Once again, on the "dual" suffix of Tangut

ARAKAWA, Shintaro

Research Institute for Languages and Culture of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

1. Tangut language and its verb phrase

The Xixia (Tangut) dynasty occupied a dominant position in the northwestern part of China between the 11th and 13th century. Despite the extinction of the Tangut language and scripts, many Tangut documents remain, illuminating the prosperous culture at the time.

Tangut belongs to Tibeto-Burman language group. The considerable amount of surviving Tangut texts contribute to a reconstruction of the phonology and grammar of Tangut. It has unique linguistic features, which are not found in either Old Tibetan or Old Burmese, for example: the 'agreement' between personal pronouns and personal suffixes, the unique set of verb-prefixes originated from 'directional marker', and other features.

In terms of linguistic typology, Tangut belongs to the so-called SOV group and its noun phrase consist of (Dem-)N(-adj-CM). The verb phrase can be complicated in some cases.

Prefix (negative, perfect, etc.)- Verb stem -Auxiliary verb -Pronominal suffix -Particle

'Verb agreement' (or 'Pronominalization') exists in the verb sentences, but only with an agreement that the first and second person is marked (personal pronoun – personal suffix). The sentence below shows the example of the agreement:

(01)

𗼊 𗟲 𗿒 𗤹 𗤻 𗭪 𗼕 𗼊

²nga ¹tha ²rI:r ¹tshe:' ?wo? ¹'a? ²tse: ²nga

S   O   Pref   V   S(Agreement)

I   Buddha Pref1 say   truth   Pref1 understand Suf (1sg)

"I understood the truth which the Buddha explained" (Arakawa 2014a: 149)

The Tangut language has a variety of verb-prefixes with different functions. The prefixes are grouped into two series with similar consonants. The first series of them indicates the direction or perfective (of the motion), and the second series represents the 'optative' meaning. The former series is usually called 'Prefix series 1' (hereafter, 'Pref1') and the latter 'Prefix series 2' (hereafter, 'Pref2'). According to Nishida, Pref1 originally functioned as directional marker and then developed into an aspect marker expressing perfect aspect. The Table 1 shows the set of Pref1 or 2 from Nishida's previous work (Nishida 1989: 419).

Table 1: The set of verb prefixes

Expected direction, Tangut script, and phonetic reconstruction[1]

	Pref1		Pref2
Direction	Perfect (or Direction)		Optative
upward	羖 ¹'a?-		茙 ¹'e:-
downward	羧 ¹na:-		蕭 ²ne:-
to here	燚 ¹kI:-		繇 ¹ke:-
over there	緮 ²wI:-		㳒 ²we:-
inward	菔 ²da:-		羍 ²de:-
outward	瓾 ²rI:r-		緂 ²ryer'2-

(02)

俺 獙 燚 蓆
²wi ¹kha ¹kI: ¹shI:
castle CM Pref1 go

(He) went inside the castle (Arakawa 2014b: 20)

2. 燚 ¹kI: functions as dual marker?

Previous Studies show that there is a correlation between independent forms and suffixes of pronominal, such as Table 2.

Table 2: The set of independent forms and suffixes of pronominal

	independent form		suffix	
1sg.	瓾	nga	瓾	-nga
2sg.	楍	ni:	既	-na:
3sg.	瓾	tha:		-Ø
pl.	N-菣	nI:	菀	-ni:

However, Nishida argued that the 燚 ¹kI: functions as dual marker in some cases. The suffix indicates "the agents are 'dual'" (Nishida 2004: 374-375), though it is not combined with independent form. It is out of range of the so-called 'agreement'.

X and Y … Verb-燚 ¹kI:

---

[1] The system of phonetic transcription is given according to Arakawa (2014). '1' means 'high-level tone' and '2' means 'low-rising tone'. The transcription 'I' means [ɨ].

He quoted the samples from Tangut version of the Lotus sutra (Nishida 2004: 374-375).

