

Where have all the adjectives gone? The case of Jinghpaw

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Abstract: The size of the adjective class varies from language to language. The aim of this paper is to investigate the membership of the adjective class in Jinghpaw, a Tibeto-Burman language, showing that Jinghpaw has a small closed class of adjectives consisting of no more than a dozen members. Building upon my own data collected through fieldwork in northern Burma, this paper further investigates the properties of Jinghpaw adjectives in terms of word class, semantics, and syntax. In terms of word class, Jinghpaw adjectives can best be treated as a subtype of verbs based on the fact that they share a number of properties with other verbs, including negatability, mood and aspect marking, and semantic compatibility with degree expressions. In terms of semantics, Jinghpaw adjectives fall into the four core semantic types of adjectives (i.e., dimension, age, value, color) that adjectives in languages with small adjective classes tend to have. Other semantic types such as physical property and human propensity tend to be lexicalized as stative verbs in the language. In terms of syntax, Jinghpaw adjectives exhibit predication and modification functions, which are common functions of adjectives in the world's languages.*

Key words: adjective, closed class, core semantic type, Jinghpaw, Tibeto-Burman

1 Introduction

It is widely known that the size of the adjective category varies from language to language (Dixon 1977 revised 1982, Schachter and Shopen 2007). Languages with a large category of adjectives have an open adjective class, a lexical category distinct from nouns and verbs. Languages with a small number of adjectives, by contrast, have a closed class of adjectives, where property concepts expressed as adjectives in some languages are mostly lexicalized as nouns or verbs. Dixon, in his seminal paper of 1977/1982, examines how

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property concepts belonging to seven semantic types (dimension, age, value, color, speed, physical property, and human propensity) are lexicalized cross-linguistically. He shows that all or almost all of the seven semantic types are lexicalized as adjectives in languages with a large adjective class in contrast to languages with a small adjective class, which tend to code only four semantic types as adjectives (i.e., dimension, age, value, and color). These semantic types are called the four core semantic types of adjectives. Igbo is a language with a small adjective class, which, as shown in (1), consists of antonymic pairs from the four core semantic types (Welmers and Welmers 1969: 321; the semantic type labels are taken from Dixon 1977/1982).

(1) Adjectives in Igbo

DIMENSION	úkwú	‘large’	ńtà	‘small’
AGE	óhú’rú	‘new’	ócyè	‘old’
VALUE	óma	‘good’	ójó’ó	‘bad’
COLOR	ójí’í	‘black, dark’	óca	‘white, light’

The aim of this paper is to investigate the membership of the adjective class in Jinghpaw, a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in northern Burma and adjacent areas of China and India. This paper shows that, based on their syntactic property, Jinghpaw has a small closed class of adjectives, consisting of no more than the dozen members given below (Section 3). This is in contrast to the treatment in previous studies, which regarded the Jinghpaw adjective class as a large category (Section 2).

(2) Adjectives in Jinghpaw¹

DIMENSION	<i>gəbà</i> ‘big,’ <i>gəjì</i> ‘small,’ <i>gəlù</i> ‘long,’ <i>gədùn</i> ‘short’
AGE	<i>ñnan</i> ‘new,’ <i>dìṅsà</i> ‘old’
VALUE	<i>gəja</i> ‘good’
COLOR	<i>caŋ</i> ‘black,’ <i>phrò</i> ‘white,’ <i>khyey</i> ‘red,’ <i>tsit</i> ‘green’

This paper also investigates the way in which semantic types of adjectives are lexicalized in Jinghpaw, showing that Jinghpaw adjectives fall into the four core semantic types of adjectives in Dixon (1977/1982), which are likely to be expressed as adjectives irrespective of the size of adjective classes (Section 4). Cross-linguistically, the two func-

¹ Jinghpaw does not have a word denoting ‘bad,’ which is not unusual in Mainland Southeast Asia.

tions of adjectives are predication and modification, that is, both predicative and adnominal use. This also holds for Jinghpaw adjectives, which we will elaborate on in Section 5 below.

