

Honorific register in Mabzhi Tibetan: How Amdo Tibetans use honorific words in their speech community

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Abstract: This article presents that Amdo Tibetan has systematic forms of honorifics used exclusively for highly respected monastic figures and *a zhangs* during wedding ceremonies (the entourage of bride’s male relatives). Despite common assumptions suggesting that Amdo Tibetan does not frequently employ honorifics, it does in fact have honorifics within a lexical category reserved for speeches addressed to extremely marginal, traditionally high-ranking persons. The article provides a list of lexical forms of honorifics along with their corresponding contexts of use in the Mabzhi dialect of Amdo Tibetan.*

Key words: Tibetic, Amdo, respectful register, politeness strategies, honorifics

1 Introduction

Tibetic languages,¹ like other Asian languages, are recognised for their development of systematic politeness registers in a morphological manner. These languages have principally two categories of politeness registers: honorific and humilific, along with marginally polite statements. All these registers are reflected in the lexicon; that is, there exist specific word forms for each category. In Literary Tibetan, the words for the politeness registers are called *zhe sa*. Among the studies on Tibetic languages, Literary Tibetan and Lhasa Tibetan’s politeness register have been comprehensively investigated. Dictionaries on respectful forms have already been published (bSod-nams rDo-rje 1993). However, spoken varieties apart from Lhasa Tibetan have been insufficiently and inadequately described. Additionally, morphological features that demonstrate politeness but do not appear in the *zhe sa* system have not yet been discussed. This inadequacy primarily pertains to Amdo Tibetan, which is the

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¹ See Tournadre (2014) and Tournadre & Suzuki (2023) for the definition of ‘Tibetic’ and general issues regarding Tibetic languages.

focus of this article.

There are not a few reference works regarding Amdo Tibetan published in various languages, e.g., sKal-bzang 'Gyur-med & sKal-bzang dByangs-can (2002:173-270) for Labrang,² 'Brug-mo-mtsho (2003) for rMachu³, Haller (2004) for Themchen,⁴ Sung & Lha Byams Rgyal (2004) and Ebihara (2007) for Khrika,⁵ Ebihara (2010) for Chabcha (pastoralists' variety of rGya ye),⁶ and Ebihara (2011) for Chabcha (agro-pastoralists' variety),⁷ as well as dPal-ldan bKra-shis (2017) for 'normalised' Amdo. However, any descriptions regarding politeness register (*zhe sa*) are insufficient. For example, Haller (2004:60) notes that the Themchen dialect seldom employs nouns of honorific connotations, displaying only one example. Two Amdo-Chinese dictionaries, Hua & Klu-'bum rGyal (1993)⁸ and Geng et al. (2006)⁹, as well as a dictionary of Tibetan pastoralism, Hoshi et al. (2020), list several entries of honorific terms; however, without adequate description of their usage, it remains unclear to us. Furthermore, Amdo Tibetan incorporates an additional politeness strategy as highlighted by Tsering Samdrup & Suzuki (2019), which has never been documented in academic literature. Referring solely to prior linguistic descriptions of Amdo Tibetan fails to provide pertinent data concerning the utilisation of honorifics.

To examine the system of respectful registers, it is useful to refer to research on the Japanese *keigo* (respectful register) system because it has been extensively described among the world's languages. Kikuchi (1992:88-90) explains that three elements are essential when assessing respectful registers as a system: form, function, and application. The *form* refers to morphological features that characterise a word as being specific to a respectful register. The *function* denotes the specific role encoded by a given form, and the *application* specifies the use according to utterance scenes. This is a valuable point of reference for both practising the accurate use of respectful registers and describing a given language system in descriptive linguistics.

From this perspective, previous studies on respectful registers have primarily addressed the first two aspects; how to form respectful word forms and how each respectful word form functions, namely, honorific, humilific, or others. Yet, the final aspect has yet to be fully

² Spoken in Xiahe County, Gannan Prefecture, Gansu Province.

