

Reported Speech in Lisu and Burmic

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Abstract

The embedding of reported speech in discourse is universal; it is often one element in an evidential system. Interestingly, the reported speech forms within evidential systems differ widely across Burmic languages. In Lisu, there is a clause-final reported speech evidential or hearsay marker **JO**: /dzo²¹/, which is by far the most frequently-occurring evidential marker in the language. This has dialect forms including Northern Lisu /dzo²¹/ and Southern Lisu /dzo²¹/ and /do²¹/.

A second frequent way of embedding reported speech in Lisu is to have a preceding verb of speaking or cognition/perception, most frequently **BV** /bæ⁴⁴/ ‘say’, in a nominalised nonfinal clause ending in the topic/conditional marker **NY** /ɲa⁴⁴/ as in **YI. BV_ M NY** [quote] /ji⁵⁵ bæ⁴⁴ɑ⁴⁴ ma⁴⁴ ɲa⁴⁴ [quote]/ ‘What he said was [quote]’. Alternatively, a quote can be preceded by speaker and/or addressee NPs without a verb, followed by the topic/conditional marker **NY** /ɲa⁴⁴/; or by a simple non-nominalised verb clause such as **YI. BV_** /ji⁵⁵ bæ⁴⁴ɑ⁴⁴/ ‘He said [quote]’. No modification to pronoun or other forms within the quotation is required, unlike for example with indirect speech in English.

A third extremely frequent way is to make the quotation into a complement of a following short main clause with a speaking or cognition verb. In Lisu, the complementiser **BE** /be⁴⁴/ directly follows the quotation, and then there is a short clause with a verb of speaking, again most often **BV**, as in [quote] **BE NU., TV. BV_ LO** [quote] /be⁴⁴ nu³³ tæ⁵⁵ bæ⁴⁴ɑ⁴⁴ lo⁴⁴/ ‘(Someone) said to you that [quote]’; many other speaking verbs are possible. For the verb **BV** only, as long as there are no NPs preceding the verb in the postquote clause, the presence of the complementiser **BE** is variable and infrequent.

Often the second and the third embedding strategies are combined, or less frequently all three, with the evidential reported speech marker in final position, like **YI. NU TV. BV_ M NY** [quote] **BE BV_ LO JO**: /ji⁵⁵ nu³³ tæ⁵⁵ bæ⁴⁴ɑ⁴⁴ ma⁴⁴ ɲa⁴⁴ [quote] be⁴⁴ bæ⁴⁴ɑ⁴⁴ lo⁴⁴ dzo²¹/ ‘It is said that what he said to you is that [quote]’.

A fourth possibility is to embed speech within discourse without any overt marking that the speech is quoted; in oral narrative, the speaker may adopt a different voice for the quoted passage. This is particularly frequent where a long series of quotations of dialogue occurs, as in narrative.

The evidential **JO**: is frequent in Lisu traditional genres, including archaic songs and proverbs and modern narrative and conversation; unlike other evidential and epistemic markers, it can also occur after another evidential or epistemic form to give hearsay evidence about the source of knowledge and/or degree of certainty. The speaker is less committed to the accuracy of the reported speech when using this evidential than with the other quotation-embedding strategies.

The Lisu reported speech evidential has likely cognates in closely-related Ngwi languages, such as Lahu *ce^v* /tʃe⁵⁴/ and Akha *je^v* /dʒe⁵⁵/, all related to Proto-Ngwi ***jay**² (Bradley 1979a etymon 861). Literary Burmese and modern spoken Burmese have completely different clause-final reported speech markers, literary ဝႃ /hu⁴⁴/ and spoken ဝႃႈ /lo⁴⁴/ or ဝႃႈ /tɛ⁴⁴/ . This indicates that these forms may change relatively rapidly, as is often the

case with evidential and other grammatical marking. Nevertheless, the overall syntactic patterns are similar, with interesting minor differences.

1. Introduction

It is necessary to distinguish between more or less exact direct quotation – word for word or closely paraphrased, versus hearsay information being reported. In Lisu and some related languages, for direct quotation there are differences between embedding strategies which include only nominal elements such as speaker and addressee, as opposed to those which also specify a relevant speaking or related verb. One type of embedding frame for direct quotation precedes the quotation; another follows it. Like most evidentials and epistemics in Lisu and related languages, the evidential of hearsay or reported speech is clause-final, while the prequote and postquote frames surround the quotation. It is also relevant how much is being quoted: a single word or phrase, a single clause, or longer stretches.

2. Lisu

In Lisu, there are various styles and genres with different structural patterns. The most archaic, and also the most stylised, is traditional songs, proverbs and riddles, which follow a rigid metrical pattern as discussed in 2.1. Modern spoken narrative and conversational style shows considerable dialect differentiation, but all three major dialects follow the same patterns and use related forms for hearsay and for directly quoted speech, as discussed in 2.2. The hearsay evidential and other evidentials and epistemics are relatively frequent in spoken language; the quotation strategies are also rather frequent. There is also a third formal Christian literary style, used in Bible translation and genres derived from this such as Christian sermons and other Christian written literature, which uses prequote and postquote framing devices very frequently, but uses fewer evidentials and epistemics than any spoken dialect; the hearsay evidential is not used in this style. On the other hand, the epistemics which are used in Christian style are used much more frequently than in any spoken dialect, as discussed in 2.3 below. 2.4 below provides an example of a non-Christian written text.

The three general speech-embedding strategies are as outlined in the abstract above. The furthest from direct quoted speech is the clause-final hearsay marker with the form **JO:** /dʒo²¹/ in Central Lisu and written Lisu, which is /dʒo²¹/ in Northern Lisu, and **ZO:** /dzo²¹/ or **DO:** /do²¹/ in spoken Southern Lisu. However, when writing Lisu, literate speakers of all dialects represent all of these with the spelling **JO:** reflecting the Central Lisu and literary form.

The prequote and postquote frames embed more or less directly quoted speech. The maximal prequote frame is an entire clause specifying a speaker, an addressee (and sometimes other nominal arguments), then a verb of speaking plus clause-final markers. This usually ends in the topic/conditional marker **NY** /ɲa⁴⁴/ in spoken language, but not in the song or Christian styles. All, any combination of these or none may be present before a direct quotation. The maximal postquote frame in spoken and Christian literary style has a complementiser **BE** /be³³/ followed by a complete clause which may contain speaker, addressee and other nominal elements, sometimes even when the prequote frame already includes the same elements, but always contains a verb of speaking or cognition followed by clause-final markers. Nominal elements are less frequent in the postquote frame, and are more frequent when the prequote frame does not include the speaker and/or the addressee, or when the quoted passage is long. With the verb **BV** /bæ⁴⁴/ ‘say/speak’, the complementiser **BE** is not required and very infrequent if there are no nominal elements preceding it in the postquote frame; this applies to spoken Lisu as well as to Christian literary language.