2 Previous studies

The “adjective” class is one of the controversial categories among Jinghpaw grammars. For Hanson (1896), “adjectives” refer to adnominals, including not only (a) words with property concepts but also (b) demonstratives, (c) numerals, (d) lexical quantifiers, and (e) nouns modifying other nouns, as given in (3), thus constituting quite a large class with many members.

(3) Adjectives in Hanson (1896: 31–9)

- a. *gəbà* ‘big,’ *gəlù* ‘long,’ *gəja* ‘good,’ *diŋ* ‘straight,’ *tsòm* ‘beautiful,’ etc.
- b. *nday* ‘this,’ *day* ‘that,’ *thórà* ‘that up there,’ etc.
- c. *ləŋây* ‘one,’ *ləkhôŋ* ‘two,’ *məsum* ‘three,’ etc.
- d. *yòŋ* ‘all,’ *nlay* ‘all,’ *ɕəgù* ‘every’
- e. *màysàk* ‘teak,’ *myèn* ‘Burmese,’ *sìnp ró?* ‘east,’ etc.

This classification, however, is problematic in that outside of adnominal uses these words do not behave in the same way either morphologically or syntactically. For example, the negative prefix *ń-* can directly be added to items in (3a) in contrast to those in (3b) to (3e), to which the prefix cannot be added (e.g., *ń-gəbà* ‘not big,’ **ń-nday*, **ń-ləŋây*, **ń-yòŋ*, **ń-màysàk*). Also, items in (3a) cannot head an NP, while items in (3b) to (3e) can head an NP functioning as an argument of a clause. Compare the elicited examples given in (4).

(4) *ɕi nday / ləŋây / yòŋ / màysàk / *gəbà =phé? məri=ʔay.*

3sg this / one / all / teak / big =ACC buy=DECL

‘He bought this / one / all / teaks / *big.’

For Liu (ed. 1984), Dai and Xu (1992), and Dai (2012), 形容詞 *xíngróngcí* “adjectives” are a large class consisting of members with typical property and state concepts as given in (5). In addition to words in (2), “adjective” in their studies includes words having the semantic categories of (a) physical property, (b) human propensity, (c) speed, (d) difficulty, (e) qualification, (f) quantification, (g) position, etc. Dai and Xu (1992: 94) and Dai (2012: 116) note that 194 adjectives have simple-causative pairs.

(5) Adjectives in Dai and Xu (1992: 87–95) and Dai (2012: 111–7)

- a. *jàʔ* ‘hard,’ *kyà* ‘soft,’ *thàt* ‘thick,’ *tsaŋ* ‘light,’ *khá* ‘bitter,’ *dùy* ‘sweet,’ *gəthèt* ‘hot,’ *gətsì* ‘cool,’ *gəɕuŋ* ‘cold,’ etc.
- b. *diŋman* ‘honest,’ *gəbu* ‘happy,’ *lèt* ‘mindful,’ *dzèt* ‘energetic,’ etc.
- c. *ləwan* ‘fast,’ *caŋ* ‘hurry,’ etc.
- d. *yàk* ‘difficult,’ etc.
- e. *ɕút* ‘incorrect,’ etc.
- f. *lóʔ* ‘many,’ etc.
- g. *tsò* ‘high,’ etc.

A shortcoming of their studies, which are semantic-based, is that they do not provide a definition of adjectives. Dai and Xu (1992) and Dai (2012) point out that adjectives and verbs share many common properties (see Section 3.2 below), but they treat adjectives as a word class distinct from verbs. They state the properties in (6), which they claim differentiate adjectives from verbs.

(6) Differentiating properties of adjectives in Dai and Xu (1992: 88–9)

- a. Adjectives, when used as predicates, cannot take the imperative mood marker, unlike verbs.
- b. Adjectives cannot take the prohibitive adverb *khùm*, unlike verbs.
- c. Adjectives cannot take objects while transitive verbs can.
- d. Adjectives, when used adnominally, can modify the nominal head in post-nominal position.

These properties are problematic in many respects. The properties (6a) and (6b) come down to the same thing: adjectives cannot occur in a command, whether positive or negative. This property, however, is shared by other words that do not code property concepts, such as *si* ‘die,’ *roŋ* ‘be in,’ and *ʔmaŋ* ‘dream,’ that Dai and Xu (1992) treat as verbs. To illustrate this, consider imperatives, which are formed by means of an imperative mood marker =ʔùʔ, and prohibitives, which are formed by means of a prohibitive adverb *khùm*.

