

Evidentials and language contact along the Sino-Tibetan frontier:

A case study of the Shuhi language

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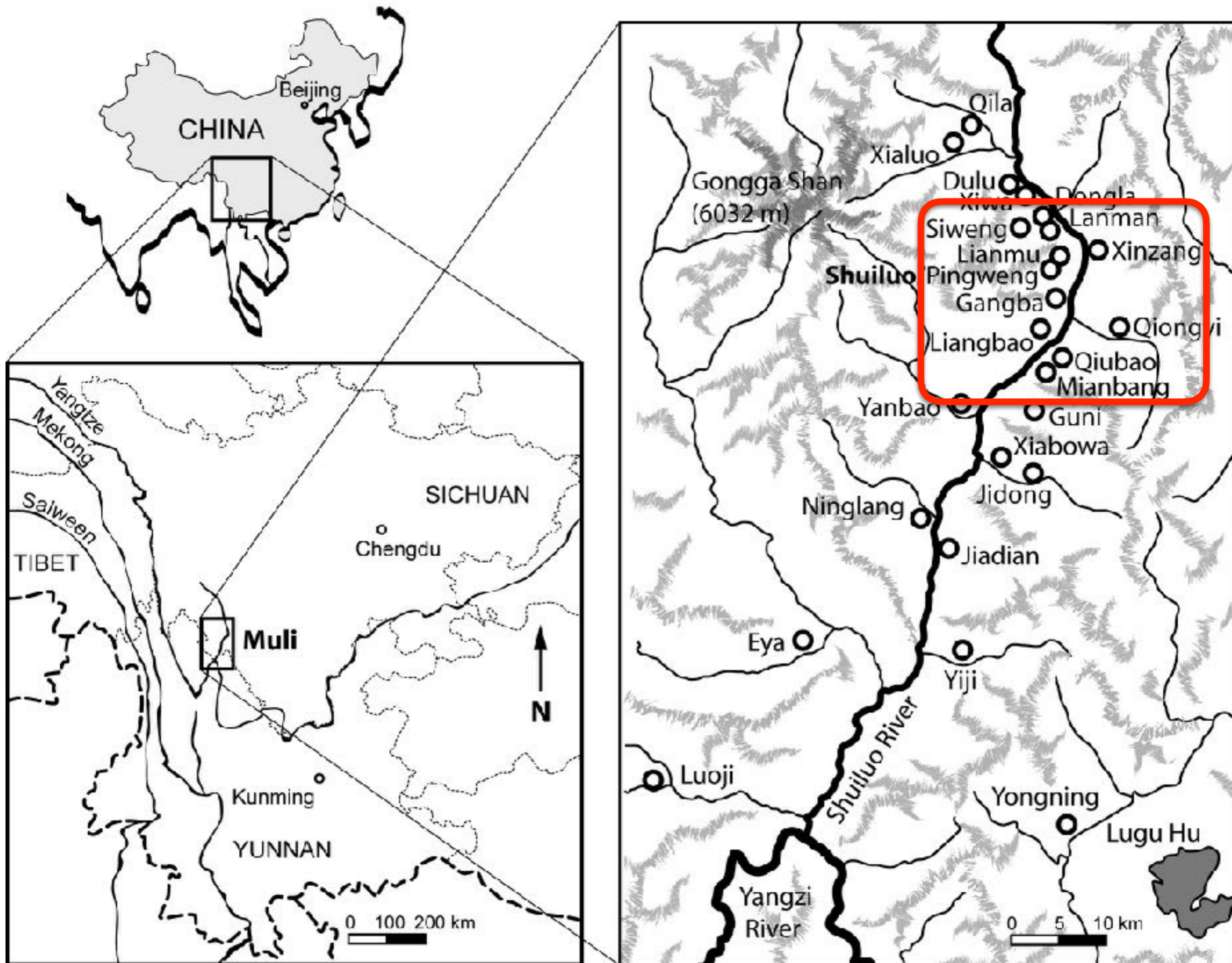
