

Contact Induced Variation and Syntactic Change in the Tsat of Hainan

Author(s): Graham Thurgood and Fengxiang Li

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## **Contact induced variation and syntactic change in the Tsat of Hainan**

GRAHAM THURGOOD and FENGXIANG LI  
*California State University, Chico*

### Introduction

Tsat is an Austronesian language located on Hainan Island. The 1982 census lists 4131 Utsat people largely in the villages of Huihuī and Huixīn near Sānyá on Hainan Island (which has recently been designated as a province), 3849 of whom still speak Tsat. Virtually all the Tsat speakers also speak one or more Chinese dialects, typically Fukienese or Cantonese, the languages of business, and Mandarin, the language of school.

Genetically the closest language to Tsat is the Northern Roglai of Vietnam, a Chamic language (Austronesian) which it split off from first around 982, with a second migration probably around 1471. Despite the genetic closeness, Tsat is now radically different both phonologically and syntactically from N. Roglai. Phonologically, Northern Roglai is sesquisyllabic and atonal whereas Tsat is monosyllabic and fully tonal. Structurally, Northern Roglai is much, much more like the other Chamic languages of Vietnam which, in turn resemble the Mon-Khmer languages of the region, while Tsat, not surprisingly, is much like the Chinese dialects that surround it. Increasingly, all that remains of Tsat is the vocabulary, with the structure being Chinese, albeit with Tsat lexical items. Thus Tsat provides some exceptionally clear examples of contact-induced syntactic variation and change. Work has been done on genetic affiliations of Tsat (Benedict 1941), the history of the Chamic languages including Tsat (e.g. Thurgood 1999, 1996), and on the description of Tsat itself, Ouyang and Zheng (1983), Zheng (1986, 1997), with the later work by Zheng including numerous valuable observations on the influence of Chinese on Tsat, both identifying Chinese borrowings and commenting on Chinese structural influence.

### Tsat contact

Changes in Tsat resulting from contact with neighboring languages of Hainan are quite obvious. Phonologically, it has gone from sesquisyllabic and registral to monosyllabic and tonal. Lexically, it contains four layers of borrowings reflecting contact patterns since the Tsat arrival in Hainan: a Hlai (= Li) strata, an early Chinese level reflecting early contact with speakers of Min

dialects such as Hainanese and various Cantonese dialects, a later layer of contact with the Mandarin spoken by the army and officials, and most recently the Mandarin of the schools. The intensity of the last layer of contact looks to have initiated rapid and through restructuring of the language.

Here we will restrict our examination to four constructions with extant variation, two involving word orders that do not correlate with VO order (Dryer 1992) and two involving word orders that do correlate: genitive constructions, demonstratives and head nouns, adjectives and head nouns, and comparative constructions. All show the structural influence of Chinese.

#### Genitive (“associative”) constructions

The genitive patterns have been divided into those with full noun phrases as the genitive and those involving pronouns, reflecting the differences in their historical paths of change.

#### Genitives with full noun phrases

In Northern Roglai full NPs are postposed. In Tsat, even in the most colloquial, non-Sinicized texts, full GenNPs already show Chinese influence: all full genitive NPs are preposed with the genitive construction marked by *sa*<sup>33</sup>. In the case of locative NPs, the preposed NPs look to be developing into prepositions. Elsewhere, the genitive marker is a marker of pre-head modification.

