Languages and Peoples of the Eastern Himalayan Region **(LPEHR) comprises an annual special issue of *Himalayan Linguistics* together with occasional special publications. Peer-reviewed and open-access, it focuses on linguistic and ethnographic documentation and description in the Eastern Himalaya.**

Languages and Peoples of the Eastern Himalayan Region (LPEHR)

Grammar sketch of Tawang Monpa

Anette Helgestad Tombleson
SIL International

ABSTRACT

Tawang Monpa, also known as Dakpa, is an East Bodish language spoken in Arunachal Pradesh in India, and in Trashigang in Bhutan. This article is a brief description of the main grammatical features of the language. The section on the noun phrase will focus on case markers and a focus marker. The section on the verb phrase outlines the set of tense, aspect, and evidentiality suffixes, and discusses negation and various adverbial suffixes in detail. Pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, and deictic expression are also described, in addition to sections about the structure of the simple clause and clause combination.

KEYWORDS

East Bodish, grammar sketch, case, tense, aspect, evidentiality

This is a contribution from *Himalayan Linguistics Vol 21(2) – Languages and Peoples of the Eastern Himalayan Region: 105–141.*
ISSN 1544-7502

Himalayan Linguistics Vol 21(2) – Languages and Peoples of the Eastern Himalayan Region © CC by-nc-nd-4.0
ISSN 1544-7502

Grammar sketch of Tawang Monpa

Anette Helgestad Tombleson
SIL International

1. Introduction[1]

This paper provides a short description of some of the main grammatical features of Tawang Monpa (Dakpa). The paper is the result of several years of research of the language, with multiple trips early on to Tawang district of Arunachal Pradesh, and further, sporadic, contact with various speakers of the language, both from India and Bhutan. Over the years, I have collected several texts of various lengths and from various genres. Some of these are more fully analyzed than others. One of these narratives will be published in interlinear form in a coming publication. In this article the examples are from four different recorded texts, one of them written, in addition to elicited materials, and examples taken from real-life conversations between me and Tawang Monpa speakers. All the elicited examples will be marked.

1.1 About the language

Tawang Monpa is an East Bodish language spoken by approximately 50.000 speakers, mostly in Tawang district of Arunachal Pradesh, India, but also across the border in Bhutan. The first mention of the language in academic publications is from 1858, where Hodgeson gives a short word list and discusses some aspects of the phonology, noting that there is both vowel length distinctions and tone distinctions. Shafer (1954) uses the work of Hodegson to establish that Tawang Monpa (which he calls Dwags) belongs to an East-Bodish subgroup. In 2010, Hyslop and Tsering published a short grammar sketch of Tawang Monpa. This current grammar sketch answers several of the questions raised in Hyslop and Tsering, although some questions remain unanswered. In 2020 Tombleson put out an article describing the copula system of Tawang Monpa. The current paper provides the most comprehensive grammatical description to date of Tawang Monpa.

1.2 About the Place in the Tibeto-Burman family

The Tibeto-Burman family tree is a complicated one, with several theories and models about which languages are related in what way. In 1955, Shafer proposed that

[1] I'm very grateful to my Tawang Monpa speaking friends who, throughout many years, have patiently taught me about their language. I'm also thankful to Tom Payne, Andreas Joswig, and all the participants and instructors at the Grammatical Description Workshop where this paper was first started. And to Juha Yliniemi and Oyuka Larring for all their help and feedback. I'm also thankful to the editors and the two reviewers of this paper for all their comments, help and feedback.

Tawang Monpa is part of the East Bodish family, which includes other Bhutanese languages. As mentioned in van Driem (2007), and in Tombleson (2020), there are grammatical similarities between Tawang Monpa and some of the Central Tibetan languages, which is not surprising due to the closeness both geographically, religiously, and culturally. In 2007, Van Driem proposed that Dzala and Dakpa form a separate subgroup of East Bodish languages.

2. Phonology

In the following section I will give an overview of the main features of Tawang Monpa contrastive phonology.

2.1 Consonants

There are 29 contrastive consonants in Tawang Monpa:

	Labial	Alveolar	Palatal	Retroflex	Velar	Glottal
Stops	p pʰ b	t tʰ d		ʈ ɖ	k kʰ g	
Nasals	m	n	ɲ		ŋ	
Fricatives		s z	ɕ ʑ	ʂ		h
Affricates		ts tsʰ dz	tɕ tɕʰ dʑ			
Laterals		l				
Rhotics		r				
Glides	w		j			
Lateral Fricatives		ɬ				

Table 1 - Tawang Monpa consonant chart

Of special note here is that I have not yet identified an aspirated unvoiced retroflex stop, or a voiced retroflex fricative. Currently more research into the phonology is being done, so it is not unlikely that these phonemes will show up.

All consonants can occur syllable initially:

p:	/pin/	glue	/sɑr.pɑ/	new
pʰ:	/pʰo:/	cave	/tsɑŋ.pʰu/	river
b:	/bɑ/	acow	/tʰɑ.rīŋ.bo/	far

t:	/tokp/	thick	/mēn.to/	flower
tʰ:	/tʰik.pɑ/	drop	/hɑ.lém.tʰi/	few
d:	/dɑŋ/	yesterday	/gi.du/	animist
ʈ:	/ʈoŋ/	hammer	/sɑp.ʈɑ/	map
ɖ:	/ɖɑ/	drum	/ʈɑ.ɖɑ.pʰɑ.ɖɑ/	colourful
k:	/kɑ/	ginger	/lām.kɑ/	bag
kʰ:	/kʰo:/	snow	/but.kʰɑ/	between
g:	/gi.du/	animist	/ɲú.gu/	pencil
m:	/mē/	fire	/tsɑn.mā/	mole
n:	/nír/	wrinkle	/ɲē.nā/	lesson
ɲ:	/ɲā/	fish	/si.ŋé.ɲé.ná/	because
ŋ:	/ŋōū/	blue, green	/mē:.ŋōn/	tale
r:	/rúí/	bamboo	/koŋ.rō/	neighbour
s:	/sum/	three	/tʰɑp.sɑŋ/	kitchen
z:	/zi:/	what	/pʰɑ.zɑr.mā/	waterfall
ʂ:	/ʂokp/	ant		
ɕ:	/ɕɑ/	meat	/ɑ.ɕum/	corn
ʑ:	/ʑim/	cat	/māū.ʑɑ/	peacock
h:	/hɑ.lā/	rabbit		
ts:	/tseu/	brush	/jø̄:.tsɑŋ/	breast
tsʰ:	/tsʰe.mā/	twins	/gráŋ.má.tsʰi/	river
dz:			/pu.dzɑ/	child
tɕ:	/tɕi.ge/	foreigner	/ʈɑp.tɕi/	button
tɕʰ:	/tɕʰen/	wood cup	/nīŋ.tɕʰu/	beautiful
dʑ:	/dʑom/	soft	/sim.dʑin/	animal
l:	/lyp/	body	/kuk.líŋ/	curl
ɬ:	/ɬám/	shoe	/gor.ɬá/	rock statue
j:	/jēr/	type of spice	/kɑr.jú/	cup
w:	/wá:/	tooth	/te.wān/	ax

Only a subset of the consonants can be found in syllable final position:

p:	/sirp/	yellow (pronounced *sirpo* in careful speech)	
t:	/ʂret/	tear (verb)	
tʰ	/utʰ/	this	
ʈ	/goʈ/	head	
k	/idʑik/		and
m	/mem/		grandfather
n	/lemin/	leg	
ŋ	/niŋ/	age	
r	/nir/	wrinkle	
s	/nis/	seven	
ɕ	/deɕ/	day	
l	/bul/	while	

j	/gej/	go

There is also a large set of complex onsets in Tawang Monpa. These onsets consist of either a stop+lateral/rhotic/glide, or a nasal+rhotic:

pr:	/práŋ/	fly
pl:	/plāŋ/	sun
pʰl:	/pʰlǿí.má/	braid
br:	/brūŋ/	buffalo
bl:	/blā/	ash
mr:	/mrī.pin/	dream
ml:	/mlēmp/	black
kʰr:	/kʰrā/	blood
kʰɬ:	/cʰɬēm/	fork
kr:	/krétʰ/	waist
kʰɬ:	/kʰɬō.gɑ/	to read
gr:	/grū:/	warm
gl:	/glāŋ/	ox
ŋr:	/ŋrī/	ask

In normal speech there is also a set of complex codas, but in careful speech these are all shown to be followed by a vowel, usually either an /ɑ/ or /u/. Below is a list of the forms as they were given to me, without the added vowel. Note that in the rest of the paper, I will provide the form as it was given to me, with or without the vowel.