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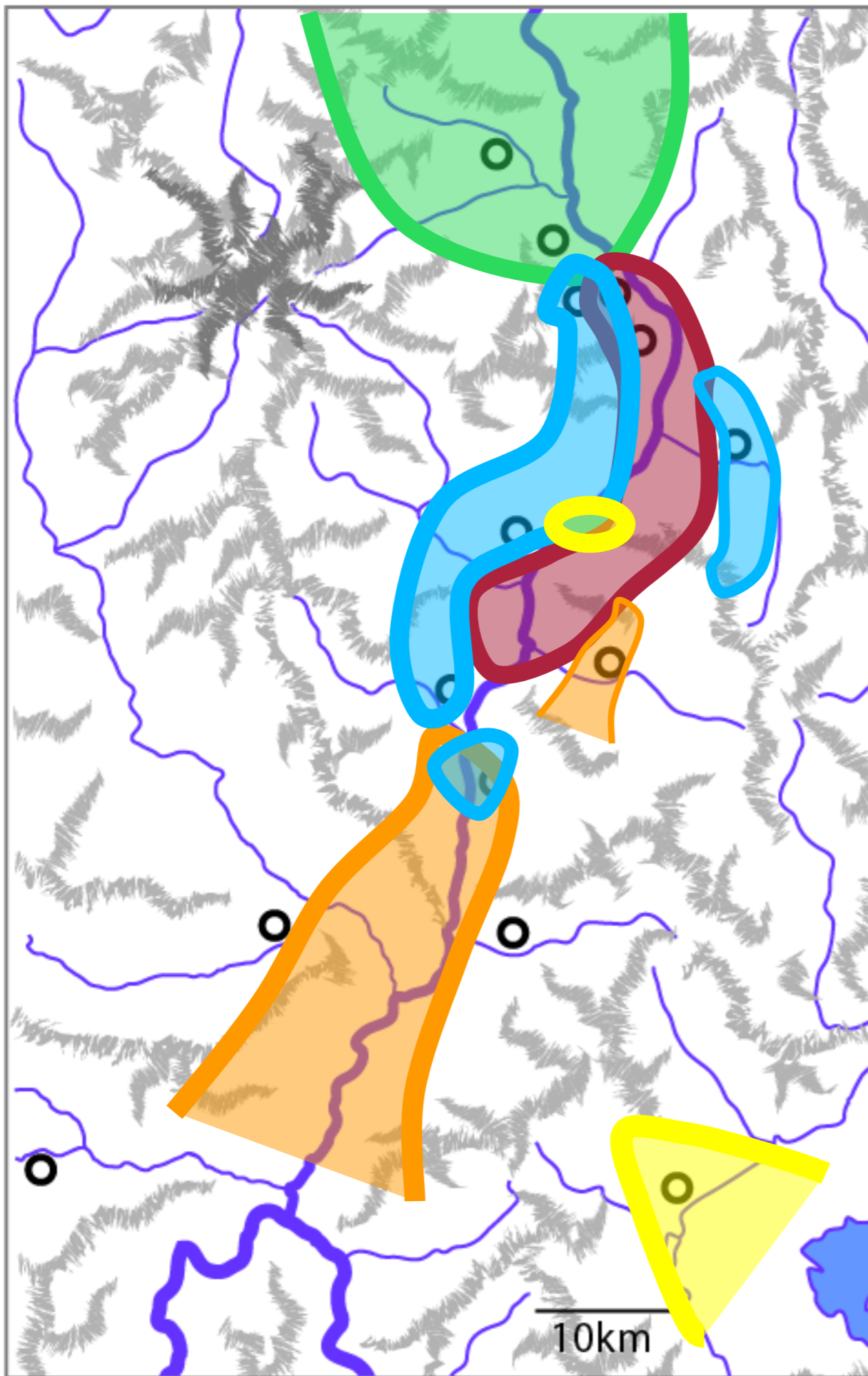
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CUHK-EHESS Symposium on Language and Cultural Contact
28 March 2024

