

Evidential system of copulative and existential verbs in Lamo*

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Summary

This article describes the evidential system of Lamo (Kyilwa dialect), focusing on the copulative and existential verbs and referring to the model of the evidential system of Tibetic languages. Lamo is a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in LDongpa and Zhonglinka Townships in mDzogong County, Chamdo Municipality, Tibet Autonomous Region, China. The article examines the evidential system of Lamo by employing the questionnaire designed for Tibetic languages. Some striking features are the following: The same framework on evidentiality functions in both copulative and existential verbs; different independent stems are used according to evidential categories; animacy for existential verbs is not distinctive; inferential evidentials distinguish sensory inferential from logical inferential in the morphological aspect; and egophoric verb stems are principally used in inferentials. The results demonstrate that the system of core evidentials (egophoric, statemental, sensory) is highly similar to the framework, as well as the morphology of Tibetic languages in Khams, especially Lhagang Tibetan. The morphological strategy of sensory and logical inferentials is partially common to Tibetic languages, but Lamo has its unique evolution which does not correspond to Tibetic. The article concludes that Lamo's the evidential framework corresponds to that of Tibetic languages of which inferential categories have been on a developing stage.

Key words: Chamdo, mDzogong County, non-Tibetic Tibeto-Burman language, evidential, borrowing

关键词：昌都、左贡县、非藏语支藏缅语、示证、借用

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1. Introduction

1.1 Lamo

Lamo is a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in IDongpa and Zhonglinka Townships in mDzogong County, Chamdo Municipality, Tibet Autonomous Region, China. A preliminary picture of this language is provided by Tashi Nyima and Suzuki (2019), which includes lexical, phonetic, morphological, and syntactic features, as well as a short narrative. In this description, we find the evidential system in Lamo close to that in Tibetic languages. Based on preliminary analyses (Suzuki and Tashi Nyima 2018; Tashi Nyima and Suzuki 2019; Sonam Wangmo et al. 2019), Lamo does not belong to Tibetic but is closer to Qiangic (yet awaiting rigorous verification). However, Tashi Nyima and Suzuki (2019) report that Lamo evidential system exhibits a similarity to Tibetic languages. From this perspective, the emergence of the Tibetic-like evidential system in Lamo should be carefully investigated.

A descriptive study on Lamo benefits Tibeto-Burman historical linguistics since Lamo is expected to be a language which maintains non-Tibetic features. However, we have noticed that the evidential system of Lamo is close to Tibetic languages, in particular, copulative and existential verbs, that display a stem difference following the evidential category. This article thus concentrates on a detailed description of copulative and existential verbs in Lamo, referring to studies on evidential system of Tibetic languages from Khams.

The target language is the Kyilwa dialect of Lamo. The source is the second author, a native speaker of Lamo. The article presents a description of copulative and existential sentences principally based on the observations of the elicitations. The sound system of Lamo is summarised in Appendix 1.

1.2 Research question

Tashi Nyima and Suzuki (2019) present a brief, fundamental description on copulative and existential verbs of Lamo. They claim that the core evidential system of Lamo resembles Tibetic languages not only in the use of independent verb stems, but also in the tripartite category: egophoric–statemental–sensory. Due to our constant focus on Tibetic languages, they have functioned as an axis of our discussion. Zhao (2019) presents an introduction to Larong sMar, a sister language of Lamo, but the framework of his analysis of copulative and existential verbs is entirely different from ours.

We find a non-coincidental similarity in verb morphology between Lamo and Tibetic regarding evidentiality; the use of independent stems for copulative and existential verbs in Lamo and Written Tibetan (henceforth, WrT; romanisation of the Tibetan script follows the style of de Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956) is based on evidentials as in Table 1.

Table 1 Copulative and existential verb stems

meaning	Lamo	WrT
CPV.E	ʼŋo	<i>yin</i>
CPV	ʼtɕ ^h u	<i>red</i>
EXV.E	ʼk ^h o	<i>yod</i>
EXV.SEN	ṽne	<i>snang</i>

The copulative verb stems only distinguish egophoric from statemental, whereas the existential verb stems only distinguish egophoric from sensory. The existential statemental form (EXV) consists of the stems of EXV.E and CPV (i.e. /ʼk^ho tɕ^hu/) that are in parallel to Tibetan word formation *yod red* (i.e. EXV.E + CPV), as seen in Table 1, whereas the copulative sensory form (CPV.SEN) has not been described.

However, the description by Tashi Nyima and Suzuki (2019) does not follow more recent studies on the evidentiality of Tibetic languages, such as Oisel (2017). Hence, the present research question is to describe the evidential system of Lamo by referring to a more elaborated evidential system of Tibetic languages to examine to which extent Lamo's system is similar to that of Tibetic.

To conduct this research, we should follow the identical framework to all the target languages to be examined. We, therefore, employ a questionnaire of Tournadre et al. (2018), designed for examining the evidential category of Tibetic languages (see Section 3.1 for the specific content). By using this questionnaire, we take the elicitation method for data collection. The original questionnaire contains sentences with specific language use contexts that we employ for elicitation purpose.

2. Evidential system of Tibetic languages

2.1 Theoretical background

There are numerous ways to analyse the evidential system of Tibetic languages. Each chapter by Gawne and Hill (2017) reflects the various approaches to the evidentiality. Our understanding of the evidentiality of Tibetic languages follows Tournadre's (2017) analysis and the practice by Oisel (2017), which demonstrate a single system of evidentiality to any subcategories of verbs.

We follow the definition of 'evidentiality' by Tournadre and LaPolla (2014): 'the representation of source and access to information according to the speaker's perspective and strategy'. We consider that Aikhenvald's (2004) focus on the 'source of information' as a definition of evidentiality is insufficient for the study on the Tibetic evidential marking as a whole grammatical encoding system.

Oisel (2017) demonstrates Lhasa Tibetan evidentiality as a single 'system'. His recapitu-

lative tabular (2017: 125–128) include five main evidentials: egophoric, sensorial, factual, inferential, and mnemonic. Additionally, various epistemic values such as sure, real, strong probability, and weak probability are considered. His description only deals with the ‘access’ type of evidentiality; the ‘hearsay’ evidential, including ‘reportative’ and ‘quotative’, is not discussed since they do not appear in the same syntactic slot as other evidential forms (Tournadre 2017: 104), which are all related to access to information.