³ Spoken in Aba County, Aba Prefecture, Sichuan Province.

⁴ Spoken in Tianjun County, Haixi Prefecture, Qinghai Province.

⁵ Spoken in Guide County, Hainan Prefecture, Qinghai Province.

⁶ Spoken in Gonghe County, Hainan Prefecture, Qinghai Province.

⁷ Spoken in Gonghe County, Hainan Prefecture, Qinghai Province.

⁸ Mainly based on the Labrang dialect.

⁹ Mainly based on the Kokonor group of pastoralists' speech.

elaborated on, thus hindering the comprehension of the usage of respectful forms. This leads to a lack of understanding regarding respectful registers in different varieties, except for the most described variety, Lhasa Tibetan.

This article describes that Amdo Tibetan possesses several dozens of honorifics as a *system* expressing politeness by displaying a range of honorific forms and their implementation in Mabzhi Tibetan.¹⁰ Mabzhi denotes a pastoral region of the northern half part of Mangra (Tib. *mang ra*; Chi. Guinan) County, Tsolho (Tib. *mtsho lho*; Chi. Hainan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province. It is a traditional appellation for a group of nine pastoral communities and it is locally pronounced as /^hma ^wzə/.¹¹ The Tibetans speak a pastoralists' dialect belonging to the Kokonor group. In total, Mabzhi is home to over 2,000 pastoral households with more than 10,000 persons.

2 Principal lexical features of honorifics in Tibetic languages

We will first summarise the fundamental aspects of politeness register in Literary Tibetan, a Standard Written Language used in most parts of the Tibetosphere. We will then refer to previous research on the respectful register in Amdo Tibetan.

2.1 Respectful register system in Literary Tibetan

Respectful register forms in Tibetic languages are primarily formed through stem alternation. They appear in various word classes, including nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and interjections. See Beyer (1992), Yamaguchi (1998), and Hoshi (2016). The two primary registers are honorific and humilific. Table 1 illustrates examples of lexical forms of politeness register in Literary Tibetan.

Table 1: Word forms on politeness register in Literary Tibetan.

Meaning	Plain	Honorific	Humilific
come	<i>'ong</i>	<i>phebs</i>	<i>bcar</i>
give	<i>sprod</i>	<i>gnang</i>	<i>'bul</i>

¹⁰ We follow the methodology of Suzuki (2016) for the phonological description of Mabzhi Tibetan using phonetic symbols. Consonants (initials): /p^h, p, b, t^h, t, d, t^h, t, d, c^h, c, ʃ, k^h, k, g, q, ʔ, ts^h, ts, dz, te^h, te, dz, s^h, s, z, ʂ, ʂ^h, ʂ, z, f^h, f, x^h, x, ɣ, ɣ, ʋ, h, fi, m, m̥, n, ŋ, ŋ, ŋ̥, ŋ, ŋ̥, l, l̥, r, w, j/; Vowels: /i, e, a, o, o, v, u, ə/. No distinctions in length and nasalisation; Suprasegmentals: not distinctive. The maximum syllable structure is ^cC₁GVC.

¹¹ See Tsering Samdrup and Suzuki (2017) for details.

tell	<i>bshad</i>	<i>gsung</i>	<i>zhu</i>
eye	<i>mig</i>	<i>spyan</i>	-
mouth	<i>kha</i>	<i>zhal</i>	-
I, me	<i>nga</i>	-	<i>phran / gyi na pa</i>
you	<i>khyod</i>	<i>khyed</i>	-
he	<i>kho</i>	<i>khong</i>	-

Honorifics are utilised to demonstrate respect to addressees (the second person), the third person, and their possessions, whereas humilifics are used in reference to the speaker (the first person). In Literary Tibetan, honorifics outnumber humilifics. Verbs have both the honorific and humilific forms; however, generally, nouns have honorific forms. With regards to pronouns, the first person has various humilific forms, while the second and third persons only have honorific forms.