(7) Imperatives and prohibitives

Forms	Meanings	Imperative	Prohibitive	Word classes in Dai and Xu (1992)
gəbà	‘big’	*gəbà=ʔùʔ	*khùm gəbà	adjective
gəbu	‘happy’	*gəbu=ʔùʔ	*khùm gəbu	adjective
si	‘die’	*si=ʔùʔ	*khùm si	verb
roŋ	‘be in’	*roŋ=ʔùʔ	*khùm roŋ	verb
sa	‘go’	sa=ʔùʔ	khùm sa	verb
gəlo	‘do’	gəlo=ʔùʔ	khùm gəlo	verb

The property (6c) also does not single out adjectives from verbs because it is shared by many words that are characterized as verbs in Dai and Xu (1992). Compare:

(8) Transitivity

Forms	Meanings	Transitive	Word classes in Dai and Xu (1992)
gəbà	‘big’	no	adjective
gəbu	‘happy’	no	adjective
si	‘die’	no	verb
sa	‘go’	no	verb
məri	‘buy’	yes	verb
gəlo	‘do’	yes	verb

The property (6d) is important in that it is not shared by verbs of Dai and Xu (1992). It should be noted, however, that not all adjectives in Dai and Xu share this property, as illustrated by (9). We will elaborate on this property in Section 3.

(9) Modification

Forms	Meanings	Modification	Word classes in Dai and Xu (1992)
gəbà	‘big’	yes	adjective
gəja	‘good’	yes	adjective
caŋ	‘black’	yes	adjective
gəbu	‘happy’	no	adjective
yàk	‘difficult’	no	adjective
lóʔ	‘many’	no	adjective

3 The adjective class in Jinghpaw

3.1 Defining adjectives

This paper identifies words syntactically having the ability to freely modify nominal heads without morphosyntactic marking as adjectives in Jinghpaw. The modifying role within an NP is one of the major properties of adjectives in the world's languages. Adjectives, as noted by Dai and Xu (1992), always follow the nominal head. Genuine adjectives with this modifying property are listed in (2) in Section 1. Examples:

- (10) a. *ɕəpre gəbà*
 bean big
 ‘big bean’
 b. *la gəja*
 man good
 ‘good man’
 c. *modo diŋsà*
 car old
 ‘old car’
 d. *ńtâ khyeŋ*
 house red
 ‘red house’

It is of importance to note that many of the “adjectives” adduced by Dai and Xu (1992) in fact do not show this modifying property. Many words in (5), as illustrated by (11), fail to satisfy the modifying criterion despite being regarded as “adjectives” in Dai and Xu (1992). For this reason, we will not treat these words as adjectives in the present paper.

- (11) a. **ɕəpre jàʔ*
 bean hard
 ‘hard bean’
 b. **la diŋman*
 man honest
 ‘honest man’

- c. **modo ləwan*
car fast
'fast car'
- d. **gà-sán yàk*
word-ask difficult
'difficult question'
- e. **gà-sì éút*
word-fruit incorrect
'incorrect words'
- f. **ítâ ló?*
house many
'many houses'

It should be noted that some property words other than genuine adjectives may also occur in the post-head position, as illustrated by (12a) and (13a). They cannot occur in this position freely, however, unlike adjectives, as can be seen in (12b) and (13b). Adjectives, by contrast, are not selective about their heads (e.g., *nàmsì gəbà* 'big fruit,' *nàmsì gəja* 'good fruit,' *nàmsì dɪŋsà* 'old fruit,' *nàmsì khyeŋ* 'red fruit').

- (12) a. *pù-khá*
intestine-bitter
'gallbladder'
- b. **nàmsì khá*
fruit bitter
- (13) a. *jùm-dùy*
salt-sweet
'sugar'
- b. **nàmsì dùy*
fruit sweet

This fact suggests that examples like (12a) and (13a) are compounds, not syntactic phrases, just like other noun-verb compounds in (14a–c). By contrast, examples like (10) are treated as syntactic phrases in this paper based on the fact that adjectives are not selective about the head they modify, suggesting that they are formed by syntactic operations. Examples like (10) are also distinguished from examples like (12a) and (13a)

in terms of idiomaticity: they are always compositional in meaning.