Complex coda:

1.	mp:	/pemp/	wing
2.	tp:	/kɑtp/	old man
3.	nt:	/kunt/	winter
4.	rt:	/tɕert/	important meeting
5.	rp:	/tʰerp/	water tank
6.	rc:	/terc/	hit
7.	rk:	/berk/	their
8.	rn:	/tɕern/	crack
9.	kp:	/tokp/	thick
10.	ŋp:	/koŋp/	millet

In the transcriptions in this paper the consonants are written as in Table 1.

2.2 Vowels

There are six contrastive vowels in Tawang Monpa, these are shown in Table 2:

	Front	Central	Back
Close	i		u
Mid	e	ø	o
Open		ɑ	

Table 2 - Tawang Monpa vowels

Below is a list of the vowels in their contexts:

i:	/i/	*2sg*	/nis/	*seven*
u:	/ut^{h}/	*this*	/mur/	*downhill*
e:			/k^{h}e/	*potato*
ø:			/jør/	*much*
o:	/op/	*older sister*	/kon/	*insect*
a:	/agun/	*cucumber*	/man/	*medicine*

It is possible to form diphthongs with the close back vowel *u* as the second element, and either *i, e o* or *a* as the first element:

/iu/:	/līū/	*red*
/eu/:	/ɲéú/	*snot*
/ou/:	/ʂou/	*hard*
/ɑu/:	/māū̱.ʐɑ/	*peacock*

2.3 Tone and vowel length

Both tone and vowel length is minimally contrastive in Tawang Monpa, with a two-way high/low tone distinction. Tone is contrastive only after sonorants, while it is predictably high after unvoiced stops, and low after voiced stops. There are only a few examples of minimal pairs where tone is the only distinguishing feature:

/líú/ heavy līū/ red
/lá/ arm /lā/ mountain

Vowel length is likewise found to only be contrastive in a few instances, and only in monosyllabic open syllables.

/má/	wound	/má:/	war
/te/	horse	/te:/	table
/pɑ/	face	/pa:/	vegetable

The ergative case marker for pronouns is i and combined with the 2.sg pronoun i results in i: as the ergative 2sg pronoun. It is clear that there are also other phonological factors playing a role both for tone and vowel length, but as these have not been researched yet, I have chosen to not mark tone or vowel length in this paper, with the exception of the ergative 2sg pronoun i:.

3. Nouns and the noun phrase

Nouns in Tawang Monpa are mostly mono- or disyllabic (*pʰo* 'cave', *nelap* 'ear'). There is no inflectional marking on nouns; both case marking and plural marking are enclitics attached to the noun phrase. In this section, I will show examples of the four case markers and the plural attached to a noun. I will also look at the Tawang Monpa noun phrase and discuss in detail the various elements that can be part of the noun phrase. In the first section, I will look at how case is used, followed by a discussion of how to indicate that something is plural; then follows a section about a focus marker, adjectives, determiners, and finally I will show some examples of how quantifiers and numerals are used in the noun phrase. A complicating factor is that in Tawang Monpa whole arguments can be left out of the clause if they are understandable from the context, which sometimes makes it difficult to fully understand what is happening. Where this happens, it will either be indicated with the missing argument in a bracket in the free translation, or it will be mentioned in the description of the relevant example.

3.1 Case marking

There are four case markers in Tawang Monpa: the ergative case marker *=si*, the dative marker *=ɕʰe* , the locative marker *=ga* realized as *=a* after nasals, and the genitive case marker *=ku*. When the agent is inanimate, the ergative *=si* case marker covers instrumental meaning. The absolutive case is unmarked.

Ergative:

(1a) *saŋge=si* *wot* *nei* *tɕʰø-sum*
God=ERG light two make-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
'God made two lights.'

(1b) *ŋai* *cʰotɕʰuŋ=si* *ɕʰa* *tup-du*
1SG.ERG knife=INSTR meat cut-IPFV
'I am cutting the meat with a knife.'

Dative:

(2) *idʑik* *toptɕʰe* *rot-ja* *kʰi=ɕʰe* *bi-sum*
and food bring-CC dog=DAT gave-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
'And bringing food (she) gave it to the dog.'

Locative:

(3a) *kʰem=a raŋ zu-gu noum*
house=LOC only sit-PERF EX.GEN.COP
'(People) only stay at home.'

(3b) *na-na cʰem tʰi=ga ʑom pun nei noum*
before-before house one=LOC girl siblings two EX.GEN.COP
'A long time ago two sisters lived in a house'

Genitive:

(4) *saŋe=ku suŋma*
god=POSS angel
'God's angel'

The genitive marker is often reduced to *=k* in rapid speech. All the case markers occur as clitics at the end of the noun phrase. Case marking is influenced by pragmatic factors that need further research. The unmarked noun is in absolutive case, which will be discussed and contrasted with ergative case in the section below.

3.1.1. Ergative and absolutive:

The normal alignment pattern for grammatical relations in Tawang Monpa is an ergative absolutive system, where the O argument of a transitive clause is marked in the same way as the S of an intransitive clause. In Tawang Monpa, this means that these arguments are not marked, but occur in the unmarked absolutive case. The A argument of a transitive clause is marked with the ergative case marker *=si*. Below are some examples of this:

(5) *ɲe be.kʰem-du*
1SG thirsty-IPFV
'I am thirsty'

(6) *ber pun nei-ga=si mrupin cʰentsa tʰi toŋ-um*
3PL sibling two-(?)=ERG dream strange one see-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
'the two siblings saw one strange dream'

In these two examples we see that both the 1st person pronoun in (5), and the O argument *mrupin* 'dream' in (6) are unmarked while the A argument in (6) *ber pun nei* 'they two' is marked with the ergative case marker. The ergative marker is the last element of a noun phrase:

(7) *idʑik ʑom priu-ɕʰo=tɕʰi=si*
and girl small-SUPER=FOC=ERG
'And the smallest girl'

The alignment system shown above is not absolute, it varies depending on several factors, not all of them are yet fully understood. In general, ergative marking is more predominant in elicited examples than in narratives, and in narratives some speakers seem to use it more than others. Below is a set of examples from an elicitation session:

(8) *data ɲe tsʰi tʰoŋ-du* [ELICITED]
now 1SG water drink-IPFV
'Now I am drinking water.'

(9) *daŋ ŋai tsʰi tʰoŋ-gu* [ELICITED]
yesterday 1SG.ERG water drink-PERF
'Yesterday I drank water.'

(10) *nogor ŋai tsʰi tʰoŋ-gju* [ELICITED]
tomorrow 1SG.ERG water drink- FUT
'Tomorrow I will drink water.'

(11) *nogor ŋai dradri ja-gju* [ELICITED]
tomorrow 1SG.ERG prepare do- FUT
'Tomorrow I will prepare.'

(12) *nogor ɲe dradri ma-ja* [ELICITED]
tomorrow 1SG prepare NEG-do
'Tomorrow I will not prepare.'

In narratives, the ergative can also be used to indicate topicality or contrastive focus. The two sentences below appear almost immediately after each other in a story, and they are differently marked. In (14) the smaller sister is marked both with the focus marker *=tɕʰi* and the ergative *=si*, possibly to indicate the switch in focus from the older sister to the younger sister

(13) *op ten-ɕʰo=tɕʰi=ɕʰe akp tʰi tʰap-um*
older.sister big-SUPER=FOC=DAT husband one receive-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
'The older sister got a husband.'

(14) *idʑik ʑom priu-ɕʰo=tɕʰi=si be-naŋ=ɕʰe cʰem temp*
and girl small-SUPER=FOC=ERG 3SG-REFL=DAT house big
tʰi tʰap-um
one receive-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
'And the smaller girl, she got a big house.'

3.1.2. Dative

The dative case marker *=ɕʰe* is most frequently used to indicate recipients. In (15) below we see a typical example of the use of the dative:

(15) *idʑik toptɕʰe rot-ja kʰi=ɕʰe bi-sum*
and food bring-CC dog=DAT gave-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
'And bringing food (she) gave it to the dog.'
The dative is used in possessive clauses:

(16) *ɲe=ɕʰe rup jør nou*
1SG=DAT money much EX.PERS.COP
'I have a lot of money.'

Occasionally, the dative is used to indicate animacy, as can be seen in the example below where we would not necessarily expect the 1st person pronoun to be marked with dative. (17a) and (17b) also illustrate that word order is not strict:

(17a) *data ɲe=ɕʰe ʂokpu=si tɕi-dur* [ELICITED]
now 1SG=DAT ant=ERG bite-PROG
'Now the ant is biting me.'

(17b) *data ʂokpu=si ɲe=ɕʰe tɕi-dur* [ELICITED]
now ant= ERG 1SG=DAT bite-PROG
'Now the ant is biting me.'