Of the spoken Tibetic languages, the politeness register in Lhasa Tibetan (or dBus-gTsang Tibetan, a.k.a. Central Tibetan) has been most studied. See Kitamura (1974), Agha (1993, 1998), DeLancey (1998), and Tournadre & Sangda Dorje (2010). Lhasa Tibetan has advanced the *zhe sa* system, with two types of honorifics: general and supreme. The former aligns with Literary Tibetan's honorifics, while the latter is a combination of various honorifics. Table 2 cites examples from sKal-bzang 'Gyur-med & sKal-bzang dByangs-can (2002:12) in the Literary Tibetan transliteration.

Table 2: Two honorific levels of Lhasa Tibetan.

Meaning	Plain	General honorific	Supreme honorific
food	<i>kha lag</i>	<i>zhal lag</i>	<i>gsol tshigs</i>
go	<i>'gro</i>	<i>phebs</i>	<i>chibs bsgyur gnang</i>
help	<i>rogs ram byas</i>	<i>phyag rogs gnang</i>	<i>skyabs 'jug gnang</i>

Several Tibetic languages, as Lhasa Tibetan, possess a more sophisticated system of politeness register than Literary Tibetan. According to sKal-bzang 'Gyur-med & sKal-bzang dByangs-can (2002:13), the appearance, enhancement, and decline of honorific words are deeply rooted in social contexts. We refrain from discussing the various social constructions found in the Tibetosphere, opting to concentrate exclusively on the synchronic descriptive approach of honorifics in Amdo Tibetan. It should be noted, however, that honorifics can

evolve in diverse ways depending on each local society. This implies that there exist instances that neither correspond to the equivalent in Literary Tibetan nor suitably studied Lhasa Tibetan.

2.2 Honorifics in Amdo Tibetan

There is limited research on the use of the respectful register in Amdo Tibetan. Scholars have overlooked a comprehensive understanding of this register due to various reasons, and it has been noted that only a few respectful word forms are used in Amdo Tibetan. The system of humilifics in Amdo Tibetan, predominantly used by pastoralist speakers, was first presented by Tsering Samdrup & Suzuki (2019).

The studies conducted by Ebihara (2007, 2019) are outstanding in the previous studies. In Ebihara's (2007) work, a useful list of respectful register word forms in Khrika Tibetan is presented, while in Ebihara's (2019) research, the respectful register in Chabcha Tibetan spoken by agro-pastoralists is examined. These works are valuable in demonstrating the systematicity of the respectful register in the varieties of Amdo Tibetan. However, they do not explore the specific conversation settings or speech patterns in which native speakers employ these forms.

The following two sections present examples of honorific words in Mabzhi Tibetan, divided by *form* and *function* (Section 3) and *application* (Section 4). Section 3 focuses on a lexicon's morphology and derivation pattern, while Section 4 provides two conversational scenarios to depict how honorifics are practically used.

3 Form and function: Morphology of honorifics in Mabzhi Tibetan

This section presents honorific word forms found in Mabzhi Tibetan, based on the introspection and participant observation of the first author in his thirties, who is native speaker of this language. Honorific words in Mabzhi Tibetan are predominantly found in a restricted range of nouns and verbs. We showcase all known word forms, which are divided into several tables for clarity.

Honorific words of nouns can be categorised into two types: stem suppletion and affixation. Table 3 presents examples of stem suppletion.

Table 3: Nouns with honorifics using different stems.

