

Tiddim Chin

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Introduction

Tiddim Chin (ISO639-3: ctd), also known as Tedim Chin, is a Tibeto-Burman language that is spoken in northeast India and west Myanmar. Phonologically, Tiddim Chin has three contrastive tones with relatively complex tone sandhi, as well as several intonation patterns. Morphologically, most of the verbs of the language, like those of other Kuki-Chin languages, possess two forms, referred to as forms I and II. This verb stem alternation cannot be linked to a single parameter of grammatical variation; however, it is conditioned by an interplay of various constructional distinctions. From a typological perspective, Tiddim Chin is a predicate final language: Its unmarked word order in an intransitive clause is SV, whereas in a transitive clause, it is AOV. It is an ergative-absolutive language. Grammatical relations are indicated by various enclitics in general.

1. The Language and Its Speakers

Genealogically, Tiddim Chin is a Tibeto-Burman language in the Kuki-Chin branch. It is mainly spoken in Chin State and Sagaing Region of Myanmar, as well as in Manipur and Mizoram of Northeast India, which Figure 1 illustrates. In the Tedim and Tonzang Townships of Chin State, Tiddim Chin is spoken as a lingua franca, thus often referred to as *zou²pâu³* or *zou²lâi³*, both of which mean “Chin language” in Tiddim Chin.

The total population of Tiddim

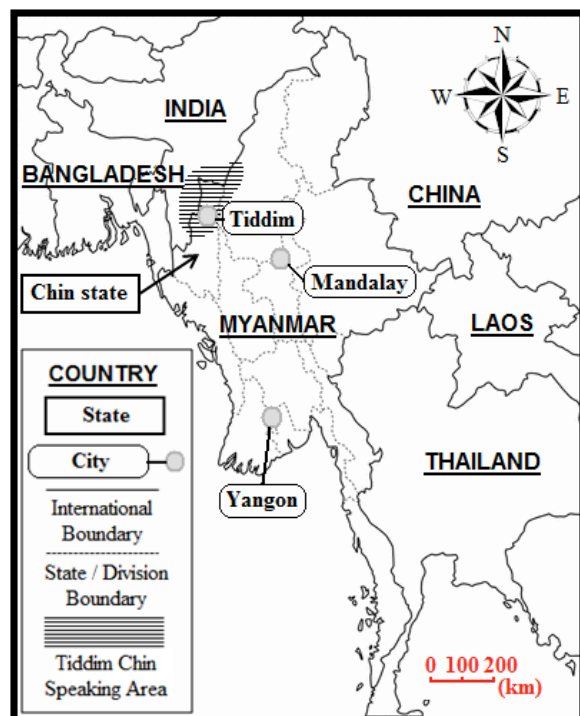


Figure 1. Tiddim Chin speaking area

Chin speakers is estimated by Grimes ed. (2000: 564) to be 344,100.

This paper focuses on colloquial Tiddim Chin, which is spoken in Myanmar. Many Tiddim Chin speakers in Myanmar also speak Burmese, the official language of Myanmar; therefore speakers borrow a number of words from Burmese.

Since the early 20th century, Tiddim Chin speakers have extensively adopted the roman orthography developed by the American priest Rev. Joseph Herbert Cope (1882–1932). It does not represent vowel length or tone; however, a long vowel is occasionally marked by vowel doubling. For more details about Tiddim Chin orthography, see Henderson (1965: 9-14).

Although Tiddim Chin is not officially taught in elementary or high schools, speakers learn to read and write the Tiddim Chin orthography at home and at local Christian churches. Furthermore, various sorts of Tiddim Chin books, magazines, and DVDs are currently sold at Christian book shops.

Tiddim Chin's narrative and colloquial styles mainly differ in verb clause structure, as shown in (1) and (2), although both styles share the same phonological system, morphological process, and vocabulary. In this sense, the present study focuses on colloquial Tiddim Chin.

(1) $sâ\eta^1$ $ka^1=$ ka^2^3 hi^3
 school 1= climb^I cop^I
 "I went to school." (narrative style)

(2) $sâ\eta^1$ ka^2^3 $=i\eta^3$
 school climb^I =1SG.REAL
 "I went to school." (colloquial style)

2. Phonology

2.1 Inventory of phonemes

Table 1 shows an inventory of consonant phonemes in Tiddim Chin. Any consonant except the glottal stop ʔ [ʔ] may occur in the syllable-initial position; however, fricatives, affricates, and aspirated and voiced stops do not occur in the syllable-final position. Note that stops are unreleased finally, and [k^h] and [x] are free allophones of the phoneme x .

Table 1. Consonants

| | bilabial | labio-dental | alveolar | alveolo-palatal | velar | glottal |
|-----------|--|------------------------------|--|---|----------------------------------|----------------|
| stop | <i>p</i> [p] <i>p^h</i> [p ^h] <i>b</i> [b] | | <i>t</i> [t] <i>t^h</i> [t ^h] <i>d</i> [d] | | <i>k</i> [k] <i>g</i> [g] | <i>ʔ</i> [ʔ] |
| affricate | | | | <i>c</i> [tɕ] <i>ch</i> [tɕ ^h] | | |
| fricative | | <i>f</i> [f] <i>v</i> [v] | <i>s</i> [s] <i>z</i> [z] | | <i>x</i> [x ~ k ^h] | <i>h</i> [h] |
| nasal | <i>m</i> [m] | | <i>n</i> [n] | | <i>ŋ</i> [ŋ] | |
| liquid | | | <i>l</i> [l] | | | <i>lʔ</i> [lʔ] |

The consonants *f* [f] (e.g., *fi²fi²* “with buck teeth”) and *c^h* [tɕ^h] (e.g., *c^hem²c^ham²* “bearded”) can be found only in ideophones. Although the consonant *j* [dʒ] is not phonemic, it occurs in some English loan words such as *ja²pân²* [dʒɑpɑ:n] “Japan.”

Table 2 shows the simple vowels, or monophthongs of Tiddim Chin. Length is contrastive for all vowels, except [e] and [o]. In the table, long vowels are indicated in phonemic writing with a circumflex $\hat{\text{}}$ above the vowel.

Table 2. Vowels (monophthongs)

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <i>i</i> [i], <i>ĩ</i> [i:] | <i>u</i> [u], <i>ũ</i> [u:] |
| <i>e</i> [e ~ ε], <i>ẽ</i> [ε:] | <i>o</i> [o ~ ɔ], <i>õ</i> [ɔ:] |
| <i>a</i> [a], <i>ã</i> [a:] | |

Tiddim Chin also has diphthongs and triphthongs: *iu* [ĩu], *ia* [ĩɑ], *ei* [ẽi], *êi* [ε̃i], *eu* [ẽu], *êu* [ε̃u], *ai* [ɑ̃i], *âi* [ɑ̃i], *au* [ɑ̃u], *âu* [ɑ̃u], *ou* [õu], *oi* [õi], *ôi* [ɔ̃i], *ui* [ũi], *ûi* [ũi], *ua* [ũɑ], *iai* [ĩɑ̃i], *iau* [ĩɑ̃u], *uai* [ũɑ̃i], *uau* [ũɑ̃u], *iei* [ĩẽi] and *uou* [ũõu].

As shown in Table 3, Tiddim Chin has three distinctive tones: a rising tone, a level tone, and a falling tone. The pitch of each tone varies according to vowel length and the sonority of a syllable-final consonant.

Table 3. Tones

| | long vowel | sonorant final | short vowel |
|--------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------|
| rising tone | \hat{a}^1 [a:1] | am^1 [am1] | a^1 [a1] |
| level tone | \hat{a}^2 [a:1] | am^2 [am1] | a^2 [a1] |
| falling tone | \hat{a}^3 [a:1] | am^3 [am1] | a^3 [a1] |

2.2 Syllable structure

Tiddim Chin's syllable structure can be reduced to (C1) (V1) V2 (V3) (C2) / T, where C1 represents an onset consonant, V represents a vowel, C2 represents a coda consonant, and T represents a tone. Each syllable consists of a vowel and may include an onset and a coda.