In the same was as for the other case markers, the dative marks a whole noun phrase. In the example below, we see the case marker after the focus marker:

(18) *idʑik nei=ga=si cʰi=tɕʰi=ɕʰe te-ja jør*
and two=(?)=ERG dog=FOC=DAT see-CC much
ɲintɕʰe-sum
compassion-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
'And the two felt great compassion when they saw the dog.'

3.1.3. Locative

Locative case is, as the name indicates, used to mark the location of a person, object or activity, and is, as the other case markers, a clitic attached to the noun phrase. The form of the suffix varies depending on phonological rules. The basic form of the suffix is *=ga*, but following nasals the /g/ is dropped, so rather than *kʰem=ga*, we find *kʰem=a* 'in the house'. In (19) below we see examples of the use of the locative case marker:

(19a) *be* *kʰem=a* *ni*
3SG house=LOC EX.TEST.COP
'He is in the house.'

(19b) *soldup lap=gani*
ring finger= LOC EX.TEST.COP
'The ring is on the finger.'

(19c) *drema* *tsʰala* *loŋ-te* *bazar=ga* *gej*
Drema things buy-PURP market= LOC go
'Drema went to the market in order to buy things.' [ELICITED]

The most common use of the locative case marker is on a set of relator nouns: *ɲeŋ=(g)a* 'inside', *gjakp=ga* 'behind', *tse=ga* 'on top', *wa=ga/maŋ=(g)a* 'under', *lo=ga* 'on side', *re=ga* 'next to', *pit=ga* 'outside', and *but=ga* 'between', 'in the middle of'. Even though these can be analysed as a noun plus the locative case marker, they have become lexicalised to such a degree that most speakers find it difficult to see that they are in fact two morphemes. There are some examples where the relator nouns, without the locative case marker, occur in compound nouns: *latse* 'mountain top'. I have therefore chosen to gloss them as a whole, rather than as a noun+LOC.

(20) *tsʰi* *karju* *ɲeŋa* *ni*
water bowl inside EX.TEST.COP
'The water is in the bowl.'

(21) *ʑokp* *kukja* *gjakpga* *ni*
boy chair behind EX.TEST.COP
'The boy is behind the chair.'

(22) *rei* *te* *tsega* *ni*
tablecloth table on.top EX.TEST.COP
'The tablecloth is on the table.'

(23) *cʰɬem* *rei* *waga* *ni*
spoon tablecloth below EX.TEST.COP
'The spoon/fork is under the tablecloth.'

(24) *praŋ* *tsikpa* *loga* *ni*
fly wall on.side EX.TEST.COP
'The fly is on the wall.'

(25) *ɕʰeŋ* *kʰem* *rega* *ni*
tree house next.to EX.TEST.COP
'The tree is next to the house.'

(26) *cʰi kʰem pitga ni*
dog house outside EX.TEST.COP
'The dog is outside the house.'

(27) *to ɲaldup butga ni*
apple circle in.middle EX.TEST.COP
'The apple is in the centre of the circle.'

3.1.4. Genitive

The genitive case marker is *=ku*, often shortened to *=k* in normal speech. The genitive case is used for possession, where the genitive case marker marks the possessor, while the possessee is unmarked. The genitive is used similarly for nouns and pronouns:

(28) *saŋe=ku suŋma*
god=POSS angel
'God's angel'

As with the other case markers, the genitive also comes at the end of the noun phrase:

(29) *op ten=ɕʰo=k makp watoŋ*
older.sister big=SUPER=POSS husband leave
'The older sister's husband left.'

3.2 Plural

There is no number marking on Tawang Monpa nouns, instead one can add numerals, quantifiers, or the clitic *=naŋ* to a noun or noun phrase to indicate plurality. *=naŋ* can also be used as a reflexive on pronouns (Section 4.0) so context is important to determine its meaning. Below are examples of the use of a numeral to indicate plurality:

(30) *ber nei*
3PL two
'they two'

(31) *cʰi sum*
dog three
'three dogs'

This is common only for smaller numbers. When larger numbers need to be indicated, various quantifiers can be used:

(32) *saŋe=si* *semtɕen* *naminatsʰo* *tanpe* *zu-gum*
God=ERG animal all.types.of creation live-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
'God created all types of animals.'

And some examples of the use of *=naŋ* to indicate plurality:

(33) *mi=naŋ*
person=PL
'people'

(34) *cʰi=naŋ*
dog=PL
'dogs'

3.3 Focus

There is a focus marker in frequent use in Tawang Monpa with two forms, *=tɕʰit* and *=tɕʰi*. *=tɕʰit* occurs at the end of a phrase, and *=tɕʰi* either between a noun and a case marker, or between a superlative marker and a case marker. The full use of this marker is not yet understood. They are used for discourse pragmatic purposes. The marker is used both to draw attention to one particular participant in a clause, often when that participant is less agentive than the other participants, or when switching focus to a new participant from the previous clause. The example with *=tɕʰit* below follows an introduction of two sisters. In this clause, the focus is on only one sister, while in the previous clause it was on both of them:

(35) *ɕʰintare* *ʑom* *tʰi=tɕʰit* *raŋ* *kʲamp nou* *ɲe-ja*
still girl one=FOC only poor EX.PERS.COP say-CC
sem jør *tʰakʲø-dum*
heart much sad-IPFV.COP.EQ.GEN
'Still one sister said, I'm only poor, and she was very sad.'

To illustrate the use of =tɕʰi we can look at this example:

(36) *idʑik* *nei=ga=si* *cʰi=tɕʰi=ɕʰe* *te-ja* *jør*
and two=(?)=ERG dog=FOC=DAT see-CC much
ɲintɕʰe-sum
feel.compassion-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
'And both felt great compassion when they saw the dog.'

Here 'two', referring to two sisters previously mentioned in the story, is marked with ergative, making them the agentive participants of the clause. 'Dog' is marked with dative, in addition to the focus marker. In normal discourse, the most agent-like participant

is usually in focus, so here the focus marker is used to highlight the less agent-like participant. There are three other, phonologically similar forms that seem to be marking topic or focus as well. The three forms are: *=tɕʰik*, *=tɕʰike* and *=tɕʰiki*. These forms are less common than *=tɕʰit* and *=tɕʰi*, and their use is not yet understood. All three occur at the end of a phrase, and are never followed by a case marker:

(37) *makp* *ɲe=ɕʰe* *ɕʰin.o* *raŋ-ja* *mon*
husband 1SG=DAT happy only-CC EX.NEG.PERS.COP
ɲe-gum *ʑom* *priu-ɕʰo=tɕʰik* *tʰi*
said-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN girl small=SUPER=FOC one
sam-um
think-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
'My husband doesn't love me, thought the younger sister'

(38) *ziŋeɲeŋa* *makp=tɕʰike* *be=ɕʰe* *jør* *tsepa* *ja-dum*
because husband=FOC 3SG=DAT much love do-IPFV.COP.EQ.GEN
tɕʰinaje
even.though
'Because even though the husband loved her very much'

(39) *idʑik* *it* *ɬa=tɕʰiki* *ɲe-gum*
and that god=FOC say-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
'And the god said...'

3.4 Adjectives

There is a class of adjectives in Tawang Monpa, consisting of colour terms (40a), quality terms (40b), and size terms (40c). Adjectives follow the noun they modify:

(40a) *kʰra* *mlemp*
hair black
'black hair'

(40b) *mrupin* *kʰentsa*
dream strange
'strange dream'

(40c) *cʰem* *tʰem*
house big
'big house'

Some of the adjectives can take the clause chaining marker *-ja*, which otherwise only occur on verbs:

(41) *ŋok* *makpe* *ɲe=ɕʰe* *liu-ja* *munum*
1SG.POSS husband 1SG=DAT good-CC EX.NEG.GEN.COP
'My husband isn't good for me.'

Adjectives, when they are the last element in a noun phrase, can take a case clitic:

(42) *ʑom* *priu=si*
girl small=ERG
'small girl'

In comparative and superlative constructions, the suffix *-ɕʰo* is added to the adjective. For comparative constructions, a comparative word *jana* is also added. I have only encountered comparative constructions in elicitation. In the following examples of the comparative construction, *jana* follows immediately after the standard of comparison, and it is this order that determines what is compared to what:

(43) *ɲe* *i* *jana* *boŋku* *riŋ-ɕʰo* *nou* [ELICITED]
1SG 2SG than tall tall-SUPER EX.PERS.COP
'I am taller than you.'

(44) *ɲe* *jana* *i* *boŋku* *riŋ-ɕʰo* *ni* [ELICITED]
1SG than 2SG tall tall- SUPER EX.TEST.COP
'You are taller than me.'

(45) *be* *i* *jana* *boŋku* *riŋ-ɕʰo* *ni* [ELICITED]
3SG 2SG than tall tall-SUPER EX.TEST.COP
'He is taller than you.'

