   2SG / 3SG buy.N-PST PRSP.N-EGO
   ‘You / he will (definitely) buy (it).’

6b) tɕʰø⁵³ / kʰu₃³⁵ni⁵³ ndzi⁵³ re²¹³.
   2SG / 3SG walk.N-PST PRSP.N-EGO
   ‘You / he will (definitely) walk.’
(7) \( t\text{h}^{35} / k\text{h}^{33}n\text{i}^{53} n\text{e}^{35} n\text{o}^{213}. \)

2SG / 3SG sleep DUR.N-EGO

‘You are / he is sleeping.’

(8) \( s\text{h}^{213} n\text{d}^{53} k\text{h}^{33}n\text{i}^{53} n\text{d}\text{z}^{a^{53}} t\text{j}^{a^{53}}n\text{o}^{213}. \)

mushroom this 3SG eat.N-PST EXP.N-EGO

‘He has eaten this type of mushrooms (in the past).’

(9) \( s\text{h}^{213} n\text{d}^{53} k\text{h}^{33}n\text{i}^{53} n\text{d}\text{z}^{a^{53}} t\text{j}^{a^{53}}n\text{o}^{213} a^{39}? \)

mushroom this 3SG eat.N-PST EXP.N-EGO Q

‘Has he ever eaten that type of mushrooms?’

(ii) with first person subjects in statements, referring to internal (or endopathic) states, such as cold, pain, hunger, or fear, over which the subject does not have control (e.g. Tournadre and Dorje 2003: 167; Tournadre and LaPolla 2014: 242). Examples include:

(10) \( n\text{a}^{35} k\text{h}^{35} r\text{e}^{213}. \)

1SG be.sick PRSP.N-EGO

‘(If it continues like that) I will certainly fall ill.’

The system of evidentials allows for interchangeability between the markers so that the speaker is free to choose different markers to signal the degree of his involvement into the situation under description. Not only can first person subjects co-occur with non-egophoric markers (as in the case of endopathic verbs), but non-first person subjects can also co-occur with egophoric markers. The latter use implies that the speaker is responsible for conceptualizing or observing the reported situation and committed to its truthfulness.  

Consider the following examples:

---

7 Such use can also be analyzed in terms of empathy, “the speaker’s identification, which may vary in degree, with a person/thing that participates in the event or state that he describes in a sentence” (Kuno 1987: 206). By taking the third person actor’s viewpoint, the speaker signals her certainty about the person’s actions (cf. Häsler’s 1999, 2001 analysis of evidentials in Sde-dge Tibetan).
Evidential markers that co-occur with past verb stems enrich the basic organization of the system by some additional meanings. Notable is also the complex system of oppositions whereby one and the same marker may stand in contrast to several markers depending on the type of verb, with which it combines, and the person of the subject.

(i) /tɕʰə³³/ contrasts to /ʂə³³/ in specifying the source of information: direct vs. indirect, respectively.

When used with volitional (or controllable) verbs and non-first person subjects, /tɕʰə³³/ signals that the speaker witnessed the event under description. By contrast, /ʂə³³/ indicates that the reported event is not directly witnessed by the speaker, but deduced on the basis of available physical evidence. Compare the following sentences:

(13) kʰa³³ɾə⁵³-ku⁵³ sɔ³⁵ ndu³⁵ mbɔ³³ tɕʰə³³.
3-PL food drink COMPL DIR
‘(I saw that) they have eaten.’

(14) kʰa³³ɾə³³-ku⁵³ sɔ³⁵ ndu³⁵ mbɔ³³ şə³³.
3-PL food drink COMPL PFV
‘They have eaten.’ (inferred, e.g. by empty plates on the table)

8 Volitional or controllable verbs refer to those actions and behaviors that the speaker is able to control through her subjective will, such as ‘go’, ‘eat’, or ‘look’.
When used with endopathic verbs, the direct evidential /tcʰɛ³³/ is generally used to refer to the speaker’s own internal state, whereas /ʂə³³/ is used to report internal states of others (but see also (iv) below). Compare the following sentences:

(15) ηa³⁵ kʰi³⁵ tcʰɛ³⁵.
    1SG be.sick DIR ‘I fell ill.’

(16) kʰu³³ɲi⁵³ kʰi³⁵ mbɔ³³ şə³³.
    3SG be.sick COMPL PFV ‘He has fallen ill.’

(ii) /tcʰɛ³³/ contrasts to /ɕy³⁵/ in specifying the direction of motion.