A majority of Tiddim Chin morphemes are phonologically monosyllabic (e.g., $n\hat{e}^1$ "eat"), though a few show a disyllabic combination of two monosyllabic structures (e.g., $pa^3t\hat{a}u^3$ "nervous").

| | | | | | |
|------|---------------|---------------|-------|----------|-----------|
| CV | $m\hat{i}^1$ | "person" | CVC | mit^3 | "eye" |
| CVV | $t\hat{a}i^2$ | "run away" | CVVC | $sial^2$ | "mithan" |
| CVVV | $nuai^1$ | "below" | CVVVC | $suai^2$ | "drawing" |

2.3 Phonological rules

Subsections [1] through [3] describe how phonemes alternate with others when two morphemes converge in a word or a phrase.

[1] Long vowel shortening

A long monophthong in an open syllable is often shortened when another consonant follows in either a word or phrase. A level tone alternates with a rising tone if the long monophthong with the level tone is shortened, as shown in (3).

$$(3) \quad n\hat{i}^2 \text{ "day"} + p\hat{i}^1 \text{ "AUG"} \rightarrow ni^1p\hat{i}^1 \text{ "week"} \quad (\hat{i} [i:] \rightarrow i [i])$$

$$\quad [ni:1] \quad [pi:1] \quad [ni^1pi:1]$$

[2] Monophthongization

As shown in (4) and (5) below, the open diphthong *ua* or *ia* often alternates with the corresponding monophthong *o* [ɔ] or *e* [ɛ] if another consonant follows it in either a word or a phrase. A level tone alternates with a rising tone if the diphthong with the level tone is monophthongized, as shown in (4).

- (4) *gua*² “bamboo” + *tuai*² “child” → *go¹tuai*² “bamboo shoot” (*ua* [ɥa] → *o* [ɔ])
 [gɥa˧˥] [tɥai˧˥] [gɔ˧˥tɥai˧˥]
- (5) *pia*¹ “give” + *xin*³ “finish” → *pe¹xin*³ “gave” (*ia* [ja] → *e* [ɛ])
 [pja˧˥] [xin˧˥] [pe˧˥xin˧˥]

[3] Tone sandhi

Tone sandhi often occurs when each tone converges in a word or a phrase. Immediately after a rising pitch, either a subsequent rising tone shifts to a higher level pitch as in (6), or the subsequent falling tone shifts to a high-falling pitch as in (7). As shown in (8), the monophthong syllable ending with either a glottal stop ʔ or a close consonant shifts its falling tone to a rising tone if preceded by a level tone. A syllable with a falling tone is generally uttered at a rather high pitch after a level tone as in (9); alternatively, the syllable alternates its falling tone with a rising tone if the vowel is shortened or monophthongized, as in (10).

- (6) *sik*¹ “steel” + *kêu*¹ “spoon” → *sik¹kêu*¹ “steel spoon”
 [si:k˧˥] [kɛ:ɥ˧˥] [si:k˧˥kɛ:ɥ˧˥]
- (7) *mâi*¹ “face” + *zâp*³ “fanned” → *mâi¹zâp*³ “fan”
 [ma:i˧˥] [za:p˧˥] [ma:i˧˥za:p˧˥]
- (8) *kôl²gam*² “Myanmar” + *aʔ*³ “LOC” → *kôl²gam*² *aʔ*¹ “in Myanmar”
 [kɔ:lɥgam˧˥] [aʔ˧˥] [kɔ:lɥgam˧˥aʔ˧˥]
- (9) *kam*² “mouth” + *pâu*³ “spoken” → *kam²pâu*³ “language”
 [kam˧˥] [pa:ɥ˧˥] [kam˧˥pa:ɥ˧˥]
- (10) *pai* “go” + *tâ*³ “PRF” + *dîŋ*¹ “PURP” → *pai²ta¹dîŋ*¹ “be about to go”
 [pai˧˥] [ta:˧˥] [di:ŋ˧˥] [pai˧˥ta˧˥di:ŋ˧˥]

2.4 Prosody

In polar questions, an interrogative marker is uttered at a high pitch as shown in (11).

- (11) *vok³-sa¹-me² na³= ne¹ =dia²*
 [*vok³sa¹me² na³ ne¹ dia²*]
 pork-meat-curry 2= eat¹ =PURP.Q
 “Will you eat pork curry?”

As shown in (12), if a clause ends with the single subordinator =*in²* or =*â²*, or the enclitic pronoun =*in²te²* (3SG.IRR), the preceding level tone syllable, as well as the conjunction or enclitic pronouns, is often uttered at a high pitch.

- (12) *sum² zoŋ² + xual³ zin¹ → sum² zoŋ² =â² xual³ zin¹*
 [*sum² zoŋ²*] [*xual³ zin¹*] [*sum² zoŋ² =a:1 xual³ zin¹*]
 money search¹ abroad travel¹ money search¹ =CONJN abroad travel¹
 “to travel in order to find money”

2.5 Morpho-phonological process

Figure 2 illustrates that genitive case in Tiddim Chin is indicated by tonal alternation or the optional genitive marker =*i* (§7.4).

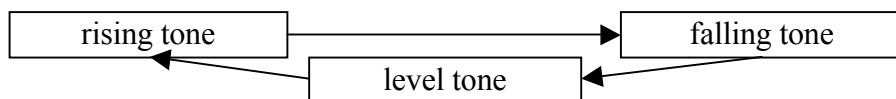


Figure 2. Tonal alternation as a genitive marker (revised from Henderson 1965)

For instance, the genitive form of a personal name *lian³* (falling tone) “Lian” is *lian²* (level tone), “Lian’s” as illustrated in (13).

- (13) *lian² nai² “Lian’s watch”*
 PN.GEN watch

As shown in (14) and (15), some locational nouns, such as *tuj¹* “above,” *nuai¹* “below,” *suŋ²* “inside,” and *kiaŋ²* “in the vicinity of” alternate their tones with falling tones to indicate locative case.

- (14) *sa¹buai³ tuŋ¹ =a²³* > *sa¹buai³ tuŋ³* “above a table”
 table above =LOC > table above.LOC
- (15) *hâu³sa³pâ³ kian² =a²¹* > *hâu³sa³pâ³ kian³* “at a leader’s place”
 leader.GEN vicinity =LOC > leader.GEN vicinity.LOC

3. Word Classes

3.1 Words, affixes, and clitics

Each morpheme can be categorized as either a free or bound morpheme. Bound morphemes can be further subdivided into clitics and affixes. Affixes syntactically differ from clitics in that no other element can be inserted between a host and an affix. In other words, clitics function on a phrasal or clausal level, whereas affixes function on a word level. This paper defines both free morphemes and clitics as words. Words can be categorized into the following five major classes: verbals (§3.2), nominals (§3.3), adverbs (§3.4), particles (§3.5), and interjections (§3.6).

3.2 Verbals

Verbals are distinguished from all other word classes in that each verbal word has two verb stem forms, which are referred to as forms I and II, and can be followed by enclitic pronouns or verb modifying particles indicating tense, aspect, or mood (e.g., =*kei¹* NEG).

Verbal words can be divided into two types according to their morpheme types: [1] verbs (i.e., free morphemes) and [2] auxiliary verbs (i.e., clitics). They do not inflect for person, number, tense, aspect, or mood.

[1] Verbs

Among verbals, free morphemes are referred to as verbs. A verb can be modified by an auxiliary verb or a verb modifying particle; either of which principally functions as a tense, aspect, or mood marker. A few verbs have morphological pairs of intransitive-transitive verbs distinguished by aspiration (e.g., *pûk¹* “to fall” vs. *p^hûk¹* “to fell”) or by verb stem alternation (e.g., *tân²* “to be bright” (form I) vs. *tân³* “to brighten” (form II)).

[2] Auxiliary verbs

Clitics belonging to verbals are referred to as auxiliary verbs. An auxiliary verb

always follows another verb. Auxiliary verbs are marked in boldface in examples (16) and (17).

(16) *a¹ma² kei¹ =sâ¹ =in² tâi³ hât¹ zô¹*
 3SG 1SG =than =CONJN run^{II} powerful^I more^I
 “He runs faster than I.”

(17) *kei¹ a¹ma² =to² pai² xol³ xôm³ nuam¹ lou³*
 1SG 3SG =COM go^I in advance^I altogether^I desire^I NEG^I
 “I do not want to go together with him in advance.”

3.3 Nominals

Nominals serve as arguments of a verb (i.e., subjects or objects) and can be encliticized by case markers. Nominals can also serve as heads of NPs and be modified by noun modifying particles. The majority of nominals are either monosyllabic or disyllabic words except for compound nouns. Nominals can be divided into two types according to their morpheme types: nouns (free morphemes) and bound nouns (clitics).

