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A grammar of the Thangmi language with an ethnolinguistic introduction to the speakers and their culture

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CHAPTER 5

NOMINAL MORPHOLOGY

This chapter is devoted to nominals which comprise the following parts of speech: nouns, adjectives, pronouns and numerals. The criteria for distinguishing between ‘nouns’ and ‘verbs’ are morphological and syntactic. While nouns can take postpositions or be marked for case and number, finite verbs are marked for person, number and tense and have different syntactic roles and functions in any given sentence. The most common functional role for nominals is to serve as an argument for a verb.

In this chapter, I discuss the morphosyntax of nominals in general. Case suffixes or postpositions attach directly to the nominal form, and two or more case endings or postpositions may co-occur if this yields a semantically plausible combination. Aside from biological sex, nominals do not distinguish grammatical gender. Grammatical cases include the absolutive, ergative, instrumental and genitive. Postpositions include locative, ablative, comitative and direct or indirect object markers, as well as numerous lexical postpositions. Adjectives may be adnominal, predicative or occur independently as nominal heads. When adjectives are used independently, they function as nouns and may take nominal case and number suffixes. Pronouns are either personal, demonstrative or interrogative. Demonstratives include deictic and anaphoric adverbs as well as pronouns and adjectives. Adverbs of time, bound nominal elements and a range of discourse particles are also discussed in this chapter.

1. Gender

While a few Thangmi nouns are gender-specific, these forms are not independent of the semantic sex of the referent, and the Thangmi language makes no grammatical gender distinction for animate nouns aside from their biological sex. Biologically masculine nouns and male kinship terms are formally unmarked while certain feminine nouns are marked by the final element /i/ <-i ~ -măi ~ -mi> (FEM). While the Thangmi feminine ending <-i ~ -măi ~ -mi> (FEM) may be derived from Nepali, in which the <-o ~ -a> (MASC) versus <-i> (FEM) distinction is commonplace (i.e. *chorā* ‘son’ vs. *chorī* ‘daughter’), other Thangmi gendered endings have Tibeto-Burman etymologies.

Table 42 below offers four examples of contrastive male/female noun pairs in Thangmi. While the first and second examples in the table are likely to be

indigenous Thangmi forms, the third and fourth gendered noun pairs may be calqued from Nepali.¹ The feminine ending <-i ~ -mäi ~ -mi> (FEM) is not indicated in the gloss as it is a non-productive morphological process in Thangmi.

TABLE 42. CONTRASTIVE MALE / FEMALE NOUN PAIRS IN THANGMI

<i>hu / humi</i>	younger brother / younger sister
<i>ca / camäi</i>	son / daughter
<i>huca / huci</i>	boy / girl
<i>thone / thoṇi</i>	old man, husband / old woman, wife

Certain Thangmi animal names and ethnonyms exhibit contrastive gender pairing in Thangmi, using <-ni> (FEM) as the female suffix. This marker is most likely a loan from Nepali <-ni> (FEM), by which animals and ethnic or caste groups are gendered, as in Nepali *tāmān* ‘a Tamang man’ and *tāmānī* ‘a Tamang woman’. In both Thangmi and Nepali, the female suffix <-ni> (FEM) is only added to a lexical item when the referent is female. The unmarked form is either specifically male or gender unspecific. Table 43 below shows four Thangmi gender specific ethnonyms and animal terms.

TABLE 43. GENDER SPECIFIC ETHNONYMS AND ANIMAL TERMS IN THANGMI

<i>kucu / kucuni</i>	dog / bitch
<i>roimi / roimini</i>	Newar man / Newar woman
<i>sem / semni</i>	Tamang man / Tamang woman
<i>thaṇmi / thaṇmini</i>	Thangmi man / Thangmi woman

The grammatical gender distinctions expressed in kinship terms and animal names illustrated above are bound forms, and are not the result of any extant or productive morphological process. Consequently, the Thangmi feminine suffix <-ni> (FEM) is not indicated in the gloss.

¹ Thangmi *thone* ‘old man, husband’ and *thoṇi* ‘old woman, wife’ resemble Nepali *bādhā* ‘old man’ and *bādhī* ‘old woman, wife’. Opgenort observes a similar case of borrowing in Wambule: ‘A new gender marker pattern which has found its way into Wambule under the increasing influence of Nepali consists of a final vowel alternation between masculine forms in /ā/ and feminine terms in /i/’ (2002: 135).

Thangmi also has a number of gender-specific kinship terms. Although ‘sex of speaker’ is not a prominent feature of Thangmi kinship terminology (cf. Chapter 2, Section §7.4), some Thangmi terms for affines (siblings-in-law, uncles-in-law and aunts-in-law) do reflect the Tibeto-Burman sex of speaker criterion. For example, while *bubu* refers to ‘elder brother’, regardless of whether the speaker is a woman or a man, a sex of speaker distinction does exist for *aji* ‘wife’s elder sister’ and *tete* ‘husband’s elder sister’. From the evidence I have collected, it appears that this distinction is made solely for affinal relationships, and that blood kin are not differentiated for sex of speaker. The complete Thangmi kinship paradigm is discussed in Section §7 of Chapter 2.

Gendered kinship terms may be borrowed or calqued, as in *jekhapa* ‘father’s elder brother’ (< Nep. *ṭhulo buvā* ‘big father’) and *jekhama* ‘father’s elder brother’s wife’ (< Nep. *ṭhulī āmā* ‘big mother’), in which <jekh-> is a Thangmi bound morpheme meaning ‘large’ or ‘senior’ derived from Thangmi *jekha* ‘big, large’.

A further way of emphasising or disambiguating biological gender in Thangmi is through the use of one of two gendered prefixes: <mama-> (FEM) or <papa-> (MALE). These reduplicative prefixal forms are attached to the noun in question to indicate biological sex and are primarily used for animals. Table 44 below shows possible prefixal and suffixal modifications to the Thangmi noun *sya* ‘bovine’ (often more loosely translated as ‘cow’ by informants).

TABLE 44. POSSIBLE PREFIXES AND SUFFIXES FOR THE THANGMI NOUN SYA

<i>mama-</i> (FEM)		
<i>papa-</i> (MALE)		
<i>me-</i> buffalo	<i>sya</i> bovine, cow	<i>-ca</i> (DIM)
<i>wa-</i> ox		

Possible combinations include: *mama-sya* ‘cow’, *papa-sya* ‘bull’, *mesya* ‘buffalo’, *wasya* ‘ox’ (restricted to bulls used for ploughing), *sya-ca* ‘calf’, *papa-sya-ca* ‘bullock’ and *mesya-ca* ‘buffalo calf’. While *mesya* ‘buffalo’ is composed of two

etymological elements, **me* ‘buffalo’ and *sya* ‘bovine, cow’, in spoken Thangmi both *mesya* ‘buffalo’ and *wasya* ‘ox’ are bound and unsegmentable forms.²

The elements <mama-> (FEM) and <papa-> (MALE) can be used with all non-human animates when it is important to differentiate or disambiguate the biological sex of the referent. These prefixal gender markers are particularly prevalent in rhetorical speech and story telling. This manner of gender coding is also present in Dutch for animate nouns that have no specific gendered form, such as *mannetjeskrocodile* ‘male crocodile’ or *vrouwtjeskikker* ‘female frog’. Examples 1 to 7 illustrate the use of the elements <mama-> (FEM) and <papa-> (MALE). While the diminutive suffix <ca-> (DIM) also features in some of these examples, its use and distribution is dealt with in Section §5.1 of this chapter.

- 1 *ci-ja-to-le, to-kăi gă-ye di-gore mama-wa*
 CAUS-survive-TPP-PCL that-PM I-ERG one-CLF FEM-chicken
 pal-to-le piy-u-n-uŋ.
 chop-TPP-PCL give-3P-1s→3-1s→3/PT

Having healed her, I slaughtered a chicken and gave it to the shaman.

- 2 *mama-mesya thi cyah-Ø-an, papa-mesya ma-cyah-Ø-an.*
 FEM-buffalo fodder eat-SAS-3S/PT MALE-buffalo NEG-eat-SAS-3S/PT

The buffalo cow has eaten the fodder, but the buffalo bull hasn’t.

- 3 *papa-kucu-ye mama-kucu-ca-kăi chit-le hok-Ø-du.*
 MALE-dog-ERG FEM-dog-DIM-PM fuck-PCL be-SAS-NPT

The male dog is screwing the little bitch.

- 4 *gare-ye mama-wa-kăi chit-ŋa libi, mama-wa-ye ahum*
 rooster-ERG FEM-chicken-PM fuck-CNS after FEM-chicken-ERG egg
 tah-Ø-u-du.
 lay-SAS-3P-NPT

Once the cockerel has screwed the hen, the hen will lay eggs.

² Other Tibeto-Burman cognates for Thangmi *mesya* ‘buffalo’ include Classical Newar *mesa* ‘buffalo’ (Malla *et al.* 2000: 400), Sampang *mesi* ‘buffalo’ (René Huysmans, personal communication), Kulung *me:si* ‘water buffalo’ (Tolsma 1999: 220) and Dumi *me:si* (van Driem 1993a: 396).

- 5 *găi-go bubu-ko sum-gore mama-phesu hok-Ø-du, găi-go-guri*
 I-GEN elder.brother-GEN three-CLF FEM-sheep be-SAS-NPT I-GEN-IND
dī-gore woi ma-hok.
 one-CLF also NEG-be

My elder brother has three ewes, but I don't have even one.