- |     |  |  |                 |
|-----|--|--|-----------------|
|     | Northern Roglai:   | Nh GENNP                                 |                 |
| (1) | <i>ga?</i> <i>sa:k</i>   |  |                 |
|     | roof    house  |  |                 |
|     | ‘the roof of the house’  |  | (Lee 1966:65)   |
|     | Tsat (colloquial):   | GENNP <i>sa</i> <sup>33</sup> Nh         |                 |
| (2) | <i>ʔa<sup>11</sup>ʔba<sup>11</sup></i>   | <i>sa<sup>33</sup> sa:ŋ<sup>33</sup></i> |                 |
|     | father’s.older.brother   | GEN house                                |                 |
|     | <i>bófū</i>  | <i>de fángzi</i>                         |                 |
|     | <i>bófū de fángzi</i>  |  |                 |
|     | ‘father’s eldest brother’s house.’   |  | (Zheng 1997:70) |
| (3) | <i>ʔia<sup>33</sup>ʔbe<sup>24</sup></i> <i>sa<sup>33</sup> ka:n<sup>33</sup></i> |  |                 |
|     | river            GEN fish  |  |                 |
|     | <i>hélǐ</i> <i>de yú</i>   |  |                 |
|     | <i>hélǐ de yú</i>  |  |                 |
|     | ‘the fish in the river’  |  | (Zheng 1997:71) |

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- (4) ...*piat*<sup>33</sup> *sa*<sup>33</sup> *za:ŋ*<sup>42</sup>  
 ...village GEN person  
 ...*cūn de rén*  
 ...*cūn de rén*  
 ‘people of the village...’ (Zheng 1997:95)
- Tsat (Mandarinized with *ti*<sup>33</sup>) GENNP *ti*<sup>33</sup> HeadNP  
 -the same pattern with the genitive borrowed from Mandarin
- (5) *tan*<sup>33</sup> *k<sup>h</sup>ua*<sup>55</sup> *ti*<sup>33</sup> *si<sup>l</sup>ha:u*<sup>42</sup>, *la*<sup>33</sup> *piat*<sup>33</sup> *sa*<sup>33</sup> *za:ŋ*<sup>42</sup>  
 arrive daybreak GEN after under village GEN person  
*dào tiānliàng de shǐhòu xià cūn de rén*  
*dì'èrtiān tiānliàng shǐhòu, cūnlǐ de nánrén hé nǚrén...*  
 ‘Early the next morning, the villagers...’ (Zheng 1997:4.1.4)
- (6) *sui*<sup>11</sup>*tso*<sup>42</sup> *kai*<sup>42</sup>*kak*<sup>24</sup> *k<sup>h</sup>a:i*<sup>33</sup>*p<sup>h</sup>a:ŋ*<sup>33</sup> *ti*<sup>33</sup> *sin*<sup>33</sup>*zit*<sup>24</sup>  
 along.with reform bloom GEN penetrate  
*suizhe gǎigé kāifàng de shēnrù*  
*suizhe gǎigé kāifàng de shēnrù*  
 ‘As the Reform and Open-door policies continue...’ (Zheng 1997:3.3.3)
- Mandarin: Poss *de* NP
- (7) *duìzhǎng de érzi*  
 captain GEN child  
 ‘the captain’s son’ (Zheng 1997:71)
- (8) *lǎoshī de shū*  
 teacher GEN book  
 ‘the teacher’s books’ (Zheng 1997:71)

In the genitives, as with the other constructions, the more Mandarinized variants tend to co-occur with borrowed Mandarin grammatical markers (which in some cases seem to mark the construction), tend to have more Mandarin borrowings in the sentence (marked in this paper through the underlining of both the borrowed Tsat term and its corresponding Mandarin (in Pinyin)), and, if one examines the texts, occur in the more Mandarinized texts. For instance, the text on the origin of the Tsat has less Mandarin influence than does the text describing the Japanese invasion of Hainan with its Mandarin influenced political content.

Table 1: Noun modification: Genitives (full NPs)

	simple modification	prehead <i>sa</i> <sup>33</sup> pattern
N. Roglai	Nh GENNP	_____
Colloquial Tsat	_____	GENNP <i>sa</i> <sup>33</sup> Nh
Mandarinized Tsat	_____	GENNP <i>ti</i> <sup>33</sup> Nh
Mandarin	_____	GENNP <i>de</i> Nh

In the case of full noun phrases, the Northern Roglai post-head genitives have been totally replaced by Chinese-influenced prehead genitive constructions. Nonetheless, contact has resulted in variation as the colloquial pattern uses a Tsat genitive marker while the Mandarinized pattern uses a borrowed genitive marker. Both patterns show the structural influence of Chinese.