In addition to being evidential markers, /tcʰɛ³³/ and /ɕy³⁵/ are also full-fledged verbs of motion: /tcʰɛ³³/ is the past form of the verb ‘go’, whereas /ɕy³⁵/ is the past form of the verb ‘come, appear’. Examples include:

(17) di³⁵ ka³⁵ tcʰɛ³⁵ dze³⁵? di³⁵ ɲi⁵³ se⁵³ tcʰɛ³⁵.
    demon where go.PST say.PST demon person kill go.PST
    ‘“Where did the demon go?” he asked, “The demon went to kill humans”.’

(18) ndze⁵³ tʰi³³ro³⁵ ɕy³⁵, t⁵³na³⁴¹, pʰa³³gw³⁴¹ ɕi⁵³ ue³⁵ şə³³.
    demon ghost appear.PST bear wild.pig home come.PST PFV
    ‘Demons and ghosts appeared, bears and wild pigs came home.’

One difference between /tcʰɛ³³/ and /ɕy³⁵/ as verbs of motion is that the former can be used as a finite verb co-occurring with evidential markers (as in 19), whereas the latter cannot. Finite forms of the verb ‘come’ make use of the past stem /ue³⁵/ (as in example 18).
Both /tɕʰɛ³³/ and /ɕy³⁵/ are also used with verbs of motion as auxiliaries indicating the direction of motion in relation to the speaker. Compare the following sentences:

(20) kʰu³³ɲi⁵³ tse⁵³ tɕʰɛ³⁵. kʰu³³ɲi⁵³ tse⁵³ cȳ³⁵.

3SG arrive go.PST 3SG arrive appear.PST

‘He arrived (there, some place away from the speaker). He arrived (here, towards the speaker).’

(iii) /ɕy³⁵/ contrasts to /ue³³/ in specifying the speaker as the voluntary or involuntary participant of the event.

In addition to denoting the actual direction of movement towards the speaker with verbs of motion, /ɕy³⁵/ can be used with non-motion verbs to indicate that the action is directed towards the speaker metaphorically. In such cases, /ɕy³⁵/ indicates that the speaker-subject has undergone the action involuntarily. In this function, Baima /ɕy³⁵/ appears a close counterpart of the auxiliary byung in Standard Tibetan (cf. Tournadre and Dorje 2003: 169). Examples include:

(21) nᵃ³⁵ jɔ³⁵ cⁱ³⁵ ue³⁵ tʰᵃ³³pᵃ⁵³ pᵘ³⁵ cy³⁵.

1SG just home come.PST rain fall.PST EGO.RCP

‘Just as I came home it started raining.’

(22) tʰə⁵³ ɬe³³ɭgi⁵³ lʸ³⁵ cy³⁵.

what matter happen EGO.RCP

‘What happened (to you)?’
In neat contrast to /cy³⁵/, /ue³³/ indicates that the speaker is the willful instigator of a situation, as in the following sentence:

(23) \( \eta a^{35} \ sɔ^{35} \ ndu^{35} \ mbɔ^{33} \ uɛ^{33}. \)

1SG       food       drink    COMPL   PFV.EGO.INT
‘I have eaten.’

(24) \( \gamma a^{53} \ sɛ^{53} \ mbɔ^{33} \ uɛ^{33}. \)

fox     kill    COMPL   PFV.EGO.INT
‘I killed the fox.’

/ue³³/ is also accepted in sentences with endopathic verbs, where it stands to imply, albeit idiosyncratically, that the speaker voluntarily incurred some internal state, e.g.:

(25) \( \eta a^{35} \ kʰi^{35} \ mbɔ^{33} \ uɛ^{33}. \)

1SG     be.sick   COMPL   PFV.EGO.INT
‘I have (purposely) fell ill.’

While possible grammatically, such use is, of course, pragmatically implausible, and is generally met with laughter from native speakers.

(iv) /ʂə³³/ can be used a factual counterpart of /ue³³/ and /tɛʰɛ³⁵/.

Similar to /ue³³/, /ʂə³³/ can be used with first person subjects and endopathic verbs. Compare the following two sentences cited from one and the same traditional story and describing one and the same event:

(26) \( kʰu^{53} \ kʰɛ^{53} \ mbɔ^{33} \ tɛʰɛ^{35}. \)

LOG  lose   COMPL   DIR
‘I lost (the competition).’
(27)  \(k^h u^{53} k^h c^{53} mb^c^{33} sh^{33}\).
       \[
       \begin{array}{llll}
       \text{LOG} & \text{lose} & \text{COMPL} & \text{PFV} \\
       \end{array}
       \]
       ‘I lost (the competition).’