- (14) a. *gà-ɕədón*
word-measure
'example'
- b. *ɕàt-gəŋaw*
rice-fry
'fried rice'
- c. *ɕàn-jù*
meat-grill
'grilled meat'

3.2 The position of adjectives within word class

Jinghpaw adjectives, as noted by Dai and Xu (1992), share a number of properties with verbs, and are thus best treated as a subtype of verbs. Jinghpaw has two major word classes, nouns and verbs, that constantly acquire new members. Nouns are defined as words that can head an NP functioning as an argument of a clause, whereas verb are words that can be negated by the negative prefix. These are distinguishing properties that do not cross the boundaries of word classes in Jinghpaw.

(15) Distinguishing properties of nouns and verbs

- a. Nouns are those words that can head an NP, functioning as an argument of a verb.
- b. Verbs are those words that can be directly negated by the negative prefix.

Many nouns can also be pluralized by a plural marker and quantified by a numeral. The former property, however, is not shared by noun subtypes such as singular and dual personal pronouns (e.g., *ŋay* '1sg') and locator nouns (e.g., *phaŋ* 'after'), and the latter is not shared by noun subtypes such as numerals (e.g., *məsum* 'three') and postpositions (e.g., *məjò* 'because').² The following (16) summarizes the properties of major noun subtypes (Kurabe 2017: 998–9). The properties are tagged thus: [a] Can head an NP; [b] Can be pluralized by a plural marker; [c] Can be quantified by numerals; [d] Can be determined by pre-head demonstratives; [e] Can be determined by post-head demonstratives; [f] Can be modified by adjectives.

² This paper treats words such as *məjò* 'because' and *mətu* 'for' as postpositions. Their nounhood is evidenced by their ability to head NPs that function as arguments of verbs (Kurabe 2012).

(16) Noun subclasses and their properties

	[a]	[b]	[c]	[d]	[e]	[f]
common nouns	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
numerals	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no
demonstrative pronouns	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no
personal pronouns	yes	some	yes	no	no	no
interrogative pronouns	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no
locator nouns	yes	no	no	yes	no	no
postpositions	yes	no	no	yes	no	no

Verbs, except the copula verb *rê*, in addition to their negatability, can take aspect and mood marking. Adjectives, when functioning as predicates, also take a wide range of the same markings as other verb subtypes (Section 5.1). Gradability, such as degree, comparative, and superlative expressions that sometimes characterize adjectives as a distinct class in some languages, does not single out adjectives from other verb subtypes in Jinghpaw (Section 5.1). The following (17) summarizes the properties of verb subtypes, including adjectives. The properties are tagged thus: [a] Can be directly negated by the negative prefix; [b] Can take mood and aspect marking; [c] Can be intensified by degree expressions such as ‘very’ when semantically compatible; [d] Can function as predicates of comparative constructions when semantically compatible; [e] V with progressive marker gives progressive reading; [f] V with declarative marker gives past reading; [g] V with change-of-state marker gives inchoative reading; [h] Can syntactically modify a nominal head without morphosyntactic marking.

(17) Verb subclasses and their properties

	[a]	[b]	[c]	[d]	[e]	[f]	[g]	[h]
activity verbs	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no
stative verbs	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no
adjectives	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
achievement verbs	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no
accomplishment verbs	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no
copula verb <i>rê</i>	yes	no	no	no	n/a	n/a	n/a	no

4 Semantics of adjectives

Dixon (1977/1982) examines the way in which property concepts belonging to seven semantic types (dimension, age, value, color, speed, physical property, and human propensity) are lexicalized cross-linguistically, showing that four semantic types (dimension, age, value, and color) are likely to be lexicalized as adjectives in languages with small closed adjective classes. This tendency is replicated in our data of Jinghpaw adjectives, reproduced in (18) for ease of reference.