Traditional song language lacks the complementizer **BE** and uses a variety of speaking and cognition verbs directly after a quote. By far the most frequent postquote frame in all styles and genres contains only the verb **BV** plus final markers.

2.1 Traditional Song Language Style

Traditional Lisu songs are mainly in seven-syllable paired lines, with the second line repeating the general meaning of the first line but using some alternative lexical forms, often including obscure or archaic words. There is a standard pair word for each frequent nominal and verbal element, but with some variation between and even within songs. Most lines break into two parts; the first four syllables are usually a nominal element and the last three syllables are often but not always a verbal element. The vocalic clitics, vocative **O**: /o²¹/ and diminutive **_-**: /a²¹/ or **_-**; /aʔ²¹/ after a noun and the declarative marker **-** /a⁴⁴/, the perfective marker **O** /o²¹/ and the question marker **_-**: /a²¹/ after a verb or verbal sequence, do not count as a syllable in the line; in Christian literary style these are written together with the preceding word. This highly constrained metrical form leads to relatively non-complex syntax within a line. Most proverbs and riddles follow an exactly similar pattern, but contain only one pair of lines. As a mnemonic for these originally oral texts, part of the lexical material toward the end of a pair of lines in a song is often partly repeated in the early part of the next pair of lines or soon afterward.

In long songs there are many quotations; due to the absence of relevant nominal forms it is sometimes ambiguous who is speaking and to whom they are speaking. Occasionally this is disambiguated with an extra two or occasionally four syllable nominal preface to a line which specifies the speaker and/or addressee; these added elements do not count as part of the seven syllables in the line, occur only on the first of the two paired lines, and tend to be edited out by Lisu writers when transcribing these songs; thus they do not often appear in printed versions of them. We will consider data from two Southern Lisu songs.

The Lisu New Year song (Bradley et al. 2008), a traditional Southern Lisu song text, is a relatively short song with only 407 pairs of lines. In this song, the hearsay evidential **JO**: /dzɔ²¹/ occurs once in the following example near the beginning (p.13 lines 13-14).

11:	ʔO;	ɬl.,	NYI:	v.,	ʌ.,	JO:-
tʰi ²¹	kʰoʔ ²¹	tsʰ ₁ ³³	ni ²¹	ha ³³	ŋa ⁴⁴	dzɔ ²¹
one	year	ten	two	month	be	QUOTE

11;	v.,	s:	ɬl.,	VY;	ʌ.,	JO:=
tʰi ²¹	ha ³³	sa ²¹	tsʰ ₁ ³³	hjaʔ ²¹	ŋa ³³	dzɔ ²¹
one	month	three	ten	night	be	QUOTE

‘It is said that one year is twelve months,
It is said that one month is thirty nights.’

In the same text there are ten pairs of lines with a speech or hearing verb at the end of a line indicating direct quotation of speech: nine instances of **BV** with its usual pair word **DE**: /de²¹/ ‘beg’ in the second line as in the following example (p.35 lines 7-8). Once **BV** occurs at the end of both lines. Notice that it is sometimes only the context here which indicates who is speaking. In this song the two parts are taken by the host and the guest, and this is from one of the guest’s passages.

VI.,	SI	dU.,	FO,	I	G7:~	BV_-:-
hi ³³	ʃ ⁴⁴	p ^h u ³³	ts ^h o ³⁵	ʔi ⁴⁴	gɯ ²¹ a ⁴⁴	bæ ⁴⁴ a ²¹
house	master	silver	table	set	GIVE DEC	say QUESTION

KW	SI	XN	FO,	T.	G7:~	DE:~:=
kwa ⁴⁴	ʃ ⁴⁴	ʃ ⁴⁴	ts ^h o ³⁵	ta ⁵⁵	gɯ ²¹ a ⁴⁴	de ²¹ a ²¹
hearth	master	gold	table	put	GIVE DEC	beg QUESTION

‘Did (you) say that the host (you) set the silver table,
Did (you) ask whether the hostess (you) put the gold table?’

There are also four instances of the perception of speech verb **P J:** /pa⁴⁴ dza²¹/ ‘hear’ paired with **DO: J:** /do²¹ dza²¹/ which is its song language pair word (not occurring outside song language) and is related to the noun **DO:** /do²¹/ ‘news’, as in the following example (p.14 lines 15-16). Not all are reported speech; some report hearing of nonspeech sounds or other actions.

NYI	N	ɬI;	HO:	P J:	Lǃ:-.
ɲi ⁴⁴	ʔy ⁴⁴	ts ^h ɿ ²¹	xo ²¹	pa ⁴⁴ dza ²¹	lae ²¹
day	count	herb	put.in	hear	QUESTION

VY:	CY,	Mǃ,	K7	DO: J:	Lǃ:=
hja ²¹	tɕa ³⁵	mæ ³⁵	ku ⁴⁴	do ²¹ dza ²¹	lae ²¹
night	reckon	herb	insert	hear.news	QUESTION

‘Did (I) hear that (you) put herbs in on the counted day,
Did (I) hear the news that (you) inserted herbs on the reckoned night?’

These examples indicate the difference between the use of **JO:** and a speech or hearing verb after the passage: **JO:** is hearsay or traditional knowledge, not attributable to a specific person who said exactly this to the speaker; while the speech and hearing verbs embed more direct quotes or observations.

Of the evidentials and epistemics in this text, there are five epistemics which occur in the 407 paired lines: eleven instances of the epistemic **B.:** /ba⁵⁵ a²¹/ of doubt or low likelihood, in ten instances paired with **d.:** /p^ha⁵⁵ a²¹/ which is the corresponding epistemic in some other dialects of Lisu; ten instances of the epistemic **Bǃ,** /bɿ³⁵/ of change of belief (I used to think otherwise, but now I am certain; some would call this an (ad)mirative); four instances of the future certainty epistemic (it will definitely be this way) **Nǃ,** /næ³⁵/ (with tonally different Southern Lisu dialect forms seen in 2.2 below); three instances of the epistemic **dE.O** /p^he⁵⁵ o⁴⁴/ of uncertainty; and two instances of the epistemic of absolute ongoing certainty **LO** /lo⁴⁴/. The pair for one instance of **B.:** and one instance of **dE.O** is **DU** /du⁴⁴/ which is an infrequent evidential of inference: the speaker infers or guesses something. Apart from this and the one pair of reported speech evidentials cited above, there is also one paired line with the Southern Lisu visual evidential **BO,** /bo³⁵/ in both lines (p.32 line 3-4).