Tournadre et al. (2018) provide a questionnaire specialised for an investigation of the evidential system of Tibetan languages. This questionnaire partially differs from the scheme provided by Oisel (2017). The questionnaire divides the evidentials into five: *egophoric*, *factual*, *sensory*, *sensory inferential*, and *logical inferential*, whereas Oisel (2017) provides five categories such as *egophoric*, *factual*, *sensorial*, *inferential*, and *mnemonic*. The latter does not make two inferentials divided, but it adds another category.

Our research results are also obtained by employing the questionnaire by Tournadre et al. (2018). We examine five principal evidential categories of the ‘access’ type: *egophoric*, *statemental*, *sensory*, *sensory inferential*, and *logical inferential*. The fundamental function of each evidential category is as follows:

Egophoric ‘access to personal knowledge’

Statemental ‘a common fact without indicating source and access to information’

Sensory ‘sensory access through any of the five senses’

Sensory inferential an inference ‘based on the information through the sensory access’

Logical inferential an inference ‘based on the speaker’s knowledge’

Note that we use the term *statemental* instead of *factual* for the same category.

2.2 Two Khams Tibetan cases as reference points

At the moment, there are no reports on the evidential system of surrounding Khams Tibetan varieties (Southern Route group) based on Tournadre and LaPolla’s (2014) and Oisel (2017). Thus, we consult other varieties of Khams Tibetan; we refer to the evidential system copulative and existential verbs of two Khams Tibetan, Lhagang and Choswateng, based on the first author’s research. Although both are spoken in remote regions of the Lamo-speaking area (see Appendix 2), they are the varieties on which detailed research has already been conducted, following the model by Oisel (2017).

We first collected data of Khams Tibetan varieties’ evidential system. Then we provisionally conclude that the evidentials in the Southern Route group (cf. Suzuki 2018b) are similar to Lhagang Tibetan of Minyag Rabgang (Suzuki and Sonam Wangmo 2018) as a system (not morphology); another reference point is Choswateng Tibetan of rGyalthang (Suzuki 2014) spoken the southeastern corner of the Tibetosphere.

2.2.1 Lhagang Tibetan

Lhagang Tibetan belongs to Minyag Rabgang Khams (Suzuki and Sonam Wangmo 2017), spoken in Lhagang Town, Dartsendo Municipality, Kandze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan Province, China. The description of the evidential system of Lhagang Tibetan is provided in Suzuki and Sonam Wangmo (2018). Table 2 displays the affirmative forms of copulative and existential verbs.

Table 2 Copulative and existential verb forms (affirmative) of Lhagang Tibetan

verb type	egophoric	statemental	sensory	sensory inferential	logical inferential
copulative	ʃji:	ʃreʔ		ʃji:-s ^h a reʔ ʃji:- ^{fi} dzui reʔ	ʃji:-lə reʔ
existential	ʃjoʔ	ʃjoʔ-reʔ	ʃji:-tu	ʃjoʔ-s ^h a reʔ ʃjoʔ- ^{fi} dzui reʔ	ʃjoʔ-lə reʔ

Lhagang Tibetan's whole evidential system is close to that demonstrated in the questionnaire by Tournadre et al. (2018), as well as Lhasa (Oisel 2017). We observe following features:

1. The sensory copulative form is missing (the statemental form is used instead).
2. Derivational epistemic variation is not rich.
3. The suffix of the logical inferential evidential is identical to the statemental nonperfect suffix.

2.2.2 Choswateng Tibetan

Choswateng Tibetan belongs to the rGyalthag group of Sems-kyi-nyila Khams (Suzuki 2014, 2018a), spoken in Yangthag Township, Shangri-La Municipality, Dechen Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China. The description of the evidential system of Choswateng Tibetan is provided in Suzuki and Lozong Lhamo (2021). Table 3 displays the affirmative forms of copulative and existential verbs.

Table 3 Copulative and existential verb forms (affirmative) of Choswateng Tibetan

verb type	egophoric	statemental	visual sensory	nonvisual sensory	inferential
copulative	ʼzẽ	ʼreʼ	ʰzẽ-ṇõ	ʼcaʼ	ʰzẽ-loʼ
	jĩ	ʰʼa ^m bo		ʰzẽ-caʼ	ʰzẽ-pa ʼa
					ʰzẽ- ⁿ doʼ
					ʰʼa jĩ ze: ṇõ
					ʰzẽ- ^ṇ da ʼa ṇõ
					ʰzẽ-ʼa jĩ sũj ʰzẽ-ʼa ⁿ doʼ sũj
existential nonanimate	ʰjuʼ	ʰjuʼ-reʼ	ṇõ	ṇõ	ʰjuʼ-loʼ
					ʰjuʼ-pa ʼa
					ʰjuʼ- ⁿ doʼ
					ʰjuʼ- ^ṇ da ʼa ṇõ
					ʰjuʼ-ʼa jĩ sũj
					ʰjuʼ-ʼa ⁿ doʼ sũj
existential animate	ⁿ doʼ	ⁿ doʼ-reʼ	(V-ṇõ)	(V-ṇõ)	ⁿ doʼ-loʼ
	ⁿ doʼ- ^h tɕi				ⁿ doʼ-pa ʼa
					ⁿ doʼ- ⁿ doʼ
					ⁿ doʼ- ^ṇ da ʼa ṇõ
					ⁿ doʼ-ʼa jĩ sũj
					ⁿ doʼ-ʼa ⁿ doʼ sũj

Choswateng Tibetan's whole evidential system resembles neither Lhagang nor Lhasa. Principal features are as follows:

1. The sensory evidential is further divided into visual sensory and nonvisual sensory (auditory, tactile, taste, olfactory) evidentials.
2. The sensory inferential and the logical inferentials are not morphologically distinguished and merged into one system. The derivational epistemic variation is rich.
3. Animacy affects the existential verb stem. The sensory evidentials (both visual and nonvisual) of animate existential verbs are expressed with a lexical verb + a visual sensory suffix.
4. Choswateng Tibetan has a mnemonic evidential category; however, Table 3 omits it because it does not play an essential role in this article.