## Genitives with pronouns

- Northern Roglai: Nh GENPr
- (9) *sa:k hã*  
house you  
'your house' (Lee 1966:65)
- Tsat (colloquial): Nh GENPr
- (10) *ŋa:n<sup>33</sup> kau<sup>33</sup> ki<sup>24</sup>*  
hand I painful  
*shǒu wǒ tòng*  
*wǒ de shǒu tòng*  
'My hand hurts.' (Zheng 1997:97)
- (11) *ko<sup>24</sup>bu<sup>24</sup> nau<sup>33</sup> sa<sup>24</sup>*  
head.hair she messy  
*tóufa tā luàn*  
*tā de tóufa luàn*  
'Her hair is messy.' (Zheng 1997:92)
- Tsat (Chinese influenced, with *sa*<sup>33</sup>)
- (12) *nau<sup>33</sup> sa<sup>33</sup> ko<sup>24</sup>bu<sup>24</sup> sa<sup>24</sup>*  
she GEN head.hair messy  
*tā de tóufa luàn*  
'Her hair is messy.' (Zheng 1997:97)

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- (13) *ha*<sup>33</sup> *sa*<sup>33</sup> *ʔa*<sup>11</sup>*sa*<sup>11</sup> *sa*<sup>33</sup> *ha*<sup>33</sup>  
 you GEN o.bro.wife seek you  
*nĩ de səo zǎo nĩ*  
 ‘Elder brother’s wife seeks you.’ (Zheng 1997:87)
- Mandarin: GENPr Nh  
 (14) *wǒ fùqin shì tā bófū*  
 I father be he uncle  
 ‘My father is his uncle.’ (Zheng 1997:77)
- GENPr *de* Nh  
 (15) *wǒ de shǒu tòng*  
 I GEN hand painful  
 ‘My hand hurts.’ (Zheng 1997:97)

Table 2: Noun modification : Genitives (pronouns)

	simple modification	prehead <i>sa</i> <sup>33</sup> pattern
N. Roglai	Nh GENPr	_____
Colloquial Tsat	Nh GENPr	_____
Mandarinized Tsat	_____	Pr <i>sa</i> <sup>33</sup> Nh
Mandarin	Pr Nh	Pr <i>de</i> Nh

Demonstratives and head nouns

Like adjectives, demonstratives are postposed in Northern Roglai and the colloquial Tsat, but preposed in Chinese-influenced Tsat and Mandarin. In the Chinese-influenced Tsat, however, the demonstratives are often accompanied by a genitive marker, a pattern that matches the adjective plus genitive construction immediately above, a construction that reflects Mandarin influence.

Northern Roglai:

- (16) *sa:k gheŋ ʔunĩ*  
 house big this  
 ‘this big house’ (Lee 1966:65)
- (17) *dua ia:k labu? ʔaŋa? sia:p ñũ ʔanĩ la sa:k*  
 two person plural child good he this in house  
 ‘these two children of his in the new house’ (Lee 1966:66)

- (18) Tsat:  
*ʔai<sup>33</sup> ni<sup>33</sup> sat<sup>24</sup> ʔan<sup>33</sup>*  
 water this truly cold  
*shǔi zhè zhēn lěng*  
*zhè shǔi zhēn lěng*  
 ‘This water is very cold.’ (Zheng 1997:84)
- (19) Tsat (Chinese influenced) (this + GEN) + clf  
*ni<sup>33</sup> sa<sup>33</sup> ta<sup>11</sup> p<sup>h</sup>an<sup>32</sup> pi<sup>11</sup>kiau<sup>33</sup> lu<sup>33</sup>*  
 this GEN one clf CM much  
*zhè de yī fēn bǐjiǎo duō*  
 ‘This portion is bigger.’ (Zheng 1997:75)
- (20) Mandarin this + clf  
*zhè lù...*  
 this road  
 ‘This road...’ (Zheng 1997:75)
- (21) *zhè shǔi...*  
 this water...  
 ‘This water...’ (Zheng 1997:84)
- (22) -the classifier version  
*zhè ge dà fángzi*  
 this CLF big house  
 ‘this big house’