A: 𗼩 𘃶 𗆟 𗟲 𘝨 𗰖 𗓋 𗣼 [𘊆] 𗏁
B: 𘝨 𗖻 𘜁 𗰿 𗟩 𘄦 [𘊆] 𗏁
C: 𘝨 𗰖 𗖻 𘄦 [𘊆]
D: 𗿈 𗤻 𗓋 𗗙 𘉍 𘝨 𗰖 𗖻 𘄦 [𘊆]
E: 𗣼 𗫴 𗓋 𗢁 [𘊆]

Re-analysis of the samples 1: In A and B, 𘊆 [1]kI: functions as a prefix or a suffix?

A: 𗼩 𘃶 𗆟 𗟲 𘝨 𗰖 𗓋 𗣼 [𘊆] 𗏁
    what cause heretical view family CM Pref1 bear ???   say
                                         Verb   Verb

"(We) have been born into this family of heretical views!"

B: 𘝨 𗖻 𘜁 𗰿 𗟩 𘄦 [𘊆] 𗏁
    house leave way Pref1 practice make ???   say
                         Verb   AV   Verb

 "(We beg our mother to permit us going to the place where the Buddha is,) to leave the household life and to practice the way."

Re-analysis of the samples 2: In C and E, no subject appears?

C: 𘝨 𗰖 𗖻 𘄦 [𘊆]
    house Pref1 leave AV ???
"(We beg our mother to permit us?) to leave the household and become shramanas."

E: 𗣼 𗫴 𗓋 𗢁 [𘊆]
    Lotus   listen to go ???
"(He will permit us?) to go and listen to the Lotus (sutra)."

Re-analysis of the samples 3: In D, which pair is 'dual', subject or object?

D: 𗿈 𗤻 𗓋 𗗙 𘉍 𘝨 𗰖 𗖻 𘄦 [𘊆]
    father mother 1sg pl   CM house Pref1 leave AV ???
    Subject   Object
"Our father and mother should permit us to leave household life."

    At first, the presenter doubted Nishida's idea and thought that it was an error in writing. However, after the re-analysis of previous studies, a sample that reinforces Nishida's idea was found:

(03)

𗉣 𗋽 𗣼 𗌗 𗫂 𗄑 𗟻 𗤮 𗵒 𗰗 𘝨

²nga ¹nI' ¹nyI' ²dzwo: ¹leu ²thI: ¹vi:q' ¹ny'e:' ²byi ²lheu ¹nwI ¹kI:

1sg Pl two person only Dem illusion live   deliverance know Suf.du

We, two persons know how to emancipate from this illusion. (AV77, Arakawa 2011: 157)

The sample sentence above has 'dual' agents of the verb that properly matches to Nishida's idea.

3. Exceptions and the explanation

The presenter basically agrees with Nishida's idea but some exceptions must be pointed out. In some cases, the sentences which include 'dual' agents have no suffix 𘝨 ¹kI:.

(04)

𗤔 𗦫 𗫜 𗋤 𗈁 𗣦 𗈁 𗤸 𗤉 𗊴   𗎼

¹chI: ²zyonq ?'a? ¹na ¹lo ¹heu ¹lo ¹'e: ¹twuq ?li?   ¹wi:

Dem time Ananda Rahula   self   thinking do

At the time, Ananda and Rahula thought to themselves. (SP4, Arakawa forthcoming)

(05)

𗣼 𗋕 𗆫 𗫸 𗑱 𗄽 𗏁 𗦻 𗠁 𗼻 𘟣 𗥃 𘟬 𗴴 𗤦 𗣼 𘏲

¹nyI' ¹tha ¹myor ¹ldenq ¹sha:q ¹zi:q' ²bI ²du: ²u ²ka ²ce: ²lu ¹chya: ¹khI: ¹lyI' ¹tsa: ²dzu'

two Buddha Tathagata   seven treasure tower   CM lion   seat CM leg cross   seat

The two *Thus Come Ones* seated cross-legged on the lion seat in the tower of seven treasure. (SP4, Arakawa forthcoming)

We face some questions: Do the 'dual' subjects appear without the suffix? Where will the suffix appear? Here, we will again check the original texts from the research. In my previous work, we can find the suffixes in the long texts below.