Sino-Tibetan frontiers







■ Kami Tibetans

■ Shuhi 书亨语

$/\text{ʃu}^{55}\tilde{\text{hi}}^{55}\text{ke}^{55}\text{t}\check{\text{ɕ}}3^{53}/$

ISO 639-3 *sxg*

■ Pumi / Prinmi

■ Mosuo

■ Naxi

Structure of the presentation

- Evidential systems in Tibetic languages
 - characteristics, structure, origins
- Evidential system of Shuhi
 - overview, similarities and differences from Tibetan
 - Evidential systems of more local languages (Prinmi)
- Comparison of local evidential systems
 - diffusion of marked features: specifics and generalities
 - a glimpse into the nature of the verbal system of Shuhi prior to contact

Tibetan evidential systems

Core categories (Tournadre 2017)

- personal knowledge (egophoric, firsthand knowledge)
- direct (sensory)
- indirect (inferential)

person exist ‘There is somebody.’

a. *mi yod* ‘I have somebody (with me)’ (egophoric)

b. *mi ’dug* ‘There is somebody’ (sensory or testimonial)

c. *mi yod-red* ‘There is somebody’ (it’s a fact)

Tournadre & LaPolla (2014: 242)

Structure

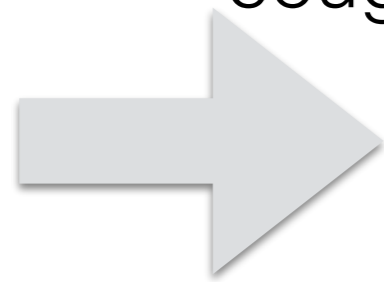
	egophoric	non-egophoric
Equational	<i>yin</i>	<i>red</i>
Existential	<i>yod</i>	<i>'dug</i>

***(DIR)-(NEG)-VERB**[INFL]-**(REL)- (NEG/PQ)** **AUX** **(FQ/TAG/JUS)**

	egophoric	direct	indirect
Copula	<i>yin</i>		<i>red</i>
Existential, locative, possessive	<i>yod</i>	<i>'dug</i>	<i>yod.red</i>
Simple past	<i>V-pa-yin</i> <i>V-byung</i>	<i>V-song</i>	<i>V-pa-red</i>
Perfect	<i>V-yod</i>	<i>V-'dug</i>	<i>V-yod.red</i>
Imperfective	<i>V-gi-yod</i>	<i>V-gi-'dug</i>	<i>V-gi-yod.red</i>
Future	<i>V-gi-yin</i>		<i>V-gi-red</i>

Personal knowledge

- person
- control and volition: a lexical category of the verb (Tournadre 2001, 2008)
 - controllable verbs: verbs that denote actions performed by knowing agents of their own will (e.g. 'eat', 'drink', 'run')
 - non-controllable verbs: verbs that denote actions over which participants have no direct control (e.g. 'forget', 'cough')



personal knowledge marking : 1st person agent

nga nang =la bsdad pa yin 1st person agent
1S inside =LOC stay PST ego

‘I stayed inside (at home).’ (Tournadre and Dorje 2003: 129)

nyi.ma nang =la bsdad pa red non-1st person agent
Nyima inside =LOC stay PST n-ego

‘Nyima stayed inside (at home).’ (Tournadre and Dorje 2003: 129)

ngas brjed pa red yin 1st person non-agent
1S.ERG forgot PST n-ego ego non-1st person non-agent

‘I forgot.’ (Hu 1986: 150)