3. Description of the Lamo evidential system

We describe two verb categories, copulative and existential, separately. Each description consists of summary tabular, morphological analysis, and usage. The summary tabular (Tables 4 and 5) is a result of the elicitation based on the questionnaire; three forms, affirmative, negative, and affirmative interrogative (an interrogative form for a yes/no question; henceforth interrogative) are provided according to evidentials. The morphological analysis is principally an explication of how we analyse each word form in the tabular. The usage is a selection of example sentences.

3.1 Copulative verbs

Summary

Table 4 Copulative verb system of Lamo

verb type	egophoric	statemental	sensory	sensory inferential	logical inferential
affirmative	ʼŋo	ʼtɕ ^h ɰ	ʼŋo-tə ʼlɑ' sə	ʼlɑ'-k ^h o-tə ʼŋo-tə ʼŋo-zə-ŋo-tə	ʼŋo-tə
negative	ʼmə-ŋui	ʼme-tɕ ^h ɰ	ʼlɑ ʼma-sə	ʼlɑ ʼma-sə ʼlɑ ʼmo-k ^h o-tə	ʼŋo-zə ʼmə-ŋui-tə ʼŋo-zə ʼmə-tə
interrogative	ʼʔa-ŋo ʼŋo ʼza	ʼʔɛ-tɕ ^h ɰ ʼtɕ ^h ɰ ʼza	ʼŋo-tə ʼze ʼtɕ ^h ɰ ʼga	—	—

Morphology

Three independent verbs are attested: /ʼŋo/, /ʼtɕ^hɰ/, and /ʼlɑ' sə/. Thus, we give a single gloss for each as in (1):

- (1) a ʼŋo
CPV.E
- b ʼtɕ^hɰ
CPV
- c ʼlɑ' sə
CPV.SEN

However, when /ʼŋo/ is followed by suffixes or appears as a part of suffixes, its gloss is not CPV.E, but CPV.

Negative forms are made by adding a negative prefix /mV-/ to the verb stem. The vowel

quality depends on that of verb stems; however, we have been unable to write out its rules. Note that the egophoric copulative /'ŋo/ changes its vowel to /uu/ when it occurs with the negative prefix.

The syllable /la/ is used as a part of the sensory inferential forms. However, since the negative precedes the second syllable of /'la' sə/, we analyse this word form as a disyllabic word, and thus its glossing is like (2):

- (2) 'la 'ma-sə
 CPV.SEN NEG-STEM

We find two ways to construct interrogatives: adding an interrogative prefix /ʔV-/ or suffixes /za/, /zɛ/, and /ga/. The suffixes always have an independent tonal pattern; hence, we temporarily describe them as independent words, glossed as Q, not -Q, as in (3) and (4):

- (3) a ʔa-ŋo
 Q-CPV.E
 b ʔɛ-tɕ^hu
 Q-CPV
- (4) a ʔɕ^hu ʔza
 CPV Q
 b ʔɕ^hu ʔga
 CPV Q

The affirmative sensory copulative form /'ŋo tə/ is likely to be analysed as '/'ŋo/+suffix'. However, this case requires us to explain the function of the suffix /-tə/ as sensory. At present, we interpret the word form as a single word glossed as CPV.SEN. We also mention /-tə/ as a sensory suffix (SEN) as a working hypothesis only when necessary. This interpretation benefits the analysis of sensory inferential forms. The form /'ŋo tə/ as CPV.SEN has no negative counterpart.

Affirmative inferential forms, both sensory and logical, can use /'ŋo tə/ as CPV.SEN; however, negative counterparts differ from sensory forms. The sensory inferential category has three forms, whereas the logical inferential category has only one form that is the same as the sensory copulative. We thus cannot determine a gloss for /'ŋo tə/; we use either CPV.SEN, CPV.SNINFR, or CPV.LGINFR. Analysing the inferential forms, we can recognise the following elements:

- (5) a $\text{ʔla } k^h\text{o } t\text{ə}$
CPV.SNINFR
- b $\dagger\text{ʔla-}k^h\text{o-}t\text{ə}$
CPV.SEN-EXV-SEN

- (6) a $\text{ʔjo } z\text{ə } \eta\text{o } t\text{ə}$
CPV.SNINFR
- b $\dagger\text{ʔjo-}z\text{ə-}\eta\text{o } t\text{ə}$
CPV-NML-CPV.SEN
- c $\dagger\text{ʔjo-}z\text{ə-}\eta\text{o-}t\text{ə}$
CPV-NML-CPV-SEN

Here we use † for a hypothetical analytic description. The analytic descriptions in (5b), (6b), and (6c) might be useful only to consider the history of the construction of inferential forms. Nevertheless, from the morphological viewpoint, the use of sensory forms, including the / ηo /-stem, is noteworthy; rather, it is ‘marked’ that the statemental form / $\text{ʔt}^h\text{ə}$ / never appears in an inferential sense. The / ηo /-stem is likely to be connected with the sensory form, not the egophoric form.

Negative inferential forms undergo a different morphological process from the sensory counterparts. Except for one negative inferential form / $\text{ʔla } \text{ʔma-sə}$ /, the hypothetical analytic forms are described below (7), (8), and (9):

- (7) a $\text{ʔla } \text{ʔmo-}k^h\text{o } t\text{ə}$
CPV.SNINFR NEG-STEM
- b $\dagger\text{ʔla-}\text{ʔmo-}k^h\text{o-}t\text{ə}$
CPV.SEN-NEG-EXV-SEN

- (8) a $\text{ʔjo } z\text{ə } \text{ʔmə-}\eta\text{ui } t\text{ə}$
CPV.LGINFR NEG-STEM
- b $\dagger\text{ʔjo-}z\text{ə-}\text{ʔmə-}\eta\text{ui-}t\text{ə}$
CPV-NML-NEG-CPV-SEN

- (9) a ʼŋo zə ʼmə tə
 CPV.LGINFR.NEG
- b †ʼŋo zə ʼmə-tə
 CPV.LGINFR NEG-STEM
- c †ʼŋo-zə-ʼmə-tə
 CPV-NML-NEG-SEN

Looking at the morphological analysis in (9b) and (9c), we find an extraordinary case, that is, the negative prefix is directly attached to the hypothetical sensory suffix; a prefix must precede a verb stem. Moreover, we cannot find any specific reason to consider /-tə/ as a verb stem. Therefore, the analysis seems wrong. We would understand the form (9a) as a contracted form of (8a), and we thus cannot analyse a negative prefix like (9b).