B, B:	dU.,	G7:	BI	LE	BO,
ba ³⁵ ba ²¹	p ^h u ³³	gɯ ²¹	bi ⁴⁴	le ⁴⁴	bo ³⁵
father	silver	box	full	CHANGE VISUAL	

M, M	XU	G7:	L7:	LE	BO,
ma ³⁵ ma ⁴⁴	ʃ ⁴⁴	gɯ ²¹	lu ²¹	le ⁴⁴	bo ³⁵
mother	gold	box	overflow	CHANGE VISUAL	

‘I see that father’s silver box has become full

I see that mother's gold box is overflowing.'

Thus the Southern Lisu epistemics and evidentials including **JO:** are found in 32 out of 407 pairs of lines or 9.1% of all lines, and embedded direct speech is found in fourteen pairs of lines or 3.4%.

In the first 80 verses or 2591 pairs of lines of the unpublished Southern Lisu **MU: GW: D: M** /mu²¹ gwa²¹ da²¹ ma⁴⁴/ 'Big Song', the Lisu historical and life cycle song as collected by David Ngwaza, the reported speech evidential **JO:** is used 22 times, mainly early in the song when more ancient traditional practices are discussed. The visual evidential **BO**, is used, here paired with the song language form **WO**. /wo⁵⁵/ which is not attested in any current spoken dialect, 26 times; of the various epistemics, for very low probability a pair of **B.:** and **d.:** is used 19 times; there is an alternative with **d.:** in both lines three times. The epistemic form **dE.O** of uncertainty is used once. For future certainty, **NV**, is used 58 times. However, the epistemics **LO** and **BQ**, do not occur. By contrast, direct quotation of speech is embedded with the speaking verb pair **BV** and **DE:** in 191 pairs of lines; three times **BV** is used in both lines. Thus the frequency of direct quote with the speaking verb **BV** is much higher than the use of the evidentials and epistemics. The speaking verb is embedded within the syntactic structure of the line and has relevant verbal markers, while the epistemics **B.:/d.:** and **dE.O** and evidentials **JO:** and **BO**,/ **WO**. only occur as the last syllable of the line. The epistemic **NV**, occurs at the end of the line five times, is followed by the perfective **O** 50 times, by the perfective and the final politeness marker **M:** /ma²¹/ twice, and in the middle of a line once, as in the following examples.

M:	XN.,	YI.	HW:	Z:	KQ	NV,-
ma ²¹	ɣl ³³	ji ⁵⁵	xwa ²¹	dza ²¹	kɣ ⁴⁴	næ ³⁵
NEG	die	NMZR	meat	eat	PAST	FUT

M:	N.,	YI.	XN:	ɔN;	Gɿ	NV,=
ma ²¹	na ²¹	ji ⁵	ɣl ²¹	tɕ ^h ɿ ²¹	gw ⁴⁴	næ ³⁵
NEG	sick	NMZR	thing	suck	PAST	FUT

'(I) will eat meat while (I) am not dead,
(I) will suck things while (I) am not not sick.'

ɖ	d:	ɿ:	WU._:	YI.,	XO;	NV,O
ya ⁴⁴	pa ²¹	t ^h i ²¹	wu ⁵⁵ a ²¹	ji ³³	k ^h oɿ ²¹	næ ³⁵ o ⁴⁴
fowl	male	one	top DIM	water	fetch	FUT PERF

ɖ	M	ɿ:	T_:	WO:	HW	NV,O
ya ⁴⁴	ma ⁴⁴	t ^h i ²¹	ta ⁴⁴ a ²¹	wo ²¹	xwa ⁴⁴	næ ³⁵ o ⁴⁴
fowl	female	one	cackle DIM	vegetables	find	FUT PERF

'At the first cockscrow, (I) will have fetched water,
at the first cackle of the hens, (I) will have found vegetables.'

d.,	BO	BO	LE:	Z:	NV,O	M:-.
p ^h a ³³	bo ⁴⁴	bo ⁴⁴	le ²¹	dza ²¹	næ ³⁵ o ⁴⁴	ma ²¹
until	full	full	ADV	eat	FUT PERF	POLITE

d.,	YI;	YI;	LE:	DO.,	NV,O	M:=
p ^h a ³³	jiɿ ²¹	jiɿ ²¹	le ²¹	do ³³	næ ³⁵ o ⁴⁴	ma ²¹
until	drunk	drunk	ADV	drink	FUT PERF	POLITE

'(You) will please have eaten until you are full,
(you) will please have drunk until you are drunk.'

ʒ:	ɔɪ.,	ɔɔ.,	ɴʋ,	ɖɯ: ʝ:	ʁɔ-.
zɑ ²¹	tsʰɿ ³³	tsʰo ³³	næ ³⁵	dy ²¹ dzɑ ²¹	kʷ ⁴⁴
son	foot	follow	FUT	think	PAST
ɴɛ	lʋ;	ʙ.,	ɴʋ,	ɡo; ru.,	ɡɿ=
nø ⁴⁴	læɿ ²¹	bɑ ³³	næ ³⁵	goɿ ²¹ ru ³³	ɡʷ ⁴⁴
child	hand	follow	FUT	consider	PAST

‘(I) thought (I) would follow son’s (your) feet,
(I) considered (I) would follow child’s (your) hands.’

The evidentials and epistemics are less frequent in this long song than in the shorter New Year song. Speaking verbs embedding direct quoted speech are far more frequent than the hearsay evidential: they occur in 194 versus 22 pairs of lines; however, this is still a higher proportion of use of **ʝo:** than in the shorter song. Overall, embedded speech is found in 194 of 2591 or 7.5% of line pairs, and evidentials or epistemics in 103 or 4.0%, including 22 or 0.8% **ʝo:**.

2.2 Spoken Style

There are substantial dialect and individual differences in the use of the hearsay evidential and the embedding of quotations; here the usage of a skilled Southern Lisu storyteller telling a traditional story about the stupid tiger and the clever rabbit is compared.