(46) *be* *jana* *i* *boŋku* *riŋ-ɕʰo* *ni* [ELICITED]
3SG than 2SG tall tall-SUPER EX.TEST.COP
'You are taller than him.'

(47) *cʰi* *ʑim* *jana* *tʰen-ɕʰo* *ni* [ELICITED]
dog cat than big-SUPER EX.TEST.COP
'The dog is bigger than the cat.'

(48) *cʰi* *jana* *ʑim* *tʰen-ɕʰo* *ni* [ELICITED]
dog than cat big-SUPER EX.TEST.COP
'The cat is bigger than the dog.'

The marker *ɕʰo* is used also in superlative constructions, but then without *jana*:

(49) *op* *ten-ɕʰo*
older sister big-SUPER
'The oldest sister'

3.5 Determiner

There are two determiners in Tawang Monpa, one indicating proximity to the speaker, and one indicating distance to the speaker:

(50) *utʰ* *dep*
this book
'this book'

(51) *um* *dep*
that book
'that book'

Distance does not necessarily have to do with physical distance, but can also indicate distance in time:

(52) *utʰ* *tam=tɕʰit* *na* *ŋok* *an* *tʰi* *tam* *jim*
this story= FOC before 1SG.POSS aunt one story EQ.GEN.COO
'This story from before is about my aunt.'

3.6 Pronouns

Tawang Monpa pronouns are marked for case. Some pronouns have not yet been analyzed, and some pronouns I have only encountered in elicitation. Table 3 below is chart of personal pronouns:

Person	Absolutive	Ergative	Dative	Genitive	Reflexive
1sg	*ɲe*	*ŋai*	*ɲe=ɕʰe*	*ŋok*	*ŋa=naŋ*
2sg	*i*	*i:*	*i=ɕʰe*	*i=ku*	*i=naŋ*
3sg	*be*	*bei*	*be=ɕʰe*	*be=ku*	*be=naŋ*
1pl	*ŋar*	*ŋar-bak=si*	*ŋar=ɕʰe*	*ŋork*	
1pl	*ŋataŋ*			*ŋataŋ=ku*	*ŋataŋk-ba*
2pl	*ir*	*ir-ba=si*	*ir=ɕʰe*	*ir=ku*	*i=taŋ*
3pl	*ber*	*ber-ba=si*	*ber=ɕʰe*	*ber=ku*	*ber=bak*

Table 3 – Tawang Monpa pronouns

What is termed here the absolutive is the unmarked pronoun form. The 1pl absolutive *ŋataŋ* is possibly an inclusive form, but I am not yet sure of the distribution of this form. The ergative case marker for noun phrases is *=si*. For the pronouns the s has been dropped resulting in diphthongs for 1st and 3rd person singular, and a long vowel for 2nd person singular. The ergative plural forms have kept the full ergative marker, in addition to the suffix *-ba*. I have only ever encountered these plural forms in elicitation. For dative case, the case marker is simply added to the absolutive form of the pronoun. The genitive forms are also, except for the 1st person forms, simply the absolutive forms with the added genitive suffix. I have not yet understood the full use of the reflexive pronoun, and some of the forms are also irregular. The various uses of the cases will be discussed more in the section about the noun phrase. Below I will give examples from each of the columns in the pronoun chart above:

(53) *ɲe* *muip* *kʰukpa* *tʰi* *ni*
1SG woman stupid one EX.TEST.COP
'I am a stupid woman.'

(54) *daŋ* *ŋai* *dradri* *ja-gju* [ELICITED]
yesterday 1SG.ERG prepare do-FUT
'Yesterday I prepared.'

(55) *ɲe=ɕʰe* *makp* *namda tʰi* *tʰap*
1SG=DAT husband good one give
'Give a good husband to me.'

(56) *utʰ* *tam* *tɕʰit* *na* *ŋok* *an* *tʰi* *tam* *jim*
this story FOC before 1SG.POSS aunt one story EQ.NEUT.COP
'This story from before is my aunt's story.'

The use of the reflexive marker on pronouns is not yet fully understood. It often seems to have an intensifying meaning in addition to being a reflexive, and it is also interesting that it has a similar form as the plural marker on nouns. It often occurs together with another case marker as in (57) below:

(57) *ŋai* *itaŋ=ɕʰe* *zigoso* *tʰi* *be-r*
1SG.ERG 2PL.REFL=DAT whatever one give-PUR
'I will give one thing to you'

4. Verbs and the verb phrase

Most verbs are monomorphemic, except for a few which are clearly compounds. A verb can be prefixed by a negative morpheme, *mV-* (4.1), and can be suffixed by one of several suffixes, some being adverbial markers, and some marking tense and aspect (4.2). To indicate evidentiality status, the verb is followed by a copula. Adverbial markers and

copulas will be further discussed in section 8.0. In this section, I will first show examples of negation then I will discuss the two aspect suffixes and the tense suffix.

4.1 Negation

The way to negate a Tawang Monpa verb is to prefix the verb stem with the negative prefix *mV-*, where V is identical to the first vowel of the stem. This is the only known instance of vowel harmony in Tawang Monpa. Below are some examples of this. I have also given the corresponding affirmative forms.

(58) *data ɲe leka ja-du* [ELICITED]
now 1SG work do-IPFV
'Now I am working.'

(59) *data ɲe leka ma-ja-du* [ELICITED]
now 1SG work NEG-do-IPFV
'Now I am not working.'

(60) *daŋ ɲe ŋu-su* [ELICITED]
yesterday 1SG cry-PERF
'Yesterday I cried.'

(61) *daŋ ɲe mu-ŋu-su* [ELICITED]
yesterday 1SG NEG-cry-PERF
'Yesterday I did not cry.'

(62) *nogor ŋai gari tʰoŋ-gju* [ELICITED]
tomorrow 1SG.ERG car drive-FUT
'Tomorrow I will drive a car.'

(63) *nogor ɲe gari mo-tʰoŋ* [ELICITED]
tomorrow 1SG car NEG-drive
'Tomorrow I will not drive a car.'

For some compound verbs, the negative morpheme comes between the first and second part of the compound:

(64) *daŋ ɲe leka gotsu-gju* [ELICITED]
yesterday 1SG work begin-FUT
'Yesterday I began work.'

(65) *daŋ ɲe leka go-mu-tsu-gju* [ELICITED]
yesterday 1SG work begin-NEG-begin-FUT
'Yesterday I did not begin work.'

For other compound verbs, rather than using the negative prefix, the verb is followed by a negative copula:

(66) *data ɲe be^{h}.k^{h}em-du* [ELICITED]
now 1SG thirsty-IPFV
'Now I am thirsty.'

(67) *data ɲe be^{h}.k^{h}em mon* [ELICITED]
now 1SG thirsty NEG.EX.TEST.COP
'Now I am not thirsty.'

4.2 Tense and Aspect

Tawang Monpa marks two aspects – perfective and imperfective, and one tense – future. Perfective aspect indicates an action or event that is complete, imperfective aspect indicates an action or event that is either incomplete or ongoing. Future tense indicates an action or event that will take place at a future time from the moment of speaking. When a verb is combined with one of these aspect and tense suffixes, it can also combine with a copula to indicate evidentiality. This is more fully discussed in Tombleson (to appear). In this section I will first look at perfective aspect, then imperfective aspect, then finally future tense.

4.2.1. Perfective aspect

Perfective aspect indicates that an action is completed. In non-finite clauses, the perfective ending is either *-u*, *-gu* or *-su*. Verbs ending in any consonant, except nasals and liquids, take the -u ending, while verbs ending in a vowel or nasal takes either *-gu* or *-su*. I have not been able to identify a pattern as to what type of verb takes which ending. In non-finite clauses verbs in perfective aspect does not combine with a copula to indicate evidentiality and can occur with all persons and numbers. Examples (68)-(70) are all non-finite clauses.

(68) *op ten-ɕ^{h}o-tɕ^{h}it sem mi-ɕ^{h}in-u*
older.sister big-SUPER-FOC heart NEG-happy-PERF
ra-sum
go-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
'the older sister, the big one, was not happy in her heart'

(69) *bei umtin leka k^{h}entsa ja-gu*
3SG.ERG like.that work strange do-PERF
'Like that, he did strange work.'

(70) *idʑik ʑuk ʑokp t^{h}i ɕ^{h}i-su*
and after boy one die- PERF
'and after one boy died'

It can also occur in finite clauses with first person actors, without being accompanied by a copula. In these cases, it takes on a personal evidential reading:

(71) *ɲe* *sika* *mo-toŋ-u*
1SG nothing NEG-see- PERF
'I haven't seen anything.'

For all these examples we see that the event, or state, they are portraying, is completed.