Meaning	plain form (LT in parentheses)	honorific form (LT in parentheses)
body	li pø (lus po)	ʰkə (sku)
head	^m gø (mgo)	ʰbə (dbu)
hand	ləχ kwa (lag pa)	^w e ^h əχ (phyag)
hair	ʰca (skra)	ʰbə ^s ca (dbu skra)
face	ŋø (ngo)	ea (zhal)
nose	ʰŋa (sna)	ʰhəŋ (shangs)
eye	ʰŋəx (mig/ dmyig)	^w ean (sryan)
ear	^r na (rna)	ʰŋan (snyan)
foot	ʰka ŋa (rkang pa)	ea ^p (zhabs)
mind	s ^h em (sems)	t ^h əx (thugs)
tooth	s ^h ø (so)	t ^s em (tshems)
corpse	rø (ro)	wem pø (bem po) / ʰdøŋ (gdung)
speech	ʰka tē ^h a (skad cha)	^p kwa ^h səŋ (bka' gsung)
divination	mø (mo)	^w e ^h əχ mø (phyag mo)
clothes	con kwi (gyon gos)	na ^w za (na bza')
hat	ea (zhwa)	ʰbə ea (dbu zhwa)
ceremonial scarf	tar (dar) / k ^h a təχ (kha btags)	^m dza tar (mjal dar)
rosary	^p t ^h əŋ ŋa (phreng ba)	^w e ^h əχ ^p t ^h əŋ (phyag phreng)
book/text	χwi tē ^h a (dpe cha)	^w e ^h əχχwi (phyag dpe)
glasses	ʰh ^e ^m ŋəx (shel mig)	^w ean ʰh ^e (sryan shel)
thought	^w sam ts ^h u (bsam tshul)	ʰgøŋ ts ^h u (dgongs tshul) / t ^h əx ʰgøŋ (thugs dgongs) / ʰgøŋ pa (dgongs pa)
rebuke	ʰdəx mo (sdigs mo)	^w kwa ^p con (bka' bkyon)
horse	əon ^s ta (zhon rta)	tē ^h ip pa (chibs pa)
meeting	t ^h əx ⁿ t ^h at (thug 'phrad)	^m dza k ^h a (mjal kha)
drink	^p təŋ ŋa (btung ba)	^w zi pa (bzhes pa)
tea	tea (ja)	^x so tea (gsol ja)
chef	tea ma (ja ma) /	^x so t ^h ap pa (gsol thab pa)

	ma ^w zan (ma byan)	
leftover	se ləχ (zas lhag)	^x so ləχ (gsol lhag)
urination	^x tein ^x toŋ wa (gcin gtong ba)	tə ^h ap ^h səŋ (chab gsang)
anger	k ^h oŋ c ^h o (khongs khro)	t ^h əx ^r ja (thugs rgyal)
hassle	^h ka ts ^h ax (dka' tshegs)	^h kə ts ^h ax (sku tshegs)
trouble	^h ka le (dka' las)	ʔo ^b ja ('o brgyal)

As indicated in Table 3, this category of honorifics comprises monosyllabic or dissyllabic forms that have correlations with Literary Tibetan. Honorific words cover a range of semantic fields, such as body parts, actions, food and related items. The number of honorific words employed by an individual speaker is dependent on their social background and proficiency in using honorifics, resulting in variations. Additional honorific words are contained in the Amdo-Chinese dictionaries Hua & Klu-'bum rGyal (1993) and Geng et al. (2006). However, some of these terms are uncommonly employed.

Other than the type presented in Table 3, multiple honorific words in Mabzhi Tibetan consist of a word and followed by a suffix /-s^həŋ/¹² (LT *tshang*). In general, the morpheme *tshang* denotes 'household' or 'family' when it is added after an individual's name. However, when added as a suffix, it shows respect and can be attached to other groups who have high status temporarily or permanently.

Table 4: Nouns with honorifics using a suffix.