In the 320 clauses of this story, there are 71 direct quotations; of these, 46 are immediately followed by **ʙʋ. ɖo:** which is the Southern Lisu spoken version of **ʙʋ- ʝo:**. One is followed by the same constituents in reverse order, **ɖo: ʙʋ** and another four are followed by **ɿɛ., ʙʋ. ɖo:** ‘this say QUOTE’. Ten quotations in the middle of a string of quotations back and forth between the tiger and the rabbit or other interlocutor only have **ʙʋ ɖo:** after the last quotation; the narrator just changes voices. Seven have **ʙʋ.** with or without additional following material but do not end with **ɖo:** and three have only **ɖo:** after the quotation. In addition, there are twenty instances of **ɖo:** used as a hearsay marker, not on a direct quotation; also three prequotes ending in **ɖo:** and four instances of non-quotations followed by **ʙʋ ɖo:** or **ʙʋ ɡɿ: ɖo:**. Thus overall there are 78 examples of hearsay **ɖo:** in the text, on 24.4% of clauses; this is the main means of embedding quotations and is frequently used for other less direct hearsay. The following is an example.

A. ɿɛ.,-	“A.-.	ʌʋ.,	A. ɿɿ. ɡɿ:	ɿ;	T.	M:”	ʙʋ.	ɖo:=
/ɑ ⁵⁵ tʰe ³³ ɑ ⁴⁴	ɑ ⁵⁵	ŋwɑ ³³	ɑ ⁵⁵ ti ⁵⁵ ɡʷ ²¹	iɿ ²¹	ta ⁵⁵	ma ²¹	bæ ⁵⁵	do ²¹ /
then	oh,	I	a.bit give	sleep	STAY	POLITE	say.DEC	QUOTE

‘Then (the tiger) said “Oh, let me sleep a bit”.’

Of the epistemics, Southern Lisu **ɴʋ:** /næ²¹/ of future certainty is used eight times, **ɖ:** of very low probability is used once, and no other epistemics or evidentials are used at all in this story. The text also uses **ʙʋ.** or **ʙʋ ɴʏ** or **ʙʋ- M** eighteen times as discourse markers, not directly connected to the surrounding syntactic context.

Prequote frames occur before 22 of 71 quotations; most frequent is the adverbial **A. ɿɛ.,-** /ɑ⁵⁵ tʰe³³ ɑ⁴⁴/ ‘then,’ seven times; or the same followed by **pe ye-.** /pe⁴⁴ je⁴⁴/ ‘it happened,’ three times. Five contain only a Speaker nominal, four of which are followed by the topic marker **ɴʏ**, while one more combines **A. ɿɛ.,-** plus a Speaker nominal; one further prequote has a Speaker plus the verb **ɴ ɴʏɿ** ‘ask’, and one specifies a place and time. Three prequotes are clauses containing **ʙʋ** as the verb followed by hearsay **ɖo:**. For postquotes, as discussed

above, this text uses a combination of the verb **BV** and the hearsay marker **DO**: 51 times, nothing ten times, a clause with **BV** as the verb seven times, and just hearsay **DO**: three times; this is quite unlike the pattern in literary Lisu as seen in 2.3 and 2.4. Immediately before a quotation, the preceding clause of the main text often ends with the Southern Lisu sequential marker **VE**. /he⁵⁵/ ‘next’, whose Central, Northern and literary counterpart is **SI**. /sɿ⁵⁵/; this is not strictly speaking a prequote, as this marker indicates that the following clause occurs after it but is not necessarily otherwise connected with it.

2.3 Bible Translation and Christian Style

Only one type of quotation pattern is found in Lisu Bible translations. Of course these are translations, and tend to be formulaic. Taking all of the quotations from Jesus in the Lisu red letter New Testament (1999), which of course has all the words of Jesus printed in red so they are easy to identify, the pattern is as follows.

Of 648 quotations of Jesus in this translation, 89.8% are preceded by at least one constituent in the prequote frame, maximally including Time nominal-Speaker-Addressee-Verb plus associated clause markers, in this order. Most include a speaker and an addressee in the prequote frame. The speaker here is of course Jesus, and his name or a pronoun **YI**. /ji⁵⁵/ ‘he’ is found before 78.1% of the quotations; this is usually followed by a nominal marker, mainly the agentive **LE** /le⁴⁴/ (67.3%), the topic marker **NY** /ɲa⁴⁴/ (14.0%), the alternative topic marker **N**: /na²¹/ (6.5%) or no nominal marker (12.1%). An addressee is present before 67.2% of quotes, always after the speaker and all followed by the object marker **TV**. /tæ⁵⁵/. 29.9% of the quotes with a speaker and/or an addressee also contain a following verbal element or elements and their clause-final elements before the quote; thus in fact the most frequent prequote frame contains only nominal elements. Most of the 10.2% of quotes with no prequote frame are quotes which follow on from immediately preceding quotes, separated only by a short post-quote speaking verb clause after the preceding quote. Unlike spoken style, prequote frames mostly do not end in the topic marker **NY**.

After every quote, the postquote frame contains a speaking verb followed by appropriate clause markers. Most quotes (94.8%) are followed by a short clause containing the verb **BV** /bæ⁴⁴/ ‘say/speak’ followed by various clause-marking elements. If the speaking verb is anything other than **BV** then the complementiser **BE** /be⁴⁴/ always follows the quote and precedes that verb; the verbs attested in this translation of the New Testament are **N NYI** /na⁴⁴ ɲi⁴⁴/ ‘ask’ 45 times, **do, Gɿ**: /p^ho³⁵ ɣu²¹/ ‘answer’ seven times, **ɿN; W: Gɿ**: /t^{hy}ɿ²¹ wa²¹ ɣu²¹/ ‘command’ three times and **XU., /k^hu³³/ ‘call’, W: XU., /wa²¹ k^hu³³/ ‘pray’, DE: /de²¹/ ‘beg’, JO K: Gɿ: /dzɔ⁴⁴ ka²¹ ɣu²¹/ ‘stop fear’ and **BO** /bo⁴⁴/ ‘write’ all once each. Very occasionally, an addressee or other nominal element (usually one not present in the prequote) can be added between the complementiser **BE** and the speaking verb. It is also possible but infrequent (13 of 586 instances of **BV**) to use the complementiser **BE** before the verb **BV**. This is obligatory when a nominal element such as speaker or addressee is present in a post-quote **BE** clause before **BV** and otherwise very infrequent.**

Many post-quote clauses (29.8%) include the posthead serial verb **Gɿ**: which is homophonous with the main verb **Gɿ**: /ɣu²¹/ ‘give’ and means that the verbal action is for someone’s benefit. This is lexicalised into the verbs ‘answer’ and ‘command’ and is also often found with other verbs including **BV** (31.6% of the instances of this verb).