- 6 *jekha papa-sya-ko bhanda, ucyacya sya-ca-ko cici aṭṭhe*
 big MALE-bovine-GEN than small bovine-DIM-GEN meat very
se-Ø-du.
 be.tasty-SAS-NPT

The meat of very small cows is tastier than that of big old bulls.

- 7 *to mama-tuṇi roimi uniṇ bāsinṭe bhari uni*
 that FEM-goat Newar like morning full sun
cyāṭaṇ-si-Ø-ta-le hok-Ø-du.
 soak.up-REF-SAS-IPP-PCL be-SAS-NPT

That female goat is just like a Newar, she spends the whole morning lying in the sun.

A restricted set of inanimate Thangmi nouns may also take gendered prefixes, a commonly occurring example of which is *yante* 'quern, hand-mill, grindstone, mill-stone', as illustrated by examples 8 and 9 below. The upper of the two stones, which has an embedded wooden handle off to one side and a central hole into which the grain is fed, is the *papa-yante*. The lower of the two, secured to the floor, and onto which the upper part is heaved, is the *mama-yante*. Informants claim that this gendering has a clear sexual connotation.

- 8 *papa-yante-ko doron-ṇaṇ saṇa tham-ko mǎi-Ø-du.*
 MALE-quern-GEN hole-inside millet insert-GEN must-SAS-NPT

The millet must be fed into the hole in the upper part of the grindstone.

- 9 *mi-ko uniṇ, mama-yante papa-yante nhabasa hok-Ø-du.*
 person-GEN like FEM-quern MALE-quern underneath be-SAS-NPT

Just like a person, the female part of the grindstone lies underneath the male.

Further examples of gendered inanimate nouns are attested in the Sindhupālcok dialect, where *mamala?* 'middle finger' is contrasted with *papala?* 'thumb'. In the case of fingers, <papa-> (MALE) is senior to <mama-> (FEM) in status rather than in

length. In the Sindhupālcok dialect, certain plant names may also take a gendered prefix, although this distinction does not correspond to any perceived biological difference. An illustrative example is provided in 10 below.

- 10 *tinyaŋ kor-sa dum-ŋa-parti, rapa?came?-ko*
 then fit.together-INF finish-CNS-after red.Himalayan.bamboo-GEN
yala-kāi pe?e-ta-le papa-came?-kāi adum paŋku-te
 flexible-PM strip.down-IPP-PCL MALE-bamboo-PM hot water-LOC
da?a-sa.
 boil-INF

Then, having finished fitting it together, you strip down the flexible red Himalayan bamboo and boil the outer layer in hot water. [Sindhupālcok]

The only other example of a gender prefix co-occurring with an inanimate object is that of *papasek* ‘testicle(s)’, a form attested in both dialects.³ The gender choice of <papa-> (MALE) in this case is fairly self-explanatory. Given the contrastive pairing of many gendered nouns in Thangmi, I suggested to informants that **mamasek* might be used to indicate ‘ovaries’, but this form was rejected.

The Thangmi feminine prefix <mama-> (FEM) is most probably derived from the well-attested Tibeto-Burman feminine suffixal form *<-ma> and to the proto-nouns **ma* ‘mother’ and **mow* ‘woman’ (Benedict 1972: 96, 148 & 66). Cognate forms in extant Tibeto-Burman languages spoken in Nepal are widespread, and include Dumi *mama* ~ *ma* ‘mother’ (van Driem 1993a: 395), the Wambule feminine morpheme <-mā ~ -m> (Opgenort 2002: 130) and the Yamphu morpheme <-ma ~ -m> ‘female person’ (Rutgers 1998: 52). Similarly, the Thangmi masculine prefix <papa-> (MALE) is most probably derived from the Proto-Tibeto-Burman masculine suffixal form *<-pa> and from the noun **pa* = *pwa* ‘man, person, husband; father’ (Benedict 1972: 96 & 19). Cognate forms in extant Tibeto-Burman languages include Dumi *pa* ~ *papa* ~ *pu* ‘father’ (van Driem 1993a: 404, 405 & 408), the Wambule masculine morpheme <-pā ~ -p> (Opgenort 2002: 130) and the Yamphu morpheme <-pa ~ -p> ‘male person’ (Rutgers 1998: 52).

2. Number

Thangmi has two systems of number marking on nominals, a standard plural suffix and a restricted plural suffix to indicate plurality on third person pronominals.

³ The bound nominal element *sek* is analysed in detail in Section §11.3 of this chapter.

2.1 Plural

morph:	<-pali>
label:	p

There is a privative opposition between singular and plural number in Thangmi, in many ways reminiscent of Nepali <-haru> (p). Singular number in Thangmi nouns is not indexed because there is no grammatical singular category as such for Thangmi nouns, and thus no zero morpheme is shown in the gloss. Plural number is indicated by the plural suffix <-pali> (p), e.g. *bubu-pali* ‘elder brothers’. The plural suffix <-pali> (p) expresses the plurality of both animate (human and non-human) and inanimate nominals, and is suffixed directly to the nominal form to which it refers. The plural suffix <-pali> (p) thus precedes all other case endings and postpositions. While there is no grammatical dual category for Thangmi nouns, duality can be expressed by using the numeral *nis* ‘two’, followed by a suitable numeral classifier, as in *ni nis-ka* (we two-HNC) ‘the two of us’ (lit. ‘we two people’) (Nep. *hāmī duī janā*). Plural marking on adjectives refers to plural objects or mass objects. Examples of nominal plural marking in Thangmi are given in Table 45 below.

TABLE 45. NOMINAL PLURAL MARKING IN THANGMI

nouns:	<i>nem</i>	house
	<i>nem-pali</i>	houses
	<i>huca</i>	child
	<i>huca-pali</i>	children
	<i>mi</i>	person
	<i>mi-pali</i>	people
adjectives:	<i>ubo</i>	white
	<i>ubo-pali</i>	the white ones

Examples 11 and 12 show the plural suffix <-pali> (p) being used with animate and inanimate nouns respectively, while example 13 demonstrates its use with an adjective functioning as a nominal head.

- 11 *naŋ-ko bubu-pali kuta yey-eŋ-an?*
 you-GEN elder.brother-p where go-pAS-3S/PT

Where have your elder brothers gone?

- 12 *ka di bitta tha-Ø-du beryaŋ, ka-kăi tokolok-e*
 this one hand.measurement be-SAS-NPT that.time this-PM hoe-INS
ka-ko pole-ŋaŋ tha-Ø-du ʈhare-pali kăi-ko măi-Ø-du.
 this-GEN trunk-inside be-SAS-NPT weed-p remove-ADH must-SAS-NPT

When [the seedlings] are about one hand length in height, one must use the hoe to remove the weeds which are growing around the stem of the seedlings.

- 13 *bophura-pali, ariy-eŋ-ta-le, jekha mi-kăi ŋa-sa*
 pity-p be.afraid-pAS-IPP-PCL big person-PM say-INF
dorok-eŋ-an.
 run-pAS-3S/PT

Those poor people, being scared, ran off to tell the important man [what had happened].

The plural suffix <-pali> (p) is superfluous when the plurality of the noun is indicated by the verb or is clear from the general context. As in Nepali, where the meaning of <-haru> (p) conflicts with a definite number, the Thangmi plural suffix <-pali> (p) is characteristically omitted when the plurality of the noun is already indicated by a numeral, as in examples 14 and 15 below. However, the suffix is typically present when the number is non-specific, as in example 16.

- 14 *găi-go nem nis-gore hok-Ø-du.*
 I-GEN house two-CLF be-SAS-NPT

I have two houses.

- 15 *jekha bubu-ko sum-ka camăi hok-eŋ-du, ca ma-hok.*
 big elder.brother-GEN three-HNC daughter be-pAS-NPT son NEG-be

My eldest brother has three daughters but no son.

- 16 *to-ko ahe ban-pali hok-eŋ-du.*
 that-GEN many friend-p be-pAS-NPT

He has many friends.

Concomitantly, the verb does not necessarily show plural number agreement if the nominal plural ending <-pali> (p) has already been suffixed to the nominal head. In Thangmi, the marking of plurality across different word classes is perceived as tautologous. An example of a pluralised nominal together with a singular verb is provided in 17 below. As this example shows, unknown quantity can be presented as plural in Thangmi speech.

- 17 *naŋ-ko huca-pali hok-Ø-du ra ma-hok?*
 you-GEN child-p be-SAS-NPT or NEG-be

Do you have any children?

If the answer to the question asked in example 17 is affirmative, then the verb in the following question, in which the addressee is asked how many children he or she has, will be marked for plural number, as in example 18. Note that the nominal plural marker <-pali> (p) is not used with the noun *ca* ‘son’.

- 18 *ŋa-to-le, naŋ-ko hani-ka ca hok-eŋ-du?*
 say-TPP-PCL you-GEN how.many-HNC son be-pAS-NPT

That’s to say, how many sons do you have?

Since the Thangmi plural marker <-pali> (p) conveys a general sense of plurality, the suffix cannot be used to mark a specific number greater than one. However, the plural suffix can be used to indicate multiplicity or to suggest manifoldness, such as *baŋi-pali* ‘pots and pans’. In such cases, the plural morpheme <-pali> (p) conveys the sense of ‘and the like’ or ‘[that] and more stuff’, as in the plural of *ken* ‘vegetable curry’ shown in example 19 below.