(18) Adjectives in Jinghpaw

DIMENSION	<i>gəbà</i> ‘big,’ <i>gəjì</i> ‘small,’ <i>gəlù</i> ‘long,’ <i>gədùn</i> ‘short’
AGE	<i>nnan</i> ‘new,’ <i>digsà</i> ‘old’
VALUE	<i>gəja</i> ‘good’
COLOR	<i>caŋ</i> ‘black,’ <i>phrò</i> ‘white,’ <i>khyeŋ</i> ‘red,’ <i>tsit</i> ‘green’

Dixon (1977/1982, 2004) also shows the cross-linguistic tendencies given in (19).

(19) Tendencies of how other typical adjectival concepts are coded (Dixon 2004: 4)

- a. PHYSICAL PROPERTY terms, if not in the adjective class, are generally in the verb class;
- b. HUMAN PROPENSITY terms, if not in the adjective class, may be in either the noun class or the verb class;
- c. SPEED terms tend to be in the adjective class if PHYSICAL PROPERTY terms are in this class, and in the adverb class if PHYSICAL PROPERTY terms are in the verb class.

Additional semantic types that may be coded as adjectives in some languages include: difficulty, similarity, qualification, quantification, position, and cardinal numbers (Dixon 1977/1982, 2004). Aside from adjectives, many of these adjectival concepts are lexicalized as stative verbs (sv.) in Jinghpaw, with some exceptions in semantic types such as similarity, quantification, and position, which are sometimes lexicalized as nouns (n.) in the language. Cardinal numbers are always coded as nouns in Jinghpaw (see 3.2). Consider:

(20) Lexicalization of adjectival concepts in Jinghpaw

- a. DIMENSION: *ləda* ‘be wide’ (sv.), *gyìp* ‘be narrow’ (sv.), *sùŋ* ‘be deep’ (sv.), *taŋ* ‘be shallow’ (sv.), *thàt* ‘be thick’ (sv.), *phà* ‘be thin’ (sv.)
- b. AGE: *dìŋla* ‘be old (males)’ (sv.), *dìŋgay* ‘be old (females)’ (sv.)
- c. VALUE: *jò* ‘be proper’ (sv.), *ʔəkhàk* ‘be important’ (sv.), *mu* ‘be tasty’ (sv.), *tsòm* ‘be beautiful’ (sv.)
- d. COLOR: *mùt* ‘be blue, bluish, gray, brown’ (sv.), *thòy* ‘be yellow, bright’ (sv.), *ʔmaŋ* ‘be purple, dark’ (sv.)
- e. PHYSICAL PROPERTY: *jàʔ* ‘be hard’ (sv.), *kyà* ‘be soft’ (sv.), *li* ‘be heavy’ (sv.), *tsaŋ* ‘be light’ (sv.), *ŋàŋ* ‘be strong’ (sv.), *dáy* ‘be sharp’ (sv.), *khróʔ* ‘be dry’ (sv.), *mədi* ‘be wet’ (sv.), *sàn-séŋ* ‘be clean’ (sv.), *gəthət* ‘be hot’ (sv.), *lum* ‘be warm’ (sv.), *gəçùŋ* ‘be cold’ (sv.), *khri* ‘be sour’ (sv.), *dùŋ* ‘be sweet’ (sv.), *khá* ‘be bitter’ (sv.), *jàp* ‘be spicy’ (sv.), *çum* ‘be salty’ (sv.)
- f. HUMAN PROPENSITY: *gəbu* ‘be happy, glad’ (sv.), *pyo* ‘be happy’ (sv.), *dìŋ-man* ‘be honest’ (sv.), *ləgòn* ‘be lazy’ (sv.), *sú* ‘be clever’ (sv.), *məna* ‘be mad’ (sv.), *yòn* ‘be sad’ (sv.), *gùmrón* ‘be proud’ (sv.), *lèt* ‘be mindful’ (sv.), *dzèt* ‘be energetic’ (sv.)
- g. SPEED: *ləwan* ‘be fast’ (sv.), *ləʔnyàn* ‘be slow’ (sv.)
- h. DIFFICULTY: *lòy* ‘be easy’ (sv.), *yàk* ‘be difficult, hard, tough’ (sv.)
- i. SIMILARITY: *búŋ* ‘be similar’ (sv.), *gəga* ‘different, other’ (n.)
- j. QUALIFICATION: *tèŋ* ‘be true’ (sv.), *jò* ‘be correct’ (sv.), *thúk* ‘be appropriate’ (sv.), *çút* ‘be incorrect’ (sv.),
- k. QUANTIFICATION: *lóʔ* ‘be many’ (sv.), *kəcí* ‘be few’ (sv.), *ram* ‘be enough’ (sv.), *yòŋ* ‘all’ (n.), *nkaw* ‘some’ (n.)
- l. POSITION: *tsò* ‘be high’ (sv.), *nəm* ‘be low’ (sv.), *tsàn* ‘be far’ (sv.), *ni* ‘be close’ (sv.), *khra* ‘right’ (n.), *pay* ‘left’ (n.), *dìŋdúŋ* ‘northern’ (n.)
- m. CARDINAL NUMBERS: *ləŋây* ‘one’ (n.), *ləkhôŋ* ‘two’ (n.), *məsum* ‘three’ (n.)