The use of the direct evidential /t\(e^h e^{35}\)/ in sentence (26) puts an emphasis on the source of information (sensory channels). The use of /\(s\(e^{33}\)/ in sentence (27), on the other hand, represents a factual account of the reported situation.

/\(s\(e^{33}\)/ is also the default perfective marker used with first person subjects and verbs of motion, as in the following example:

(28)  \(\eta a^{35} tse^{53} sh^{33}\).
       \[
       \begin{array}{llll}
       1\text{SG} & \text{arrive} & \text{PFV} \\
       \end{array}
       \]
       ‘I arrived.’

The distribution of Pingwu Baima past evidential markers in relation to the type of verbs and the person of the subject is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Distribution of Pingwu Baima past evidential markers in relation to the type of verbs and the person of the subject

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>First person subject</th>
<th>Non-first person subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>egophoric intensionary</td>
<td>egophoric receptive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>volitional verbs</td>
<td>(u e^{33})</td>
<td>(c y^{35})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>endopathic verbs</td>
<td>(t c^h e^{35}) (sensory source of information)</td>
<td>(s e^{33})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>motion verbs</td>
<td>(s e^{33})</td>
<td>(c y^{35}) (centripetal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(t c^h e^{35}) (centrifugal)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As shown in Table 3, /ʂə³³/ is the least restricted form, which can co-occur with all types of verbs and all types of subjects. Together with /ue³³/, /ʂə³³/ also has high frequency of occurrence in my corpus of traditional stories. /cy³⁵/ and /tcʰe³⁵/, on the other hand, occur less frequently. They are chiefly used as verbs of motion or auxiliaries indicating the direction of motion. /cy³⁵/ is more restricted in distribution that /tcʰe³⁵/, as it is mostly only used with the verb /tse⁵³/ slebs ‘arrive’, as in the following example:

(29) to³⁵ ta³³j³⁵ dza³⁴lʰa³³tsʰə⁵³ ʂə³³ na⁵³ tse⁵³ cy³⁵.

on just.now beggar INDF here arrive appear.PST
‘A beggar just came here.’

/cy³⁵/ in its function as the egophoric receptive marker is the least frequent of all evidential markers. Its use has been mainly documented through elicitation.

/ue³³/ and /ʂə³³/ also stand in clear contrast to /tcʰe³⁵/ and /cy³⁵/ with respect to their degree of grammaticalization. /ue³³/ and /ʂə³³/ are etymologically obscure, bound morphs.⁹ /tcʰe³⁵/ and /cy³⁵/, on the other hand, exhibit a low degree of grammaticalization. They retain their status of autonomous units (as in examples 17-18) and show no signs of desemanticization, phonological attrition, or loss of morphosyntactic properties (cf. Lehmann 1995: 121–178).

3. Pingwu Baima evidentials in the Tibetic context

The system of evidentiality in Pingwu Baima incorporates some very specific categories — such as egophoric, endopathic, and anticipation rule — all of which are held to be characteristic properties of the evidential systems of the Tibetic family (e.g. Tournadre 1996; Tournadre and Konchok Jiatso 2001; Tournadre and LaPolla 2014: 252–256). Overall,

⁹ Based on the basic grammatical functions of /ue³³/ and /ʂə³³/, Huang and Zhang (1995: 108) argue that the former is a contracted form of pa-yn of Standard Tibetan, whereas the latter is a variant of the Proto-Tibetan past tense morpheme *-s. This is not quite in accord with regular sound correspondences between OT and Baima or with the paradigmatic relationship of these two markers to other members of the evidential system, as discussed in this article. The etymological origins of /ue³³/ and /ʂə³³/ are yet to be determined.
evidentiality systems in Tibetic languages are held to be similar in their structure and morphogenesis. When differences occur, they are related to phonological and lexical variation between varieties. A comparative analysis of the final auxiliary verb systems of various Tibetic languages by Nicolas Tournadre also reveals that the range of evidential morphemes across the Tibetic family is limited, while lexical choices in a particular variety can be diagnostic of that variety’s group membership (1996; Tournadre and Konchok Jiatso 2001: 82–88).

How does Baima fit into this picture? Table 4 provides Pingwu Baima evidentials together with their function equivalents in various Tibetic languages, including Standard Tibetan, two Khams varieties, and three Amdo varieties (comprising two Tibetic languages of the border areas between southern Gansu and northern Sichuan, Thebo and Mdzo-dge) (based on Tournadre and Konchok Jiatso 2001: 84–87; J. Sun 1993).