Most of the post-quote clauses (78.8%) end with **LO** /lo⁴⁴/ which is the epistemic of absolute certainty in normal spoken Lisu. Other possibilities include nonfinal clause markers like sequential **SI**. /sɿ⁵⁵/, temporal **ɿV**: /t^hæ²¹/, conditional **NY** /ɲa⁴⁴/ and nominaliser **_ M** /a⁴⁴

ma⁴⁴/ where a further quote or some immediate consequential action follows. A typical example follows.

YE-SU LE	YI.	TV.	[quote]	BV	G1:	LO=
je ⁴⁴ su ⁴⁴ le ⁴⁴	ji ⁵⁵	tæ ⁵⁵		bæ ⁴⁴	gu ²¹ a ⁴⁴	lo ⁴⁴
Jesus AGT	he	OBJ	[quote]	say	GIVE DEC	CERTAIN

‘Jesus said to them [quote], he said.’ (Matthew 8:22)

The Bible style of Lisu does not use any of the evidentials used in the various spoken dialects. This includes the hearsay marker **JO:** and related forms, which is a very frequent clause-final evidential in all dialects of spoken Lisu (Bradley 2010). A few of the epistemics used in spoken Lisu varieties are also used in Bible style. The epistemic marker **LO** of absolute certainty is found in 78.8% of post-quote clauses in the New Testament translation, and is very frequent in other clauses in the New Testament as well. Presumably the words of Jesus and many of the other clauses in the rest of the New Testament are followed by **LO** to give them absolute certainty and authority; they are not intended to be taken as hearsay or otherwise doubtful. This greatly increased use of **LO** is now also found in religious sermons and Christian written styles. This is very different from other styles of Lisu, in which **LO** is a low-frequency epistemic of very strong certainty, rarely found in traditional song language; its semantic strength has been greatly reduced by its overuse in Christian style.

2.4 Secular Written Style

For an example of quotation patterns in non-Christian written Lisu, we will consider **SI,-rU-X** (1995), a brief history of the Lisu by a Lisu cadre in China, who speaks the Northern dialect of Lisu. This book is written using the Christian orthography, but also using quotation marks to frame some quotations. Its introductions and first four chapters contain 423 clauses, including 72 quotations; most quotations are short but some are longer than one clause. Of the quotations, 16 or 22.2% have a prequote frame, twice with a Speaker (once followed by **LE** and once without a nominal marker) and seven with an Addressee plus **TV.** **NY** and four with Addressee plus **TV.** as expected; Addressee is also once followed by **NYI** /ji⁴⁴/ ‘then’.

The postquote frame occurs after every single quote; of the 72, 56 contain **BE** plus a verb clause, with six verbs represented; 15 have just a verb directly after the quotation, of which 11 are **BV** as one would expect, three are negated **M:** **XU.**, /ma²¹ k^hu³³/ ‘not call’, and one is **BO** /bo⁴⁴/ ‘write’. In the one remaining instance, the postquote is just a noun phrase, but the clause preceding the quote includes the embedding verb **BO** ‘write’. With the verb **BV**, 11 postquotes are without **BE**, and in 16 **BE** precedes **BV**. None of these has an intervening nominal between **BE** and the verb **BV**.

The following example shows a prequote frame with Speaker and Addressee followed by a quotation, which in turn contains a prequote frame, then another short quotation embedded within it, each followed by an appropriate postquote frame with **BE** plus verb and its markers.

GO., M	P1. DU	SU., XN:	LE	RO:	TV.	
/go ³³ ma ⁴⁴	pu ⁵⁵ du ⁴⁴	su ³³ ʃ ²¹	le ⁴⁴	ʒo ²¹	tæ ⁵⁵ /	
that NMZR	reason	others group	AGENT	we.INCLOBJ		
‘A. XN:	P1. DU	NU., W:	LI-SU	13.,	11:	XN: TV. NY-.
/a ⁵⁵ ʃ ²¹	pu ⁵⁵ du ⁴⁴	nu ³³ wa ²¹	li ⁴⁴ su ⁴⁴	t ^h ø ³³	t ^h i ²¹	ʃ ²¹ tæ ⁵⁵ ɲa ⁴⁴ /
what	reason	you PL	Lisu	this	one	group OBJ TOPIC
LI-SU	BE	XU.,- LO?’	BE	N NYI	1A:-.	

/li⁴⁴ su⁴⁴ be⁴⁴ k^hu^{33 44} lo⁴⁴ be⁴⁴ na⁴⁴ ji⁴⁴ t^hæ²¹ /
 Lisu COMP call DEC FACT COMP ask TIME

‘For that reason, when other groups ask us ‘Why do you call this Lisu group “Lisu”, ...
 (Shi 1995: 9, missing tone marks added, Northern Lisu pronunciation)

There is no use of the hearsay evidential **JO**: or any other evidential, which may be due to the influence of the Christian written style and/or to the fact that the author intends his account to be authoritative. The absolute certainty epistemic **LO** is used at the end of 48 clauses or 11.3%; this is higher than its frequency in any variety of spoken Lisu, but much lower than its frequency in Christian genres. The changed knowledge epistemic is used twice, spelled **BE**, /bɛ³⁵/ fused with a following declarative and then followed by conditional **NY** as it sometimes occurs in Christian contexts.

2. Reported Speech in Other Ngwi Languages

The elements used for hearsay and quoted speech in two other Ngwi languages will be briefly outlined: one other Central Ngwi language, Lahu, and one Southern Ngwi language, Akha.

2.1 Lahu

The Central Ngwi language Lahu is fairly closely related to Lisu. Thus it is not surprising that its quotation-embedding strategies are generally similar, though many of the forms used for embedding differ. In Lahu Na (Black Lahu), there is a clause-final hearsay marker *ce^v* /tʃe⁵⁴/ which Matisoff (1982: 469) describes as “indicating that one’s statement is based on second-hand information, rather than personal experience or direct knowledge”; in a footnote (ibid. 600-601) he explicitly links this to hearsay evidentiality. There is also a post-quotation marker *teh_A* /tɛ²¹/ or less frequently *teh_v* /tɛ²¹/ ‘real’ which embeds more or less direct quotations, and a more informal alternative *hk’e* /q^he³³/ ‘like’ (ibid. 467-468). Placement of commas in written Lahu text indicates that this quotation marker is attached to the end of the quotation, not to a following postquote frame containing a verb of speaking.