Usage

Egophoric

- (10) nə po ri ʼa-ŋo
 2SG Tibetan Q-CPV.E
 ‘Are you Tibetan?’
- (11) ŋa po ri ŋo
 1SG Tibetan CPV.E
 ‘I am Tibetan.’
- (12) ŋa po ri mə-ŋu
 1SG Tibetan NEG-CPV.E
 ‘I am not Tibetan.’

Sentence (10) reflects the anticipation rule of the egophoric evidential (Tournadre and LaPolla 2014:244). Egophoric is often used with the first person, especially when it is a single argument. A genitive relationship of the first person does not reflect the egophoric evidential, but is often connected with the statemental evidential as in (13):

- (13) ʼa fiə ŋa no tɕʰu
 this 1.GEN son CPV
 ‘This is my son.’

Statemental

- (14) ʔnə ʔpo ri ʔtɕʰu
 2SG Tibetan CPV

‘You are Tibetan.’

- (15) ʔkə ʔpo ri ʔtɕʰu
 3SG Tibetan CPV

‘He is Tibetan.’

- (16) ʔkə ʔpo ri ʔme-tɕʰu
 3SG Tibetan NEG-CPV

‘He is not Tibetan.’

- (17) ʔkə ʔpo ri ʔʔɛ-tɕʰu
 3SG Tibetan Q-CPV

‘Is he Tibetan?’

- (18) ʔʔa fiə ʔfi gi wɔ ʔʔɛ-tɕʰu
 this grape-made wine Q-CPV

‘Is this red wine?’

Interrogative forms of the statemental evidential request an addressee to reply based on the addressee’s knowledge. For example, Sentence (18) contains the speaker’s assumption that the addressee knows an answer (yes/no or true/false) without testing the red liquid by any senses.

Sensory

- (19) ʔʔa fiə ʔtɕi ʔʔɛ-tɕʰu
 this water Q-CPV

‘Is this water?’

- (20) ʔʔa fiə ʔwɔ ʔŋo tə-fia
 this alcoholic drink CPV.SEN-SFP

‘(Having drunk it, I am quite sure that) this is alcohol.’

The sensory evidential reflects that an utterance is based on the sensory-accessed information. Sentence (19) is a question with a statemental evidential, and Sentence (20) is the answer to Sentence (19). Sentence (20) is marked with the sensory evidential. The background of this utterance is that the speaker of Sentence (20) confirmed whether the given liquid was water or not; as a result, the speaker made known that the liquid was not water but alcohol. The sentence final particle (SFP) in Sentence (20) implies the speaker's sensory confirmation.

- (21) ṽa fiə ṽci ṽla 'ma-sə
 this water CPV.SEN NEG-STEM

‘(Having drunk it, I am quite sure that) this is not water.’

- (22) ṽa fiə ṽja ṽno ṽla' sə
 this 1.GEN son CPV.SEN

‘(Having looked at a child in the photo, I am quite sure that) this is my son.’

- (23) ṽkə ṽfi'ge' fi'gi 'ŋo tə
 3SG teacher CPV.SEN

A. ‘(Having visually observed him, I am quite sure that) he is a teacher.’

B. ‘(According to his appearance,) he may be a teacher.’

C. ‘(According to my knowledge,) he must be a teacher.’

Sentence (23) can be interpreted in three ways. Although the morphological feature of the copulative verb is identical, reading A is intended when the gloss is CPV.SEN. In the case of reading B, the gloss should be CPV.SNINFR, whilst in the case of reading C, it should be CPV.LGINFR.

- (24) ṽkə ṽfi'ge' fi'gi 'ŋo ṽzɛ
 3SG teacher CPV.SEN Q

‘(According to his appearance,) is he a teacher?’

- (25) ṽa fiə ṽja ṽno ṽtɕʰɛ ṽga
 this 1.GEN son CPV Q

‘(Looking at a child in an old photo) Is this my son?’

Sentences (24) and (25) are typical interrogative forms of the sensory evidential. The gloss of the verb in (24) is connected to SEN, whereas that in (25) is not; this depends on

the relationship of the verb stem with the sensory evidential.

Sensory inferential

- (26) a ʔkə ʔŋo mɛ ʔfi ge' fi gi ʔŋo tə
 3SG definitely teacher CPV.SNINFR

‘(According to his appearance,) he must be a teacher.’

- b ʔkə ʔŋo mɛ ʔfi ge' fi gi ʔla ʔma-sə
 3SG definitely teacher CPV.SNINFR NEG-STEM

‘(According to his appearance,) he must not be a teacher.’

- (27) a ʔʔa fiə ʔŋo mɛ ʔtɕi ʔŋo tə
 this definitely water CPV.SNINFR

‘(According to its appearance,) this must be water.’

- b ʔʔa fiə ʔŋo mɛ ʔtɕi ʔŋo zə ŋo tə
 this definitely water CPV.SNINFR

‘(According to its appearance,) this must be water.’

Sentences (26) and (27a) can also be interpreted as an utterance with the sensory evidential if the background of the utterance allows, whereas Sentence (27b) only provides a reading of the sensory inferential access to information.

Logical inferential

- (28) ʔʔa fiə ʔŋo mɛ ʔtɕi ʔŋo tə
 this definitely water CPV.LGINFR

‘(According to my knowledge) this must be water.’

- (29) ʔkə ʔʔa kʰə ʔŋo mɛ ʔxi mbe ʔŋo zə ʔmə-ŋui tə
 3SG now definitely farmer CPV.LGINFR NEG-STEM

‘(According to my knowledge,) he must not be a farmer now.’