[1] Nouns

Nouns do not inflect for gender, number, or case, except for free personal pronouns. As described in §7.4, cases are usually marked by enclitics. The following subsections briefly explain three functional features found in nouns: numerals and two kinds of pronouns.

(a) Numerals

Numerals in Tiddim Chin are based on the decimal system.

xat³ “one,” *ni²* “two,” *t^hum²* “three,” *lî²* “four,” *ηâ²* “five,” *guk³* “six,” *sa¹gi²* “seven,” *giat¹* “eight,” *kua¹* “nine,” and *sôm³* “ten”

Multiples of ten greater than twenty are expressed as shown below: *sôm³+ni²* “twenty,” *sôm³+t^hum²* “thirty,” *sôm³+lî²* “forty,” *sôm³+ηâ²* “fifty,” *sôm³+guk³* “sixty,” *sôm³+sa¹gi²* “seventy,” *sôm³+giat¹* “eighty,” *sôm³+kua¹* “ninety.” Cardinal numbers greater than a hundred are *zâ³* “hundred,” *tûl³* “thousand,” *t^hên³* “ten thousand,” *sâ¹η¹* “hundred thousand,” *ôn¹* “million,” *am³* “ten million,” and *mak³*

“hundred million.” For numerals greater than *sôm*³ “ten,” the conjunction =*le*³ “and” is often inserted between each numerical position as illustrated in (18).

- (18) *tûl*³ =*le*³ *za*³+*kua*¹ =*le*³ *sôm*³+*giat*¹ =*le*³ *xat*³
 thousand =CONJN hundred+nine =CONJN ten+eight =CONJN one
 “1,981”

Ordinal numbers are expressed by adding the prefix *a-* and the noun modifying particle =*nâ*² to the numeral, as in *a*¹-*xat*³ =*nâ*² “first” and *a*¹-*ni*³ =*nâ*² “second”.

(b) Demonstrative pronouns

There are four demonstrative pronouns: *hi*² (proximal), *tua*² (distal), and *hua*² or *hia*² (far distal). The pronoun *hi*² refers to proximal objects or contexts expressed by the speaker, whereas the pronoun *tua*² refers to distal objects or contexts, that are typically located nearer to the speaker’s speech partner. The pronoun *hua*² refers to far distal objects or contexts and, is also used when the speaker is in the process of recollection.

(c) Personal pronouns

Personal pronouns distinguish two quantities: singular and plural. Exclusive and inclusive are distinguished for the first-person plural. Genders (i.e., masculine and feminine) are not distinguished. Personal pronouns inflect for number and case; thus Table 4 shows only absolutive, ergative or genitive forms. Other cases are indicated by case markers (§7.4).

Table 4. Free personal pronouns

| | SG | | | PL | | |
|-------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| | ABS | ERG | GEN | ABS | ERG | GEN |
| 1 | <i>kei¹</i> | <i>ken³</i> | <i>kei³</i> | <i>kou³</i> | | |
| 1INCL | | | | <i>ei¹</i> | <i>en³</i> | <i>ei³</i> |
| 2 | <i>naŋ¹</i> | <i>naŋ³</i> | | <i>nou³</i> | | |
| 3 | <i>a¹ma^{ʔ3}</i> | <i>a¹man³</i> | <i>a¹mâ²</i> | <i>a¹mâ³</i> | | <i>a¹mâ²</i> |

[2] Bound nouns

Some nominals do not appear without modifiers and are referred to as bound nouns. Most bound nouns indicate location (e.g., *tuy¹* “above,” *nuai¹* “below,” and *kiaŋ²* “around,” etc.) and require modifiers such as genitive-marked NPs and proclitic pronouns.

3.4 Adverbs

An adverb modifies a VP or a whole sentence by postposing or preposing it to a VP. Some adverbs are unique in their forms, such as fossilized reduplication (e.g., *kô¹kô¹* “here and there,” *zia^{ʔ3}zia^{ʔ3}* “loudly,” *dial¹dial¹* “fluttering movement”) and semi-reduplication (e.g., *tin¹ten¹* “holding something firmly,” *t^hil¹t^hial¹* “humble and modest,” *giŋ¹geŋ¹* “being thin”), neither of which can be morphologically analyzed any further. As in (19), both reduplicated and semi-reduplicated adverbs often follow VPs. See Henderson (1965: 57) and Bhaskararao (1989) for more details.

- (19) *na¹*= *up³* =*nâ²* *lên³* ***tin¹ten¹*** =*in³*
 2= believe^{II} =NA hold^I tight =IMP
 “Hold your belief tight.”

3.5 Particles

A particle is a clitic that precedes or follows a phrase. Particles can be divided into seven types: (a) case markers generally indicating a type of case by encliticizing them to an NP; (b) noun modifying particles following an NP, thus indicating its specific number, place, or time; (c) verb-modifying particles following a VP, thus indicating tense, aspect, or mood; (d) conjunctions connecting two words, phrases,

and clauses (e.g., $=\hat{a}^2$, $=in^2$, $=le\hat{p}^3$, etc.); (e) adverbial particles following either an NP or a VP and modifying a predicate; (f) final particles occurring at the end of a sentence, thus indicating pragmatic effect; and (g) clitic pronouns. Clitic pronouns can be further divided into proclitic and enclitic pronouns. A proclitic pronoun's tone is determined by the subsequent tone.

Table 5. Proclitic pronouns

| | | |
|---|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | $ka^1 / ^2 / ^3 =$ | $i^1 / ^2 / ^3 =$ (PL.INCL) |
| 2 | $na^1 / ^2 / ^3 =$ | |
| 3 | $a^1 / ^2 / ^3 =$ | |

To indicate plural proclitic pronouns, the plural marker $=u\hat{p}^3$ follows the NP, e.g., $ka^3 nu^1 =u\hat{p}^3$ ‘‘our mother’’. Enclitic pronouns are formally distinguished by mood, either realis or irrealis (see Table 6). The realis form describes the actual occurrence, whether past or ongoing, whereas the irrealis form describes the desire, necessity, or futurity of some event. Henderson (1965: 109) has stated that in Tiddim Chin, the use of enclitic pronouns is perhaps the most characteristic mark of colloquial style.

Table 6. Enclitic pronouns

| | Realis Mood (REAL) | | Irrealis Mood (IRR) | |
|---|------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|
| | SG | PL | SG | PL |
| 1 | $=i\eta^3$ | $=u\eta^3$ (EXCL) $=ha\eta^3$ (INCL) | $=ni\eta^1$ | $=nu^1\eta^3$ (EXCL) $=ni^3$ (INCL) |
| 2 | $=te\hat{p}^3 / cin^3$ | $=u\hat{p}^3te\hat{p}^3 / u\hat{p}^3cin^3$ | $=ni^1te\hat{p}^3 / ni^1cin^3$ | $=nu^1te\hat{p}^3 / nu^1cin^3$ |
| 3 | $=\emptyset$ | $=u\hat{p}^3$ | $=in^2te\hat{p}^1$ | $=un^2te\hat{p}^1$ |

3.6 Interjections

Interjections do not have any grammatical relation to any other words, for they express the speaker's emotions (e.g., $ka^1lai^3 sai^3$ ‘‘Oh my!’’, ui^3 ‘‘Ugh!’’, $m\hat{o}k^1\hat{o}^3$ ‘‘How pity it is!’’, etc.) and reactions (e.g., $h\hat{e}^3$ ‘‘Yes.’’ $h\hat{o}i^3$ ‘‘Oh, yes.’’ $h\hat{o}i^1$ ‘‘What?’’ \hat{o}^3

“All right,” etc.).

4. Morphology

4.1 Overview (affixation, compounding, reduplication)

Affixation and compounding are productive derivational processes, whereas reduplication is rarely used as a derivational process.

4.2 Nominal morphology

[1] Affixation to nouns

Tiddim Chin has various suffixes to derive one noun from another: *-tal²* (masculine suffix) as in *vok³-tal²* (pig-MAS) “hog,” *-pi¹* (feminine suffix) as in *âk²-pi¹* (chicken-FEM) “hen,” *-lâ²* (a suffix indicating adolescence) as in *sial²-lâ²* (mithan-young) “young mithan,” etc.