The prequote framing elements in Lahu may include some or all of a Time nominal, Speaker, Addressee followed by the object marker *hta_A* /t^ha²¹/ and verb or sequence of verbs plus postverbal markers, most often *k’o^A* /qo⁷⁵⁴/ ‘say’ usually followed by declarative *ve* /ve³³/, or also instead by *leh* /lɛ³³/ ‘also’ when the verb is other than *k’o^A*. In the postquote frame in spoken Lahu, as in Lisu, the main speaking verb *k’o^A* very often directly follows and embeds a quotation (ibid. 465-467); as in Lisu, it is frequently followed by *pi^v* /pi⁵⁴/, the postverb homophonous with the verb ‘give’, in Lahu indicating action (or in this case speech) directed to a third person. Unlike Lisu, where the complementiser **BE** is obligatory after the quotation before other verbs of speaking or thinking, various other Lahu speaking and cognition verbs may also directly follow and embed quotations, usually with a preceding quotation marker *teh_A* or *hk’e*. Another pattern preceding quotes is to have the speaker followed by the topic marker *leh_v* /lɛ²¹/, without a verb.

Unlike Lisu, Lahu has an additional embedding device, with clause-final *na₋* /na¹¹²/ in a nonfinal embedded question clause (ibid. 470-471), which is often a quotation of one’s own or someone else’s question; in Lisu such clauses are embedded in the normal way by **BE** plus a question verb such as **N NYI** /na⁴⁴ ji⁴⁴/ ‘ask’. This Lahu embedded question marker is regularly cognate with Lisu **N**: /na²¹/, Akha *na^v* /na⁵⁵/, Nisu /no⁵⁵/ and other related forms which are markers of a secondary topic and also of a nonfinal conditional clause, all regularly reconstructible as ***?na²** (Bradley 1979a etymon 860). In Lisu, **N**: is also the song word pair

for the primary topic and conditional marker **NY**. Thus it appears that this Lahu usage of *na_* is an innovative development.

The Lahu New Testament (1962) and other Lahu scriptures maximally use a preceding quotation frame containing a Time nominal, Speaker, Addressee and verb or sequence of verbs of speaking or cognition plus associated verb markers, or Speaker plus topic *leh_v* /*le²¹*/. The postquote frame always has the quotation marker *teh_A*, usually followed by a clause potentially including a speaker and addressee and almost always including a verb of speaking, again most often *k'o^A*. Thus the pattern is very similar to that seen in Lisu, and again the reported speech evidential is not used in this literary context where the intention is to indicate that the quotations are accurate, not just hearsay.

Of 133 quotations of Jesus in the Lahu New Testament Book of Matthew, 114 (85.7%) have a preceding quote frame, and 129 (97%) have a following quote frame. Of the preceding frames, 23 start with a Time nominal, most often *o^v hta^v* /*o⁵⁴ tha⁵⁴*/ 'then'; all have a Speaker nominal, 71 have an Addressee nominal followed by object marker *hta_A*, and 102 end in a verb (of which 94 are *k'o^A*) plus associated postverbal markers. Nearly all of the prequote frames containing *k'o^A* have declarative *ve* in clause-final position, while five of the eight with other verbs instead have final *leh*. Of the 12 prequote frames without a verb, all contain a Speaker nominal followed by the topic marker *leh_v*. All quotes in this text end with the quotation marker *teh_A*; in the postquote frame, 126 of 129 end in a verb, of which 113 are *k'o^A*; of those with other verbs, eleven are embedded questions followed by a postquote with the verb *na nyi* /*na³³ ni³³*/ 'ask'; *na_* is not used here. In 24 postquotes, a Speaker nominal is present; in 27 there is an Addressee nominal plus object marker *hta_A*. The Speaker and Addressee nominals are more frequent in the postquote if they are not present in the preceding prequote; unlike in Lisu, the Speaker is sometimes repeated after a long quote. Unlike Lisu, in Lahu it is also possible for the Addressee to precede the Speaker in the prequote or less frequently the postquote frame. The quotation marker *teh_A* is also used to embed single word quotations, without prequote or postquote frame, as in the following example.

Da_ vi ^A	yaw ^v	hta _A	Jaw ^v maw ^v	teh _A	k'o ^A	ve	k'o, ...
/da ¹¹² vi ²⁵⁴	jɔ ⁵⁴	t ^h a ²¹	dʒɔ ⁵⁴ mɔ ⁵⁴	tɛ ²¹	qo ²⁵⁴	ve ³³	qo ³³ /
David	he	OBJ	lord/master	QUOTE	say	DEC	CONDITIONAL

'If David calls him "Lord"...' (Matthew 22:45)

Unlike spoken Lahu, quotations containing questions are embedded in exactly the same way, not with clause-final *na_*.

In Lahu Shi (Bradley 1979b), the quotation system is fairly similar, but unlike Black Lahu, the quote marker at the end of every quote is *lehd* /*le⁵⁵*/ or *lehx* /*le¹³*/ rather than *teh_A*. Also, the possibility of having just a Speaker nominal plus topic marker in the prequote position does not occur. For example, in the Lahu Shi New Testament (2015), all of the twelve instances of Speaker plus topic marker in (Black) Lahu instead have a prequote containing a verb of speaking, which is usually *koz* /*ko³⁵*/, the Lahu Shi counterpart of *k'o^A*. The example parallel to the Black Lahu example given above is as follows; note that quotations are also indicated by quotation markers in written Lahu Shi.

Dar viq	yawd	haq	"Jawd mawd" lehd	koz	ve	
/da ¹¹ vi ¹¹	jɔ ⁵⁵	ha ²¹	dʒɔ ⁵⁵ mɔ ⁵⁵	le ⁵⁵	ko ³⁵	ve ³³/
David	he	OBJ	lord/master	QUOTE	say	CONDITIONAL

'If David calls him "Lord"...' (Matthew 22:45)

2.2 Akha

The Southern Ngwi language Akha has a cognate clause-final hearsay evidential *je^v* /dʒe⁵⁵/ whose function partly resembles those of Lisu **JO:** and Lahu *ce^v* but can also embed actual direct quotes. Akha, even more so than Lisu, has developed a very large system of clause-final evidential markers of which this is now just one of many forms (Kya Heh 2003). Exact quotations are more often followed by *leh^v* /lɛ⁵⁵/, then a verb of speaking in a normal clause. Quotations are often preceded by *nya^v-eu* /ɲa⁵⁵ ɣ³³/ before the quote, whether followed by *je^v* or by *leh^v*. The prequote frame may contain only a Speaker nominal, or may be a full clause with a speaking verb. Notice the similarity of *nya^v-eu* to the spoken Lisu pre-quote topic/conditional marker **NY** which may also be cognate; and functionally to the Lahu postnominal prequote topic marker *leh_v*. Note also the similarity of form of the Lahu topic marker, the Akha postquote marker *leh^v* and the Lahu Shi postquote markers *lehd* and *lehz*. The following is an example.