Origins

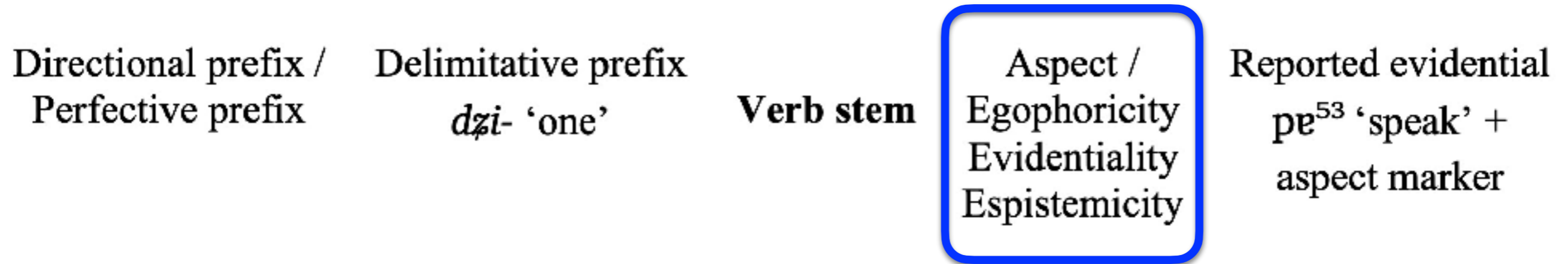
- a recent innovation, no such system in Classical Tibetan (Hill 2013, Zeisler 2014)
- egophoric forms are original, non-egophoric forms are a later development

	egophoric	non-egophoric
Equational	<i>yin</i>	<i>red</i>
Existential	<i>yod</i>	<i>'dug</i>

- structurally similar systems are widespread, but the semantic details may differ even across fairly closely-related dialects

Evidential system of Shuhi

Structure and core categories



<i>firsthand evidence</i>	<i>sensory evidence</i>	<i>inferential justification</i>
sɿ	tɕyɐ	dzã
personal knowledge	direct visual	indirect visual, inference and assumption



xɛ⁵⁵ ɽei⁵⁵ xɛ⁵⁵ hẽ³³-tu⁵⁵-hẽ³⁵ lje³³-bə³³.ɽə³³=xɛ⁵⁵ = tɛye⁵⁵
this cloth this self-?-self PFV-break.INTR=PFV.N-CTR = DIR

‘This piece of cloth broke by itself.’ (based on Bohnemeyer et al. 2001, cb08cspont)

/sɿ/ : 1st person agent; past oriented

controllable verbs, e.g. /dʒue³⁵/ ‘hit, beat, strike’

		1st	non-1st
egophoric	sə	dʒue ³³ = sə ⁵³	
direct	tɕye		dʒue ³³ = tɕye ⁵³
indirect	dʒã		dʒue ³³ = dʒã ⁵⁵

non-controllable verbs, e.g. /ʒy³⁵/ ‘be afraid’

ŋe⁵⁵ ʒy³⁵=xɐ=sə

1SG be.afraid=PFV.N-CTR=EGO

thi⁵⁵ ʒy³⁵=xɐ=sə

3SG be.afraid=PFV.N-CTR=EGO

‘I was afraid. He was afraid.’

no anticipation rule

ηe^{55} $\text{d}\tilde{\text{a}}^{33}=\text{s}\text{ɿ}^{55}$

1SG see=EGO

‘I saw / have seen.’

ji^{55} $\text{e}^{33}=\text{d}\tilde{\text{a}}^{53}?$

2SG Q=see

‘Have you seen?’

ηa^{55} $\text{d}\text{u}^{33}\text{g}\text{u}^{55}=\text{x}\text{e}^{33}=\text{s}\text{ɿ}^{55}$

1SG be.full=N-CTRL=EGO

‘I am full (after eating).’

ji^{55} $\text{d}\text{u}^{33}\text{g}\text{u}^{55}$ $\text{e}^{33}=\text{x}\text{e}^{51}?$

2SG be.full Q=N-CTRL

‘Are you full?’