- (30) ʔkə ʔŋo mɛ ʔŋa ʔno ʔŋo zə ʔmə tə
 3SG definitely 1.GEN son CPV.LGINFR.NEG

‘(According to my knowledge,) he must not be my son.’

Sentence (28) can also be interpreted as an utterance with the sensory or sensory inferential evidentials if the background of the utterance allows.

3.2 Existential verbs

Summary

Table 5 Existential verb system of Lamo

verb type	egophoric	statemental	sensory	sensory inferential	logical inferential
affirmative	ʔk ^h o	ʔk ^h o tɕ ^h u	ːne	ʔk ^h o-zə-ŋo-tə	ʔk ^h o-ji ʔk ^h o-tə-fia
negative	ˈmo-k ^h o	ʔk ^h o ˈme-tɕ ^h u	ˈmə-ne	ʔk ^h o-zə ˈmə-ŋu-tə	ʔk ^h o-ji ˈmo-k ^h o-tə-fia
interrogative	ʔk ^h o ˈfia ʔk ^h o ˈza	ʔk ^h o tɕ ^h u ˈga ʔk ^h o tɕ ^h u ˈfia	ːne ˈfia	—	—

Morphology

Two independent verbs are attested: /ʔk^ho/ and /ːne/. We give a single gloss for each as follows:

- (31) a ʔk^ho
EXV.E
- b ːne
EXV.SEN

However, when /ʔk^ho/ is followed by suffixes or appears as a part of suffixes, its gloss is not EXV.E, but EXV.

Negative forms are made by adding a negative prefix /mV-/ to the verb stem. Unlike copulative verbs, the vowel quality of the existential verbs does not change with the negative prefix.

The affirmative statemental evidential is given a single gloss as in (32a); however, its construction can be analysed as a compound of ‘EXV.E + CPV’ as (32b):

- (32) a ʔk^ho tɕ^hu
EXV
- b †ʔk^ho-tɕ^hu
EXV.E-CPV

The interrogative forms formed by adding a suffix. No interrogative prefixes appear. We

observe three suffixes /fia/, /za/, and /ga/, but we have not found any semantic differences between them. Although we call them ‘suffixes’, they always have an independent tonal pattern; hence, we temporarily describe them as independent words, glossed as Q, not -Q, as in (33):

- (33) a ʔ^ho ʔ^hfi
 EXV.E Q
- b ʔ^ho ʔ^hza
 EXV.E Q
- c ʔ^ho tɕ^h ʔ^hga
 EXV Q
- d ʔ^ho tɕ^h ʔ^hfi
 EXV Q
- e ʔ^hne ʔ^hfi
 EXV.SEN Q

All the inferential forms are derived from the egophoric stem /ʔ^ho/. However, this stem is not connected to the egophoric evidential from the viewpoint of the evidential category. Both the sensory and logical inferentials have only one form for each. We give each a single synthetic gloss as EXV.SNINFR, or EXV.LGINFR; however, we provide potential analytic descriptions as in (34) and (35):

- (34) a ʔ^ho zə ɲo tə
 EXV.SNINFR
- b †ʔ^ho-zə-ɲo tə
 EXV-NML-CPV.SEN
- c †ʔ^ho-zə-ɲo-tə
 EXV-NML-CPV-SEN
- (35) a ʔ^ho ji k^ho tə fia
 EXV.LGINFR
- b †ʔ^ho-ji-k^ho-tə-fia
 EXV-NML-EXV-SEN-SFP

It is worth noting that the sensory inferential existential form contains the sensory copulative form, whereas the logical inferential existential form contains the egophoric exis-

tential stem with the ‘hypothetical’ sensory suffix. Additionally, the nominaliser part at the second syllable differs in each: /zə/ for the sensory inferential and /ji/ for the logical inferential. The latter is common to the genitive (GEN) marker; however, since the case marker does not directly follow a verb stem, /ji/ should be interpreted as a nominaliser.

A negative prefix is *inserted* to form negative inferentials as in (36) and (37):

- (36) a ʔ^ho zə ʼmə-ŋu tə
 EXV.SNINFR NEG-STEM
- b †ʔ^ho-zə-ʼmə-ŋu tə
 EXV-NML-NEG-CPV.SEN
- c †ʔ^ho-zə-ʼmə-ŋu-tə
 EXV-NML-NEG-CPV-SEN
- (37) a ʔ^ho ji ʼmo-k^ho tə fia
 EXV.LGINFR NEG-STEM
- b †ʔ^ho-ji-ʼmo-k^ho-tə-fia
 EXV-NML-NEG-EXV-SEN-SFP

The vowel quality of the negative prefix is common for the verb stems /ʼŋo/ and /ʔ^ho/.

Usage

Existential verbs function to express not only ‘existence’, but also ‘possession’ as well as ‘location’. Examples below are arranged with each evidential.

Egophoric

- (38) ʼŋa ʼʔə rɛ ʔ^ho
 1SG here EXV.E
- ‘I am here.’
- (39) ʼŋa ʔtɕə na ʼmo-k^ho
 1SG home NEG-EXV.E
- ‘I am not home.’

- (40) ʼŋa-lə ʼp^ho fiu ʼdə k^ho
 1SG-DAT pig one EXV.E

‘I have a pig.’

- (41) ʼŋa-lə ʼtɕi ʼtsə tsə ʼmo-k^ho
 1.SG-DAT water boiled EXV.E

‘I do not have boiled water.’

Sentences (38)–(41) are ordinary as utterances in the egophoric evidential. Existential verbs also apply the anticipation rule on the use of the egophoric evidential, as in (42) and (43):

- (42) ʼnə-lə ʼta jĩ ʼqə rɛ k^ho ʼza
 2.SG-DAT money many EXV.E Q

‘Do you have much money?’

- (43) ʼŋa-lə ʼta jĩ ʼqə rɛ k^ho
 1.SG-DAT money many EXV.E

‘I have much money.’

Besides, unlike the copulative verb, the egophoric evidential appears in the genitive relationship of the first person in case of the existential verb, as in (44)–(46):

- (44) ʼŋa ʼno ʼtɕə na k^ho
 1.SG.GEN son home EXV.E

‘My son is home.’