Verbs in perfective aspect can occur in constructions with all five copulas to make a finite clause. The most common construction, especially in narratives, is a perfective aspect verb with the equative general copula *jim*. This construction, *-u jim*, *-gu jim* or *-su jim* is usually shortened to *-um*, *-gum* or *-sum*. In constructions with other copulas there is no such shortening of the construction. When combined with copulas, the verb in perfective aspect keeps the aspect reading, but takes on the evidentiality status of the following copula. The following examples shows the constructions with perfective aspect verbs and the various copulas:

Perfective aspect with equative general copula *jim*

(72) *ʑom* *priu-si* *makp* *loŋ-um* *jim*
girl small-ERG husband receive- PERF COP.EQ.GEN
'The small girl received a husband.'

Perfective aspect with equative personal copula *jin*

(73) *ŋai* *itaŋ-sha* *ŋoinei ʨʰat-u* *jin*
1SG.ERG 2SG-DAT TRUTH speak-PERF COP.EQ.GEN
'I speak truth to you.'

Perfective aspect with existential general copula *noum*

(74) *data* *bera* *tawaŋ=a* *ra-su* *noum* [ELICITED]
now 3PL tawang=LOC come-PERF COP.EX.GEN
"Now they have come to Tawang".

Perfective aspect with existential personal copula *nou*

(75) *ŋaruk* *jinda* *tawaŋ=a* *ʑʰu-gu* *nou* [ELICITED]
1PL.POSS master tawang=LOC live.HON-PERF COP.EX.PERS
'Our master lives in Tawang.'

Perfective aspect with existential testimonial copula *ni*

(76) *data bera tawaŋ=a ra-su-k ni* [ELICITED]
now 3PL tawang= LOC come-PERF-(?) COP.EX.TEST
'Now they have arrived in Tawang.'

In the section about copulas, it will be seen that equative copulas denote proper inclusion and equation, while the existential copulas denote existence, attribution, possession, and location. These distinctions can be found also in the constructions above, although it might not be as easy to see as when the copulas are used by themselves. Examples (72) and (74) with the general copulas leaves it unmarked how the speaker gained access to the information in the statements. Examples (73) and (75) with the personal copulas indicates that the speaker has some type of personal access to the information they shared, while the testimonial copula in (76) denotes that the speaker had direct access through one of their senses (see, hear, feel, smell etc.) to what they are saying. In this example most likely that they saw them arriving in Tawang.

4.2.2. Imperfective aspect

The imperfective aspect suffix is *-du*. In the same was as with the perfective aspect suffix, when the imperfective suffix it is followed by the equative general copula *jim*, the whole construction often reduces to *-dum*. Imperfective aspect indicates an event or action that is incomplete or ongoing. In non-finite clauses -du is not followed by a copula and can occur with any person or number. In (77) the not knowing in imperfective aspect is an ongoing state.

(77) *zinena itaŋ=si ma-kan-du*
because 2SG=ERG NEG-know-IPFV
'because you don't know….'

It can also occur in finite clauses without a copula, with a first-person actor:

(78) *data ŋara leka gai-du* [ELICITED]
now 1PL work go-IPFV
'Now we go working'

Unlike verbs in perfective aspect, verbs in imperfective aspect does not combine with the existential personal or existential general copulas. Below are examples of the constructions with imperfective aspect and the equative copulas and the existential testimonial copula:

(79) *op-tɕʰit* *be-na-k* *makp* *deuka* *cʰem*
older.sister-FOC 3SG-(?)-POSS husband together house
priu-tɕʰe *zu-dum*
small-FOC live-IPFV.COP.EQ.GEN
'The older sister lived with her husband in the small house.'

(80) *ŋai* *i=ɕʰa* *tʰudʑitɕʰei* *fui-du* *jin*
1SG.ERG 2SG=DAT thanks give-IPFV COP.EQ.PERS
'I offer thanks to you.'

(81) *bera* *tawaŋ=a* *zu-du-k* *ni* [ELICITED]
3PL tawang=LOC live-IPFV-(?) COP.EX.TEST
'They live in Tawang.'

The construction with imperfective aspect and the existential testimonial copula is not very common. This construction indicates inference - the speaker does not have direct evidence for what they are saying but based on some secondary evidence they make an inference. In (81) the inference is based on hearing someone speaking Tawang Monpa. Note that in the same was as for the perfective aspect with existential testimonial copula construction, the suffix *-k* is added to the imperfective suffix.

In addition to the imperfective aspect described above, there is an additional suffix based on the imperfective form *-dur*, which is used to describe an ongoing action that is witnessed by the speaker. I have glossed this as 'progressive'. (82) is an example of this:

(82) *me* *ɕʰuŋ* *ɕʰuŋ* *tʰi* *ʑoŋ-dur*
fire smoke smoke one come-PROGR
'firesmoke is coming'

4.2.3. Future tense

As opposed to the perfective and imperfective suffixes which indicates aspect, future tense indicates an event or action that will take place at a future point from the time of speaking. The verb suffix that indicates future tense is *-gju*. As was the case with the perfective and imperfective suffixes, *-gju* in combination with the equative general copula *jim* will be reduced to *-gjum*. The future tense suffix can combine with all the five copulas.

In the resulting constructions with the equative copulas, the whole verb phrase then gets the evidential reading of the copula. For the constructions with the existential copulas the situation is quite different. The future tense construction with existential general copula *noum* or existential personal copula *nou* receives a reading indicating that what is being spoken of was future at the time of speaking, even if the whole sentence is in the past. The examples below will make this clearer. In a future tense construction with the existential testimonial *ni*, there is a strong sense of inference.

As was the case with perfective aspect and imperfective aspect a verb with the future tense suffix *-gju* is found without a copula in non-finite clauses, and in finite clauses with first person actors. Below are some examples of this:

In non-finite clause:

(83) *mi=naŋ=ɕʰa* *raŋ=ku* *ɕuk* *ton-gju* *sam-dum*
people=PL=DAT REFL=POSS power show-FUT plan-IPFV.COP.EQ.GEN
'(They) are planning to show their power to the people.'

In finite clause:

(84) *nogor* *ŋai* *toɕʰeŋ* *tse-gju* [ELICITED]
tomorrow 1SG.ERG appletree cut-FUT
'Tomorrow I will cut (the) apple tree.'

When *-gju* is found in constructions with the two equative copulas the whole clause is in future tense, and with either a general or personal evidential reading:

(85) *idʑik* *nei=ga* *sem* *ɕʰin-ja* *zu-gjum*
and two=LOC heart happy-CC live-FUT.COP.EQ.GEN
'And both lived happily.'

(86) *bei* *i=ɕʰa* *toptɕʰedradri* *ja-gju* *jin*
3SG.ERG 2PL=DAT food prepare do-FUT COP.EQ.PERS
'He will prepare food for you.'

The use of the personal equative copula in (86) can be used about a third person actor here because this is part of a larger speech clause, and the speaker has intimate knowledge about what will happen. For all the constructions with future tense *-gju* and one of the existential copulas, the suffix *-k* is added to the future suffix. With testimonial copula *ni* the reading is one of inference, rather than certainty:

(87) *leka* *ja-gju-k* *ʑʰotʰ* *ni* [ELICITED]
work do-FUT-? ready COP.EX.TEST
'(They/he/she) are/is ready to do this work.'

When *-gju* is in construction with the existential general copula and the existential personal copula, the whole clause receives the evidential reading of the corresponding copula, and in addition the whole clause is set sometime in the past but indicating that what is being expressed was to happen at a future time for the time of speaking.

(88) *berai* *ut^{h}* *leka* *ja-gju-k* *noum* [ELICITED]
3PL.ERG DET work do-FUT-? COP.EX.GEN
'They were to do this work.'

(89) *ŋara* *tawaŋ* *zu-gju-k* *nou* *ɕ^{h}intare* [ELICITED]
1PL Tawang live-FUT-? COP.EX.PERS but
deɕ^{h} *ŋara* *mu-zu*
today 1PL NEG-live
'We used to live in Tawang, but these days we don't live (there).'

None of the constructions with the future tense suffix *-gju-* and the existential copulas are common, and I only have elicited examples of these.

5. Adverbs

Most adverbs in Tawang Monpa occur clause initially, usually only preceded by a conjunction. The exception to this is the set of adverbial suffixes that attach to a verb stem. These will all be described in section 9.4 about adverbial clauses. Below are some examples of time adverbs:

(90) *data* *ɲe* *ŋri-du* [ELICITED]
now 1SG ask-IPFV
'Now I am asking'

(91) *nogor* *ŋai* *ŋri-su* [ELICITED]
tomorrow 1SG.ERG ask-PERF
'Tomorrow I will ask'

6. Deictic expressions

I have identified deictic expressions with parameters like distance and elevation. It is likely that there is other deictic expression as well. In the two examples below, we see two expressions indicating closeness vs distance to the speaker:

(92) *be* *odzo* *num* [ELICITED]
3SG here EX.GEN.COP
'He is here.'