5 Syntax of adjectives

Cross-linguistically, the two main functions of adjectives are predication and modification, as they are used both predicatively and adnominally. This also holds for Jinghpaw adjectives, on which we will elaborate in the following subsections.

5.1 Adjectives as predicates

Adjectives can function as intransitive predicates. They can take the same range of mood markings (declarative, interrogative, optative, etc.) as other verb types, except those for imperative, prohibitive, and hortative, due to their stative semantic nature. As an illustration, consider the predicate in (21) headed by an adjective *gəlù* ‘be long’ with the declarative mood marker *=ʔay*.

- (21) *num-ɕà day=gò kərá=má grày gəlù=ʔay=dàʔ.*
 female-person that=TOP hair=also very be.long=DECL=HS
 ‘The hair of that woman is also very long, it’s said.’

Adjectives also take a wide range of markings associated with verbs, being able to take negation, causative, and aspect marking. Adjectives are negated by directly adding the negative prefix *n̄-* ~ *n-* in the same way as other types of verbs.

(22) Negation of verb subtypes

activity verbs	sa	‘go’	n-sa	‘not go’
stative verbs	si	‘die’	n-si	‘not die’
adjectives	caŋ	‘be black’	n-caŋ	‘not be black’
achievement verbs	gàʔ	‘be broken’	n̄-gàʔ	‘not be broken’
accomplishment verbs	khróʔ	‘dry’	n̄-khróʔ	‘not dry’
copula verb	rê	‘be’	n̄-rê	‘not be’

Adjectives, like other types of verbs, can be causativized by means of the causative prefix *ɕə-*, which is deaspirated to *jə-* before aspirates (Kurabe 2018). Adjectives, as intransitive verbs, become derived transitive verbs.

(23) Causativization of verb subtypes

activity verbs	khom	‘walk’	jə-khom	‘let walk around’
stative verbs	khá	‘be bitter’	jə-khá	‘make bitter’
adjectives	caŋ	‘be black’	ɕə-caŋ	‘blacken’
achievement verbs	gàʔ	‘be broken’	ɕə-gàʔ	‘break’
accomplishment verbs	khróʔ	‘dry’	jə-khróʔ	‘dry’
copula verb	rê	‘be’	n/a	

Adjectives can take various kinds of aspect marking. The change-of-state aspect *s-* is used to mark a recent change of state, whether the onset or endpoint. The aspect marking typically encodes an inchoative meaning when the situation is atelic, while it encodes termination when the situation is telic. Adjectives are atelic verbs, and thus the beginning of an action or coming into a state is indicated with the change-of-state aspect marker. Example (24) marks the situation where the speaker is coming into the state of being old.

- (24) *yáʔ=gò ñay gəbà=s-ay=gò.*
 now=TOP 1sg be.big=CSM-DECL=SFP
 ‘Now I have become old.’