- (45) ʼŋa ʼno ʼtɕə na ʼmo-k^ho
 1.SG.GEN son home NEG-EXV.E

‘My son is not home.’

- (46) ʼna ʼno ʼtɕə-na k^ho ʼfia
 2.SG.GEN son house-LOC EXV.E Q

‘Is your son in the house?’

Statemental

- (47) $\bar{f}i$ gã-kə ʼnɔ-lə ʼqɪ t^hu ʼk^ho tɕ^hu
 box-GEN inside-LOC pen EXV

‘There are pens in the box.’

- (48) $\bar{f}i$ gã-kə ʼnɔ-lə ʼqɪ t^hu ʼk^ho ʼme-tɕ^hu
 box-GEN inside-LOC pen EXV NEG-STEM

‘There are no pens in the box.’

- (49) ʼt^he re ʼqɪɔ tɕ^hi ʼk^ho tɕ^hu ʼga
 over there yak meat EXV Q

‘Is there yak meat over there?’

- (50) ʼmə ʼkə-lə ʼta jĩ ʼk^ho tɕ^hu ʼfia
 person that-DAT money EXV Q

‘Does that person have money?’

- (51) ʼkəʼ nə-lə ʼno no ʼk^ho ʼme-tɕ^hu
 3.PL-DAT child EXV NEG-STEM

‘They do not have any children.’

Interrogative forms of the statemental evidential request an addressee to reply based on the addressee’s knowledge. For example, Sentence (49) contains the speaker’s assumption that the addressee knows an answer (yes/no or true/false).

Sensory

- (52) ʼkə rɛ ʼp^ho fiu ʼdə ʼne
 there pig one EXV.SEN

‘There is a pig.’

- (53) ʼkə-lə ʼp^ho fiu ʼdə ʼne
 3SG-DAT pig one EXV.SEN

‘He has a pig.’

- (54) ˈkə rɛ ˈpʰo fiu ˈdə ˈmə-ŋe
 there pig one NEG-EXV.SEN

‘There is no pig.’

Sentences (52)–(54) are uttered under a background where the speaker accessed information using any of the senses. Sentences (52) and (53) are utterances based on the speaker’s visual perception. Sentence (53) is an utterance based on the speaker’s auditory perception of the oinking sound, or olfactory perception of the smell peculiar to the pig.

- (55) ˈta rə ˈtɕɛ ˈne
 still tea EXV.SEN

‘There is still tea (left).’

- (56) ˈtɕɛ ˈmə-ŋe
 tea NEG-EXV.SEN

‘There is not tea.’

Sentences (55) and (56) are utterances based on the speaker’s nonvisual perception. The speaker accessed to information by lifting the pot and feeling its weight (tactile) or shaking the pot to see if there is a sound inside (auditory).

- (57) ˈfiə ˈŋa-lə ˈta jĩ ˈne
 INTJ 1.SG-DAT money EXV.SEN

‘Oh, I have money!’

- (58) ˈna ˈno ˈlo^{fi}dɛ ˈnɔ-lə ˈne ˈfia
 2.SG.GEN son school inside-LOC EXV.SEN Q

‘Is your son in the school?’

Sentence (57) reflects the speaker’s surprise that he found some money in the pocket accidentally. This semantic situation is called mirative; however, this is simply marked by the sensory evidential. Sentence (58), contrary to Sentence (46), uses the sensory existential verb. The speaker assumes that the addressee does not use egophoric in the answer.

Sensory inferential

- (59) $\bar{k}\bar{o}'$ $n\bar{o}$ - $l\bar{o}$ $\bar{n}o$ no $k^h o$ $z\bar{o}$ ηo $t\bar{o}$ fia
 3.PL-DAT child EXV.SNINFR

‘(According to their action,) they must have a child.’

- (60) $\acute{t}\bar{o}$ $n\bar{e}$ $\bar{t}\bar{c}\bar{o}$ na $\bar{n}o$ no $k^h o$ $z\bar{o}$ $\acute{m}\bar{o}$ - ηui $t\bar{o}$ - fia
 then home child EXV.SNINFR NEG-STEM-SFP

‘Then, (according to the situation,) there must not be children at home.’

Sentences (59) and (60) have only one reading, unlike sensory inferential copulative forms (cf. Sentence 26).

Logical inferential

- (61) $\bar{k}\bar{o}'$ $n\bar{o}$ - $l\bar{o}$ $\bar{n}o$ no $k^h o$ ji $k^h o$ $t\bar{o}$ fia
 3.PL-DAT child EXV.LGINFR

‘(According to my knowledge,) they must have a child.’

- (62) $\bar{?}\bar{o}$ $r\bar{e}$ $\acute{t}\bar{c}\bar{e}$ $k^h o$ ji $\acute{m}o$ - $k^h o$ $t\bar{o}$ fia
 here tea EXV.LGINFR NEG-STEM

‘(According to the calculation of the bottle size,) here must not be tea (left).’

Sentences (61) and (62) have only one reading, unlike logical inferential copulative forms (cf. Sentence 28).

4. Discussion

Based on the description in Sections 3.1 and 3.2, we conclude that the research using the questionnaire of Tournadre et al. (2018) brought fruitful results to examine the evidential system of Lamo. As the tabular summary (Tables 4 and 5) shows, it is evident that the copulative and existential verbs of Lamo exhibit a more systematical similarity to Lha-gang Tibetan than Choswateng Tibetan. Let us summarise the similarities and differences between Lamo and two Tibetic languages:

- The same framework on evidentiality functions in both copulative and existential verbs.
- Different independent stems are used according to evidential categories (see also

Table 1).

- Animacy for existential verbs is not distinctive (same as Lhagang; differing from Choswateng).
- The statemental existential verb /^ho tɕ^hu/ corresponds to Tibetanic *yod red*.
- Inferential evidentials distinguish sensory inferential from logical inferential in the morphological aspect.
- Egophoric verb stems are principally used in inferentials.
- No statemental verb stems appear in inferentials.
- The number of inferential forms is small in Lamo. It varies even in Tibetanic languages, as shown in Lhagang and Choswateng as well as Lhasa.
- The core evidential categories in Lamo are tripartite: egophoric, statemental, and sensory.