- 19 *su-ko nem-te isa ken-pali ma-hok?*
 who-GEN house-LOC food vegetable.curry-p NEG-be

Who doesn’t have anything to eat at home (lit. food and vegetable curries)?

The plural suffix <-pali> (p) is only occasionally used with proper nouns, and then not to refer to two individuals or places with the same name, but rather to extrapolate on the basis of a specific instance or to indicate a specific person or place and others like it. For example, *lile-pali* (Lile-p) refers to ‘Lile and his friends’ or ‘Lile and his family’, while *Dolkha-pali* (Dolakhā-p) indicates ‘Dolakhā and other similar market towns’.

Plural marking on mass nouns indicates various types or varieties of the referent denoted by the noun, such as *coi-pali* ‘various types of blood’, i.e. ‘bodily

fluids' from *coi* 'blood'. In many cases, plural marking on mass nouns adds a metaphorical meaning to the referent, sometimes euphemistic, and often humorous, such as *paṅku-pali* 'various types of water or liquid', i.e. 'alcohol', from *paṅku* 'water', or *sargya-pali* 'skies', i.e. 'heaven', from *sargya* 'sky'. When referring to varieties of grain, however, Thangmi speakers use the plural suffix <-pali> (p) to indicate 'piles of...' or 'heaps of...', as in *saṇa-pali* 'piles of millet' or *akan-pali* 'heaps of barley'. Opgenort makes a similar observation for Wambule when he suggests that 'number markers are also commonly employed to create countable units of mass nouns' (2002: 137).

The Thangmi plural marker <-pali> (p) is also encountered as a suffix on quantifiers marking non-singular referents, as in *nembo-pali* (other-p) 'others' from the indefinite pronoun *nembo* 'other', and *sakalei-pali* (all-p) 'all (of them)' from *sakalei* 'all, every'. The Thangmi plural marker <-pali> (p) can co-occur with other nominal postpositions and case markers as in examples 20 to 22.

- 20 *ni-ko huca-pali-ye 'ni-ye saṇa kum-wa-du'*
 we-GEN child-p-ERG we-ERG millet cut.horizontally-1p→23-NPT
ṇay-eṇ-thyo.
 say-pAS-3sCOND

Our children had said, 'we'll harvest the millet'.

- 21 *ni-ye sakalei mi-pali-ko miṇ ni-wa-n.*
 we-ERG all person-p-GEN cloth see-1p→23-PT

We saw everyone's clothes.

- 22 *huca-pali-kāi tun-sa gap-eṇ-an?*
 child-p-PM drink-INF be.enough-pAS-3S/PT

Have the children had enough to drink?

If the result yields a semantically plausible combination, adjectives may also take the plural marker <-pali> (p), as in example 23.

- 23 *jekha-pali-ye pheṇga cabuy-eṇ-du.*
 big-p-ERG hemp.cloak carry-pAS-NPT

The big ones will carry the sack-cloth made of hemp.

Nominalised verbs may also take the plural suffix <-pali> (p), as in 24 and 25 below.

- 24 *ulam-te caway-eŋ-du-pali-ye ɲey-eŋ-no, to nuiy-Ø-an.*
road-LOC walk-pAS-NPT-p-ERG beat-pAS-3→3/PT that laugh-sAS-3S/PT

People walking along the road beat him, but he [the jackal] only laughed.

- 25 *băsințe thaŋmi-pali-ko naka nem, naka bore lony-eŋ-du-pali-ye,*
morning Thangmi-p-GEN new house new marriage do-pAS-NPT-p-ERG
gare toŋ alam hen-ko mǎi-Ø-du.
rooster beer ritual.flag take-ADH must-sAS-NPT

In the morning, all the Thangmi people who have recently built a new house or are newly married must take a cockerel and some beer and carry the shaman's flag [to the temple].

2.2 Pronominal plural for third person

morph: <-baŋ>
label: Pp

Third person pronouns and the interrogative pronoun *su* 'who' take the third person pronominal plural marker <-baŋ> (Pp) rather than the plural suffix <-pali> (p). Examples include *ka-baŋ* (this-Pp) 'they', *to-baŋ* (that-Pp) 'they (distal)', *dha-baŋ* (that.distant-Pp) 'they (distant)' and *su-baŋ* (who-Pp) 'who(p)'. Fluent Thangmi speakers reject **ka-pali*, **to-pali*, **dha-pali* and **su-pali* as viable alternatives, even though such forms are increasingly heard among young and imperfect Thangmi speakers.

Other than in the third person, Thangmi personal pronouns do not take the pronominal plural marker <-baŋ> (Pp), thus the plural form of *naŋ* 'you' is not **naŋ-baŋ* (you-p) but rather the irregular *niŋ* 'you(p)'. The complete pronominal system of Thangmi is discussed in Section §6 of this chapter. Sentences 26 to 28 illustrate the use of the pronominal plural marker <-baŋ> (Pp).

- 26 *libi to-ye ɲah-Ø-u-no 'nan ka-baŋ amiy-eŋ-du, tyay*
after that-ERG say-sAS-3P-3→3/PT now this-Pp sleep-pAS-NPT then
ya-ŋa-du', tyay lawa amiy-Ø-an.
go-1S-NPT then husband sleep-sAS-3S/PT

Later she thought [to herself] 'now, when they're all asleep, then I'll go', then her husband fell asleep.

- 27 *to-baŋ gǎi-go palam-ko ca camăi thay-eŋ-du.*
 that-Pp I-GEN mother's.elder.brother-GEN son daughter be-pAS-NPT

They are my mother's elder brother's children.

- 28 *su-baŋ ray-eŋ-an?*
 who-Pp come.from.level-pAS-3S/PT

Who(p) have come?

The pronominal plural marker <-baŋ> (Pp) remains absent if plurality has already been indicated on an associated nominal referent by the plural suffix <-pali> (p), as shown in example 29 below.

- 29 *ka mi-pali apraca jet lony-eŋ-du.*
 this person-p good work do-pAS-NPT

These people are doing good work.

The pronominal plural marker <-baŋ> (Pp) may co-occur with other nominal postpositions and case endings if this yields a semantically plausible combination. In such situations, the pronominal plural marker <-baŋ> (Pp) is suffixed directly to the pronominal head and all other elements follow, as in examples 30 and 31 below. When the ergative suffix <-e ~ -ye> (ERG) follows the pronominal plural marker <-baŋ> (Pp), the final velar nasal [ŋ] of the suffix <-baŋ> (Pp) is subject to regressive assimilation for place of articulation, as in example 32 below. This morphophonological assimilation is thus represented in my phonological representation of the Thangmi language, and is discussed in detail in Section §2 of Chapter 4.

- 30 *ka su-baŋ-ko nem hok-Ø-du?*
 this who-Pp-GEN house be-sAS-NPT

Whose(p) is this house?

- 31 *dī-ka mi-ye 'nan ka-baŋ-kǎi paŋ pi-ko*
 one-HNC person-ERG now this-Pp-PM sour.fruit give-ADH
măi-Ø-du, tyəŋ ja-Ø-du' ŋah-Ø-u-no.
 must-sAS-NPT then okay-sAS-NPT say-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

One person said 'we should feed them some sour fruit, and then they will be fine'.

- 32 *to-bany-e gǎi-gǎi niy-eŋ-ŋa-n.*
 that-Pp-ERG I-PM see-pAS-1s-PT

They saw me.

Other than *su* ‘who’, all Thangmi interrogative pronouns convey plurality by reduplication, a topic which is dealt with in Section §6.3 of this chapter. The interrogative pronoun *su* ‘who’ has two plural forms: *su-baŋ* ‘who(p)’, as outlined above, and *su su* (who who) ‘who(p)’. Somewhat like Nepali *ko ko* (who who) or Dutch *wie allemaal*, the latter reduplicative form is used to indicate a diverse range of expected actants and is best translated by ‘who...all’, as in example 33 below.

- 33 *su su mi-pali ray-eŋ-an?*
 who who person-p come.from.level-pAS-3S/PT

Who(p) are all the people who have come?

3. Case

In Thangmi, a distinction exists between nominal suffixes which function as case endings and those which function as postpositions. ‘Case’ implies a grammatical category used in the analysis of word classes to identify the syntactic relationship between words in a sentence. Case endings are a closed or limited set of suffixes which exhibit morphophonological variations of a fusional nature and which constitute a class of bound morphemes which are used to distinguish different grammatical roles from one another. A ‘postposition’ is a suffix which follows one or more nominal constituents to form a single constituent of structure, usually with no apparent morphophonological alternation. The present distinction between case endings and postpositions has been made to facilitate analysis of the grammar of Thangmi.

3.1 Unmarked

In Thangmi, unmarked verbal arguments include the subjects of intransitive and reflexive verbs and inanimate direct objects in transitive verbal scenarios, as in *gǎi isa cya-ŋa-du* (I food eat-1s-NPT) ‘I eat/am eating food’. In both the lexicon and in citation, nominals are given in the unmarked form.

3.2 Ergative

morph:	<-e ~ -ye>
label:	ERG

The ergative case is marked by the suffix <-e ~ -ye> (ERG), as in *ban-e* ‘friend(ERG)’. If the nominal constituent to which the ergative morpheme is suffixed ends in a vowel, the ergative morpheme has a regular allomorph with a glide /y/, as in *mi-ye* ‘person(ERG)’. The ergative case always marks the agent or cause of a transitive verb in the preterite tense and sometimes also the agent or cause of a transitive verb in non-preterite time. The ergative case also marks the subject of intransitively conjugated transitive verbs. Human beings, spirits, gods, animals and objects may all take the ergative case. Examples 34 to 36 illustrate the use of the allomorph <-e> (ERG), and examples 37 to 39 illustrate the allomorph <-ye> (ERG).