The continuous-resultative aspect encodes the continuity, resultativity, or habituality of an action or a state. In the case of achievement verbs, often a sentence is ambiguous between the continuity and resultativity interpretations, e.g., *ciŋkha phòʔ=to=ʔay* (door open=CONT=DECL) ‘The door is open; the door is opening.’ When marked with this aspect marker, adjectives marks the continuity of a state.

- (25) *naŋ=gò ñsén grày gəbà=to=ʔay.*
 2sg=TOP voice very be.big=CONT=DECL
 ‘Your voice is being very loud.’

The completive aspect is employed to mark the completion of an action or state. Adjectives are compatible with it, which marks the completion of the change of state.

- (26) *jàn grày jàʔ=ná càn caŋ=màt=ʔay.*
 sun very be.strong=SEQ skin be.black=COMPL=DECL
 ‘The sun was strong and their skins became black.’

Gradability, which singles out adjectives in some languages, does not discriminate between adjectives and other types of verbs in Jinghpaw. Gradability is manifested by degree expressions and by comparative and superlative expressions. Adjectives are intensified by degree expressions such as *grày* ‘very’ and *nàw* ‘too much’, which are also compatible with other verb subtypes, as illustrated by the elicited examples in (27):

- (27) a. *çi=gò nàw gəbà=ʔay.*
 3sg=TOP too.much be.big=DECL
 ‘He is too big.’

- b. *ɛi=gò nàw gəgàt=ʔay.*
 3sg=TOP too.much run=DECL
 ‘He ran too much.’

Adjectives can function as predicates of comparative constructions, where the locative case *=thàʔ* marks the standard of comparison. The comparative formation is not exclusive to adjectives. Observe the syntactic parallelism between comparative constructions in (28), where both states and actions are compared in exactly the same way.

- (28) a. *ɛi=gò ɲay=thàʔ graw gəbà=ʔay.*
 3sg=TOP 1sg=LOC more be.big=DECL
 ‘He is bigger than I.’
 b. *ɛi=gò ɲay=thàʔ graw gəgàt=ʔay.*
 3sg=TOP 1sg=LOC more run=DECL
 ‘He ran more than I.’

Adjectives can also function as predicates of superlative constructions. The construction is formed by means of an auxiliary *thùm* following the adjective, the resulting structure of which functions as a noun, followed by a copula. Other verb types also admit the superlative formation, which thus does not single out adjectives.

- (29) a. *ɛi=gò gəbà=thùm rê.*
 3sg=TOP be.big=SUPER COP
 ‘He is the biggest.’
 b. *ɛi=gò gəgàt=thùm rê.*
 3sg=TOP run=SUPER COP
 ‘He ran the most.’

5.2 Adjectives as modifiers

Adjectives, as demonstrated in Section 3.1, can modify a nominal head, occurring in the post-head position without any morphosyntactic marking, as in (30a). Adjectives can also modify a nominal head in the form of a nominalized (relative) clause that usually occurs in the pre-head position with a nominalizer, as in (30b). The latter is the common strategy of modification of other verb types.

- (30) a. *pəlon phrò*
 shirt white
 ‘white shirt’
 b. [*phrò=?ay*] *pəlon*
 white=NMLZ shirt
 ‘shirt that is white’
 c. *nday pəlon phrò=?ay.*
 this shirt white=DECL
 ‘This shirt is white.’

The difference between the pre- and post-nominal occurrences of adjectives is that the former primarily has a predicative function, sharing a number of properties with the predicate of a sentence such as (30c). The latter, by contrast, is modifying in its function and lacks many properties of the predicate of a sentence, as demonstrated by (31) to (33). A preposed adjective can take an argument, auxiliaries, and adverbs, as in (31b), (32b), and (33b), just like the predicate of a sentence, as in (31a), (32a), and (33a). A postposed adjective, on the other hand, does not have this property, as demonstrated by (31c), (32c), and (33c).