[2] Compounding

As illustrated in Table 7, there are three types of compound nouns in Tiddim Chin. If the preceding noun is the subject of the following verb, the form I verb stem occurs, as shown in (21). However, as shown in (22), the form II verb stem occurs if the preceding noun is the object of the subsequent verb:

Table 7. Compound noun

| | | |
|----------------------------|--|--------------|
| (20) Noun + Noun | <i>ha¹-zâ²</i> tooth-medicine | “toothpaste” |
| (21) Noun + Verb (Form I) | <i>mi¹-hai¹</i> person-crazy ¹ | “idiot” |
| (22) Noun + Verb (Form II) | <i>kôŋ¹-gâk³</i> waist-tighten ² | “belt” |

[3] Reduplication

Some interrogative words, such as *baŋ³* “what” and *kua³* “who,” are reduplicated, and may be translated to English as “whatever” and “whoever,” respectively, as shown in (23) and (24):

- (23) *baŋ³+baŋ³ na¹= sil²³ =zoŋ³ =in² ki³- lôm² =te²*
 what+what 2= wear^{II} =also =CONJN MDL- suit^I =2SG.REAL
 “Whatever you wear, it suits you.”
- (24) *kua³+kua³ a¹= hî³ =zoŋ³ =â² ŋâi² xa¹ =môk¹ ka¹= hi³ =vê²*
 who+who 3= COP^I =also =CONJN love^I NONV^I =randomly 1= COP^I =MOD
 “I accidentally fell in love with whoever she is.”

Aside from the interrogative words described above, nominals are rarely reduplicated. Some personal names are fully or partially reduplicated to form corresponding nicknames. For example, the boy’s name *xâi²* can be fully reduplicated to make his nickname *xâi²xâi²*, whereas the girl’s name *vuy²* can be partially reduplicated to make her nickname *vû¹-vuy²*.

4.3 Verbal morphology

4.3.1 Form I and form II

Each verb has two alternating stems, form I and form II, whose usage depends on grammatical context. This peculiar verb stem alternation is common to almost all Kuki-Chin languages but is not linked in any simple way to a single parameter of grammatical variation, such as tense, aspect, or mood. A form I verb generally occurs in unmarked conclusive clauses, whereas a form II verb often occurs in marked clauses, such as certain transitive or subordinate clauses.

Some verbs alternate either a single final phoneme (see (25) and (26)) or a tone (see (27)), whereas other verbs alternate both as in (28). Some other verbs, however, have formally homophonous forms I and II, as seen in (29).

| | Form I | Form II | Meaning |
|------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| (25) | <i>ciam³</i> | <i>ciap³</i> | “to taste” |
| (26) | <i>nê¹</i> | <i>nêk¹</i> | “to eat” |
| (27) | <i>pai²</i> | <i>pai³</i> | “to go” |
| (28) | <i>sam¹</i> | <i>sap³</i> | “to call” |
| (29) | <i>hoi²³</i> | <i>hoi²³</i> | “to be good” |

Syntactically, this verb stem alternation in Tiddim Chin may have some

relevance to transitivity, nominalization, and adverbialization, each of which is described below.

[1] Transitivity

Table 8 shows that some verbs have morphological pairs of intransitive-transitive verbs derived by verb stem alternation. This morphological process is no longer productive, yet the form II verb stem occurs if attached to certain transitivity suffixes, such as *-sak³* (substitutive or benefactive), *-pi²³* (comitative), and *-san³* (relinquitive). This will be described further in § 7.8.

Table 8. Transitivity and verb stems

| Form I | Form II | Meaning |
|------------------------|------------------------|--------------|
| <i>dim¹</i> | <i>dim³</i> | “to be full” |
| <i>dim³</i> | <i>dip³</i> | “to fill” |

[2] Nominalization

In Tiddim Chin, no nominalizer is necessary to nominalize a verb as shown in (30).

- (30) *ka¹*= *dôn³* *nop³* =*pên²* *nian²+tûi¹* *a¹*= *hi³* =*vê²*
 1= drink^{II} desire^{II} =TOP tea+water 3= COP^I =FIN
 “What I want to drink is tea.”

[3] Adverbialization

In a compound verb (§4.3.2 [2]), if the second verb occurs in form II, then the first word functions adverbially: *no²³-tâi³* (fast¹-run²) “to run fast,” *nâi¹-et³* (close¹-watch²) “to watch closely,” *tô³-om³* (corner-exist²) “to exist at the corner,” *t^hûk¹-xum³* (sour¹-sweet²) “to be sour-sweet,” etc.

4.3.2 Derivation process

[1] Affixation

Several verb prefixes can attach to form I verb stems in the unmarked clause, including *ki³-*, a middle voice prefix functioning as an impersonal, reflexive, or

reciprocal marker; *na*^{l-}, indicating an event that takes place without either of the speech participants; *va*³⁻, indicating the direction away from the speech participants; and *oŋ*^{l-}, indicating the direction toward the speech participants. Certain transitivity suffixes, such as *-sak*³ (substitutive or benefactive), *-pi*²³ (comitative) and *-san*³ (relinquitive), can attach to form II verbs.

[2] Compounding

Table 9 shows Tiddim Chin's three types of verbal compounding.

Table 9. Compound verbs

| | | | |
|------|--------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| (31) | Verb (Form I) + Verb (Form I) | <i>diŋ</i> ² - <i>xia</i> ³ stand ^l -fell ^l | “to depart” |
| (32) | Verb (Form I) + Verb (Form II) | <i>sâŋ</i> ² - <i>dian</i> ³ high ^l -jump ^{ll} | “to jump high” |
| (33) | Noun + Verb (Form I) | <i>lam</i> ^l - <i>day</i> ^l road-other ^l | “to be surprised” |

[3] Reduplication

A verb can be reduplicated to express continuous or habitual action, as seen in (34). Though it is a nonproductive process, some verbs are adverbialized by reduplication, as seen in (35).

(34) *lian*³*pi*^l *i*²³*mû*²-*mû*²

PN RDP:sleep^l

“Lianpi is always sleeping.”

(35) *a*^l*ma*²³ *kô*^{l2}+*pâu*³ *tôm*²-*tôm*² =*bek*^l *pâu*² *t*^h*ei*³

3SG Myanmar+language RDP:little^l =only speak^l can^l

“He can speak Myanmar language only a little.”

4.4 Class-changing derivation

Within the narrow limits of this study's data, only one apparent class-changing process has been found: the nominal suffix *-vâi*^l functions as a verbalizer, as seen in *pa*³*sal*^l-*vâi*^l (male-VBLZ) “to be manly”.

5. Syntax

5.1 Basic clause structure and word order

Tiddim Chin is a predicate-final language. The unmarked word order is SV in an intransitive clause and AOV in a transitive clause, as shown in (36) and (37), respectively. During discourse, however, elements of little importance tend to be omitted. As in (38), the copula verb *hi*³ is used in copula clauses; its unmarked word order is SCV.

- (36) *zu*¹*sâ*¹ *tâi*²
 mouse run¹
 “A mouse runs.” (Intransitive clause: SV)

- (37) *lian*³ =*in*³ *an*¹ *nê*¹
 PN =ERG meal eat¹
 “Lian ate meal.” (Transitive clause: AOV)

- (38) *lian*³ =*pên*² *sâŋ*¹+*nâu*²*paŋ*¹ *hi*³
 PN =TOP school+child COP¹
 “Lian is a student.” (Copula clause: SCV)

5.2 Noun phrases

The basic structure of an NP is illustrated below. The head noun appears in boldface.

(DEM) (proclitic pronoun) (N.GEN or ABS) **N** (V) (noun modifier) (NUM) case marker

A demonstrative, a proclitic pronoun, or a genitive noun may precede a head noun as a modifier, whereas a verb, a noun modifier, or a numeral may follow a head noun in an unmarked construction, as shown in (39), where the head noun appears in boldface.