Table 4. Evidential markers in Pingwu Baima compared to their function equivalents in various Tibetic languages (adapted from Tournadre and Konchok Jiatso 2001: 84–87; J. Sun 1993)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dialect</th>
<th>Marker</th>
<th>Dialect</th>
<th>Marker</th>
<th>Dialect</th>
<th>Marker</th>
<th>Dialect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pingwu Baima</td>
<td>Ü-Tsang</td>
<td>Kham</td>
<td>Amdo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lhasa</td>
<td>Chunyido</td>
<td>Labrang</td>
<td>Thebo</td>
<td>Mdzo-dge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prospective</td>
<td>gyis?</td>
<td>jijēn</td>
<td>jijēn</td>
<td>ċi</td>
<td>?rgyu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>egophoric</td>
<td></td>
<td>gyi-yin</td>
<td>gyi-yin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prospective</td>
<td>re²¹³</td>
<td>līre?</td>
<td>līre?</td>
<td>ċi gi</td>
<td>?rgyu-ği</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-egophoric</td>
<td>red</td>
<td>le-red</td>
<td>le-red</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durative /</td>
<td>zy³⁴¹</td>
<td>ĉu</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>yiye</td>
<td>jod yod</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existential</td>
<td>yod</td>
<td>bzhin-yod</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>egophoric</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durative /</td>
<td>nō²¹³</td>
<td>līre?</td>
<td>joka/ga</td>
<td>yiylegi</td>
<td>jod bkg</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existential</td>
<td>snang</td>
<td>le-red</td>
<td>*gi-yod-</td>
<td></td>
<td>?bzhin-yod-le-ği</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-egophoric</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ni/ni-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egophoric</td>
<td>cha yod</td>
<td>myong</td>
<td>myong</td>
<td>nu</td>
<td>myong</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experiential</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>myong</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tʃʰa³⁵³kʃj³⁴¹</td>
<td>lejēn</td>
<td>lejīn</td>
<td>pu le</td>
<td>(na)¹⁰</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cha yod</td>
<td>le-yn</td>
<td>le-yn</td>
<td></td>
<td>?ni-yn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ni/najan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹⁰ Jackson Sun (1993: 958) analyzes the enclitic /na/ as “nothing more than a slot-filler with minimal semantic content or pragmatic function, serving merely to add phonological bulk to monosyllabic predicates.” This is quite different from Pingwu Baima, where /uɛ³⁵³/ has a clear function of an evidential.
The comparative data in Table 4 suggest that the Pingwu Baima system may combine features of different groups of Tibetic languages. On the one hand, Pingwu Baima is similar to Central and Khams varieties in marking a distinction between centrifugal and centripetal evidentials and sharing the receptive egophoric marker byung. Interestingly, in Pingwu Baima, these are the markers that are but little grammaticalized and relatively marginal (especially /ɕy³⁵/). For that reason, they are possibly recent additions to the Pingwu Baima system. On the other hand, Pingwu Baima may share some irregular developments with the Tibetic varieties spoken in its neighborhood, at the border of Sichuan and Gansu provinces. One such development is a possible link between the indirect evidential marker and the indefinite marker in Mdzo-dge Tibetan (both /zəg/). That is parallel in Pingwu Baima, where the indirect and factual marker /ʂə³³/ is homophonous with the indefinite marker /ʂə³³/ (as in example 29). In his analysis of Mdzo-dge, J. Sun (1993: 953) proposes a cross-linguistically infrequent grammaticalization path from the indefinite marker to the indirect evidential via the semantic extension referential indefiniteness > evidential indirectness. In contrast to the centrifugal-centripetal distinction shared with Central and Khams varieties, that feature that is common between Pingwu Baima and Mdzo-dge relates to the etymologically obscure, high-frequency marker /ʂə³³/, which is therefore likely to belong to the core layer of the evidential-aspectual system of Baima. If discovered in other Tibetic languages of northern Sichuan and southern Gansu, the unusual development from the indefinite marker to the indirect evidential marker may be taken as evidence of close historical relationship between these varieties, supporting the Eastern grouping of Tibetic languages. Naturally, more work is required to
arrive at a more complete view of Baima, Tibetic varieties in its neighbourhood and their relationship to each other.

Overall, the system of evidentiality in Pingwu Baima appears quite dissimilar to other Tibetic languages in its lexical choices, etymological origins and morphology (note the lack in Pingwu Baima of any nominalizing or connective morphemes commonly attached to verb stems in other Tibetic languages). Whether an idiosyncratic development, a product of competing contact processes, or (most likely) a combination of the two, the system of evidentiality in Pingwu Baima stands out as fairly unique in the Tibetic context, nicely illustrating the diversity of evidential systems among Tibetic languages.

References