Needless to say, the demonstrative-noun order is a result of Chinese contact. This word order change induced by extensive and prolonged contact with Chinese is quite systematic and pervasive throughout the grammatical system of Tsat. It is found in texts collected from the same speaker by Zheng Yiqing in the 80s published in Zheng (1997). It is interesting to note that the borrowed patterns are found in texts that describe more recent phenomena, whereas the native patterns are used in texts of traditional stories.

Table 3: Noun modification: Demonstratives

	simple modification	prehead <i>sa<sup>33</sup></i> pattern
N. Roglai	Nh Dem	_____
Colloquial Tsat	Nh Dem	_____
Mandarinized Tsat	_____	Dem <i>sa<sup>33</sup></i> Nh
Mandarin	Dem Nh	Dem CLF Nh

Adjectives and head nouns

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N. Roglai has postposed adjectives as does the colloquial Tsat, while the Mandarinized Tsat and Mandarin itself have preposed adjectives.

- N. Roglai: postposed adjectives
- (23) *sa:k ghey ?uni*  
house big this  
'this big house' (Lee 1966:65)
- Tsat: postposed adjectives
- (24) *na<sup>11</sup>tsun<sup>33</sup> pioŋ<sup>ʔ2</sup> poi<sup>24</sup>*  
bird big say  
*niǎo dà shuō*  
'The big bird said:...'  
(Zheng 1997:1.1.9)
- (25) *t<sup>h</sup>un<sup>33</sup>zau<sup>33</sup> pioŋ<sup>ʔ2</sup> siŋ<sup>ʔ2</sup>liang<sup>11</sup>*  
tree big relax.in.cool.place  
*shù dà xiēliáng*  
*dà shù xià xiūxi de*  
relaxed under a big tree (Zheng 1997:1.2.21)
- Tsat (Mandarin-influenced) preposed adjectives
- (26) *hu<sup>11</sup>tsa:n<sup>ʔ2</sup> mi<sup>33</sup> san<sup>11</sup> na:i<sup>ʔ2</sup> sin<sup>33</sup> na:i<sup>ʔ2</sup> pa:u<sup>33</sup>, ...*  
Tsat we believe good heart good reward  
*Huízú wǒmen xìn hǎo xīn hǎo bào*  
*wǒmen Huízú rén xiāngxìn hǎo xīn de rén yídìng dédào hǎo bào...*  
'We Tsat people believe that people with kind hearts will be rewarded...'  
(Zheng 1997:4.2.1)
- (27) *...kiu<sup>33</sup> san<sup>33</sup>*  
...old village  
*...jiù cūn*  
*...jiù cūn*  
'... the old village' (Zheng 1997:2.1.1)
- preposed with *sa<sup>33</sup>*, a calque on Mandarin *de*
- (28) *na:i<sup>ʔ2</sup> sa<sup>33</sup> san<sup>33</sup>huat<sup>24</sup>*  
good GEN life  
*hǎo de shēnghuó*  
*hǎo de shēnghuó*  
'(the) good life' (Zheng 1997:2.1.10)
- Mandarin
- (29) *dà niǎo shuō*  
big bird say



‘The big bird said:’ (Zheng 1997:1.1.9)

-preposed with *de*, a ‘genitive’ marker

(30) *hǎo de shēnghuó*

good GEN life

‘(the) good life’

(Zheng 1997:2.1.10)

Note that under the influence of Chinese, the preposed adjectives of Tsat are often accompanied by a genitive marker (or, as Li and Thompson (1981:113-116) term it, an “associative” marker).