- | | | | | | | |
|------|--|------------------------|-------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| DEM | proclitic pronoun | N.GEN | N | verb | NUM | case marker |
| (39) | <i>tua</i> ² <i>ka</i> ³ = | <i>nû</i> ³ | <i>pâk</i>² | <i>san</i> ² <i>xat</i> ³ | = <i>to</i> ² ³ | |
| | DEM 1= | mother.GEN | flower | red ¹ one | =COM | |
- “with that one red flower of my mother’s” (elicited example)

5.3 Verb phrases

In colloquial Tiddim Chin, a verb can be a predicate without any other element, though verbs are often accompanied by modifiers. The structure of a verb phrase can be schematized as in (40) where the main verb appears in boldface.

$$\text{(proclitic pronoun)} \quad \mathbf{V} \quad \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{(auxiliary verb)} \\ \text{(verb modifier)} \\ \text{(adverb)} \end{array} \right\} \quad \text{(enclitic pronoun)}$$

| (40) | <i>tʰuak²</i> | <i>kêi²kâi²</i> | <i>zou¹</i> | = <i>kei¹</i> | <i>=uŋ³</i> |
|--|----------------------|-----------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| | bear¹ | enduringly | able¹ | =NEG | =1PL.REAL |
| “We are not able to bear it enduringly.” | | | | | |

6. Grammatical Relations (i.e., Subject and Object)

Grammatical subjects agree with clitic pronouns in person and number, as shown in (41).

| | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|------------|---------------|-------------|
| (41) | <i>zəŋ²koŋ²</i> | = <i>aʔ¹</i> | <i>ken³</i> | <i>a¹maʔ³</i> | <i>mu³</i> | = <i>ŋei¹</i> | <i>=iŋ³</i> |
| | PN | =LOC | 1SG.ERG | 3SG | see¹ | =ever | =1SG.REAL |
| ‘I have seen her in Yangon.’ | | | | | | | |

Meanwhile, as in (42), an object can be identified morpho-syntactically by the prefix *oŋ¹-*, which affixes to a verb if the patient or recipient is a speech-act participant in the transitive clause:

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| (42) | <i>zəŋ²koŋ²</i> | = <i>aʔ¹</i> | <i>a¹man³</i> | <i>ŋəŋ¹</i> | <i>oŋ¹-</i> | <i>mû³</i> |
| | PN | =LOC | 3SG.ERG | 2SG | DIR- | see¹ |
| “He saw you in Yangon.” | | | | | | |

Semantically, an agent, an experiencer, and the like (i.e., agent-like argument) are prototypical subjects, whereas a patient, a causee, a recipient, and the like (i.e., patient-like argument) tend to be objects.

7. Functional Categories

7.1 Interrogative sentences

Interrogative sentences can be categorized as either polar or content questions. In an interrogative sentence, the purposive particle =*dîŋ*¹ indicates irrealis mood, whereas the auxiliary verb *lou*³ indicates negative mood. The prosodic feature of interrogative sentences is discussed in §2.4.

[1] Polar questions

The expected answer to a polar question is the equivalent of either “yes” or “no”. To express a polar question, one of the interrogative markers =*mô*³, =*na*¹, =*tam*³, =*dia*², =*diam*², =*a*², or =*am*² needs to be used. =*mô*³ can be directly attached to a VP, but the others follow VPs with proclitic pronouns. The interrogative marker =*a*² or =*am*² must follow the copula verb *hî*³. The particle =*dia*² or =*diam*² is used to indicate an interrogative sentence in the irrealis mood.

- (43) *a*¹*ma*²*ʔ*³ *ja*²*pân*² =*a*² *pai*² =*kîk*¹ =*dîŋ*¹ =*mô*³
 3SG PN =LOC go¹ =ITER =PURP =Q
 “Is he going to Japan again?”

- (44) *sâŋ*¹ *na*¹= *ka*²*ʔ*³ =*na*¹
 school 2= climb¹ =Q
 “Do you go to school?”

- (45) *lûn*³*boi*²*ʔ*³ =*in*³ *vok*³-*sâ*¹ *a*³= *ne*¹ *t^hei*³ *hî*³ =*a*²
 PN =ERG pig-meat 3= eat¹ can¹ COP¹ =Q
 “Can Lunboih eat pork?”

The interrogative markers =*am*², =*diam*² and =*tam*² are used in both direct and indirect questions, as shown in (46), whereas the other interrogative markers tend to be used in direct questions.

- (46) *vok*³+*sâ*¹ *na*³= *ne*¹ *t^hei*³ *hî*³ ?=*a*²/=*am*² *t^hei*³ =*keŋ*¹
 pig+meat 2= eat¹ can¹ COP¹ =Q know¹ =NEG.1SG.REAL
 “I don’t know whether you can eat pork.”

[2] Content questions

Content questions contain one of the interrogative words: *baŋ*³ “what,” *koi*¹ “where,” *kua*³ “who,” and *cik*³ “when.” In content questions, an interrogative marker is not necessary (as seen in (47)), though an interrogative marker =*a*² or =*am*² is occasionally used. Example (48) shows that the copula verb *hi*³ and the interrogative marker =*a*² or =*am*² can be omitted.

(47) *ko*² *pai*² =*diŋ*¹
 where.LOC go¹ =PURP
 “Where are you going?”

(48) *baŋ*³ *sêm*³ *a*¹= (*hi*³ =*a*²)
 what do¹ 3= COP¹ =Q
 “What did he do?”

Polar questions with speculated answers have been referred to as “biased questions” by Sadock and Zwicky (1985). The structure of the predicate in the biased question is similar to that of the predicate in the content question as in (49).

(49) *vok*³+*sá*¹ *ne*¹ *t^hei*³ *a*¹= *hi*³ =*a*²
 pig+meat eat¹ can¹ 3= COP¹ =Q
 “He can eat pork, can’t he?”

7.2 Imperatives

As shown in (50), the imperative marker =*in*³, =*ou*³, =*vê*² or =*sin*³ follows a VP to indicate singular imperative mood, whereas attaching =*un*³, =*vuou*³, =*vê*³*vua*² or =*sin*³ =*u*² to a VP indicates plural imperative mood as shown in (51). Note that =*sin*³ is always uttered at a high pitch. Imperative markers can be omitted when authoritatively commanding somebody. For negative imperative mood, the negative marker =*kei*¹ or =*da*² is used, as seen in (52).

(50) *nian*²+*tûi*¹ *dôn*² { =*in*³ / =*ou*³ / =*vê*² / =*sin*³ }
 tea+water drink¹ =IMP =IMP =IMP =IMP
 “Drink tea!”

(51) $bô\eta^2+nô^1$ $dôn^2$ { $=un^3$ / $=vuou^3$ / $=vê^3vua^2$ / $=sin^3$ $=u^3$ }
 cow+milk say¹ =PL.IMP =PL.IMP =PL.IMP =IMP =PL
 “Drink milk, guys!”

(52) $zû^2$ $dôn^2$ { $=ken^3$ / $=kei^1$ $=ou^3$ / $=kei^1$ $=vê^2$ / $=kei^1$ $=sin^3$ }
 liquor drink¹ =NEG.IMP =NEG =IMP =NEG =IMP =NEG =IMP
 “Don’t drink liquor!”

7.3 Equation, proper inclusion, location, possession

As shown in (53) and (54), the verb $hî^3$ is used as a copula to express equation or proper inclusion.

(53) a^1ma^2 $=pên^2$ $ka^3=$ $pâ^1$ $hî^3$
 3SG =TOP 1= father COP¹
 “He is my father.”

(54) $nu^1+cîn^1$ $=pên$ $sâ\eta^1+sia^1+nû^1$ $hî^3$
 aunt+PN =TOP school+teacher.GEN+woman COP¹
 “Aunty Cin is a school teacher.”

A verb om^1 “exist” is used in unmarked locational clauses, as shown in (55).

(55) $ka^3=$ $tâ^1$ $=tê^1$ te^1dim^2 $=a^2$ om^1
 1= son =PL PN =LOC exist¹
 “My sons are at Tiddim.”

As shown in (56) and (57), there are two ways to express possession. The verb om^1 “exist” expresses not only existence but also possession:

(56) ken^3 $mô^2tô^2$ xat^3 nei^3
 1SG.ERG car one have¹
 “I have a car.”

(57) kei^3 $kia\eta^2$ $=a^2$ $mô^2tô^2$ xat^3 om^1
 1SG.GEN place =LOC car one exist¹
 “I have a car. / There is a car at my place.”

7.4 Case

Case on nouns is represented mainly by enclitics; genitive and locative cases are also indicated by tonal alternation (§2.5). Absolutive case is realized as zero-forms. Data show nine morphological cases in Tiddim Chin: = \emptyset for absolutive (i.e., intransitive subject, object, and subject of a copula verb); = in^3 for ergative (i.e., transitive subject); = i^2 for genitive (i.e., possessor); = to^2 for comitative (i.e., company, ways, and means); = in^2 for instrumental (i.e., ways and means as well as instrument); either = a^2 or = \hat{a}^2 for locative (i.e., location of existence or action, as well as goal); = $do\eta^1$ for terminative (i.e., terminal point of time or location); = pan^3 for ablative (i.e., starting point in time or location); = $s\hat{a}\eta^1$ for comparative (i.e., object for comparison).