- 34 *‘nan lipem-e tel-to-le sat-i-du’ ηa-to-le.*
 now snow-ERG squeeze-TPP-PCL kill-1pPS-NPT say-TPP-PCL
 ‘Now the snow will squish us to death’, we thought.

- 35 *apan-e hen-ηa libi, guru-kāi begale wakhe*
 forest.spirit-ERG take-CNS after shaman-PM other word
ṭisen-Ø-u-du.
 teach-SAS-3P-NPT

Having taken the shaman away, the forest spirit teaches him secret things.

- 36 *miryaṇ sony-e ṭuṇi hen-Ø-u-no.*
 yesterday river-ERG goat take-SAS-3P-3→3/PT

Yesterday the river carried away a goat.

- 37 *miryaṇ gǎ-ye jet loṇ-u-n-uṇ.*
 yesterday I-ERG work do-3P-1s→3-1s→3/PT

Yesterday, I worked.

- 38 *nem-te ya-let-ta-i-le, ni-ye nembo-kāi sakalei*
 house-LOC go-appear-IPP-1pPS-PCL we-ERG other.person-PM all
wakhe ηa-wa-n.
 word say-1p→23-PT

Once we got home, we told everyone all our stories.

- 39 *yaŋ gǎi-gǎi kucu-ye cek-Ø-ŋa-n.*
 today I-PM dog-ERG bite-SAS-1s-PT

Today the dog bit me.

Ergative marking on the agent or cause of a transitive verb is obligatory in the preterite tense. In the non-preterite, ergative marking is optional, akin to the distribution of the Nepali ergative marker <-le> (ERG), and follows the pattern of split ergativity outlined in Section § 2 of Chapter 1. When the direct and indirect objects of a non-preterite situation are not made explicit, the ergative marker <-e ~ -ye> (ERG) is usually absent. In the non-preterite, the ergative suffix is used to disambiguate the agent from the patient as well as to add emphasis or intent to the phrase, not unlike Nepali *ma garchu* ‘I’ll do it’ versus *maile garchu* ‘I will be the one to do it’. Consequently, many occurrences of the ergative suffix in the non-preterite tense are answers to a question which contained an interrogative pronoun such as ‘who’ or ‘what’. Sentences 40 and 41 are answers to such questions.

- 40 *nī-ye jet loŋ-wa-du.*
 we-ERG work do-1p→23-NPT

We shall work.

- 41 *gǎ-ye seŋ cabuh-u-n-du.*
 I-ERG wood carry-3P-1s→3-NPT

I’ll carry the wood.

Examples 42 to 44 illustrate non-preterite transitive scenarios from which the ergative marker is absent.

- 42 *gǎi chya gǎi-go nem-te hen-u-n-du.*
 I salt I-GEN house-LOC take-3P-1s→3-NPT

I’m taking the salt home.

- 43 *gǎi jet loŋ-u-n-du.*
 I work do-3P-1s→3-NPT

I work / I am working.

- 44 *e tete, naŋ hara loŋ-u-na-du?*
 oh elder.sister you what do-3P-2s-NPT

Oh, elder sister, what are you doing?

The plural suffix <-pali> (p) precedes the ergative marker, as in examples 45 and 46.

- 45 *ka jet habi habi tha-Ø-du, tyaŋ camăica-pali-ye libi libi*
 this work before before be-SAS-NPT then woman-p-ERG after after
saŋa-ko puya peŋe-sa ray-eŋ-du.
 millet-GEN seed sow-INF come.from.level-pAS-NPT

All this work happens first, and only then do the women follow, bringing the millet seeds to sow.

- 46 *camăica mi-pali-ye racya peŋey-eŋ-du beryaŋ, kari woi*
 woman person-p-ERG paddy sow-pAS-NPT that.time song also
kariy-eŋ-du.
 sing-pAS-NPT

When sowing the paddy, the womenfolk also sing songs.

In a syntagma containing an embedded sentence, such as example 47 below, both the main clause and the embedded clause may take an actant in the ergative case.

- 47 *gă-ye miryaŋ toŋ-u-n-du miŋ nany-e kuta nah-u-na-n?*
 I-ERG yesterday wash-3P-1s→3-NPT cloth you-ERG where put-3P-2s-PT

Where have you put the clothes that I washed yesterday?

The ergative marker <-e ~ -ye> (ERG) co-occurs with *uni* ‘day, sun’ to convey the meaning of ‘one day, this day’, as in examples 48 and 49. Here the ergative suffix <-e ~ -ye> (ERG) marks the agent which sets the scene for an event or which facilitates further action.

- 48 *to uni-yiŋ, gă-ye di uni-ye nis-dicip-gore tun-u-n-thyo.*
 that day-ABL I-ERG one day-ERG two-ten-CLF drink-3P-1s→3-3sCOND

From that day on, I smoked twenty [cigarettes] a day.

- 49 *camăi nik-Ø-du sum uni-ye, wagal uniŋ nem-te*
 daughter give.birth-sAS-NPT three day-ERG henhouse like house-LOC
di-ka camăica kerep-Ø-du.
 one-HNC woman cry-sAS-NPT

Having given birth to a daughter three days earlier, the woman is crying in jail [lit. ‘henhouse-like house’].

3.3 Instrumental

morphs: <-e ~ -ye>
label: INS

The instrumental case is marked by the suffix <-e ~ -ye> (INS), as in *lak-e* ‘by hand’. If the nominal constituent to which the instrumental morpheme is suffixed ends in a vowel, the instrumental morpheme has a regular allomorph with a glide /y/, as in *ăikuca-ye* ‘with a knife’.

The instrumental case ending <-e ~ -ye> (INS) is formally identical to the ergative case ending <-e ~ -ye> (ERG), and they are one and the same category from the point of view of nominal morphology. From a syntactic point of view, however, two different functions of this morphological category can be distinguished. A nominal argument in the instrumental case does not exhibit the same morphosyntactic behaviour as an actant in the ergative case, nor does it fulfil the same semantic functions. The instrumental case indicates an instrument, implement or means by which or with which an action is enacted or takes place, as shown in examples 50 to 57. As such, the instrumental case marker is used to mark the cause of a situation. In such cases, as in example 74 below, the instrumental case marker is suffixed to the entity which is perceived to have caused a second entity to have performed an action or undergone some change.

- 50 *to isyaŋ begale thăi-te woi ăikuca-ye pal-eŋ-no*
that period other place-LOC also large.knife-INS chop-pAS-3→3/PT
ŋa-to-le nasăiy-eŋ-no.
say-TPP-PCL hear-pAS-3→3/PT

On that day they heard that these guys had been chopping with their knives in other places also.

- 51 *cyatane-ye ŋeh-Ø-u-du beryaŋ, to-yiŋ coi*
rice.spoon-INS beat-SAS-3P-NPT that.time that-ABL blood
let-Ø-an, coi let-Ø-ta-le, to mi-ye yo-le
appear-SAS-3S/PT blood appear-SAS-IPP-PCL that person-ERG look.at-PCL
nah-Ø-u-no.
put-SAS-3P-3→3/PT

When he beat it with the rice-cooking spoon, blood appeared, and when that blood came out that person just stared and stared.

- 52 *nan libi racya-ko puya lak-e li-ko mǎi-Ø-du.*
 now after paddy-GEN seed hand-INS scatter-ADH must-sAS-NPT

After this, the paddy seed should be scattered by hand.

- 53 *libi bubu oste-ye isa ken loŋ-sa*
 after elder.brother self-ERG food vegetable.curry do-INF
daŋ-Ø-u-du, soyony-e me mut-Ø-u-du, me ma-ti.
 search-sAS-3P-NPT tube-INS fire blow-sAS-3P-NPT fire NEG-light

Then elder brother tries to prepare the food and vegetable curry by himself,
 and he blows on the fire with the tube, but the fire won't light.

- 54 *kiji nasa-ye tel-to-le nah-Ø-u-du uniŋ tha-Ø-ta-le*
 black mud-INS squeeze-TPP-PCL put-sAS-3P-NPT like be-sAS-IPP-PCL
hok-Ø-an.
 be-sAS-3S/PT

She lived feeling as if she were squished by black mud.

- 55 *libi pepelek-e begale naka naka miŋ rah-Ø-u-no, asare*
 after money-INS other new new cloth bring-sAS-3P-3→3/PT tasty
ni-Ø-du isa cyah-Ø-an.
 appear-sAS-NPT food eat-sAS-3S/PT

Later, with that money, he brought new clothes to wear and tasty food to eat.

- 56 *ka uniŋ ŋa-to-le, suwa-ye cek-Ø-u-thyo, ka*
 this like say-TPP-PCL tooth-INS bite-sAS-3P-3sCOND this
chuku-ye nih-Ø-u-no.
 father.in.law-ERG see-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

That's to say, she bit it [the money] off with her teeth and her father-in-law
 saw it.

- 57 *'tyaŋ libi serek-ta-ŋa-le, to-kǎi ŋeh-u-n-uŋ, mesek-e*
 then after arise-IPP-1s-PCL that-PM beat-3P-1s→3-1s→3/PT eye-INS
ma-nih-u-n-uŋ, hani ŋeh-u-n-uŋ.'
 NEG-see-3P-1s→3-1s→3/PT how.much beat-3P-1s→3-1s→3/PT

'Then I got up and beat him, not seeing out of my eyes, who knows how
 much I beat him.'