These results, however, trigger another issue. Lamo is considered a language belonging to the Qiangic branch (Tashi Nyima and Suzuki 2019), but Qiangic languages, even spoken in the Tibetosphere, generally do not seem to possess any systematic but complicated framework of evidentiality. Of course, different definitions regarding the term *evidentiality* exist; some refer to Aikhenvald's (2004) *classical* definition, some adapt Tournadre and LaPolla's (2014) *expanded* definition. However, if a given language had a complicated evidential system, this reality would be reflected in various ways in descriptive grammars. For example, Nagano (2018: 89) describes a Situ rGyalrong grammar, in which the evidential marking denotes 'directly experienced' as a verb prefix. One exception is Japhug described by Jacques (2019), who successfully elucidated the tripartite evidential system. However, contrary to Lamo, Japhug's evidential marking system principally appears as verb prefixes, and thus only the framework of evidentiality is similar to Tibetanic languages. In his previous grammar description of Japhug, Jacques (2008) does not apply the tripartite evidential model for the verb morphology. Hence, we assume that the difference of approach to evidentiality can change the grammatical framework, and we should be prudent to consider that Qiangic languages do not possess a similar evidential system to Tibetanic languages.

There are other similarities of the Lamo evidential system to that of Tibetanic languages. One example is 'mirativity' expressed by using the sensory evidential as in (57). Scholars have debated whether mirativity of Lhasa Tibetan is an independent grammatical category (DeLancey 1997 vs Hill 2012). In Tournadre and Suzuki's (2021) understanding, mirativity is one of the semantic functions of the sensory evidential in Tibetanic languages. It is noticeable that the mirative function is also assigned to the sensory evidential in Lamo.

Additionally, Jacques (2019) also describes the mirative function by the sensory evidential marking in Japhug.

Based on multiple morphological, semantic, and systematic similarities between Lamo and Tibetic languages mentioned above, we consider more probable that the evidential system in Lamo was acquired through language contact with Tibetic. In other words, Lamo has not inherited any systematic evidential framework, although it has potentially had specific manners to mark evidentials. In this regard, we should note that ancient Tibetic languages have not developed systematic evidentiality either. Lamo also has had an opportunity to develop its evidential system. If we consider Lamo as a Qiangic or rGyalrongic language, it should have possessed a person-verb agreement system instead of the Tibetic-like evidential marking strategy. Unfortunately, Lamo has already lost the agreement system completely. We suggest that the loss of the agreement system was triggered by the acquisition of the Tibetic evidential system. It is suggested that Lamo acquired the Tibetic evidential system in an earlier stage after Tibetic languages have developed the evidential system, but we have no evidence to confirm when and how this happen.

We should pay attention to Lamo's morphological evolution of inferential forms after it acquired the Tibetic evidential framework. Both Lamo and Tibetic languages have analytic forms (see Tables 2–5). Lamo's morphological analysis presented in (5)–(9) and (34)–(37) is not parallel to Tibetic languages. Compare a morphological analysis of inferential copulative verbs in Lhagang Tibetan and Choswateng Tibetan below:

(63) Lhagang Tibetan: sensory inferential copulative

- a ʹji: s^ha re?
CPV.SNINFR
- b ʹji:-s^ha re?
CPV-SNINFR
- c †ʹji:-s^ha-re?
CPV-NML-CPV

(64) Lhagang Tibetan: sensory inferential copulative

- a ʹji: ^{fi}dzɯ re?
CPV.SNINFR
- b †ʹji:-^{fi}dzɯ re?
CPV-FUT

(65) Lhagang Tibetan: logical inferential copulative

a ʼji: lə re?
CPV.LGINFR

b †ʼji:-lə re?
CPV-NPFT

(66) Choswateng Tibetan: inferential copulative

a ʰzẽ lo?
CPV.INFR

b ʰzẽ-lo?
CPV-INFR

(67) Choswateng Tibetan: inferential copulative

a ʰzẽ pa ʔa
CPV.INFR

b ʰzẽ-pa ʔa
CPV-INFR

c †ʰzẽ-pa-ʔa
CPV-INFR-SFP

(68) Choswateng Tibetan: inferential copulative

a ʔa jĩ ʒe: ɳõ
CPV.INFR

b †ʔa-jĩ-ʒe:-ɳõ
Q-CPV,E-ʔ-EXV.VSEN

(69) Choswateng Tibetan: inferential copulative

a ʰzẽ ʳda ʔa ɳõ
CPV.INFR

b †ʰzẽ-ʳda-ʔa-ɳõ
CPV-be similar-Q-EXV.VSEN

(70) Choswateng Tibetan: inferential copulative

a $\hat{z}\tilde{e} \text{ } ?a \text{ } j\tilde{i} \text{ } s\tilde{u}j$

CPV.INFR

b $\dagger\hat{z}\tilde{e}-?a-j\tilde{i}-s\tilde{u}j$

CPV-Q-PFT.E-doubt

The morphological analysis in the two Tibetic languages does not match that of Lamo's inferential forms. Thus, as far as the inferential forms are concerned, the morphological process in Lamo does not follow Tibetic. Instead, Lamo applies a morphological way of construction that employs the egophoric forms. It is also possible that every Tibetic variety has elaborated the inferential forms independently. To sum up, development of inferentials could be a later morphosyntactic process where a language has a core evidential system. The morphological analysis in the two Tibetic languages does not match that of Lamo's inferential forms. Thus, as far as the inferential forms are concerned, the morphological process in Lamo does not follow Tibetic. Instead, Lamo applies a morphological way of construction that employs the egophoric forms. It is also possible that every Tibetic variety has elaborated the inferential forms independently. To sum up, development of inferentials could be a later morphosyntactic process where a language has a core evidential system.

For the phenomenon of borrowing the Tibetic evidential system in another language, the case of Selibu (Zhou and Suzuki 2020, forthcoming) might be considered. Selibu is a mixed language consisting of Yunnanese (Yunnan dialect of Mandarin, Sinitic) as a basis, and local Khams Tibetan (Alangu dialect) as its superstratum. Selibu has already acquired the Tibetic evidential system (sexpartite; egophoric/statemental/visual sensory/nonvisual sensory/sensory inferential/logical inferential) in which an ongoing incorporation of Yunnanese words emerges. This case demonstrates that borrowing a whole evidential framework is highly potential.