7.5 Noun class (Gender)

There are no noun classes in Tiddim Chin.

7.6 Person

A directional prefix $o\eta^1-$, which generally indicates a deictic spatial direction or a change of state involving the speech-act participant, also functions as a kind of inverse marker in transitive clauses. The directional prefix $o\eta^1-$ must be attached to a verb if a patient or recipient is a speech-act participant, as shown in (58) and (59).

(58) $lian^3$ = in^3 kei^1 **$o\eta^1-$** $m\hat{u}^3$
 PN =ERG 1SG DIR- see^I
 “Lian saw me.”

(59) $na^1=$ vok^3+man^3 **$o\eta^1-$** pe^1 = kei^1 = $ni\eta^1$
 2= pig+price DIR- give^I =NEG =1SG.IRR
 “I won’t pay you the money for your pig!”

Proclitic pronouns primarily indicate either possessors (as described in §3.5) or subjects of nominalized or relativized clauses, as in (60):

(60) tua^2 mou^2 $a^3=$ $n\hat{e}k^1$ ken^3 $m\hat{u}^3$ = $i\eta^3$
 DEM snack 3= eat^{II} 1SG.ERG see^I =1SG.REAL
 “I saw him eating the snack.”

As shown in (61), the enclitic pronoun follows the VP to mark the subject.

- (61) (*ken*³) *taŋ¹mâi²* *t^hum²* *lei¹* =*iŋ³*
 1SG.ERG cucumber three buy¹ =1SG.REAL
 “I bought three cucumbers.”

7.7 Number

Number as an obligatory category does not exist in Tiddim Chin. In other words, one form can designate either a single or plural reference. To specify plurality, the optional plural marker =*tê¹* or =*teŋ²* needs to be postposed to a NP, such as *lâi³bû¹* =*tê¹* (book =PL) or *lâi³bû¹* =*teŋ²* (book =PL) “books.”

7.8 Valence-changing

7.8.1 Valence-increasing operations

As shown in (62)b, causatives are expressed by attaching the particle =*sak³* to a form I verb stem.

- (62) a. *kei¹* *zum³* =*a²* *pai²*
 1SG office =LOC go¹
 “I go to the office.”
- b. *nu¹+hâu³* =*in³* *kei¹* *zum³* =*a²* *oŋ¹-* *pai²* =*sak¹*
 aunt+PN =ERG 1SG office =LOC DIR- go¹ =CAUS
 “Aunty Hau made me go to the office.”

As shown in (63) to (65), the transitivizing suffixes =*sak³* (substitutive or benefactive), =*pi²* (comitative), and =*san³* (relinquitive) must be attached to a form II verb. In a relinquitive construction, the agent argument performs an activity leaving the patient behind.

- (63) a. *nu¹+hâu³* =*in³* *me²* *bôl²*
 aunt+PN =ERG curry make¹
 “Aunty Hau made a curry.”

- b. *nu*¹+*hâu*³ =*in*³ *lian*³ *me*[?]³ *ból*³ **-*sak***³
 aunt+PN =ERG PN curry make^{II} -TRVZ
 “Aunty Hau made a curry for Lian.” (benefactive)

- (64) a. *kei*¹ *vâk*¹
 1SG go out^I
 “I went out.”

- b. *ken*³ *a*¹*ma*[?]³ *vâk*³ **-*pi***[?]³
 1SG.ERG 3SG go out^{III} -TRVZ
 “I went out along with him.” (comitative)

- (65) a. *nu*¹+*ciŋ*[?] *tâi*[?]
 aunt+PN run^I
 “Aunty Cing ran away.”

- b. *nu*¹+*ciŋ*[?] =*in*³ *lian*³ *tâi*[?] **-*san***[?]
 aunt+PN =ERG PN run^{II} -TRVZ
 “Aunty Cing ran away leaving Lian behind.” (relinquitive)

7.8.2 Valence-decreasing operation

As shown in (66) to (68), the verbal prefix *ki*³- indicates middle voice and thus functions as an impersonal, reciprocal, or reflexive marker.

- (66) *kâp*¹ *ki*³- *t*^h*at*[?]
 PN MDL- kill^I
 “Someone killed Kap.” (impersonal)

- (67) *kei*¹ *a*¹*ma*[?]³ =*to*[?]³ *ki*³- *lâi*¹
 1SG 3SG =COM MDL- fight^I
 “I argued with him.” (reciprocal)

- (68) *naŋ*¹ =*le*[?]³ *naŋ*¹ *ki*³- *dâl*¹ =*ou*[?]³
 2SG =CONJN 2SG MDL- protect^I =IMP
 “Protect yourself.” (reflexive)

7.9 Negation

Negation is expressed by attaching one of three negative markers: the verb modifying particles =*kei*¹ and =*da*[?]³, or the negative auxiliary verb *lou*[?]³. A

co-occurrence restriction holds in which an enclitic pronoun cannot follow the negative auxiliary verb *lou*³ in a main clause; this is demonstrated in (70). Also, the negative particle =*daʔ*³ occurs only in clauses indicating the speaker's intentions or in imperative sentences.

(69) *kou*³ *tʰei*³ *nuam*¹ { =*kei*¹ / =*daʔ*³ } =*uŋ*³
 1PL know¹ desire¹ =NEG =1PL.REAL
 “We don't want to know.”

(70) *kou*³ *tʰei*³ *nuam*¹ *lou*³ (*=*uŋ*³)
 1PL know¹ desire¹ NEG¹ =1PL.REAL
 “We don't want to know.”

7.10 Tense, aspect, and mood

There is a major, formal distinction between irrealis and realis moods. On the one hand, realis mood is indicated either by using the realis form of an enclitic pronoun as in (71) or by zero marking as in (72). On the other hand, irrealis mood is expressed by either using the irrealis form of an enclitic pronoun, as shown in (73), or by using the purposive particle =*dîŋ*¹ as in (74). The other kinds of mood, tense, and aspect are marked by verb-modifying particles such as the perfective marker =*tâ*³, the iterative marker =*kîk*¹, the continuative marker =*lâi*², and the near future marker =*dek*³.

(71) *kou*³ *vâk*¹ =*uŋ*³
 1PL go out¹ =1PL.REAL
 “We went out.”

(72) *kou*³ *vâk*¹
 1PL go out¹
 “We went out.”

(73) *kou*³ *vâk*¹ =*nûŋ*³
 1PL go out¹ =1PL.IRR
 “We will go out.”

(74) *kou*³ *vâk*¹ =*dîŋ*¹
 1PL go out¹ =PURP
 “We will go out.”

7.11 Information structure (topic and focus)

Topic is typically expressed either by using the topic marker =*pên*² or by changing the word order. The unmarked word order of a transitive clause is AOV, though as shown in (75), OAV order also occurs in marked clauses in which O is topicalized. Focus constructions such as pseudo-cleft sentences can also occur as in (76):

(75) *tua² mou²³ =pên² lian³ =in³ ne¹ xin³*
 DEM snack =TOP PN =ERG eat^I finish^I
 “As for that snack, Lian has eaten it.”

(76) *ken³ ka³= vuak¹ =pên² a¹ma²³ a¹= hi³ =vê²*
 1SG.ERG 1= beat^{II} =TOP 3SG 3= COP^I =MOD
 “It is him that I beat up.”

8. Clause Combining

8.1 Overview of clause combining

Tiddim Chin uses two major types of clause combinations: coordination and subordination. Some conjunctions and noun-modifying particles can function as subordinators.

8.2 Coordination

In coordination two clauses of equal grammatical status are combined. As shown in (77), inserting the conjunction *=in³* between two clauses often indicates coordination:

(77) *tû¹lâi² =tak¹ lian³ =in³ lâi³ sim² =in³ a³=nûn³ an¹*
huan¹
 present time =just PN =ERG letter read^I =CONJN 3= mother.ERG meal
 cook^I

“Now, Lian is reading a book, and his mother is cooking meal.”

8.3 Subordination

1.1.1. Complement clauses

A complement clause corresponds to the subject or object of the verb in another larger clause. As shown in (78), noun clauses are embedded within another clause and are generally indicated either by attaching (a) a proclitic pronoun or (b) a genitive NP to a form II verb as its subject. The proclitic pronoun indicating a third person can be omitted if unnecessary.