An instrumentally marked argument can occur with an infinitive verb, as in examples 58 to 60, as can an ergatively marked one, as in example 61. Since infinitives do not show agreement for subject, agent or patient, the difference between an instrumentally and ergatively marked infinitive argument is entirely semantic. In example 61, *di-ka-ye* (one-HNC-ERG) is the agent which performs the action, in this case *tap-sa* (beat-INF), whilst *konṭe-ye* (leg-INS) is the implement or instrument used by the agent to perform the said action.

58 *rapa-ye ji-sa.*

axe-INS chop-INF

To chop with an axe.

59 *ṇiny-e khem-sa.*

stone-INS build-INF

To build with stone.

60 *maṇṇāi lak-e man-sa.*

bread hand-INS knead-INF

To knead bread by hand.

61 *di-ka-ye citaliṇ tap-sa, to woi konṭe-ye.*

one-HNC-ERG drum beat-INF that also leg-INS

One of them played the drums, but then with his feet.

In finite transitive verbal forms, the verb agrees with the actant in the ergative case, and not with an instrumentally marked argument, even if the actant is implicit, as in examples 62 to 64 below.

62 *'to loṇ-to-le woi kutaleṇ woi ma-jah-Ø-an, rage*
that do-TPP-PCL also when also NEG-okay-SAS-3S/PT anger

let-ṇa-n, maṇ-ṇaṇ me-ye jyouh-u-n-uṇ.'

appear-1S-PT body-inside fire-INS burn-3P-1S→3-1S→3/PT

'Even doing this, things never improved, and in anger, I burnt his body with fire.'

63 *gaṇ-ṇa libi, seny-e ṇey-eṇ-du.*

dry-CNS after firewood-INS beat-PAS-NPT

Once it's dry, they beat [it] with a piece of wood.

- 64 *racya min-ŋa libi, karati-ye koŋey-eŋ-du.*
 paddy ripen-CNS after sickle-INS cut-pAS-NPT

Once the paddy has ripened, they cut it with sickles.

A further morphosyntactic distinction between the ergative and instrumental case is that an actant in the ergative case cannot occur in an intransitive verbal scenario, whereas an actant in the instrumental case can, as in example 65.

- 65 *ni nis-ka lipem-e phoy-i-le hok-i-thyo.*
 we two-HNC snow-INS soak-1pPS-PCL be-1pPS-3sCOND

The two of us were totally drenched by the snow.

Expressions of hunger and anger are two of the most common Thangmi idioms governed by the instrumental case. The hungry actant is the subject of the scenario and thus he, she or it is unmarked for case, while *isa* ‘food’ is marked with the instrumental case <-e ~ -ye> (INS), as shown in examples 66 and 67 below. Two verbs are used to express hunger in Thangmi: *karāisa*, derived from Nepali *karāunu* ‘to shout, call’, and the indigenous Thangmi verb *kolasa* ‘to be hungry’, which is heard less frequently. Both verbs conjugate intransitively and show subject agreement in the verbal affixal string.

Instrumental marking for such forms is unusual in the Himalayan context, since neighbouring Tibeto-Burman languages as well as Nepali use patient marking to express hunger, i.e. Nepali *malāi bhok lāgyo* (lit. hunger is felt to/by me) ‘I feel hungry’. Aside from the lack of nominal marking on the actant, further evidence for instrumental rather than ergative patterning is found in the verbal agreement morphology. While the intransitive preterite first person subject form *karāi-ŋa-n* (shout-1s-PT) ‘I shouted’ is homophonous with the transitive preterite singular agent to first person singular patient form *karāi-Ø-ŋa-n* (shout-SAS-1s-PT) ‘he/he/it shouted to/at me’, expressions of hunger involving third person singular and plural subjects clearly show intransitive rather than transitive verbal agreement marking, i.e. *to isa-ye karāiy-Ø-an* (that food-INS shout-SAS-3S/PT) ‘he/she/it is feels hungry) and *to-baŋ isa-ye karāiy-eŋ-an* (that-Pp food-INS shout-SAS-3S/PT) ‘they feel hungry’.

- 66 *cya-sa pi-Ø-ŋa-n, isa-ye kola-ŋa-du beryaŋ, sola*
 eat-INF give-SAS-1s-PT food-INS be.hungry-1s-NPT that.time snack
pi-Ø-ŋa-n.
 give-SAS-1s-PT

She gave me food, and when I was hungry, [mother] fed me snacks.

67 *găi isa-ye karăi-ŋa-n.*

I food-INS shout-1s-PT

I am hungry.

The Thangmi noun *rage* ‘anger’ conveys the meaning ‘in anger’ when used in combination with the instrumental case <-e ~ -ye> (INS), as in examples 68 and 69.

68 *su woi khaŋou ɬaŋ-sa ma-kyel-Ø-an, mosani rage-ye*
who also door open-INF NEG-come-SAS-3S/PT spirit anger-INS

khaŋou ɬem-to-le biy-Ø-an.

door break-TPP-PCL enter-SAS-3S/PT

No one came to open the door, and the spirit, breaking down the door in fury, entered.

69 *ŋiŋ ci-theŋ-Ø-u-no, ɬitiŋ-Ø-an hani*
stone CAUS-stand.up-SAS-3P-3→3/PT fall.over-SAS-3S/PT how.much

ci-theŋ-Ø-u-no, ɬitiŋ-Ø-an, tyaŋ rage-ye to
CAUS-stand.up-SAS-3P-3→3/PT fall.over-SAS-3S/PT then anger-INS that

ŋiŋ-kăi cyaŋane-ye ɬeh-Ø-u-no.

stone-PM rice.spoon-INS beat-SAS-3P-3→3/PT

He set the stone upright, but it fell down, and as many times as he set it straight, it fell over again, so in anger he beat the stone with a rice-cooking spoon.

Thangmi *rage* ‘anger’ is also attested in combination with two intransitive verbs, *thasa* ‘to be’ and *letsa* ‘to appear, feel’. The difference in meaning between the two forms is as follows: *rage thasa* ‘to be angry’ is used to describe those who are moody or angry without cause, while *rage letsa* ‘to appear angry, become angry’ describes the anger of the unjustly wronged and is also used for people pretending to be angry. In neither of these two idioms is *rage* ‘anger’ governed by the instrumental case. In expressions of anger, the subject of the intransitive verbs *thasa* ‘to be’ and *letsa* ‘to appear’ may take the patient marker <-kăi> (PM), as shown in example 71 below, or not, as in example 70. While the presence of the Thangmi patient marker <-kăi> (PM) normally indicates the involvement of a transitive verb, the verbs *thasa* ‘to be’ and *letsa* ‘to appear, feel’ are always conjugated intransitively and show no verbal agreement marking for a transitive actant. The Thangmi phrase *găi-găi rage let-ŋa-n* (I-PM anger appear-1s-PT) ‘I became angry’ may be calqued from the Nepali form *malāi rīs āyo/uṭhyo* (lit. anger came to me, anger arose in me) ‘I became angry’.

- 70 *nyoŋi apa-kǎi woi ci-sǎiy-Ø-u-no, to woi rage*
 evening father-PM also CAUS-hear-sAS-3P-3→3/PT that also anger
thah-Ø-an.
 be-sAS-3S/PT

In the evening, she also told her father, and he too was angry.

- 71 *'nembo-ko nem-te gwi-to-le, gǎi-gǎi rage let-ŋa-n.'*
 other.person-GEN house-LOC steal-TPP-PCL I-PM anger appear-1s-PT
 'Stealing [as he did] from other people's house, I became angry.'

The instrumental case marker <-e ~ -ye> (INS) can also be suffixed to *sare* 'voice', as in example 72 below, to yield an expression of manner.

- 72 *jekha sare-ye, bubu-ye 'hara ka thǎi-te? lawa*
 big voice-INS elder.brother-ERG what this place-LOC husband
ma-hok-Ø-du-ye, mo-sa ma-khalam?' ŋa-to-le
 NEG-be-sAS-NPT-ERG survive-INF NEG-receive say-TPP-PCL
ŋah-Ø-u-du.
 say-sAS-3P-NPT

And elder brother says in a loud voice 'what is it with this place? Is one not allowed to live without a husband?'

Similarly, adjectives may take instrumental marking, as in example 73 below, in which *apraca* 'good' and the instrumental suffix <-e ~ -ye> (INS) combine to give the meaning 'well', literally 'by good'. In example 74, the adjective *ajik* 'cold' takes the instrumental case to mean 'by the cold' or 'on account of the cold'. In this example, the instrumental case is used to mark the cause of a situation.

- 73 *saŋa-ko puya na-sa habi, raŋ-kǎi apraca-ye*
 millet-GEN seed put-INF before unirrigated.field-PM good-INS
sya-ko syā-kli cuk-to-le sya wa-ko
 bovine-GEN bovine-shit insert-TPP-PCL bovine plough-ADH
mǎi-Ø-du.
 must-sAS-NPT

Before planting the millet seeds, cow dung is well spread over the fields, and the fields must then be ploughed with oxen.

- 74 *ajik-e racya ucyaca sek-sa loŋ-Ø-u-du.*
cold-INS paddy small to.ripen-INF do-sAS-3P-NPT

The cold makes the paddy small when it ripens.