Meaning	plain form (LT in parentheses)	honorific form (LT in parentheses)
reincarnate lama	ʔa ləχ (a lags)	ʔa ləχ s ^h əŋ (a lags tshang)
Buddhist doctor (geshe ¹³)	^h ge ^w ə ^h i (dge bshes)	^h ge ^w ə ^h i s ^h əŋ (dge bshes tshang)
teacher (in the context of a monastic institution)	^h ge ^r gan (dge rgan)	^h ge ^r gan s ^h əŋ (dge rgan tshang)
tutor for the reincarnate lama	joŋ ⁿ dzin (yongs 'dzin)	joŋ ⁿ dzin s ^h əŋ (yongs 'dzin tshang)
abbot (khenpo)	^m k ^h wan bo (mkhan po)	^m k ^h wan bo s ^h əŋ (mkhan po tshang)
maternal uncle	ʔa zəŋ (a zhang)	ʔa zəŋ s ^h əŋ (a zhang tshang)

¹² This form has a phonetic free variant [-ts^həŋ].

¹³ A person with the highest degree in Geluk school of Tibetan Buddhism.

The final entry of Table 4, ‘maternal uncle’, is noteworthy due to the semantic point of view. Although the word *a zhang* literally denotes maternal uncle, in this case it refers to the group of people accompanying the bride or groom from their side to a wedding banquet. Refer to Section 4 for further elucidation on the usage of this term.

This word formation is not described in the Amdo-Chinese dictionaries (Hua & Klu-’bum rGyal 1993, Geng et al. 2006). Literary Tibetan also does not have this usage. See bSod-nams rDo-rje (1993) and Yamaguchi (1998).

Honorific verbs are listed in Table 5.

Table 5: Verbs with honorifics.

Meaning	plain form (LT in parentheses)	honorific form (LT in parentheses)
stand up/get up	ləŋ (langs)	^w zəŋ (bzhengs)
sit	^b dat (bsdad) / ^p tsoɣ (btsog)	^w zəx (bzhugs)
ride	ɛon (zhon)	^p tɛip (bcib)
know	f ^h i (shes)	^m c ^h en (mkhyen)
drink	ⁿ t ^h əŋ (’thung)	^w zi (bzhes)
eat	sa (za)	^w zi (bzhes)
come	joŋ (yong)	hep (phebs)
go	ⁿ ʒo (’gro)	hep (phebs)
sleep	ŋa (nyal)	^h zim (gzim)
speak	^w eat (bshad)	^h səŋ (gsung)
laugh	^w gat (bgad)	^w zat (bzhad)
look	^w ta (blta)	^h zəx (gzigs)
see	rəx (rig) / ^m t ^h oŋ (mthong)	^h zəx (gzigs)
hear	kɔ (go)	^x san (gsan)
wear	con (gyon)	^m nap (mnabs)
give	^p tɔt (sprod) / ^s ter (ster)	^h nəŋ (gnang)
walk	^s kəŋ t ^h əŋ ⁿ ʒo (rkang thang ’gro)	ɛap t ^h əŋ hep (zhabs thang phebs)

As shown in Table 5, this type of honorifics primarily employs a monosyllabic verb stem. Only a few compounds or idioms, such as the last example ‘walk’, exist. Each word form of honorifics corresponds to Literary Tibetan and is classified as *zhe sa*.

Table 6 shows examples of honorific pronouns.

Table 6: Pronouns with honorifics.

Meaning	plain form (LT in parentheses)	honorific form (LT in parentheses)
you	c ^h o (khyod)	c ^h e ke (khyed ke) / c ^h e ke s ^h əŋ (khyed ke tshang)
he	k ^h o (kho)	k ^h oŋ s ^h əŋ (khong tshang)

The honorific form for the second person in Table 6 originally denotes ‘your family’, a specific collective form. This usage is described in the Themchen dialect (Haller 2004:50), a variety which is very close to Mabzhi Tibetan;¹⁴ however, their use as honorifics is not mentioned. Regarding the honorific form for the third person, Haller (2004:50) also describes a similar form as an honorific.