- (78) a. *hiʔ¹ pân³ tua² mouʔ³ (a³=) nêk¹ ken³ mû³ =ij³*
 DEM man.ERG DEM snack 3= eat^{II} 1SG.ERG see^I =1SG.REAL
- b. *hiʔ¹ pâ³ tua² mouʔ³ nêk¹ ken³ mû³ =ij³*
 DEM man.GEN DEM snack eat^{II} 1SG.ERG see^I =1SG.REAL
- “I saw this man eating that snack.”

As in (79) and (80), either *cî³* “to say” or *sâ³* “to think, to feel” directly follows a clause without any subordinator or alternating the verb stem.

- (79) *ken³ lou¹ =bek¹ koj¹- lei¹ cî³*
 1SG.ERG field =only 1.DIR- buy^I say^I
 “I only bought a field, he said.”
- (80) *a¹man³ hiʔ¹ meʔ³ =pên³ nel² sâ³*
 3SG.ERG DEM curry =TOP greasy^I think^I
 “He thought this curry is greasy.”

If a matrix verb is a speech-act verb describing either internal or external speech (e.g., *gên¹* “speak,” *doj³* “ask,” *ki³ciam²* “promise,” *tâŋ²kou²* “declare,” *zâ¹* “hear,” *tʰei³* “know,” *um³* “believe,” *lam¹en¹* “hope,” *xen²sat¹* “decide,” *ŋaiʔ³sun³* “consider,” *pʰôk¹* “realize,” and *tel¹* “understand” etc.), the conjunction *=in²* or *=â²* functions as a complementizer as in (81). Irrealis mood is indicated with the purposive particle *=dîŋ¹*, as seen in (82). The conjunction is often omitted.

- (81) *lian³nou¹ =in³ huai¹kim² ŋâi² =in² tʰei³ =ij³*
 PN =ERG PN love^I =CONJN know^I =1SG.REAL
 “I know that Lianno loves Huaikim.”
- (82) *ja²pân² =aʔ¹ nâ³sêm³ =dîŋ¹ (=in²) xen²sat¹ =ij³*
 PN =LOC work^I =PURP =CONJN decide^I =1SG.REAL
 “I decided that I would work in Japan.”

8.3.1 Relative clauses

Tiddim Chin does not require any relativizers to indicate relative clauses. The relative clause precedes or follows the head NP. If the subject is relativized, then

form I is selected for the verb stem in the relative clause, as shown in (83) and (84).

- (83) *lian*³ =*in*³ *lâi*³*bû*¹ *a*¹= *sa*² =*pian*³ *xat*³ *sim*²
 PN =ERG book 3= thick^I =rather one read^I
 “Lian is reading a book which is rather thick.”

- (84) *xuai*² *a*²= *zoŋ*² *zoŋ*² *a*³= *nû*¹ =*zoŋ*³ *tua*² *xuai*² =*in*³ *de*²
 bee 3= search^I search^I 3= mother =also DEM bee =ERG sting^I
 “The bee also stung a mother who had searched for the bee.”

Conversely, form II is chosen for the verb stem in the relative clause if a non-subject, such as an object, is relativized, as shown in (85) and (86). The subject of the relative clause appears in the form of a genitive-marked NP, or a proclitic pronoun accompanied by an optional ergative NP.

- (85) { *na*¹= / *naŋ*³ } *me*² *nêk*¹ *a*²= *lim*² *hî*³ =*a*²
 2= 2SG.GEN curry eat^{II} 3= tasty^I COP^I =Q
 “Is the curry that you tasted good?”

- (86) *lian*² *pa*²*tâk*¹ *huai*¹*nû*³ *xûp*¹ =*in*³ *tên*³ -*pi*²
 PN.GEN like^{II} PN PN =ERG marry^{II} -COM
 “Khup married Huainu, whom Lian liked.”

If the other type of oblique NP is relativized, then the noun modifying particle =*nâ*² follows the form II verb stem. As shown in (87), the relative clause precedes the head noun in this case.

- (87) *zan*²*koŋ*² =*a*² { *ei*³ / *i*¹= } *pai*³ =*nâ*² *mô*²*tô*²
 PN =LOC 1PL.INCL.GEN / 1PL.INCL go^{II} =NA car
*oŋ*¹- *ki*³- *le*² =*kîk*¹
 DIR- MDL- turn^I =again
 “The car by which we went to Yangon turned back here.”

8.3.2 Adverbial clauses

Adverbial clauses are indicated by either a single subordinator or by a combination

of subordinators. Subordinators can be classified either as noun-modifying particles or as conjunctions. Syntactically, there are two major types of adverbial clauses in Tiddim Chin. Some adverbial clauses employ form I verb stems for their predicates, whereas others employ form II.

[1] Form I verbs

In some adverbial clauses with clause-final subordinators such as $=in^2$ (purposes and sequential actions, among others), $=\hat{a}^2$ (purposes and sequential actions, among others), $=le^2$ (conditions), $=ta^3le^2$ (concessives), and $=na^3pi^1$ (concessives), the form I verb stem may be used, as shown in (88):

- (88) a^1ma^2 zon^2 $=in^2$ pai^2 $=i\eta^3$
 3SG search^I =CONJN go^I =1SG.REAL
 “I went to look for him.” (purpose)

An enclitic pronoun is required after the subordinators $=le^2$ (conditionals), $=ta^3le^2$ (concessives), and $=na^3pi^1$ (concessives). The subordinator $=le^2$ and the enclitic pronoun $=i\eta^3$ are fused to $=l\hat{e}\eta^3$, as shown in (89). An enclitic is occasionally followed by a subordinator $=\hat{a}^2$ to express a reason clause, as in (90).

- (89) kei^1 nan^1 hi^3 $=l\hat{e}\eta^3$ tua^1 $n\hat{u}^1$ $=to^2$ pai^2 $x\hat{o}m^3$ $=ni\eta^1$
 1SG 2SG COP^I =CONJN.1SG DEM.GEN woman =COM go^I together^I =1SG.IRR
 “If I were you, I’d go with the woman.”

($=le^2$ <CONJN> + $=i\eta^3$ <1SG.REAL> → $=l\hat{e}\eta^3$)

- (90) $l\hat{a}i^3$ $h\hat{a}n^3ciam^2$ $=i\eta^3$ $=\hat{a}^2$ ka^1 $=l\hat{a}i^3$ $o\eta^2$ ka^1 $=hi^3$ $=v\hat{e}^2$
 letter exert^I =1SG.REAL =CONJN 1= letter pass^I 1= COP^I
 =MOD

“As I studied hard, I passed an exam.”

[2] Form II verbs

If either conjunction $=in^2$ or $=\hat{a}^2$ directly follows a predicate verb in form II with a proclitic pronoun, the clause expresses a sequential action as shown in (91). Some noun modifying particles also function as subordinators, such as $=le^2$ (conditionals), $=cian^1$ (reason, time), $=h\hat{a}\eta^1$ (adversative, reason), $=man^3$ (reason), $=k\hat{o}m^2$

(simultaneous action), and =teʔ' ("thereafter"). These subordinators may follow a form II verb stem as in (92). As in (93), a subordinator =cianʔ' or =hânʔ' occasionally alternates its tone with =cian³ or =hân³ without either conjunction =â² or =in²:

- (91) zîŋ²saj² ka¹= tʰoʔ³ =â² xua² vâk² =tâ³
 morning 1= arise^{II} =CONJN weather lighten^I =PFV
 "When I got up in the morning, the sun had already risen." (sequential action)
- (92) zaj²koŋ² na¹= tun³ =cianʔ' =in² tʰû¹ oŋ¹- ŋaʔ³ =sak³ =ou³
 PN 2= arrive^{II} =time =CONJN matter DIR- get^I =CAUS =IMP
 "Please let me know when you arrive at Yangon." (time)
- (93) hiʔ¹ lâi³ sim² ka¹= hiʔ³ =hân³ ka²= luŋ² lût¹ =kei¹
 DEM letter read^I 1= COP^{II} =but 1= heart enter^I =NEG
 "I read this book; however, I was not interested in it." (adversative)

9. Text: "Peng Lam leh a sial" (Peng Lam and his mithan)

- [1] *Nidang lai-in, Peng Lam a kici pasal khat om.*
 ni¹+daŋ¹ =lâi² =in² peŋ²lam¹ a¹= ki³- cî³ pa³sal¹ xat³ om¹
 day+other¹ =around =CONJN PN 3= MDL- say^I male one exist^I
 once upon a time a man called Peng Lam exists
 "Once upon a time, there was a man called Peng Lam."