3.4 Genitive

basic morphs: <-ko ~ -go>
label: GEN

The genitive case is marked by the suffix <-ko ~ -go> (GEN). The only instance of the allomorph <-go> (GEN) is in combination with the first person singular pronoun *gǎi* ‘I’, to form the first person singular possessive pronoun *gǎi-go* (I-GEN) ‘my’, as in example 75. All other occurrences of the genitive morpheme are of the regular allomorph <-ko> (GEN).

- 75 *gǎi-go nem babre.*
I-GEN house Bābre

My home is Bābre (I live in Bābre).

The genitive forms of all other personal pronouns are discussed in Section §6.1 of this chapter. The genitive case indicates belonging, ownership or possession, as in examples 76 to 79.

- 76 *naŋ-ko nem kuta?*
you-GEN house where

Where is your home (where do you live)?

- 77 *gǎi naŋ-ko palam-ko nem-yiŋ*
I you-GEN mother’s.elder.brother-GEN house-ABL
ra-ŋa-n.
come.from.level-1s-PT

I came from your mother’s elder brother’s house.

- 78 *amrika-ko jekha mi-ko nem-ko name ‘ubo nem’.*
America-GEN big person-GEN house-GEN name white house

The house of the big man of America is known as ‘White House’.

- 79 *‘tyaŋ su-ko nunu to koŋe doroŋ loŋ-to-le, gǎi-go ugo-te*
 then who-GEN milk that wall hole do-TPP-PCL I-GEN mouth-LOC
bi-Ø-du, to gǎi-go ama, to-ko lawa, gǎi-go apa.’
 enter-SAS-NPT that I-GEN mother that-GEN husband I-GEN father

‘Then whoever’s milk makes a hole in the wall and enters my mouth, she is my mother and her husband is my father’ [he said].

The genitive case suffix <-ko ~ -go> (GEN) also indicates related semantic functions such as the membership of an element in a set or a part-whole relationship, as in examples 80 to 83.

- 80 *saŋa-ko isa.*
 millet-GEN food

Millet paste.

- 81 *gǎ-ye wa-ko mus pun-u-n-du.*
 I-ERG chicken-GEN hair pull.out-3P-1S→3-NPT

I’m plucking the chicken.

- 82 *isa-guri, saŋa-ko denderek phase-ko isa nyakaŋeŋ-ko*
 food-IND millet-GEN coarse.and.rough flour-GEN food nettle-GEN
ken cya-ta-i-le, nis uni to-te hok-i-n.
 vegetable.curry eat-IPP-1pPS-PCL two day that-LOC stay-1pPS-PT

As for the food, well we ate this rough, coarse millet flour paste with nettle soup, and we stayed for two days.

- 83 *yamiryaŋ-ko thaŋmi-ko huca-pali oste-ko kham*
 nowadays-GEN Thangmi-GEN child-p self-GEN language
ma-cijyany-eŋ.
 NEG-speak-pAS

These days Thangmi children don’t even speak their own language.

Nominalised verbs may also take genitive case marking, as in examples 84 and 85, if this results in a semantically plausible combination.

- 84 *libi to laŋi khyak-si-Ø-du-ko apa-ye*
 after that necklace strap.on-REF-sAS-NPT-GEN father-ERG
ŋah-Ø-u-no:
 say-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

Later, the father of the one wearing the necklace said:

- 85 *hok-Ø-du-ko nem-te, phase ney-eŋ-to-le cey-eŋ-du,*
 be-sAS-NPT-GEN house-LOC flour grind-pAS-TPP-PCL eat-pAS-NPT
ma-hok-Ø-du-ko nem-te, thel thel isa cey-eŋ-du, to
 NEG-be-sAS-NPT-GEN house-LOC watery watery food eat-pAS-NPT that
woi tany-eŋ-du.
 also be.happy-pAS-NPT

In houses that have it, they grind flour to eat, in those that don't, they eat watery food, but even they are happy.

Under certain circumstances, adjectives can also take the genitive case, as in examples 86 and 87. In example 86, *ɸila-ko uni* (cold-GEN day) has the meaning 'on a cold day', and native speakers reject the form **ɸila uni* (cold day). To convey the meaning 'it was a cold day' or 'the day was cold', the adjective *ɸila* 'cold' follows the noun *uni* 'day, sun', as in the phrase *uni ɸila thah-Ø-an* (day cold be-sAS-3S/PT).

- 86 *ɸila-ko uni, cereŋ-cereŋ uni woi ma-hok-Ø-thyo.*
 cold-GEN day scorching sun also NEG-be-sAS-3S/COND

On a cold day, the sun wasn't scorching.

- 87 *di chin libi, wa jekha mi-ko nem-te*
 one moment after chicken big person-GEN house-LOC
ya-let-Ø-an, kherte-ko arka pole-te hok-Ø-an, to isyaŋ
 go-appear-sAS-3S/PT near-GEN walnut tree-LOC be-sAS-3S/PT that period
to-ko camăi-ko bore tha-Ø-le hok-Ø-thyo.
 that-GEN daughter-GEN marriage be-sAS-PCL be-sAS-3S/COND

A moment later, the chicken arrived at the house of the important person, and sat down nearby a walnut tree, [and it happened that] that day that man's daughter was getting married.

A noun in the genitive case yields a constituent which may, if semantically plausible, take a further case ending. In the nominal string, the genitive suffix <-ko ~ -go> (GEN) always occupies a position posterior to the plural suffix <-pali> (p), as

demonstrated by examples 88 and 89. The suffixal string *<-ko-pali> (GEN-p) is rejected by Thangmi speakers as it yields a semantically implausible combination. The difference between a compound and a genitive construction, when both are semantically plausible, is the difference between a type of thing and a specific thing or group of things, such as *sya-kli* ‘cow dung’ versus *sya-ko kli* ‘the cow’s dung’, ‘the dung of a cow’, ‘the dung of the cow’, or *wa-ahum* ‘chickens’ eggs’, ‘a chicken’s egg’ versus *wa-ko ahum* ‘the chicken’s egg’, ‘the egg of a chicken’, ‘the egg of the chicken’.

- 88 *‘huca-pali-ko ama rah-u-n-du’ ŋa-to-le ŋah-Ø-u-no,*
 child-p-GEN mother bring-3P-1s→3-NPT say-TPP-PCL say-SAS-3P-3→3/PT
ŋaŋ di uni nis-ka mi hen-to-le ɬaye caway-eŋ-an.
 and one day two-HNC person take-TPP-PCL night walk-pAS-3S/PT
 ‘I’ll bring the children’s mother’, he said, and then one day he set off
 walking in the night with two other guys.

- 89 *nan to oste-ko camăi-pali-ko nem-te yah-Ø-an.*
 now that self-GEN daughter-p-GEN house-LOC go-SAS-3S/PT
 So he went off to the houses of his own daughters.

The genitive case marker <-ko ~ -go> (GEN) and the locative postposition <-te> (LOC) occupy the same suffixal position in the nominal chain. According to the rules of Thangmi morphology, when these two suffixes appear in combination, their relative order has semantic implications. If the locative postposition precedes the genitive, as in *to-te-ko* (that-LOC-GEN) ‘of that (one), of there’, then the meaning is that of a genitive of location or place, as shown in examples 90 and 91. If the genitive suffix precedes the locative postposition, such as *naŋ-ko-te* (you-GEN-LOC) ‘at/in your’s’, then the meaning is akin to French *chez* ‘at the house of’, as in examples 92 and 93. Nepali has a similar construction to convey the sense of being at someone’s home, *tapāĩ-ko-mā* (you.honorific-GEN-LOC) ‘at your place’, from which the Thangmi version may be calqued.

- 90 *nan to-te-ko mosani priŋ ci-let-Ø-u-du tyaŋ libi*
 now that-LOC-GEN spirit outside CAUS-appear-SAS-3P-NPT then after
libi poh-Ø-u-du.
 after chase-SAS-3P-NPT

Now the spirit that is there is made to come out and is then chased away.

- 91 *po-ŋa libi, ni di-gore dewa nem duŋ-ŋaŋ*
 chase-CNS after we one-CLF god house within-inside
bi-ta-i-le hok-i-n, to-ŋaŋ-ko athaŋ sat-wa-n.
 enter-IPP-1pPS-PCL be-1pPS-PT that-within-GEN light kill-1p→23-PT

After we had been chased away, we snuck into a temple, turned off the light inside and stayed there.

- 92 *libi to-ko uma ma-thaŋ-Ø-an, ma-thaŋ-ŋa libi,*
 after that-GEN wife NEG-be.well-sAS-3S/PT NEG-be.well-CNS after
guru-ko-te hen-wa-n, guru-kăi ci-yo-wa-n.
 shaman-GEN-LOC take-1p→23-PT shaman-PM CAUS-look.at-1p→23-PT

Some time later, his wife got ill, and being ill, we took her to the shaman's house where we showed her to him.

- 93 *libi loŋe dese-te cawah-Ø-an, di-ka mesek*
 after jackal village-LOC walk-sAS-3S/PT one-HNC eye
ma-niy-Ø-u-du mi-ko-te ya-let-Ø-an.
 NEG-see-sAS-3P-NPT person-GEN-LOC go-appear-sAS-3S/PT

Later the jackal walked to the village and arrived at the home of a blind person.

When combined with the genitive marker, any remaining suffixal markers occupy a posterior position, such as <-be> (TOP) or <-guri> (IND), as shown in examples 94 and 95.