Table 4: Noun modification: Adjectives

	simple modification	prehead <i>sa</i> <sup>33</sup> pattern
N. Roglai	Nh Adj	_____
Colloquial Tsat	Nh Adj	_____
Mandarinized Tsat	Adj Nh	Adj <i>sa</i> <sup>33</sup> Nh
Mandarin	Adj Nh	Adj <i>de</i> Nh

The spread of the *sa*<sup>33</sup> construction

The *sa*<sup>33</sup> construction is a calque on the Mandarin *de* construction illustrated throughout this paper: X *sa*<sup>33</sup>/*de* NP, in which the first element (X) modifies the final NP. This construction, marked by *sa*<sup>33</sup>, is expanding in use. Its initial use appears to have been with preposed genitive NPs involving full NPs and then expanded to other parts of the grammar. The three constructions already discussed show this movement from posthead to prehead using the *sa*<sup>33</sup> construction (see Table 5).

Table 5: Noun modification: Spread of the *sa*<sup>33</sup> construction

	Genitive NP	Genitive pr	Dem	Adj
N. Roglai	Nh NP	Nh Pr	Nh Dem	Nh Adj
Colloquial Tsat	NP <i>sa</i> <sup>33</sup> Nh	Nh Pr	Nh Dem	Nh Adj
Mandarinized Tsat	NP <i>sa</i> <sup>33</sup> Nh	Pr <i>sa</i> <sup>33</sup> Nh	Dem <i>sa</i> <sup>33</sup> Nh	Adj Nh Adj <i>sa</i> <sup>33</sup> Nh
Mandarin		Pr Nh	Dem Nh	Adj Nh
	NP <i>de</i> Nh	Pr <i>de</i> Nh	Dem clf Nh	GENNP <i>de</i> Nh

For full NP genitives, the older Northern Roglai postposed NPs have been completely replaced by preposed NPs using the *sa*<sup>33</sup> construction; for genitive

pronouns, the older postposed genitive pronouns are still used in more colloquial contexts, but in more Mandarinized speech these are now preposed. For demonstratives, the situation is more complex. All demonstratives were postposed in Northern Roglai and tend to retain this posthead position in the more colloquial Tsat. However, in the more Mandarinized speech demonstratives are variably preposed through the use of the *sa*<sup>33</sup> construction. The distribution between the postposed and the preposed with *sa*<sup>33</sup> variants appears to correlate albeit only loosely with both the register and the type of NP involved. Adjectives were postposed in Northern Roglai, are postposed in the more colloquial Tsat contexts, and even in the most Mandarinized Tsat texts still remain postposed some of the time, at other times being preposed using the *sa*<sup>33</sup> construction. The use of this pattern has expanded beyond the examples in this paper to include prehead relative clauses, a construction highly marked highly marked for an SVO language like Tsat.

#### Comparative constructions

The existence of contact-induced word order variation is obvious in the two distinct Tsat comparative patterns: the native pattern is inherited from Chamic; the other is borrowed from Chinese:

X - Adj - CM/ST	native pattern
X - CM/ST - Adj	Chinese influenced pattern

In the native pattern, Zheng (1997:75) notes that the word order is quality-marker-standard (X - Adj - CM/ST), that is, the quality being compared, followed by the preposition *la:u*<sup>72</sup> ‘CM; pass’ (which serves as the comparative marker), followed by the standard of comparison, typically a pronoun. The extent or degree of the quality may also be marked, in which case it is through modification of the quality.