/dzã~dzã/: appears to combine semantic parameters of aspectual and evidential character

ŋɛ ³³ -wu ⁵⁵	ɐ ³³ -jy ³⁵	dza ³³ hõ ⁵⁵	lje ⁵⁵ -mu ⁵⁵ -pa ⁵⁵	ku ⁵⁵ ɪə ⁵⁵	ŋɛ ⁵⁵
1SG-household	KNSP-elder.sibling	house	PFV-NEG-arrive	front	1SG

lje³³-zə³³=i⁵⁵=dzã

PFV-sleep=PROG=ANT

‘[Last night] I had been sleeping before my brother returned home.’ (Based on Dahl 1985: 204, sentence 132)

Origins

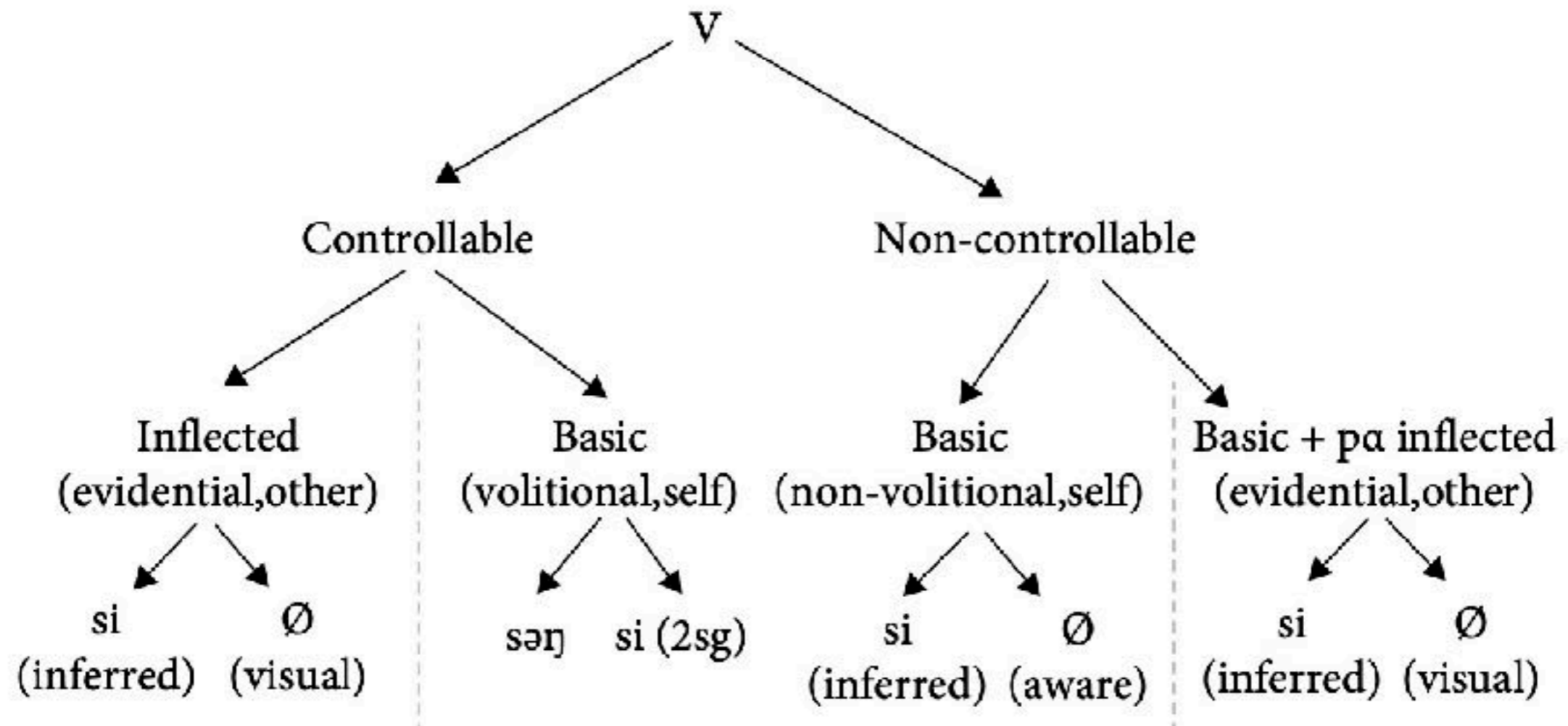
- /dzã ~ dzã / < the verb /dzã³⁵ ~ dzã³⁵/ ‘exist, possess’: existence or possession of inanimate beings
 - lexical < aspectual < evidential; location < anterior aspect < evidential (Willett 1988, section 4; Bybee & Dahl 1989; Bybee et al. 1994: 63; Heine & Kuteva 2001; Aikhenvald 2018)
- /sɿ/: etymologically obscure: ST past marker (Huang 1991: 325–326; Sun et al. 2014: 124)
- /tɕyɛ/: etymologically obscure
- /xɛ/: past form of the verb ‘go’ (parallel to the past direct marker *song* in WT?); /wu/: Upper Reaches ≈ ‘exit’