- 94 *nem-te ya-Ø-ta-le uma-kăi sakalei wakhe*
 house-LOC go-sAS-IPP-PCL wife-PM all word
ci-nasăiy-Ø-u-no, thoŋi kerep-kerep-Ø-ta-le
 CAUS-hear-sAS-3P-3→3/PT old.woman cry-cry-sAS-IPP-PCL
ŋah-Ø-u-no 'naŋ-ko-be camăi hok-Ø-du, pi-Ø-na-du,
 say-sAS-3P-3→3/PT you-GEN-TOP daughter be-sAS-NPT give-sAS-2s-NPT
găi-go su hok-Ø-du ra?'
 I-GEN who be-sAS-NPT or

Having gone home he told his wife everything that had happened, and the old woman said, crying and crying, 'you have a daughter who gives you things, now whom do I have?'

- 95 *naŋ-ko-guri hara jet hok-Ø-du to dese-ŋaŋ?*
 you-GEN-IND what work be-SAS-NPT that village-inside

What is it that you have to do in that village?

Genitive nominals may occur as independent heads, as in the possessive *gǎi-go hok-Ø-du* (I-GEN be-SAS-NPT) ‘I have one/mine’, or as in example 96.

- 96 *naŋ-ko hok-Ø-du, gǎi-go ma-hok.*
 you-GEN be-SAS-NPT I-GEN NEG-be

You have one, I don’t.

The genitive suffix <-ko ~ -go> (GEN) can also function as an adverbial nominaliser. Examples 97 and 98 illustrate the nominalised forms of *habi* ‘before’ and *libi* ‘after’ through the suffixation of the genitive marker <-ko ~ -go> (GEN), meaning ‘earlier, first’ and ‘later, last’ respectively.

- 97 *macyu-ko ca, gǎi-go bubu, ahe habi-ko*
 mother’s.younger.sister-GEN son I-GEN elder.brother very before-GEN
wakhe loŋ-u-n-du, to-ko.
 word do-3P-1s→3-NPT that-GEN

Let me tell a story about what happened a long time ago to my mother’s younger sister’s son, my elder brother.

- 98 *gǎi-go walŋa-ka tete, libi-ko gǎi.*
 I-GEN five-HNC elder.sister after-GEN I

There were five elder sisters, and last of all, me.

In Thangmi, a number of frequently used idiomatic phrases are governed by the genitive case. First, the narrative construction *di uni-ko wakhe* (one day-GEN word), best translated as ‘once upon a time...’ or ‘one day, this happened...’. Most Thangmi folk tales and historical anecdotes narrated around the family hearth open with this formulaic construction, as in example 99.

- 99 *di uni-ko wakhe, gǎi begale mi-ko bore-te ya-ŋa-thyo,*
 one day-GEN word I other person-GEN marriage-LOC go-1s-3sCOND
to-te di-ka ubo mi hok-Ø-thyo.
 that-LOC one-HNC white person be-SAS-3sCOND

Once upon a time, I went to someone else's wedding and there, at the wedding, was a white man.

While *oste* 'self' is attested without the genitive suffix in verbal scenarios, in noun phrases it most commonly occurs in the form *oste-ko* (self-GEN) 'own', as in examples 100 and 101.

- 100 *bubu woi gǎi-go oste-ko bubu uniŋ hok-Ø-du.*
 elder.brother also I-GEN self-GEN elder.brother like be-SAS-NPT

And that man is just like my own elder brother.

- 101 *nyoŋi tha-ŋa libi, oste oste-ko nem dǎi yey-eŋ-du.*
 evening be-CNS after self self-GEN house towards go-PAS-NPT

And when it's evening, they all go to their own homes.

The Thangmi language has no indigenous way of constructing comparative or superlative adjectival forms, such as 'more than' or 'most'. While younger speakers find ways of conveying these expressions through Nepali,⁴ older speaker still use the Thangmi word *uniŋ* 'like, as, than', to express comparative scenarios, in the same way that speakers of German use *als* 'like, as, than'. In such cases, *uniŋ* appears after a noun together with the genitive case suffix <-ko ~ -go> (GEN), as in example 102.

- 102 *ka-kǎi li-sa, saŋa, makǎi-ko uniŋ aye jet loŋ-sa*
 this-PM broadcast-INF millet maize-GEN like much work do-INF
ma-mǎi.
 NEG-must

Broadcasting this [wheat] is far less work than scattering millet or maize.

[lit. broadcasting this, one doesn't have to do as much work as one does with millet or maize.]

The Thangmi noun *pepelek* 'money, coins' combines with the genitive suffix <-ko ~ -go> (GEN) to give highly specific meanings. The phrase *pepelek-ko* (money-GEN)

⁴ Younger Thangmi speakers use Nepali *bhandā* 'more than' and *sab bhandā* 'most' to convey the comparative and superlative meaning of adjectives.

denotes ‘wealthy’ or ‘monied’ (example 103), while *pepelek-ko mi* (money-GEN person), ‘wealthy person’, has the more negative connotation of ‘money-lender’ (example 104). With interest rates of anything up to 60% per annum, it is no wonder that the Thangmi language has a specific term for those individuals who lend money.⁵

- 103 *‘soŋ-te di-gore pepelek-ko moro itu-le*
 river-LOC one-CLF money-GEN corpse bring.from.above-PCL
nah-Ø-u-du.’
 put-SAS-3P-NPT

‘At the river, a wealthy dead person [corpse with a money on it] has been washed down from above’ [the jackal said].

- 104 *pepelek-ko mi-ye nem cya-sa daŋ-Ø-u-du.*
 money-GEN person-ERG house eat-INF search-SAS-3P-NPT
 A money lender tries to take [lit. eat] houses.

4. Postpositions

4.1 Locative

morph:	<-te>
label:	LOC
morph:	<-ŋaŋ>
label:	inside

The locative case indicates location, place or destination. Thangmi has two locative postpositions, <-te> (LOC) which is variously translated as ‘in’, ‘on’, ‘at’ or ‘by’ and may be termed a locative proper, and the inessive <-ŋaŋ> ‘inside’. While both locative postpositions denote location, only <-te> (LOC) indicates direction. Less fluent or younger Thangmi speakers often use them interchangeably.

Examples 105 to 111 illustrate a range of uses of the locative suffix <-te> (LOC), *nem-te* (house-LOC) ‘home (direction)’ or ‘at home’ (105), *ka-te* (this-LOC) ‘here’ (106), *dilaŋ-te* (stone.resting.place-LOC) ‘by/on/at the stone resting place’ (107), *ken-te* (vegetable.curry-LOC) ‘in the curry’ (108), *kham-te* (language-LOC) ‘in the language’ (109), *uni-te* (sun-LOC) ‘in the sun’ (110) and *thapu-te* (fireplace-LOC) ‘on the stove’ and *lak-te* (hand-LOC) ‘on the hand’ (111).

⁵ In the northernmost Thangmi villages *pepelek-ko mi* also means ‘Brahmin’ since higher-caste non Thangmi are usually the lenders and Thangmi are the recipients.

- 105 *gǎi nem-te ya-ŋa-du.*
 I house-LOC go-1s-NPT
 I'm going home.
- 106 *gǎi-go nem ka-te.*
 I-GEN house this-LOC
 My house is here (I live here).
- 107 *to dilaŋ-te di-si-Ø-du.*
 that stone.resting.place-LOC rest-REF-SAS-NPT
 He is resting by the stone resting place.
- 108 *gǎi ken-te chya cuk-u-n-du.*
 I vegetable.curry-LOC salt insert-3P-1s→3-NPT
 I'm putting some salt in the vegetable curry.
- 109 *naŋ-ko kham-te to-kǎi hara isiy-eŋ-du?*
 you-GEN language-LOC that-PM what say-pAS-NPT
 How do they say that in your language?
- 110 *nan saŋa let-Ø-an, saŋa uni-te areŋ-to-le, yante-te*
 then millet appear-SAS-3S/PT millet sun-LOC dry-TPP-PCL quern-LOC
na-to-le ney-eŋ-du.
 put-TPP-PCL grind-pAS-NPT
 Then the millet comes clean off the husk and is then dried in the sun, put in
 a quern [grindstone], and ground.
- 111 *baŋi thapu-te nah-Ø-u-du, lak-te kiji thum-Ø-du, me*
 pot fireplace-LOC put-SAS-3P-NPT hand-LOC black stain-SAS-NPT fire
ma-ti-Ø-ta-le kerep-Ø-du, raphil thor-si-Ø-du
 NEG-light-SAS-IPP-PCL cry-SAS-NPT tear wipe.away-REF-SAS-NPT
beryaŋ, kiji naŋe-te thum-Ø-du.
 that.time black cheek-LOC stain-SAS-NPT
 As he puts the pot on the fireplace, he gets black [soot] on his hands, and
 what with the fire still not being alight, he cries, and as he wipes the tears
 away, the soot smears all over his cheeks.

The locative postposition <-te> (LOC) may also be suffixed to adjectives and adverbs, as in examples 112 to 115, *ǎlǎmtha-te* (distance-LOC) 'in the distance/far away'

(112), *ukhiṇ-te* (dark-LOC) ‘in the dark/by night’ (113), *dha-te* (that.distant-LOC) ‘over there/in that place’ (114) and *chin-te* (moment-LOC) ‘in a moment’ (115), the latter a calque from Nepali *ek chin-mā* (one moment-LOC) ‘in a moment’.