4 Application: Use of honorifics in contexts

As outlined in Section 3, Amdo Tibetan possesses numerous honorific words. However, previous studies have not thoroughly addressed these terms. It is possible that their infrequent usage contributed to their lack of attention in prior works. In order to illustrate the use of honorifics in Amdo-speaking communities, we will provide examples of conversations.

In language communities of Mabzhi Tibetan, honorifics are primarily used when addressing highly respected monastic figures (reincarnate lamas and highly achieved monks such as *dge shes*) and *a zhangs* during wedding ceremonies (the entourage of bride’s male relatives who accompany her to go to the groom’s place).¹⁵ In most regions of the Tibetosphere, reincarnate lamas hold the highest rank in society.¹⁶

¹⁴ Tournadre & Suzuki (2023) classify both Themchen and Mabzhi into the Kokonor dialect group.

¹⁵ It should be noted that there is a local proverb emphasising the significance of *a zhang* during wedding ceremonies: /ts^he ts^həx ɣa p^hkər ʔo ha ma ra ŋəŋ ts^həx ɣa p^hkər ʔo ʔa zəŋ/ (tshe gcig la bkur rgyu pha ma dang nyin gcig la bkur rgyu a zhang/) ‘It is parents who should be respected for a life time, and *a zhang* who should be respected for a day [of wedding]’.

¹⁶ In the traditional local society, *dpon pos* (i.e., traditional leaders or chieftains) were also addressed

Below we present two scenarios illustrating typical conversation situations in which Mabzhi Tibetan pastoralists employ honorifics. One depicts a wedding ceremony, while the other portrays the practice of inviting a lama to the host's tent. Both scenarios were written by the first author, a native speaker of Mabzhi Tibetan, based on personal experience.

Every sentence consists of four lines. The first is a phonological description; the second is a transliteration of Literary Tibetan corresponding to the phonological surface; the third is a linguistic glossing,¹⁷ and the last is a sentence-by-sentence translation.

Scenario 1: At a wedding

When a group of *A zhang* accompany the bride or the groom to the other party's house, a conversation may occur between *A zhang* and *gnyen tshang*, or the host family.

gNyen tshang:

- | | | | | |
|-----|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------|---------------|
| (1) | ʔa zəŋ s ^h əŋ | cap kə | ^b de mə | jən-na |
| | <i>a zhang tshang</i> | <i>gyab gi</i> | <i>bde mo</i> | <i>yin na</i> |
| | maternal uncle.HON | all | fine | CPV.EGP-Q |
- ‘How are you all, *a zhangs*?’

A zhang:

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------|------------|
| (2) | ^b de mə | jən |
| | <i>bde mo</i> | <i>yin</i> |
| | fine | CPV.EGP |
- ‘We are good.’

gNyen tshang:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|-----------|-----------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| (3) | ja | ta | ʔa zəŋ s ^h əŋ | nəŋ-ŋa | hep-pa t ^h oŋ |
| | <i>ya</i> | <i>da</i> | <i>a zhang tshang</i> | <i>nang nga</i> | <i>phebs ba thongs</i> |
| | INTJ | CONJ | maternal uncle.HON | inside-LOC | go.HON-REQ |

with honorifics. This practice is no longer observed in contemporary society.

¹⁷ [Abbreviations] 1: first person pronoun; 2: second person pronoun; ACH: achievement; ADRHON: addressee honorific; AOR: aorist; COL: collective; CONJ: conjunction; CPV: copulative verb; DAT: dative; EGP: egophoric; ERG: ergative; EXV: existential verb; FAC: factual; GEN: genitive; HON: honorific; INS: instrumental; INTJ: interjection; LOC: locative; NDEF: nondefinite marker; NEG: negative prefix; NPFT: non-perfect; PART: particle; Q: question marker; REQ: request; SEN: sensory; SFP: sentence final particle; SG: singular.

‘Good, then, please go inside, *a zhangs*.’