𗤂𗦱𗨙𗦱𗧓𗄈𗫂𗤲𗴡𗟻𗫂𗍫𗤮𗉣𗋽𗆱𗉣𗤲𗟻𗟻𗤮𗵒𗰗𗤂𗤮𗵒𗰗𗫂𗄑𗑱𗤲𗤌𗥃𗄑𗄑𗤂𗟻𗟻𗤮𗵒𗰗𗫂𗄑𗗟𗃛𗧓𗫂𗑱𗤲𗤌𗥃𗄑𗄑𗤂𗟻𗟻𗤸𗦱𗗁𗤲𗤌𗥃𗈁𗤮𗄑𗄑𗟻𗟻𗤂𗵒𗰗𗤂𗑱𗉣𗤲𗤌𗥃𗄑𗄑�11𗈁𗤲𗤌𗥃�𗤂𗥃𗫂𗑱𗤲𗤌𗥃𗄑𗄑��2𗨨𗍫𗤲𘝨𗤂𗤲𗵒𗰗𗄈𗫂𗤲𗴡�

(AV77, Arakawa 2011: 155-157)

The texts seem long, but the construction is simple:

At the time, **the boy and girl** said to Sudhana, "We, two …"

𘜶𗟻𗟻𘜶 ... "... 𗟻..." 　　　"　": conversation

The first sentence in which 'dual' agents are talking to Sudhana has no suffix of dual. On the other hand, in the conversational part, all verbs (the subjects of which are 'the boy and girl') are followed by the suffix. The rest of the text is omitted because it is long, but all the samples (A-E) of Nishida can be found in the conversational part.

Actually, the sample sentence (04) and (05) appear in the descriptive (not conversational) part. Besides, since the sentences are very short, it is easy to find the 'dual' agents.

The facts above may suggest that 𗟻 [1]kI: works in colloquial style.

The suffix does not appear in short and simple sentences. Rather, it appears in long and complicated sentences in which the subject (or object) is not easy to define as 'dual'. The suffix is not an obligatation, just works as a 'reminder.'

4. Two remarks on 𗟻 [1]kI:

Here the presenter makes two comments on 𗟻 [1]kI:.

In some cases, 𗟻 [1]kI: functions as the last element in idioms such as 𗟻 𗟻 "what is".

𗟻	𗟻		𗟻	𗟻
[1]ldi:q'	[1]kI:		[2]wa	[1]kI:
what	X		what	X
What (is it)			What (is it)	

After interrogative pronouns, 𗟻 [1]kI: functions as an accusative case marker.

The second comment is about the shape of the character. Though the character "𗟻" consists of two same elements such as Chinese "双", the character does not mean 'dual' ideographically. The other character 𗟻 means 'dual' (Li 2008: 905-906).

5. 'Dual' in Tibeto-Burman languages

We can find the same kind of expression in the Tibeto-Burman (hereafter, TB) languages. This presentation does not cover all TB languages, but some languages have a special expression for 'dual': Type A: verb suffix, Type B: noun suffix (or special form of pronouns).

The verbal agreement of the Rgyalrong language is introduced below. Rgyalrongic marks dual in the form of suffixes as -ch (-Nch) (Nagano1988: 1387).

Table 3: Rgyalrongic affixes

	prefix	suffix
1sg.	(kə-)	-ng
1du.	(kə-)	-ch
1pl.	(kə-)	-y
2sg.	tə-	-n
2du.	tə-	-Nch
2pl.	tə-	-ny

(06)

Chi-gyo kə-mə-Ndu-ch ko.

we(du.) Pre-pre-V-Suf Aux

we   1du-Pref-V-Suf1du   AV

We (two of us) will arrive.