When relationships are compared, the comparative marker is the preposition *la:u*<sup>72</sup> ‘CM; pass; exceed’, derived from a verb. For example,

Tsat (colloquial):

- (31) *nau*<sup>33</sup> *ma*<sup>72</sup> *la:u*<sup>72</sup> *ha*<sup>33</sup>  
 he fat CM you  
*tā* *pàng* *bǐ* *nǐ*  
*tā bǐ nǐ pàng*  
 ‘He is fatter than you.’ (Zheng 1997:75)
- (32) *lu*<sup>33</sup> *pion*<sup>72</sup> *la:u*<sup>72</sup> *bo*<sup>11</sup>*koi*<sup>24</sup>  
 coconut.palm big CM pomelo  
*yēzi* *dà* *guò* *yòuzi*

- yēzi bǐ yòuzi dà  
 ‘The coconut palm is bigger than the pomelo.’ (Zheng 1997:89)
- (33) ʔa<sup>11</sup>ko<sup>33</sup> p<sup>h</sup>ai<sup>43</sup> k<sup>h</sup>a:n<sup>21</sup> na:i<sup>32</sup> la:u<sup>32</sup> ʔa<sup>11</sup>t<sup>h</sup>ai<sup>11</sup>  
 elder.brother read book good CM younger.brother  
 gēge dú shū hǎo guò dìdi  
 gēge xuéxí bǐ dìdi hǎo  
 ‘Elder brother studies more than younger brother.’ (Zheng 1997:75)

Tsat influenced by Chinese

However, as Zheng goes on to note, under the influence of Chinese, comparatives often follow a Chinese order, namely, comparative marker, standard, quality (X - CM/ST - Adj), using *pi*<sup>11</sup> ‘CM; compare’ borrowed from Chinese to mark the comparison. For example:

- (34) kau<sup>33</sup> pi<sup>11</sup> ha<sup>33</sup> tsat<sup>24</sup>tso<sup>33</sup> ki<sup>33</sup> sun<sup>33</sup>  
 I CM you short three inch  
 wǒ bǐ nǐ ǎi sān cūn  
 wǒ bǐ nǐ ǎi sān cūn  
 ‘I am three inches shorter than you.’ (Zheng 1997:75)
- (35) mi<sup>33</sup> sa<sup>33</sup> saŋ<sup>33</sup>huat<sup>24</sup>, ta<sup>11</sup> zai<sup>33</sup> pi<sup>43</sup> ta<sup>11</sup> zai<sup>33</sup> pu<sup>33</sup> na:i<sup>32</sup>  
 we GEN life, one day CM one day NEG good  
 wǒmen de shēnghuó yī tiān bǐ yī tiān bù hǎo  
 wǒmen de shēnghuó yītiān bǐ yītiān chà...  
 ‘...our life went downhill each day.’ (Zheng 1997:2.1.4)
- (36) zin<sup>11</sup>min<sup>11</sup> sa<sup>33</sup> saŋ<sup>33</sup>huat<sup>24</sup> ta<sup>11</sup> zai<sup>33</sup> pi<sup>43</sup> ta<sup>11</sup> zai<sup>33</sup> na:i<sup>32</sup> a<sup>2</sup>  
 people GEN life one day CM one day good PART  
 rénmín de shēnghuó yì tiān bǐ yì tiān hǎo a  
 rénmín de shēnghuó cái yìtiān bǐ yìtiān hǎo yuè a  
 ‘...people’s lives began to get better and better.’ (Zheng 1997:2.1.16)

Mandarin

- (37) wǒ bǐ nǐ ǎi sān cūn  
 I CM you short three inch  
 ‘I am three inches shorter than you.’ (Zheng 1997:75)
- (38) tā bǐ nǐ pàng  
 he CM you fat  
 ‘He is fatter than you.’ (Zheng 1997:75)

In these examples, both the word order and the comparative marker itself are Chinese. Instead of the native pattern of quality-standard-noun illustrated by the example in (1), we have noun-marker-standard-quality exemplified by examples in (2a) to (2c). In fact, this kind of almost wholesale borrowing from

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Chinese is not confined to a limited number of grammatical structures in Tsat. In other words, it is quite pervasive throughout the grammatical system of Tsat.

### Adverbs and conjunctions from Chinese

Adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions are all borrowed from Mandarin.