After entering the groom’s house.

gNyen tshang:

- (4) ta tə ni ^wzəx-ya t^hoŋ
 da *di nas* *bzhugs ga thongs*
 CONJ there sit.HON-REQ

‘Then, please sit there.’

- (5) ʔa zəŋ s^həŋ-gə t^həx ta ta ʃ^hi-ni tea-zəx ^wzi
 a zhang tshang gis *thugs* *dal dal* *byas nas* *ja zhig* *bzhes*
 maternal mind.HON relaxed do-CONJ tea¹⁸-NDEF drink.HON
 uncle.HON-ERG

‘*A zhangs*, please have some tea with relaxation.’

After a while, the groom’s side asks *a zhangs* if they are in need of relieving themselves.

gNyen tshang:

- (6) ta ʔa zəŋ s^həŋ t^həp^hsəŋ-la ^hteəx hep-ʔə-na
 da *a zhang tshang* *chab gsang la* *gcig* *phebs rgyu na*
 CONJ maternal uncle.HON urination.HON-LOC a while go.HON-NPFT-CONJ

‘So, *a zhangs*, do you [want to] go for relieving yourselves?’

And when *A zhangs* ready to go out for urination, some men from the host family might shout to the crowd to make sure there is a way out for *A zhangs* by saying,

gNyen tshang:

- (7) ʔa roχ t^ha wo lam ^wɛ^he-ra ʔa zəŋ s^həŋ t^həp^hsəŋ-ŋa
 a rogs *cha bo* *lam* *phyes ra* *a zhang tshang* *chab gsang nga*
 INTJ COL path open-CONJ maternal uncle.HON urination.HON-LOC
 hep-ʔə re
 phebs rgyu red
 go.HON-NPFT.FAC

‘Hey guys, give a way out for the *a zhangs*, they are going to go and have them relieved.’

¹⁸ In general, the honorific form for ‘tea’ is not employed for *a zhangs*. Cf. (10).

Scenario 2: When a lama is invited to a house/tent

When the lama (a reincarnate lama) enters a room or tent of the household which invited him, he will be asked to take a seat on a readymade throne—at least a platform that is elevated from the mats and rugs while the host saying something in the following lines:

Host:

- (8) །ཀམ་ལམ་སྐྱེས་པའི་ཁོ་ལ་ རྒྱུ་ལྡན་གྱི་འཇོག་གཤམ་ རྩམས་པའི་འཇོག་
a lags tshang gong de nas bzhugs ga thongs
 reincarnate lama.HON there sit.HON-please

‘A lags, please sit there.’

- (9) འདྲིམ་པའི་ཀམ་ལམ་ འདྲིམ་པའི་ རྩམས་པའི་ རྩམས་པའི་ རྩམས་པའི་ རྩམས་པའི་
da khyed ke'a da thengs sku tshegs 'o brgyal yet-btang
 CONJ 2.SG.HON.DAT this time hassle.HON trouble.HON do-ACH

‘[We have brought you] hassle and trouble this time [by inviting you].’

- (10) འདྲིམ་པའི་ རྩམས་པའི་ རྩམས་པའི་ རྩམས་པའི་
da a lags tshang nga gsol ja drong ya
 CONJ reincarnate lama.HON-DAT tea.HON serve-SFP

‘Please offer tea to the lama now.’ (asking a family member)

Lama:

- (11) འདྲིམ་པའི་ རྩམས་པའི་ རྩམས་པའི་ རྩམས་པའི་ རྩམས་པའི་ རྩམས་པའི་
ngas sngon na 'don pa kha shas 'don na 'jog ja
 1.SG.ERG first chanting some chant-CONJ-stay tea
 རྩམས་པའི་
drag-gi
 be well-SEN

‘I will do some chanting first, you can bring the tea later.’