Nga _v	ma	nya ^v -eu	la ^v	aw _v	je ^v .
/ɲa ²¹	ma ³³	ɲa ⁵⁵ ɣ ³³	la ⁵⁵	ɔ ²¹	dʒe ²¹ /
my	mother	PREQUOTE	come	IMP	POSTQUOTE

‘My mother says “Come!”’ (Kya Heh 2003: 179, sentence 5.3)

As in Lisu, Akha quotes are often framed by a preceding prequote clause, sometimes specifying Speaker and/or Addressee as well as a speaking verb, with or sometimes without a following *nya^v-eu* as in the following example. Direct quotes with a following *leh^v* are normally framed by a following postquote clause, minimally a speaking verb with postverbal markers. The example shows that the speaking verb in the prequote frame and the speaking verb in the postquote frame are often the same, especially when the quote is long. Unlike Lisu and Lahu, where a single speaking verb predominates in prequote and postquote frames, and the verb in the prequote and postquote need not be the same, in Akha various verbs occur frequently in this position, with the same verb before and after the quote; in Lisu and Lahu, it is very unusual to have the same verb other than Lisu **BV** or Lahu *k'o^a* or Lahu Shi *koz* both before and after the quote.

Maw ^v Hui _v	haw ^v -eu	Maw ^v Nyi ^v	a _v ha nya _A	nm ^v -ah ^v	eh ^v neh _v -eu,
/mɔ ⁵⁵ hu ²¹	hɔ ⁵⁵ ɣ ³³	mɔ ⁵⁵ ɲi ⁵⁵	a ²¹ ha ³³ ɲa ²¹	nm ⁵⁵ ʒ ⁵⁵	ɛ ⁵⁵ nɛ ²¹ ɣ ³³ /
Maw big	and	Maw two	they.dual	sibling OBJ	tell-DEC

[long quote of five clauses] leh^v eh^v-neh_v-eu meh.
 /lɛ⁵⁵ ɛ⁵⁵ nɛ²¹ ɣ³³ mɛ³³/
 QUOTE tell-DEC 3.POSITIVE

‘(He) told the two brothers, Maw Hui and Maw Nyi, [quote], he told (them).’

(Mah_v Po^a Gu_v Law_v Gaw & Lewis 1999: 2)

Formal Christian prose in the Akha New Testament (1968) normally uses preceding speaker and/or addressee plus *nya^v-eu* or a normal clause with verb of speaking directly preceding a quote, and following *leh^v* plus clause minimally including a verb of speaking and final markers rather than *je^v* after quotes. To use the same example from Matthew again:

Da _v bi ^v	a _v yaw _A -ah ^v	Sah _v pa _v	leh ^v	ku ^v	na ^v , ...
/da ¹¹ bi ⁵⁵	a ¹¹ ɔ ¹¹ ʒ ⁵⁵	sɔ ¹¹ pa ¹¹	lɛ ⁵⁵	ku ⁵⁵	na ⁵⁵ /
David	he	OBJ	Lord	QUOTE call	CONDITIONAL

‘If David calls him “Lord” ...’ (Matthew 22:45)

3. Reported Speech in Burmese

Modern Literary Burmese has a quote-embedding marker ၏ /hu⁴⁴/, as seen in the following example.

ထို	ဆန်	မျိုး	ကို	လုံး	တီး	ဆန်	ဟု	ခေါ်	သည့်
t ^h o ²²	s ^h an ²²	mjo ⁴¹	ko ²²	loun ⁴¹	ti ⁴¹	s ^h an ²²	hu ⁴⁴	k ^h ɔ ²²	θi ²²
t ^h o ²²	s ^h an ²²	mjo ⁴¹	go ²²	loun ⁴³	di ³¹	s ^h an ²²	hu ⁴⁴	k ^h ɔ ²²	ði ²²
that	paddy	kind	OBJ	round	beat	paddy	quote	call	REALIS

‘That kind of rice is called loundi rice (brown rice).’ (Okell & Allott 2001: 250)

This ၏ is derived from a contraction of the archaic verb ၏ /hu²²/ ‘say’ followed by ရှိ /jwe⁴⁴/ which is a clause linker (Okell & Allott 2001: 250-251), together meaning ‘having said’. It can embed single words or entire clauses. The contraction has the segments of the first syllable and the tone of the second. The sequence ၏ ရှိ /hu²² jwe⁴⁴/ also occurs in its original uncontracted form in more formal literary Burmese. As a full verb, ၏ was already infrequent in the early nineteenth century (Judson 1852 (1966): 1058) and does not occur in modern spoken Burmese at all; it is infrequent and archaic even in literary Burmese other than in this construction and as first element in a few similar frozen postposition forms (Myanmar Language Commission 1993: 528-529).

Spoken Burmese uses လို့ /lo⁴⁴/ plus a main verb clause of speaking (Okell & Allott 2001: 209) as an embedded quote marker; sometimes other types of verbs may occur, and sometimes the following clause may be omitted, as in the following example.

စဉ်း	စား	အုံး	မယ်	လို့	ပြော	တယ်။
sin ⁴¹	sa ⁴¹	oun ⁴¹	mɛ ²²	lo ⁴⁴	pjo ⁴¹	tɛ ²²
sin ⁴⁴	za ⁴¹	oun ⁴¹	mɛ ²²	lo ⁴⁴	pjo ⁴¹	dɛ ²²
think.over	would	IRREALIS	QUOTE	say	REALIS	

‘(He) said that he would think it over.’ (Okell & Allott 2001: 209)

This can perhaps be connected with the nominal လို့ /lo²²/ ‘way/manner’; but probably not with the verb လို့ /lo²²/ ‘want’. There is also a homophonous clause-final marker လို့ /lo⁴⁴/ ‘because’ (usually but not always in a nonfinal clause), also used as a linker between verbs in sequence. For clause-final လို့ ‘because’ in nonfinal clauses, there is an alternative spoken form မို့ /mo⁴⁴/ which can occur alone or sometimes in sequence before or after လို့ ‘because’ (Okell & Allott 2001: 156-157). Myanmar Language Commission (1993: 439) suggests that လို့ of quotation occurs only before four verbs, ပြော /pjo⁴¹/ ‘speak’, ဆို /s^ho²²/ ‘say’, ခေါ် /k^hɔ²²/ ‘call’ and တွင် /twin²²/ ‘be known as’. However, the modern use of လို့ of quotation is much more general: it occurs before a much wider range of verbs, including some which are cognition or perception rather than speaking. The Myanmar Language Commission dictionary indicates that the literary marker also occurs combined with လို့ in a quotation marker ၏လို့ /hu⁴⁴ lo⁴⁴/ (ibid. 529); this may be a transitional form between literary and spoken usage.