Adverbs: (the examples given here are intensifiers)

- (39) *tʰa:i*<sup>33</sup> *d̩a*<sup>24</sup>.      *pʰai*<sup>33</sup>*siaŋ*<sup>21</sup> *na:i*<sup>32</sup>  
 very hot                      extremely good  
*tài rè*      *rè*                      *fēicháng*      *hǎo*  
*tài rè*      *fēicháng* *hǎo*  
 ‘very hot’                      ‘extremely good’                      (Zheng 1997:76)
- (40) *na:i*<sup>32</sup> *ket*<sup>43</sup>.                      *sat*<sup>24</sup> *ti*<sup>55</sup>  
 good extremely                      really white  
*hǎo jí*                      *zhēn bái*  
*hǎojí*                      *zhēn bái*  
 ‘extremely good’                      ‘truly white’

Correlative conjunctions:

- (41) *ziu*<sup>33</sup> *pā*<sup>33</sup> *ziu*<sup>33</sup> *ha:i*<sup>33</sup>  
 both hungry and tired  
*yòu è*      *yòu*      *lèi*  
*yòu è yòu lèi*  
 ‘Both hungry and tired.’                      (Zheng 1997:84)

Both the Mandarin and the Tsat have exactly the same structure with the key morphemes borrowed from Mandarin.

Clausal conjunctions:

- (42) *zi*<sup>11</sup>*ko*<sup>11</sup> *kh*<sup>43</sup>      *tʰa:i*<sup>33</sup> *d̩a*<sup>24</sup>, *kau*<sup>33</sup> *sau*<sup>43</sup>      *pu*<sup>33</sup>      *na:u*<sup>32</sup> *l̩ə*<sup>33</sup>  
 if tomorrow very hot, I then NEG go PERF  
*rúguǒ míngtiān tài rè, wǒ jiù bú qù le*  
*rúguǒ míngtiān tài rè, wǒ jiù bú qù le*  
 ‘If tomorrow is very hot, I won’t go.’                      (Zheng 1997:85)

What makes these examples particularly interesting is that not only are they borrowed but that for the most part their syntax in Tsat matches their syntax in Mandarin. That is, what has been borrowed is a construction still marked by its characteristic lexical item.

### Other Han influenced constructions



Li 1999; Li 2000, Sun and Li 2001; Whaley and Li 1998, 2000), Chinese contact did not occur until after the settlement in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Nonetheless, within a short span of only a few decades, we already see signs of strong contact influence on the grammatical structure of the language. A case in point is the fact that one of our informants from the central dialect region used the adverb *məʃaŋ*, which is a Chinese borrowing meaning ‘immediately’ spontaneously without noticing it. When fed the Oroqen word *diyaldzi* meaning the same thing, he accepted it, but strongly prefers the Chinese borrowing. Interestingly enough, our informants from the western and northeastern dialect regions adamantly rejected the Chinese form insisting that it is not an Oroqen word.

Even in the northeastern dialect region where Oroqen is preserved the best, we saw strong Chinese influence, which is shown in the examples in (44).

- (44) a) *ʃi tɪmana ŋənə-ni yəʃa*  
 you tomorrow go-2SG.PRES Q.2SG.PRES  
 ‘Are you going tomorrow or not?’  
 b) *yabuʃa haʃi yəʃa*  
 walk.PAST still-be Q.PAST  
 ‘Went or not?’

In (44), we have two examples of the A-not-A question formation in Oroqen. Notice that the informant produced the Chinese *háishi* ‘still be: or not’ in 44b). She did so without realizing it at all until it was pointed out to her. This informant feels at ease with both languages. In fact, she possesses native proficiency in both Chinese and Oroqen.

This kind of phenomenon suggests that when a speaker reaches a certain level of bilingual proficiency, borrowing between the languages is much more readily than is generally assumed in the literature. Thus, it does not take a very long time for a language to shift to a completely different typological pattern in its grammatical structures. Central to the rate of such structural shifts are sociolinguistic factors, particularly, the so-called intensity of contact. Our work suggests that for both Tsat and Oroqen a crucial factor has been schooling in Mandarin.