Grammaticalization

- distinction between controllable and non-controllable verbs
- /sɿ/: originally an evidentially unmarked form; it likely comes to take on ego evidential meanings through its contrastive paradigmatic relationship with the direct evidential /tɕyɐ/
- the direct evidential is used in describing the actions of other people (that is, actions that the speaker did not participate in)
- by implicature, clauses not marked with the direct evidential come to be understood as having a participatory meaning (that is, that the speaker did participate in the event)
- a paradigmatic contrast between personal knowledge and direct evidentials
- the system is further enriched by the indirect marker /dʒã ~ dʒã/

Northern Prinmi

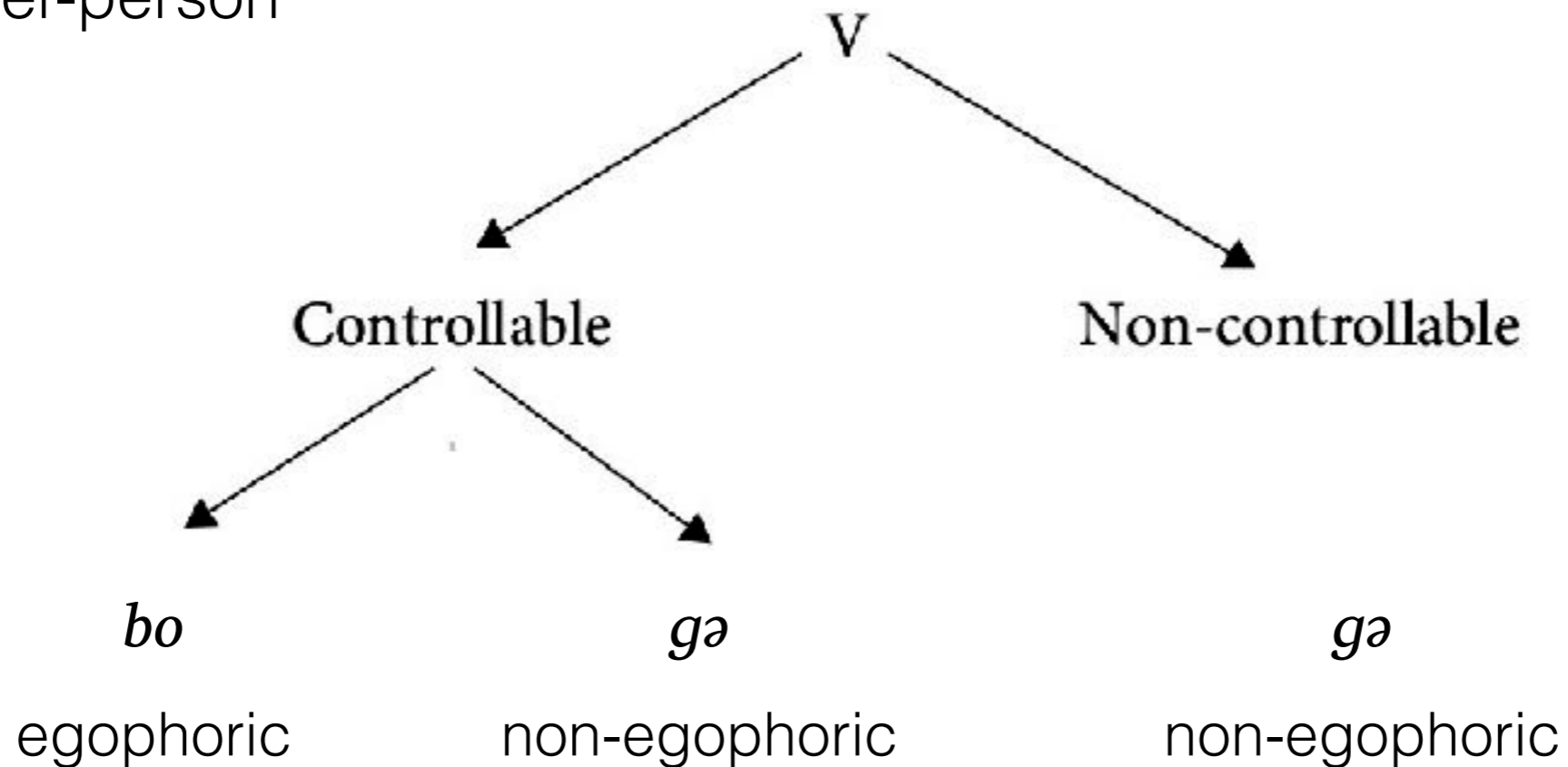
- Daudey (2014, 2015): change from a system with richer inflection, marking person-number or actor-agreement, to a much more reduced verbal paradigm that is governed by the notions of volition, control, and '1st-person' vs. 'other-person'