It is difficult to define whether dual-marking "verb + 綴 ¹kI:" was used in Proto TB, or can only be found in Tangut and Tangut-Rgyalrongic subbranch. If we suppose that Proto language of Rgyalrong and Tangut used *-ki (or prefix *ki-), that makes it possible to point out the change of *-ki ＞ -kI (centralization in Tangut) and *-ki ＞ -ch (Affrication in the front of front-vowel and the lost of the vowel in Rgyalrong)

6. Conclusion

The Tangut morpheme 綴 ¹kI: has three functions:

A) the most-common use, a verb-prefix indicating the direction of the action or perfective aspect.

B) an element in idioms such as 觪 綴 "what is".

C) a verb-suffix functioning as a "dual" marker.

Although the late Prof. Nishida advocated the hypothesis of the "dual" marker (Nishida 2004 etc.), the attestations he adduced were insufficient. In this study, his examples are re-analyzed, and further attestations are provided from some Buddhist texts of Tangut version (mainly, 大方広仏華厳経 *Buddhāvataṃsaka-nāma-mahāvaipulya* and 妙法蓮華経 *Saddharma -puṇḍarīka*).

In the conclusion, the author argues:

1) The suffix 羧 [1]kI: functions as a marker expressing the "dual" persons of the action.

2) The use of the suffix is not obligatory. It is frequently missing in short or simple sentences, but is favored in long or complicated passages in which it is not otherwise easy for a reader to confirm the duality of the person doing the action.

3) Similar sound and usage of the suffix can be found in some Tibeto-Burman languages, especially Rgyalrongic languages which are said to be potentially cognate to Tangut.

Abbreviations

AV: *Avataṃsaka* (Arakawa 2011), SP: *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka* sutra (Nishida2005, Arakawa forthcoming)　　AV: auxiliary verb, CM: case marker, Dem: demonstrative, du: dual, P: particle, Pl: plural, O: object, Pref1/2: prefix series 1/2, S: subject, Suf: suffix, V: verb, 1sg: first person singular

References

Arakawa, Shintaro (荒川 慎太郎). 2011. Princeton Daigaku shozō Seika-bun Kegon-kyō Kan nana-jū-nana Yaku-chū (プリンストン大学所蔵西夏文華厳経巻七十七訳注). *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 81: 147-305.

____2014a. *Seika-bun Kongō-kyō no kenkyū* (西夏文金剛経の研究).　Kyoto: Shokadoh.

____2014b. On the Tangut verb phrase in *The Sea of Meaning, Established by the Saints*. *Central Asiatic Journal* 57: 15-25.

____forthcoming　*Xixia Version of the Lotus Sutra: from the Collection of the Princeton University: Facsimile, text and linguistic studies.*

Li, Fanwen (李範文). 1997. *Xi-Xia-Han zidian* (夏漢字典). Beijing: Chinese Social Science Publisher (2nd edition 2008).

Nagano, Yasuhiko (長野 泰彦). 1988. Gyaron-go (ギャロン語). *Gengogaku Daijiten* (言語學大辞典) Vol. 1. Ed. by T. Kamei et al. Tokyo: Sanseidō: 1385-1390.

Nishida, Tatsuo (西田 龍雄). 1989. Seika-go (西夏語). *Gengogaku Daijiten* (言語學大辞典) Vol. 2. Ed. by T. Kamei et al. Tokyo: Sanseidō: 408-429.

____2004. Seika-go Bunpoo Shintan (西夏語文法新探). *Studies on Sino-Tibetan Languages: Papers in Honor of Professor Hwang-cherng Gong on his Seventieth Birthday*. Eds. By Lin Ying-chin et al. Institute of Linguistics, Academia Sinica: 353-381.

____2005 *Xixia Version of the Lotus Sutra from the Collection of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences*, IOS RAS and Soka Gakkai.

Please do not cite this paper without the author's agreement.