#### Mulam

In Mulam (Zheng 1988), a Kam-Sui language of the Guangxi area related ultimately to Thai, is undergoing many of the same changes Tsat is: borrowing of conjunctions, adverbs, and prepositions along with the introduction of constructions with new word orders under the influence of Chinese. In fact, Mulam even has its own equivalent of the *sa*<sup>33</sup> construction, built on a different genitive marker but, like its Tsat counterpart, resembling the *de* construction of Mandarin.

Zheng Guoqiao (1988:173), in discussing the Mulam borrowing of Chinese adverbs and conjunctions, notes that “degree and quantity adverbs are all borrowed from Han” and that “borrowed adverbs generally are subject to the same syntactic rules as Han”. That is, what is borrowed is not just a lexical item but a lexical item along with accompanying syntax – in short, a construction.

Mulam, despite being its geographical distance from Tsat, has calqued the *de* construction of Mandarin very much as Tsat has, and Mulam is borrowing many of the same constructions along the representative morpheme, leading to convergence with Mandarin. Sometimes this has produced variation with the native patterns competing with the borrowed patterns; in other cases, the native pattern has been completely replaced.

### Observations

In short, under intense Chinese similar, rapid restructuring is occurring in geographically distant languages belonging to distinct language families: in Tsat, an Austronesian language of Hainan; in Oroqen, a Tungusic language much farther to the north; and in Mulam, a Tai-Kadai language found south of the Yangtze.

Although not our major focus, it is obvious that sociolinguistic factors rather than structural factors that provide the impetus for the word order changes. Although some linguists consider structural similarity and functional congruence as the most important factors in cases of grammatical borrowing (e.g. Weinreich (1953)), Tsat and Oroqen seem instead to support Thomason and Kaufman’s contention (1988:35) that “it is the sociolinguistic history of the speakers, and not the structure of their language, that is the primary determinant of the linguistic outcome of language contact. Purely linguistic considerations are relevant but strictly secondary overall.” In the case of Tsat, a major impetus to wholesale restructuring has been the fluency brought about by schooling in Mandarin.

Most central to the data presented are the paths of diachronic change. Grammatically, one configurational grammatical structure is being replaced by another, construction-by-construction, with the older Chamic word order being replaced by its Mandarin equivalent. In some cases, the Mandarin-influenced construction, often marked by a transparently Mandarin grammatical morpheme, is simply a marked alternative, as with comparatives, but in other constructions the word order of the native Chamic construction has been completely superseded, as with the genitives. The word order changes have entered the language as borrowed constructions, marked by a characteristic often-borrowed grammatical morpheme. Still further influence is manifested in the overgeneralization of calques, cf. the spread of the *sa*<sup>33</sup> construction in Tsat.

The complex set of conditions responsible for the restructuring are only partly explainable by internally and externally motivated principles proposed in the literature. A profound understanding of the situation must take account of the dynamic changes that take place in not only linguistic structures but in the social

conditions as well. There is a range of social factors that contribute to borrowing and structural shifts. In the case of Tsat, encroaching bilingualism with a powerful dominant language (along with schooling and social mobility) are among the most prominent factors that lead to the massive borrowing and drastic structural shift.

The rapid changes taking place in these languages make it imperative that the nature of the speech community be specified in far more detail than it is now and as quickly as possible. We can already see that extensive language change in these particular languages whose speaker community is constituted by bi- or multi-lingual linguistic and ethnic minorities but the details need to be documented and the paths of change need to be examined. A lot more work needs to be done and done quickly before the languages in question cease to exist.

Finally, a comment on the obvious: It is the construction, rather than just its characterizing grammatical morpheme, that is the typical unit of borrowing.

gthurgood@csuchico.edu

fli@csuchico.edu

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Graham Thurgood / Fengxiang Li

CSU Chico  
Chico, CA 9

gthurgood@csuchico.edu,