5. Conclusion

This article examined the evidential system of the copulative and existential verbs of Lamo by employing the questionnaire designed for Tibetic languages. The results demonstrate that the system of core evidentials (egophoric, statemental, sensory) is highly similar to the framework, as well as the morphology of Tibetic languages in Khams, especially Lhagang Tibetan. The morphological strategy of sensory and logical inferentials is partially common to Tibetic languages, but Lamo has its unique evolution which does not correspond to Tibetic.

The article concludes that Lamo acquired the evidential framework from Tibetic lan-

guages through language contact when the inferential categories of the Tibetic languages have been on a developing stage.

Appendix 1: Sound system of Lamo (Kyilwa dialect)

The description of segmental sounds follows the framework by Zhu (2010, 2015) as well as Suzuki (2016), including IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet) symbols and additional indispensable phonetic symbols employed in Chinese linguistics. The analysis of suprasegmental sounds follows Kitamura (1977), with a necessary expansion.

Syllable structure

The method for displaying the syllable structure follows Suzuki (2005).

The maximum syllable structure of Lamei is summarised as ^CCGV, where ^C is a preinitial, C is a main initial, G is a glide, and V is a nucleus, that is, a vowel. CV is a minimum, indispensable unit of a syllable.

Consonantism

		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
plosive	aspirated	p ^h	t ^h	t̪ ^h			k ^h	q ^h	
	non-aspirated	p	t	t̪			k	q	ʔ
	voiced	b	d	d̪			g	ɣ	
affricate	aspirated		ts ^h		tɕ ^h				
	non-aspirated		ts		tɕ				
	voiced		dz		dʒ				
fricative	voiceless		s	ʂ	ɕ	x [ç̞x]	ɣ	h	
	voiced		z		ʐ	ɣ [j̞ɣ]	ʁ	ɦ	
nasal	voiced	m	n		ɳ		ŋ	ɴ	
	voiceless	m̥	n̥		ɳ̥		ŋ̥		
liquid	voiced		l	r					
	voiceless		l̥						
semi-vowel	voiced	w				j			

N.B. A: bilabial; B: denti-alveolar; C: retroflex; D: prepalatal; E: palatal; F: velar; G: uvular; H: glottal

Preinitial is occupied by either a nasal (prenasalisation) or a glottal fricative (preaspiration).

Vocalism

plain	i	e	ɛ	a	ɑ	ɔ	o	u	ɯ	ʉ	ə	ɵ	ɤ	ɤ̃
nasalised	ĩ	ẽ	ɛ̃		ã	õ	õ	ũ			ə̃	ɵ̃		
creaky		ɛ̤	ɛ̤	a̤	ɑ̤	ɔ̤	o̤	ṳ	ɯ̤	ʉ̤	ə̤	ɵ̤	ɤ̤	
nasalised creaky					ã̤	õ̤								

12 tongue positions, divided into four types: plain, nasalised, creaky, and nasalised creaky.

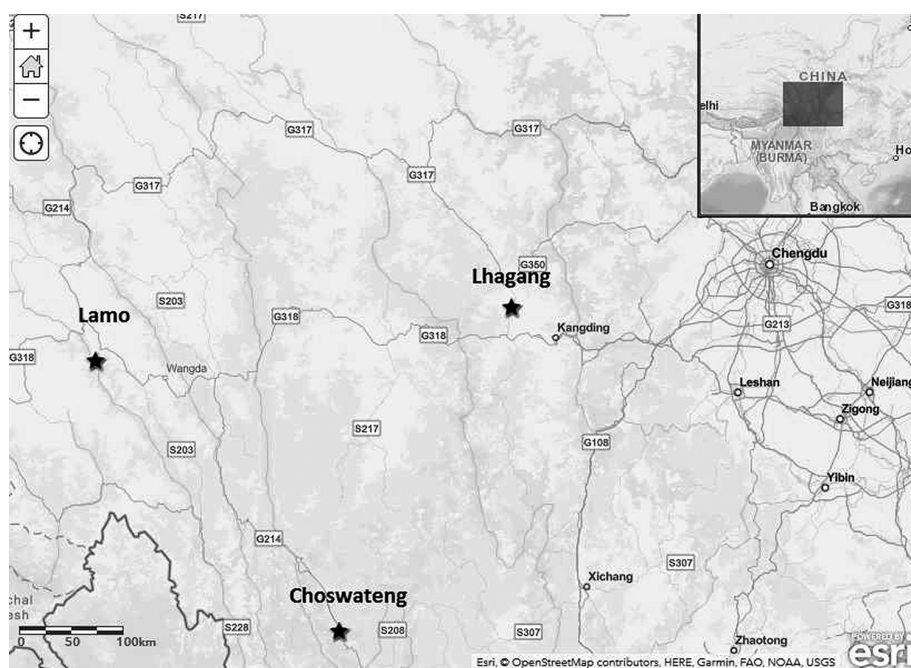
Suprasegmentals

There is two-way pitch distinction at a word-initial position: high (˥) and low (˩). Both falling and non-falling tones are acceptable.

The TBU is a phonological word (a root plus affixes), up to the first two syllables.

An apostrophe (ˈ) appearing between first and second syllables denotes that the second syllable is out of the TBU and thus atonal. Tones are not distinctive over syllables from the third syllable of a word, as well a phonological word, being realised as low level.

Appendix 2: Location of the principal languages mentioned in the article



Abbreviations

-	morpheme boundary	INTJ	interjection
†	hypothetical analysis	LGINFR	logical inferential
1	1st person	LOC	locative
2	2nd person	NEG	negative
3	3rd person	NML	nominaliser
DAT	dative	PL	plural
E	egophoric	Q	question marker
ERG	ergative	SEN	sensory
EXV	existential verb	SG	singular
FUT	intentional future	SNINFR	sensory inferential
GEN	genitive	STEM	verb stem
INFR	inferential	VSEN	visual sensory

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