- [2] *Tua Peng Lam gamlakah vak kawikawi.*
 tua² peŋ²lam¹ gam² lak¹ =aʔ³ vâk¹ kôî¹kôî¹
 DEM PN jungle inside =LOC walk out^I here and there
 that Peng Lam in the jungle walked here and there
 "Peng Lam was walking here and there in the jungle."

- [3] *A vakna-ah a tawvang beelsia khat mu.*
 a¹= vâk³ =nâ² =aʔ¹ a³= to¹+vaŋ² bêl²+sia¹ xat³ mû³
 3= walk out^{II} =NA =LOC 3= bottom+hollow^I pot+broken^I one find^I
 at the place where he walked one broken pot with a hole in the bottom found
 "He found a broken pot with a hole in the bottom."

[4] *Tua beelsia a innah ciahpih.*
 tua² bêl²+sia¹ a³= in¹ =a?³ cia?³ -pi?³
 DEM pot+broken^I 3= house =LOC return^{II} -COM
 that broken pot to his house returned with
 “He returned home with the broken pot.”

[5] *Inn a tun ciangin, a nu a lah leh,*
 in¹ a¹= tun³ =ciaŋ¹ =in² a³= nû¹ a¹= la?³ =le?³
 house 3= arrive^{II} =TIME =CONJN 3= mother 3= show^{II} =CONJN
 when he arrived when he showed it to his mother
a nu in tua beel+sia deih lo-in tai.
 a³= nû¹ =in³ tua bêl²+sia¹ dei?³ lou³ =in² tâi¹
 3= mother =ERG DEM pot broken^I like^I NEG^I =CONJN scold^I
 his mother didn't like the broken pot and scolded him
 “When he arrived home, and showed it to his mother, his mother didn't
 like the broken pot, so she scolded him.”

[6] *Peng Lam zong lo-ah a pai leh, sial khat mu leuleu.*
 peŋ²lam¹ =zɔŋ³ lou¹ =a?³ a¹= pai³ =le?³ sial² xat³ mu³ lêu³lêu³
 PN =also field =LOC 3= go^{II} =CONJN mithan one find^I again
 Peng Lam also at the field when he went a mithan found again
 “Peng Lam went out again and found a mithan in the field.”

[7] *Lampi-ah tua sial in ektha.*
 lam¹ -pî¹ =a?³ tua² sial² =in³ êk¹ t^hâ³
 road -AUG =LOC DEM mithan =ERG feces defecate^I
 on the big road that mithan defecated
 “On the big road, the mithan defecated.”

[8] *Tua ahik manin, Peng Lam in, “Hihsial zong a taw*
 tua² a¹= hi?³ =man³ =in² peŋ²lam¹ =in³ hi?¹ sial² =zɔŋ³ a³= tô¹
 DEM 3= COP^{II} =cause =CONJN PN =ERG DEM mithan =also 3= bottom
 because of that Peng Lam this mithan also his bottom

vang zel ahih leh ka nu'n deih ken teh
 van² =zêl¹ a¹= hi³ =le³ ka³= nûn³ dei³ =ken²te¹
 hollow¹ =again 3= COP^{II} =CONJN 1= mother.ERG like^I =NEG.3SG.IRR
 hollow again so that my mother won't like

ci-in, lampi-ah that.
 ci³ =in² lam¹ -pî¹ =a³ t^hat³
 say^I =CONJN road -AUG =LOC kill^I
 say, and on the big road killed

“Because of that, Peng Lam said, ‘The mithan’s bottom has a hole, too, so my mother won’t like it.’ He killed it.”

[9] *A thah khit ciangin, a sateng lakpan*
 a¹= t^ha³ xit³ =cian¹ =in² a³= sâ¹ =ten² lak¹ =pan³
 3= kill^{II} finish^{II} =time =CONJN 3= meat =PL inside =ABL
 when he has killed it from inside of the meat

a pheï bek a innah ciahpih.
 a¹= p^hei³ =bek¹ a³= in¹ =a³ cia³ -pi³
 3= thigh =only 3= house =LOC return^{II} -COM
 its thigh only to his house returned with

“He killed it, and returned home with only its thigh, taken from inside the body.”

[10] *Lampi-ah a ciah kawmin Peng Lamin a veih teh.*
 lam¹ -pî¹ =a³ a¹= cia³ =kôm² =in² peŋ²lam¹ =in³ a²= vei³ te³
 road -AUG=LOC 3= return^{II} =while =CONJN PN =ERG 3= fart let.go^I
 on the big road with his returning Peng Lam his fart let go

“While returning home, he broke wind on the big road.”

[11] *Tua uih lua ahih cianga, Peng Lamin nam sia sa*
 tua² ui[?]³ lua² a¹= hi[?]³ =ciaŋ¹ =â² peŋ²lam¹ =in³ nam² sia¹ sa³
 DEM stink^I very^I 3= COP^{II} =cause =CONJN PN =ERG smell bad^I feel^I
 it very stinky therefore Peng Lam smell bad feel

lua.

lua²

very^I

very

“It was so stinky that Peng Lam smelt a very bad smell.”

[12] *Ahih hanga, ama' veih ahih lam thei lo-in,*
 a¹= hi[?]³ =hâŋ¹ =â² a¹mâ² vei[?]³ a¹= hi[?]³ lam¹ t^hei³ lou³ =in²
 3= COP^{II} =but =CONJN 3SG.GEN fart 3= COP^{II} fact know^I NEG^I =CONJN
 but his fart fact didn't know and

sial' veih sa ahih ciangin,
 sial¹ vei[?]³ sâ³ a¹= hi[?]³ =ciaŋ¹ =in²
 mithan.GEN fart think^I 3= COP^{II} =cause =CONJN
 mithan's fart thought because

“However, he didn't realize that it was his fart, and he thought it was the mithan's.”

[13] *“Sial aw, k'ong thah zawh sawt nai lo hi ve'n.*
 sial² =ô³ koŋ¹- t^ha[?]³ zo[?]³ sôt¹ =nâi¹ lou³ hi³ =vên³
 mithan =FIN 1.DIR- kill^{II} accomplish^{II} take.time^I =yet NEG^I COP^I =MOD.3SG
 Mithan having killed have not taken time yet

“Mithan, it hasn't been much time since I killed you!”

A ba'hang namsia ta na hia?”
 a¹= ba³hâŋ³ nam² se¹ =tâ³ na¹= hî³ =a²
 3= what.cause.CONJN smell bad^I =PFV 2= COP^I =Q
 for what you smelt bad

“Why do you smell bad?”

[14] *ci-in, tua sialphei pai.*
 cî³ =in² tua² sial¹ p^hei³ pâi³
 say¹ =CONJN DEM mithan.GEN thigh throw.away¹
 said and that mithan's thigh threw away
 "he said, and threw away the mithan's thigh."

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Abbreviation

1: First person, 2: Second person, 3: Third person, ¹: Rising tone, ²: Level tone, ³: Falling tone, -: Affix boundary, =: Clitic boundary, +: Compound boundary, ¹: Form I, ^{II}: Form II, A: Most agent-like argument of a transitive clause, ABS: Absolutive, AUG: Augmentative, C: Complement, C: Consonant, CAUS: Causative, COM: Comitative, CONJN: Conjunction COP: Copula, DEM: Demonstrative, DIR: Direction, ERG: Ergative, EXCL: Exclusive, FEM: Feminine, FIN: Final particle, GEN: Genitive, IMP: Imperative, INCL: Inclusive, ITER: Iterative, LOC: Locative, MAS: Masculine, MOD: Mood, MDL: Middle voice, NA: The noun modifying particle =nâ², NEG: Negative, NONV: Non-volitional, NP: Noun phrase, O: Most patient-like argument of a transitive clause, PFV: Perfective, PL: Plural, PN: Proper noun, PURP: Purposive, RDP Reduplication, Q: Interrogative or question marker, REAL: Realis, S: Single argument of an intransitive clause, SG: Singular, T: Tone, TIME: Time, TOP: Topic, TRVZ: Transitive marker, V: Verb, v: Vowel, VBLZ: Verbalizer, VP: Verb phrase.