- (31) a. *nday pəlon=gò lətá? phrò=?ay.*
 this shirt=TOP hand white=DECL
 ‘As for this shirt, its sleeves are white.’
 b. [*lətá? phrò=?ay*] *pəlon*
 hand white=NMLZ shirt
 ‘shirt whose sleeves are white’
 c. **pəlon lətá? phrò*
 shirt hand white
- (32) a. *nday pəlon=gò phrò=to=?ay.*
 this shirt=TOP white=CONT=DECL
 ‘This shirt is being white.’
 b. [*phrò=to=?ay*] *pəlon*
 white=CONT=NMLZ shirt
 ‘shirt that is being white’
 c. **pəlon phrò=to*
 shirt white=CONT

- (33) a. *nday pəloŋ=gò grày phrò=?ay.*
 this shirt=TOP very white=DECL
 ‘This shirt is very white.’
 b. [*grày phrò=?ay*] *pəloŋ*
 very white=NMLZ shirt
 ‘shirt that is very white’
 c. **pəloŋ grày phrò*
 shirt very white

6 Conclusions

This paper investigated the membership of the adjective class in Jinghpaw, showing that the language has a small closed class of adjectives consisting of no more than a dozen members, such as *gəbà* ‘big,’ *dɪŋsà* ‘old,’ *gəja* ‘good,’ and *phrò* ‘white.’ Unlike previous studies that treated adjectives as a large class based mainly on their semantics, the present study showed that Jinghpaw adjectives comprise only a few members based on the fact that only they have the ability to syntactically freely modify nominal heads without morphosyntactic marking. This property is not shared by many other words naming property concepts, many of which were treated as “adjectives” in previous studies.

This paper further investigated Jinghpaw adjectives in terms of word class, semantics, and syntax. In terms of word classes, Jinghpaw adjectives can be best treated as a subtype of verbs because they share a number of properties with other verbs, including negatability, mood and aspect marking, and semantic compatibility with degree expressions. In terms of semantics, Jinghpaw adjectives fall into the four core semantic types of adjectives (i.e., dimension, age, value, color) that adjectives in languages with small adjective classes tend to have (Dixon 1977/1982). Other semantic types, such as physical property, human propensity, speed, difficulty, similarity, qualification, quantification, and position, tend to be lexicalized as stative verbs in the language. In terms of syntax, Jinghpaw adjectives exhibit predication and modification functions, which are cross-linguistically common functions of adjectives. Jinghpaw adjectives can function as intransitive predicates, taking the same range of mood marking as other verbs when semantically compatible. Like other verbs, they can take negation, causative, and aspect marking. Adjectives can modify a nominal head in the post-head position without morphosyntactic marking. They can also modify a nominal head through a grammati-

cal nominalization that usually occurs in the pre-head position with a nominalizer. The difference between pre- and post-nominal modification is that the former primarily has a predicative function in contrast to the latter, which is modifying in its function.

Symbols and abbreviations

-	morpheme boundary	COP	copula verb
=	clitic boundary	CSM	change-of-state marker
[]	nominalized clause boundary	DECL	declarative
1	first person	HS	hearsay
2	second person	LOC	locative
3	third person	NMLZ	nominalizer
sg	singular	SEQ	sequential
ACC	accusative	SFP	sentence-final particle
COMPL	completive	SUPER	superlative
CONT	continuous	TOP	topic

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形容詞はどこへ行ったか？ ジンポー語の事例

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要旨

形容詞類のサイズは言語ごとに異なる。本稿では、ジンポー語形容詞類のメンバーシップを検討し、ジンポー語が 1 ダースを超えないメンバーからなる小規模な閉じたクラスの形容詞類を持つことを示す。加えて、フィールドワークにより蒐集した一次資料に基づきながら、ジンポー語形容詞を品詞論、意味論、統語論の観点から検討する。品詞の観点からは、否定辞付加可能性、ムード・アスペクト標示などの点で、形容詞類が動詞類に観察される多くの特徴を示すことから、ジンポー語形容詞類は動詞類のサブタイプとして位置づけることができることを述べる。意味論的観点からは、ジンポー語形容詞は「大きさ」「新しさ」「価値」「色」という形容詞の 4 つの典型的な意味タイプに収まることを示すと同時に、この言語においてはほかの属性概念が状態動詞として語彙化されていることを指摘する。統語的観点からは、ジンポー語形容詞が叙述と修飾の両機能を持つことを示すと同時に、その形態統語的特徴を検討する。

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