(93) *be* *odo* *num* [ELICITED]
3SG there EX.GEN.COP
'He is there'

In the following two examples *oio* indicates that the object is above the speaker, while *omo* indicates that the object is below the speaker:

(94) *saŋe oio num*
god up EX.GEN.COP
'God is up.'

(95) *ɲeiba omo num*
hell down EX.GEN.COP
'Hell is down.'

7. Interrogatives

There are at least three different ways of forming questions in Tawang Monpa. In this section, I will discuss the ones that involve the use of a particle, either *lo*, *wa* or *jo*. The particles *wa* and *jo* only occur in the context of a copula, while *lo* functions by itself when it is used as a copula. The particle *lo* can also occur in the context of another verb. I do not have much data on interrogatives and have not been able to form any theory regarding the distribution of *wa* and *jo*. More research is needed, so in the following section, I will simply present the data that I have gathered so far.

7.1 lo

This interrogative is used as a copula in cases where there is also a question word. We see an example of this below:

(96) *i=ku meŋ zi lo*
2SG=POSS name what INTER
'What's your name?'

The particle *lo* can be used as an interrogative also in combination with other verbs, and thus not function as a copula.

(97) *i kadʑe gej-k lo*
2SG where going-FUT INTER
'Where are you going?'

(98) *i=ɕʰe dep go go-su lo* [ELICITED]
2SG=DAT uncooked.rice how.much need-PERF INTER
'How much rice do you need?'

(99) *odzo rup go ja-du lo*
this money how.much do-IPFV INTER
'How much does this cost?'

It is also possible to combine lo with the copula *nou*:

(100)	*i=ɕʰe*	*ʑim*	*go*	*nou*	*lo*	[ELICITED]
	2SG=DAT	cat	how much	EX.PERS.COP	INTER	
	'How many cats do you have?'					

(101)	*i=ku*	*cʰem=a*	*mi*	*go*	*nou*	*lo*
	2SG=POSS	house=LOC	people	how.much	EX.PERS.COP	INTER
	'How many people live in your house?'					[ELICITED]

These are also examples of the use of the egophoric in interrogatives, where the speaker assumes that the addressee will be able to answer using the egophoric. (102) is used as a rhetorical question to oneself when one is searching for one's trousers:

(102)	*kadʑe*	*nou*	*lo*	*dorma*	[ELICITED]
	where	EX.PERS.COP	INTER	trousers	
	'Where are the trousers?'				

To summarize, *lo* is used as a copula for questions in combination with a question word, and also in combination with the copula *nou* to ask questions where the knowledge base is personal, and as an interrogative particle in content questions with non-copular verbs.

7.2 wa

Unlike *lo*, *wa* can never occur by itself and thus function as a copula. It always occurs either together with a copula, (most often with *nou*), or with another verb. Together with *nou*, *wa* is used for asking questions which indicate that the person being asked has some sort of personal knowledge of the answer, which implies that *wa* could be classified as an egophoric interrogative marker. In the following section there are examples of the use of *wa*.

(103)	*odzo*	*ʑim*	*nou*	*wa*	[ELICITED]
	here	cat	EX.PERS.COP	INTER	
	'Is there a cat here?'				

(103) would be said if you hear the sound of what you think is a cat, but you are unable to visually verify whether there is a cat here or not, so you ask someone sitting in such a position that you assume that they will be able to see if there is in fact a cat here. In (104) below we see a question where implicit in this question is the belief that the person being asked has personal knowledge of the answer.

(104) *i=ɕʰe* *rup* *nou* *wa* [ELICITED]
2SG=DAT money EX.PERS.COP INTER
'Do you have any money?'

This aligns with what has been found for other languages with evidential markers, where questions are asked with the evidential that the answer is expected to use. Example (105), however, deviates from this rule:

(105) *be* *mi* *ɕʰo* *nou* *wa* [ELICITED]
3SG person rich EX.PERS.COP INTER
'Is that person rich?'

This question would be asked the same way if the person in question was someone the hearer had known for a long time, or if it was asked about a random person walking by on the street. In the first example, there is an element of personal information, but not in the second situation.

As can be seen, the main difference between *lo* and *wa* is that *wa* never occur in the context of a question word, being a polar question marker. As mentioned above *wa* can also occur together with verbs that are not copulas. Example (106) illustrates the usage of *wa* with such a verb:

(106) *nogor* *i* *oŋ-du* *wa* [ELICITED]
tomorrow 2SG come-IPFV INTER
'Are you coming tomorrow?'

Both (105) and (1016) reinforce the reading of *wa* as having to do with the person being asked having some sort of personal knowledge of the answer to the question. My language informant did tell me that it is possible to exchange *wa* for *jo* in some situations. When this is done the meaning changes in a way that she was unable to further specify. More examples of both *wa* and *jo* are needed to fully understand the distribution of these question particles.

7.3 jo

The particle jo is not used as much as *lo* and *wa*. In the same way as with *wa*, *jo* can occur both with a copula and with a normal verb, but never by itself. In all the examples I have of the use of *jo* together with a copula, it occurs together with the equative copula *jin*, which could indicate that *wa* only occurs with the existential copula, and *jo* only with equative copula. But when I asked, my language informant did say that it would be possible to exchange *wa* with *jo* and vice versa in some contexts. This requires more research. In the following section, I will give the examples that I have elicited so far with the use of *jo*, both in the context of *jin* and in the context of other verb.

(107) *ut^{h}* *ŋok* *jin* *jo* [ELICITED]
DET 1SG.POSS EX.PERS.COP INTER
'Is this mine?'

(108) *ut^{h}* *be=ku* *jin* *jo* [ELICITED]
DET 3SG=POSS EX.PERS.COP INTER
'Is this his?'

Below are some examples of how *jo* is used together with non-copula verbs.

(109) *nogor* *i* *oŋ* *jo* [ELICITED]
tomorrow 2SG come INTER
'Are you coming tomorrow?'

(110) *ŋataŋ* *nei* *gej* *jo* [ELICITED]
1PL.REFL two go INTER
'Are we going?'

Based on these few examples I cannot see how *jo* differs from *wa*, although it is interesting to note that *wa* seems to be much more common than *jo*. There still seems to be an element of expected personal knowledge from the person being asked with regards to the answer, just as we found for *wa*.

8. The Structure of the Simple Clause Verbs and the verb phrase

In the following section, I will look at the structure of the simple clause, starting with verbless predicate clauses which include equative clauses, existential clauses, and possessive clauses - all of which use a copula construction. Then follows a discussion of transitive, intransitive and ditransitive clauses.

8.1 Verbless predicate clauses

There are three main verbless predicate clauses, all of which use a copula. These follow the normal SOV word order for the language, with the copula coming in the verb slot at the end of the sentence. The only known example of a verbless predicate clause without a copula is in interrogative constructions with the use of a question word:

(111) *i=k* *meŋ* *si* *lo*
2SG=POSS name what INTER
'What is your name?'

This construction, and other interrogative constructions are described in detail in section 9 about interrogatives above.

8.1.1. Equative clauses

There are two forms of the equative copula in Tawang Monpa, *jin* and *jim*. The form *jin* is a personal form, used about things that are personally known to the speaker, while *jim* is used in all other contexts, glossed as "general":

(112) *ŋok* *meŋ* *pemba* *jin*
1SG.POSS name pemba EQ.PERS.COP
'My name is Pemba.'

(113) *i=k* *meŋ* *tenzin* *jim*
1SG=POSS name tenzin EQ.PERS.COP
'Your name is Tenzin.'

The negative of the equative copulas is *men* for the personal, and *menum* for the general, again keeping with the SOV word order.

(114) *ut^h* *ŋok* *k^{h}em* *men* [ELICITED]
DET 1SG.POSS house NEG.EQ.PERS.COP
'That is not my house.'

(115) *be* *doktor* *menum* [ELICITED]
3SG doctor NEG.EQ.GEN.COP
'He is not a doctor.'

8.1.2. Existential clauses

As with equative clauses, existential clauses also use a copula construction. There are three positive existential copulas, and three negatives:

	Testimonial	Personal	General
Positive	*ni*	*nou*	*num*
Negative	*mon*	*monou*	*munum*

Table 5 - Tawang Monpa existential copulas

In the following sections I will give examples of the use of each of these copulas.

8.1.2.1 Testimonial:

The testimonial copula is used when the speaker has some type of direct sensorial verification of what they say. This can be either seen, heard, smelled, or tasted.

(116) *be* *riŋp* *ni* [ELICITED]
3SG tall EX.TEST.COP
'He is tall.'