- only used in the perfective aspect

Lizu

- Chirkova (2017)
- change from a system of epistemic marking to a system that is governed by the notions of volition, control, and '1st-person' vs. 'other-person'



- only used in reference to non-past events

	Tibetic	Shuhi	Northern Prinmi	Lizu
core categories		personal knowledge	direct, indirect	
lexical opposition between controllable and non-controllable verbs	yes	yes	yes	yes
anticipation rule	yes	no	yes	yes
correlations with tense/aspect	non-past past (more elaborate distinctions)	past	past	non-past
origins	1. recent (11-12th century) 2. egophoric forms are original, non-egophoric forms are a later development	1. recent 2. reinterpretation of a tense/aspectual form as having egophoric meaning	1. recent 2. reinterpretation of verb inflection to express evidential meanings	1. recent 2. reinterpretation of epistemic markers to express evidential meanings
direct-indirect distinction	byproduct of the personal knowledge system	an original direct form a more recent indirect form	byproduct of the personal knowledge system	recent direct and indirect forms

Specifics & Generalities

- languages in contact tend to converge: we find similar meanings obligatorily expressed, and parallel structures developed
- native verbal forms develop evidential meanings as a result of reinterpretation of aspectual, modal, and other forms
- emulation of the dominant prototype with its salient characteristics
- diffusion of personal knowledge evidentials begins with the lexicalization of the semantic notions of control and volition
- specifics of the system depend on the original meanings and functions of reinterpreted morphemes

Shuhi prior to contact

- no distinction between controllable and non-controllable verbs
- some archaic features: ST past marker
- /sɿ/: an evidentially unmarked past form, possibly with a broader distribution
- a simple evidential system: direct-indirect; with one direct evidential (/tɕyɐ/)
- the areally dominant pattern may in turn be influenced by the structure of the evidential systems of local languages, such as Shuhi

Thank you for your attention!

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<http://elararchive.org>

<https://pangloss.cnrs.fr>

<https://cocoon.huma-num.fr>