Host:

- (12) །ཀམ་ལམ་ རྩམས་པའི་ རྩམས་པའི་ རྩམས་པའི་
a lags khyed khi spyan gis e gzig gi
 reincarnate lama 2.SG.HON.GEN sit.HON-INS Q-see.HON-SEN

‘*A lags*, do your eyes see [the text]?’

- (13) ^hloχ ^pkwar-^ptəŋ-na ṣa-nə ma ra
glog *bkar btang na* *sra ni ma ra*
 light turn on-ACH-CONJ good-STA.FAC.NEG.Q

‘Should [I] turn on the light?’

Lama:

- (14) mə-^rgo-kə
mi dgos gi
 NEG-need-SEN

‘[You] don’t need [do it].’

- (15) ŋe rəx-kə
ngas *rig gi*
 1.SG.ERG see-SEN

‘I [can] see [the texts].’

Host:

- (16) ja ləχ s^ho
ya *lags so*
 INTJ INTJ.ADRHON

‘Okay, that is great.’

Host:

- (16) ʔa ləχ c^he ke ^we^həχ mə-^wzəx-ra ^hzəx
a lags *khyed ke* *phyag mo bzig ra* *gzigs*
 reincarnate lama 2.SG.HON divination.HON-NDEF-CONJ see.HON
^rgo-kə
dgos gi
 need-SEN

‘*A lags*, you have to perform a divination on ...’

- (17) to ts^həχ ^ptea wa rim co ⁿɕa ⁿɕa ʔe-jo-kə
do tshigs bca'ba rim gro 'dra 'dra e yod ki
 this year implement religious service similar Q-EXV-SEN

‘On what religious services [this household] has to implement this year.’

Lama:

- (18) ja ja ɲe mɔ tsə ge ^wzəx kə ⁿdep
ya ya ngas mo tsi ge bzig gi 'debs
 INTJ 1.SG.ERG divination in a while perform

‘Sure, I will perform the divination in a while.’

Host:

- (19) ja ja ləχ s^ho
ya ya lags so
 INTJ INTJ.ADRHON

‘Okay, sure.’

- (20) ta c^he ke tea-^wzəx ^wzi-ra
da khyed ke ja bzig bzhes ra
 CONJ 2.SG.HON tea-NDEF drink.HON-SFP

‘So, you drink some tea.’

5 Conclusion

This article examined the morphology and utilisation of honorific forms in Mabzhi Tibetan in Amdo. While honorifics exist in Amdo Tibetan, they are only used in limited circumstances. Previous works have provided inadequate coverage of these honorifics. Descriptive grammars acknowledge the existence of honorifics but do not give them significant attention, and dictionaries contain numerous honorific word forms without guidance on their practical usage. The article discussed fundamental honorific vocabulary and offers two common scenarios that involve extensive usage of honorifics.

Morphologically, honorifics appear as suppletive forms in around several dozens of words. Most word forms have a lexical correspondence with Literary Tibetan. Since the use of honorifics is restricted to specific social activities, male members of communities employ

them more frequently than their female counterparts do. Speakers only acquire word forms and usages of honorifics through special occasions like rituals due to their non-everyday usage. If the local social system were to change, honorifics and their use would be lost quickly.

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マウジュチベット語の尊敬語 アムドチベット語コミュニティにおける尊敬語の使用環境の記述

才讓三周 鈴木博之

要旨

本稿では、アムドチベット語（環青海湖方言群マウジュ方言；青海省貴南県）において、非常に尊敬される宗教的職能者と婚礼における母方のおじを含む *a zhang* と呼ばれる個人に対して特に用いられる系統的な尊敬語があることを記述する。アムドチベット語は、チベット系諸言語の中であまり敬語を用いない変種として知られていた。しかしながら、実際には少なくない尊敬語が存在する一方で、それが用いられる環境がきわめて限定的であることが分かった。本稿はマウジュ方言の尊敬語の形態・機能・用法の3点を語彙リスト・派生法・会話テキストに分けて実例を記述し、尊敬語の全容を明らかにする。

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