(117) *be* *riŋp* *mon* [ELICITED]
3SG tall NEG.EX.TEST.COP
'He is not tall.'

8.1.2.2 Personal:

The personal copula is used to convey information that is personally known to the speaker or used about 2nd person in questions. Another term often used for this is "egophoric".

(118) *ɲe* *remba nou* [ELICITED]
1SG good EX.PERS.COP
'I'm good.'

(119) *ŋok* *cʰem=a* *mi* *monou* [ELICITED]
1SG.POSS house=LOC people NEG.EX.PERS.COP
'There are no people in my house.'

8.1.2.3 Neutral:

When the neutral copula is used, there is no indication as to how the speaker gained access to the knowledge of what he is talking about. It can be used for things that are generally known, or when the speaker chooses not to reveal how they know what they know.

(120) *tɕʰemgare* *ɲop* *num* [ELICITED]
sugar sweet EX.GEN.COP
'Sugar is sweet.'

(121) *idʑik* *utʰ* *dzamliŋ=a* *sika* *munum*
and this world=LOC nothing NEG.EX.GEN.COP
'And there was nothing on this world.'

8.2 Intransitive clauses

The subject of an intransitive clause in Tawang Monpa is in the unmarked absolutive case. In stories and natural speech, however, the subject is often marked for focus:

(122) *be* *gej-um*
3SG go-PERF
'He went.'

(123) *ɕʰintar tʰi-tɕʰit tʰa-ma-kʲø-dum*
still one-FOC happy-NEG-happy-IPFV.COP.EQ.GEN
'Still the other sister was unhappy.'

(124) *idʑik pun nei-ga hago-sum*
and sibling two-LOC understand-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
'And the two sisters understood.'

When another element is added to the intransitive clause it is put between the subject and the verb, as in the example below:

(125) *be kʰem=a gej-um* [ELICITED]
3SG house=LOC go-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
'He went home.'

8.3 Transitive clauses

In most transitive clauses the agent is marked with the ergative case marker, while the other participant is in the absolutive case. There are pragmatic exceptions to this. For a fuller discussion of the use of the ergative, see section 3.1.1 above about case marking. The most common word order in transitive clauses is SOV, although, as we will see below, there are exceptions to this. The following three examples show transitive clauses where the agent is marked with the ergative case marker and with SOV word order:

(126) *ʑom priu=si makp loŋ-um*
girl small=ERG husband receive-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
'The small girl received a husband.'

(127) *ber pun nei-ga=si mrupin cʰentsa tʰi*
3PL sibling two-LOC=ERG dream strange one
toŋ-um
see-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
'The two sisters saw a strange dream.'

(128) *idʑik ber nei=si makp-tɕʰit toŋ-um*
and 3PL two=ERG husband-FOC see-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
'And the two sisters saw the husband.'

In clauses with one human participant and one non-human participant, where the non-human participant is the agent and therefore marked for ergative case, the word order is changed, so that the human participant comes first:

(129) *data* *ɲe=ɕʰe* *ʂokpu=si* *tɕʰi-dur* [ELICITED]
now 1SG=DAT ant=ERG bit-PROG
'Now the ant is biting me.'

8.4 Ditransitive clauses

There are not many examples of ditransitive clauses where all three arguments are overtly expressed. In (130) the agent is omitted because it is understood from context:

(130) *idʑik* *toptɕʰe* *rot-ja* *cʰi=ɕʰe* *bi-sum*
and food bring-CC dog=DAT give-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
'And bringing food she gave it to the dog.'

Also, in the following example the recipient is omitted, again being understood from context:

(131) *idʑik* *ʑuga* *de* *ʑom* *priu-ɕʰo-tɕʰi=si* *gej-ja* *karjo* *tʰi-ga*
and after then girl small-SUPER-FOC=ERG go-CC cup one-LOC
tsʰi *rot-ja* *ra-sum*
water bring-CC come-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
'And after the younger sister got a cup of water and gave (the dog), ...'

9. Clause Combination

There are several types of clause combinations in Tawang Monpa. In this section, I will look at some of the most common types of clause combinations starting with clause coordination, and then look at various types of subordinate clauses. In the section about subordinate clauses, I will look at complement clauses, clause chaining and various types of adverbial clauses. There is also one example of what could be a relative.

9.1 Clause coordination

One of the most frequently used clauses coordinating conjunctions used in Tawang Monpa is the word *idʑik*. Once a story or a conversation has started, *idʑik* is the word that drives the discourse forward. It can usually be translated into English as 'and', or 'and then'. Most often it connects two finite clauses, and it often marks the beginning of a new clause. It can, however, also connect two clauses where one is subordinated. For that to happen, there needs to be some other subordinate marker on the verb of the subordinate clause. In the following example we see how *idʑik* connects two finite clauses:

(132) *idʑik* *ʑom* *priu-ɕʰo-tɕʰi=si* *be=naŋ=ɕʰe* *cʰem*
and girl small- SUPER-FOC=ERG 3SG=REF=DAT house
temp *tʰi* *tʰap-um* *idʑik* *nei-ga* *sem* *ɕʰin-ja*
big one give-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN and two-LOC heart happy-CC

zu-gum
live-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
'And the younger one got a big house, and both lived happily.'

Below is an example of *idʑik* used to combine two nonfinite clauses:

(133) *idʑik* *toŋ-ja* *idʑik* *cʰi-tɕʰit* *ŋreŋ-sek*
and drink-CC and dog-FOC full-COMPL
'And drinking, and the dog completely full...'

There are also examples of a coordinated concessive conjunction in Tawang Monpa. This is the adverb *ɕʰintar*, which, depending on context, can be translated as either 'but', 'still', or 'even though' in English. In the example below the girl is thinking that she has a big house and a husband, *ɕʰintare* 'still' her husband is useless. This is part of a much larger complex clause. In this example, we see *ɕʰintare* connecting two copular clauses:

(134) *idʑik* *ɲe=ɕʰe* *makp* *be* *nou* *ɕʰintare*
and 1SG=DAT husband 3SG EX.PERS.COP still
makp *zika* *pʰanto* *mon*
husband nothing useful NEG.EX.TEST.COP
'And I have a husband, still, the husband is not useful.'

The causal conjunction *ziŋeŋeŋa* 'because' is also used to connect two finite clauses:

(135) *idʑik* *be=k* *makp-tɕʰit* *mi-ɕʰin-um*
and 3SG=POSS husband-FOC NEG-happy-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
ziŋeŋeŋa *makp-tɕʰike* *be=ɕʰe* *jør* *tsepa* *ja-dum*
because husband-FOC 3SG=DAT much love do-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
'And her husband was unhappy because the husband loved her very much.'

9.2 Complement clauses

Complement clauses are common in Tawang Monpa, particularly when the matrix verb is a verb of utterance or cognition. In the example below we see the finite verb *ɲegum*, 'said', coming both before and after the complement clause. The complement clause itself is complex, but everything the god said is an O complement to the verb *ɲegum*.

(136) *idʑik* *it* *ɬa-tɕʰiki* *ɲe-gum* *[deɕ* *ir* *nei=si* *leka*
and that god-FOC say-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN today 2PL two=ERG work
namda *namda* *tʰi-jan* *ir* *nei* *pe* *intɕʰepʰan*
good good one-(?) 2PL two so much compassion
ni] *ɲe-ja* *[ŋai* *itaŋ=ɕʰe* *zigoso* *tʰi*
EX.TEST.COP say-CC 1SG.ERG 2PL=DAT whatever one

be-r	*itaŋ*	*nei*	*zigoso*	*ɕʰata]*	*ɲe-gum*	
give-PUR	2PL	two	whatever	talk	said-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN	

'And the god said: today the two of you did a very good work, you both have much compassion, saying, I will give you one thing, whatever you ask for, saying, said.'

There are also examples of complement clauses with other verbs than verbs of utterance or cognition. In the example below, the subordinate clause comes between the subject of the main verb, and the main verb itself. The whole subordinate clause functions as the O argument of the main clause:

(137)

plaŋ	*tʰi*	*ber*	*nei=si*	*[prem.ne-ja*	*ra-su*	*cʰi*	*tʰi]*
sun	one	3PL	two=ERG	hungry-CC	come-PERF	dog	one

toŋ-um
see- PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
'One day the two of them saw a hungry dog coming.'

Here we also see that the constituent order within the complement clause deviates from the normal SOV constituent order, in that the A comes after the verb.

9.3 Clause chaining

One of the most common forms of combining clauses in Tawang Monpa is to add the bare root of the verb *ja* 'do' to the root of another verb. This combination is unmarked for tense, aspect and evidentiality, and the A is the same for both verbs in this construction. Below is an example:

(138)

idʑik	*toptɕʰe*	*rot-ja*	*cʰi=ɕʰe*	*bi-sum*
and	food	bring-CC	dog=DAT	give- PERF.COP.EQ.GEN

'And bringing food (she) gave it to the dog.'