The other spoken Burmese quotation marker is the direct quote marker တဲ့ /tɛ⁴⁴/ after a quotation without a following speaking verb, most often embedding a single word or short

quotation, but also longer direct quotations (Okell & Allott 2001: 76-77). There is also a homophonous spoken realis relative clause marker ၵ derived from the realis final clause marker တယ် /tɛ²²/.

ဖေ ဖေ	နဲ့	မ	လိုက်	ချင်	တော့	ဘူး	တဲ့။
p ^h e ²² p ^h e ²²	nɛ ⁴⁴	mə	lai [?] 5	tɕ ^h in ²²	tɔ ⁴⁴	p ^h u ⁴²	tɛ ⁴⁴
p ^h e ²² p ^h e ²²	nɛ ⁴⁴	mə	lai [?] 5	tɕ ^h in ²²	dɔ ⁴⁴	bu ⁴²	tɛ ⁴⁴ /dɛ ⁴⁴
father	WITH	NEG	follow	want	YET	NEG2	QUOTE

‘(He) said “(I) don’t want to go along with Dad”.’ (Okell & Allott 2001: 76)

ဒီ	အောက်	မှာ	တော့	ပိုး	အစစ်	တဲ့။
di ²²	au [?] 5	hma ²²	tɔ ⁴⁴	po ⁴²	əsi [?] 5	tɛ ⁴⁴
di ²²	au [?] 5	hma ²²	dɔ ⁴⁴	po ⁴²	əsi [?] 5	tɛ ⁴⁴
this	below	LOC	YET	silk	real	QUOTE

‘Down at the bottom here it says “real silk”.’ (Okell & Allott 2001: 76)

Before either of these spoken Burmese quotation markers, a preceding clause-final realis/irrealis marker can be and often is reduced from တယ်/မယ် /tɛ²²/, /mɛ²²/ to ခ/မ /θə/, /mə/ as in in questions. When asking whether someone said something or what someone said, the quotation marker can be followed by the appropriate yes/no question marker လား /la⁴²/ or the substance question marker လဲ /lɛ⁴¹/.

ရောဂါ	အခြေ အနေ	ဘယ်	လို	ထင် ဖြင်	ခ	တဲ့	လဲ။
ɟɔ ⁴¹ ga ²²	ətɕ ^h e ²² əne ²²	bɛ ²²	lo ²²	t ^h in ²² mjin ²²	θə	tɛ ⁴⁴	lɛ ⁴¹
ɟɔ ⁴¹ ga ²²	ətɕ ^h e ²² əne ²²	bɛ ²²	lo ²²	t ^h in ²² mjin ²²	ðə	dɛ ⁴⁴	lɛ ⁴¹
disease	progress	which	way	think see	REALIS	QUOTE	QUESTION

‘What does he say he thinks about the progress of the disease?’ (Okell & Allott 2001: 76)

Notice that all the single-syllable Burmese quotation-embedding forms have the creaky tone, which could here be seen as marking grammatical subordination as the creaky tone often does. The differences between literary and spoken Burmese are indicative of the rapid change possible in the grammatical marking of reported speech: the literary language, which presumably more or less reflects the spoken language of 700 or so years ago when the language was standardised, has a completely different form from the spoken language. Furthermore, the spoken language has two alternative forms for direct and indirect quotes, while the literary language has only one, with uncontracted and contracted stylistic alternatives.

4. Conclusion

As has been shown, the syntax of quotation and hearsay is complex in Lisu and other Burmic languages, and the markers for embedding this may show relatively rapid change through time, as we have seen by comparing different genres of Lisu and different dialects of Lahu and observing the differences between literary and spoken Burmese. Lisu has both a clause-final

hearsay evidential and a distinct embedded quotation structure. The hearsay evidential has possible hearsay evidential cognates in other Ngwi languages, but as is often the case with clause-final markers, the phonological correspondences are not regular. Lisu embedded quotations are often framed by preceding and/or following clauses or partial clauses, as they also can be in Lahu, Akha and Burmese. The maximal preceding clause specifies some other nominal elements such as time and place, the speaker, the addressee, and then gives a speaking verb with following verbal markers; the maximal following frame may again contain some nominal elements but very often is just a speaking verb with following verbal markers. The syntactic patterns in Lisu, Lahu, Akha and Burmese differ in subtle ways, but are generally similar.

There are interesting epistemic nuances of meaning which differentiate the Lisu, Lahu and Akha hearsay markers. In Lisu, the hearsay marker implies less commitment of the speaker to the accuracy and truth value of the reported statement than a quotation framed by a prequote and/or postquote sequence. In Lahu, the hearsay marker implies substantial uncertainty and doubt, while in Akha, the semantic difference between hearsay and framed quotation is minimal.

The Lisu hearsay evidential **JO:** is probably cognate with Lahu *ce^v* and Akha *je^v*, though the rhyme and tone correspondence is somewhat irregular: the initial correspondence regularly reflects Proto-Ngwi (Proto-Loloish) ***j**, the rhyme could be from ***ay** but is irregular in Lisu, and the tone correspondence reflects ***2** in Lisu and Lahu, but ***1** in Akha (Bradley 1979a etymon 861). Conversely, the phonetically similar Burmese and Lahu quotation markers *ၵၢ* and *teh_A* are probably not related; Lahu *teh_A* ‘real’ appears to be a Shan loanword, Burmese *ၵၢ* is a recent spoken form derived from the final realis marker *ၵၢၵၢ*, and the similarity of the forms is probably accidental, though contact could also be a factor. Additional cognates may be found among the other markers used: the subject or topic marker ***C-lay²** (Bradley 1979a etymon 847), the topic marker ***nya¹** and the secondary topic or conditional marker ***na²**. (Bradley 1979a etymon 860). These are redeployed in different ways in different related Ngwi languages to embed quotations.

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