Note that the A is not overtly stated in this sentence, as it is being understood from the previous context. In the section above about complement clauses, we saw this example:

(139)

plaŋ	*tʰi*	*ber*	*nei=si*	*prem.ne-ja*	*ra-su*	*cʰi*	*tʰi*
sun	one	3PL	two=ERG	hungry-CC	come-PERF	dog	one

toŋ-um
see- PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
'One day the two of them saw a hungry dog coming.'

Here we see that the clause chaining construction is found within the object complement:

(140) *prem.ne-ja* *ra-su* *cʰi* *tʰi*
hungry-CC come-PERF dog one
'a hungry dog coming'

The A of the chained verb is the same here as the A of the finite verb within the object complement clause. Note that the A is not overtly stated in this sentence, as it is understood form the previous context. The constituent order within this complement clause is, as mentioned above, different from the normal SOV constituent order, in that the two verbs come before the noun. It is also possible to have several verbs chained together using the clause chaining construction:

(141) *idʑik* *ʑuga* *de* *ʑom* *priu-ɕʰo-tɕʰi=si* *gej-ja* *karjo*
and after then girl small-SUPER-FOC=ERG go-CC cup
tʰi-ga *tsʰi* *rot-ja* *ra-sum*
one-LOC water bring-CC came- PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
'And after that, the younger sister went, brought a cup of water, and came.'

Here the A is the same for all the three events that the verbs describe: the going, bringing, and coming. This has been the case in all the examples I have of the clause chaining construction with *ja*, which indicates that a requirement for this construction is that the A stays the same.

9.4 Adverbial clauses

In this section I will be discussing various types of adverbial clauses. I will show examples of purpose, simultaneous action, time, and conditional clauses. In the example below we see a purpose clause, where the suffix *-r* is added to the verb root *te* 'see', making *te-r*, 'in order to see'. The two verbs here both come at the end of the sentence.

(142) *idʑik* *op* *ten-ɕʰo-tɕʰit* *cʰem* *ɲeŋa* *toptɕʰe*
and older.sister big-SUPER-FOC house inside food
ɬama *[nek nam munak nam]* *te-r* *gej-um*
left.over [is it or isn't it] see-PUR went-PERF.COP.EQ.GEN
'And the older sister went into the house in order to see whether or not there was some food left over.'

The adverbial clause here is not marked for tense, aspect or evidentiality, and the S is the same as for the matrix clause. To mark simultaneous action, the suffix *-bul* is added to the verb stem of the verb that happens at the same time as the matrix verb. The A of the two verbs is the same. The verb marked for simultaneous action comes after the first O, and is followed by the description of what happened at the same time:

(143) *be* *toptɕʰe sa-bul* *tsʰi* *je* *beh*
3SG food eat-SIMUL water also drink
'While eating food he also drank water.'

In (144) we see an example of a temporal adverbial clause. In this example, *ɕʰatri* is a noun with a verb like meaning of speaking. The verb in this clause is *ja* 'do', and it is suffixed with ga *tɕʰe* meaning 'after', then follows the rest of the action that happened after the two were done doing the speaking.

(144) *nei-ga* *ɕʰatri* *ja-ga-tɕʰe* *nei-ga=si*
two-LOC speak do-after two-LOC=ERG
'After speaking, the two…'

To indicate simultaneous action, the suffix -bul attaches to the verb stem of the verb in the dependent clause:

(145) *be* *toptɕʰe sa-bul* *tsʰi* *je* *beʰ* [ELICITED]
3SG food eat-SIMUL water also drink
'While eating food he also drank water.'

(146) *i-naŋ* *mariam* *cʰris* *i-naŋ* *damba*
2SG-REFL Mary take.with 2SG-REFL together
ɲik-bul *blakʲak-mo-go*
keep-SIMUL scared-NEG-scared
'While you yourself take Mary together with you, don't be afraid.'

To indicate purpose either the suffix *-r* or the suffix *-te* is added to the stem of the verb:

(147) *nogor* *toptɕʰe* *sa-r* *ɕʰo* [ELICITED]
tomorrow food eat-PUR come
'For eating food, come tomorrow.'

(148) *drema* *tsʰala* *loŋ-te* *bazar-ga* *gej*
Drema things buy-PUR market-LOC go
'Drema went to the market in order to buy things.'
Completion of an activity is marked on the verb by the suffix -sek, or -juk:

(149) *tomrit tʰi* *dzaŋ-sek* *i-naŋ* *kan-ku* *ni* [ELICITED]
year one learn-COMP 2SG-REFL know-(?) EX.TEST.COP
'When you have learned for one year, you will know.'

It is also possible to combine two of these adverbial suffixes:

(150) *toptɕʰe* *sa-r-juk* *shot* *ni*
food eat-PURP-COMPL eat EX.TEST.COP
'Is the food ready for eating?'

9.5 Conditional clauses

There is a conditional suffix in Tawang Monpa, *-na*. As with many adverbial suffixes it attaches to a verb root. The conditional *-na* is attached to the verb *ɕʰa tsa* 'worship' which connects to the following finite clause.

(151) *inaŋ* *ŋok* *ɲeska* *kur-sai* *ɕʰa.tsai-na* *uth* *gaŋpo*
2SG-REFL 1SG.POSS beside bend-and worship-REL DET all
ŋai *inaŋ=ɕʰa* *bir-gju* *jin*
1SG.ERG 2SG-REFL=DAT give-FUT COP.EQ.PERS
''If you bend down and worship beside me I will give all this to you.'

9.6 Relative clauses

There is not much evidence for a relative clause marker in Tawang Monpa. There are, however, examples of sentences with a relative meaning, but with no overt relative marking. It is possible that such marking will show up with analysis of more data. Below is an example of a sentence with a relative meaning:

(152) *ber* *nei-si* *mrupin* *toŋ-u* *tɕʰit* *it* *cʰi*
3PL two-ERG dream saw-PERF FOC that dog
ber *nei=si* *ɲent* *toptɕʰe* *bi-su*
3PL two= ERG afternoon food give-PERF
'The two of them saw in the dream the dog they had given food in the afternoon.'

10. Conclusion

In this paper I have shown the main grammatical features of Tawang Monpa, with a special emphasis on nouns and the noun phrase, verbs and the verbs phrase, and various types of clause combinations. There are four case markers for nouns: ergative, dative, genitive and locative. Pronouns have three case markers - ergative, dative, and genitive, and what could be a reflexive marker, which is similar in form to the plural marker for nouns. The verbs take several adverbial suffixes, in addition to a range of suffixes marking tense and aspect. I also included a section that looked at interrogative markers, and an extensive discussion of verbless predicate clauses. In conclusion, I would like to state again that this is a brief description of some of the grammatical features of Tawang Monpa. Much more could be said about each of the features in this article, and many more features could be discussed, and hopefully will be discussed, in later articles.

ABBREVIATIONS

CC = clause chaining
COMPL = completed
COND = conditional
COP = copula
DAT = dative
DET = determiner
EQ = equative
ERG = ergative
EX = existential
FOC = focus
FUT = future
GEN = general
INTER = interrogative
IPFV = imperfective
LOC = locative
NEG = negative
PERF = perfective
PERS = personal
PL = plural
POSS = possessive
PROG = progressive
PUR = purpose
REFL = reflexive
SG = singular
SIMUL = simultaneous
SUPER = superlative
TEST = testimonial

REFERENCES

Bowermann, Melissa & Eric Pederson. 1992. Topological relations pictures series. Space stimuli kit 1.2. ed. by Stephen C. Levinson, 51. Nijmegen: Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics.

van Driem. 2007. Dakpa and Dzala form a related subgroup within East Bodish, and some related thoughts. In Ronald Bielmeier & Felix Haller (eds.), Linguistics of the Himalayas and beyond, 71–84. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter. 10.1515/9783110968996.71.

Hodgson, Brian H. 1853. Sifan and Horsok vocabularies. Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal 22.117–151.

Hyslop, Gwendolyn, & Karma Tshering. 2010. Preliminary notes on Dakpa (Tawang Monpa). In Stephen Morey & Mark W. Post (eds.), North East Indian Linguistics 2.3-21. New Delhi: Cambridge University Press/Foundation. 10.1017/upo9788175968554.003.

Shafer, Robert. 1954. The linguistic position of Dwags. Oriens, Zeitschrift der Internationalen Gesellschaft für Orientforschung 7.348–356. 10.2307/1579131.

Tombleson, Anette. 2020. The copula system of Tawang Monpa. Linguistics of the Tibeto Burman Area 43:1, 37-5. 10.1075/ltba.17013.tom.