- 112 *ălāmtha-te di-ka camāica khalam-Ø-u-no, camāica-ko apa*
 distant-LOC one-HNC woman meet-SAS-3P-3→3/PT woman-GEN father
ama-kāi ṇa-to-le, ca-ko bore loṇ-Ø-u-no.
 mother-PM say-TPP-PCL son-GEN marriage do-SAS-3P-3→3/PT

He found a woman in a place far away, and having discussed it with the woman’s father and mother, the son was married.

- 113 *nis-ka-ye huca-pali cabuy-eṇ-to-le, ukhiṇ-te caway-eṇ-an.*
 two-HNC-ERG child-p carry-pAS-TPP-PCL dark-LOC walk-pAS-3S/PT

Those two people, carrying the children, walked by night.

- 114 *dha-te ulam apraca ma-hok.*
 that.distant-LOC path good NEG-be

That path over there is not good.

- 115 *to mi-ye ṇa-Ø-ṇa-n, ‘nan, ka-yiṇ di chin-te*
 that person-ERG say-SAS-1s-PT now this-ABL one moment-LOC
ya-let-ni-du.’
 go-appear-2p-NPT

And that person said to me, ‘from here you’ll(p) be there in no time.’

The spatial adverb *kherte* ‘near, nearby, close’ is derived from **kher* ‘close’ combined with the locative postposition <-te> (LOC), as illustrated in example 116 below. Thangmi speakers reject **kher* as a viable alternate in all scenarios.

- 116 *isa cya-ta-i-le, thapu kherte gāi ami-ṇa-n.*
 food eat-IPP-1pPS-PCL fireplace near I sleep-1s-PT

Once we had eaten, I fell asleep close to the fireplace.

When the result is semantically plausible, the locative postposition <-te> (LOC) may also be suffixed to a nominalised verb, as in example 117.

- 117 *per-Ø-du-te woi lun-ŋa-n, nan hara tha-Ø-du? masăi.*
 fly-SAS-NPT-LOC also ride-1s-PT now what be-SAS-NPT who.knows

I even got to ride one of those flying things, now what else will happen?
 Who knows?

As discussed in Section §3.4 above, locative postpositions may be combined with the genitive marker (examples 90 to 93). Along with the genitive, the locative suffixes may also be combined with other suffixal elements, such as *ka* ‘throughout’ (118), <-guri> (IND) (119) and <-be> (TOP) (120).

- 118 *ari-Ø-ta-le ŋah-Ø-u-no, ‘bubu, ka dese-te*
 be.afraid-SAS-IPP-PCL say-SAS-3P-3→3/PT elder.brother this village-LOC
găi-go su woi ma-hok, găi sumaka thăi daŋ-ca daŋ-ca
 I-GEN who also NEG-be I silent place search-PSG search-PSG
ra-ŋa-du, tyaj ka-te ka ra-let-ŋa-n.’
 come.from.level-1s-NPT then this-LOC throughout come-appear-1s-PT

All afraid, she said, ‘elder brother, I know no one in this village, and I have been searching and searching for a quiet place to go to, and ended up here.’

- 119 *to-te-guri di-gore kiji ŋiŋ na-to-le cikhet-eŋ-no.*
 that-LOC-IND one-CLF black stone put-TPP-PCL show-pAS-3→3/PT

And in that place, they left a black stone to show her [i.e. the mother, what she had given birth to].

- 120 *‘fila-te-be me ma-mut, yamiryaŋ adum tha-Ø-du beryaŋ*
 cold-LOC-TOP fire NEG-blow nowadays hot be-SAS-NPT that.time
hara-ko me mut-Ø-u-thyo?’
 what-GEN fire blow-SAS-3P-3sCOND

‘They don’t light the heater when it’s cold, and these days, now that it’s warm, why would they light a fire anyway?’ [my friend said].

The locative postpositions <-te> (LOC) and <-ŋaŋ> ‘inside’ may be suffixed to both demonstrative and interrogative pronouns, such as *to-te* (that-LOC) ‘there’, *hara-te* (what-LOC) ‘in/by what’ (example 121) or *to-ŋaŋ* (that-inside) ‘in that place’ (example 122).

- 121 *'di pepelek-ko jake hani pi-sa? phah-o!*
 one money-GEN rice how.much give-INF hold.out.and.receive-s→3/IMP
hara-te hen-u-na-du?'
 what-LOC take-3P-2s-NPT

'How much rice should I give you for one coin? Hold out your hand! But what will you carry it inside?' [the storekeeper asked].

- 122 *to ni-to-le atthe taη-Ø-an, libi to-ηaη arki*
 that see-TPP-PCL much be.happy-sAS-3S/PT after that-inside deer
sya-pali nih-Ø-u-no.
 cow-p see-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

She was really happy to see all that, and in that place she later saw deer and cows also.

When combined with the locative postposition <-te> (LOC), certain Thangmi nominals take on a specific meaning. Thangmi *dewa* 'deity, god, spirit', derived from Nepali *deva* 'god', combines with the locative <-te> (LOC) to give *dewa-te* (*god-LOC*), meaning 'place of worship' or 'temple', as in example 123. There are no indigenous proper nouns in Thangmi for the bazaar towns of Dolakhā and Carikoṭ, nor for the capital city Kathmandu. The latter is usually referred to as *jekha dese* (big village) 'the big village'. Travelling to Dolakhā or Carikoṭ is described as going *jet-te* (work-LOC) 'to work', since these district towns are important sources of wage labour for the impoverished Thangmi community (see example 124). In contrast to example 72 above, in which a fluent Thangmi speaker used the instrumental case with the noun *sare* 'voice' to convey the meaning 'in a...voice', less fluent Thangmi speakers may use the locative postposition <-te> (LOC). While opting for the locative postposition over the instrumental case in such instances does not result in a semantic difference, the locative construction illustrated by example 125 below is most likely calqued from Nepali *ṭhūlo svar-mā* (big voice-LOC) 'in a loud voice'.

- 123 *cawa-ηa libi, ṭaye dewa-te ya-let-i-n.*
 walk-CNS after night god-LOC go-appear-1pPS-PT

Having travelled all day, we only arrived at the temple at night.

- 124 *uma lawa isa cey-eŋ-ta-le, me sat-eŋ-to-le, jet*
 wife husband food eat-pAS-IPP-PCL fire kill-pAS-TPP-PCL work
jet-te yey-eŋ-thyo.
 work-LOC go-pAS-3sCOND

Having eaten their meal and put out the fire, the wife and husband went off to their respective jobs.

- 125 *to-kǎi ma-piy-Ø-u-du mi-ko laŋga-te ya-Ø-ta-le,*
 that-PM NEG-give-sAS-3P-NPT person-GEN courtyard-LOC go-sAS-IPP-PCL
jekha sare-te kiḍiy-Ø-an.
 big voice-LOC quarrel-sAS-3S/PT

He went to the courtyard of that person who wouldn't give the money and, in a very loud voice, started a quarrel.

The inessive postposition <-ŋaŋ> 'inside' specifies location rather than direction, as demonstrated by examples 126 to 131 below.

- 126 *naŋ-ko nem to dese-ŋaŋ hok-Ø-du ra?*
 you-GEN house that village-inside be-sAS-NPT or
 Do you live in that village?

- 127 *jakcho-kǎi yante-ŋaŋ ne-to-le phase loŋ-to-le, maṇṇi, isa,*
 wheat-PM quern-inside grind-TPP-PCL flour do-TPP-PCL bread food
anek-to-le, cya-ŋa sola woi tha-Ø-du.
 fry-TPP-PCL eat-CNS snack also be-sAS-NPT

Having ground the wheat in a quern and made it into flour, it can be eaten as bread, as cooked food or even as a snack when fried.

- 128 *aye adum tha-Ø-du ṭhǎi-ŋaŋ ka racya jet apraca*
 very hot be-sAS-NPT place-inside this paddy work good
tha-Ø-du.
 be-sAS-NPT

In very hot places, paddy grows well. [lit. the rice work is good]

- 129 *tyaŋ thaɸu-ŋaŋ na-to-le jyoh-Ø-u-no, min-ŋa libi*
 then fireplace-inside put-TPP-PCL burn-sAS-3P-3→3/PT cook-CNS after
cyah-Ø-an.
 eat-sAS-3S/PT

Then he put it in the fire and roasted it, when it was cooked he ate it.

- 130 *gǎi naka nem-ŋaŋ hok-ŋa-n, naka isa cya-ŋa-n'*
 I new house-inside be-1s-PT new food eat-1s-PT
ŋah-Ø-u-no.
 say-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

'I stayed in a new house and ate new food', she told them.

- 131 *gǎi kiŋi ta-sa ukhiŋ-ŋaŋ ya-ŋa-n, tah-u-n-uŋ.*
 I shit release-INF dark-inside go-1s-PT release-3P-1s→3-1s→3/PT

I went to take a shit in the dark, and I shat.

In certain contexts, the inessive postposition <-ŋaŋ> 'inside' is understood to convey the sense of 'right there', as in example 132.

- 132 *libi to-ŋaŋ ni yo-siy-i-n, nuy-i-n.*
 after that-inside we look.at-REF-1pPS-PT laugh-1pPS-PT

Then, right there, we looked at each other and laughed.

In other situations, the locative postposition <-ŋaŋ> 'inside' may best be translated by 'on' or 'onto', as in example 133.

- 133 *miryaŋ gǎ-ye to-ko koŋte-ŋaŋ ŋiŋ ci-ros-u-n-uŋ,*
 yesterday I-ERG that-GEN leg-inside stone CAUS-fall-3P-1s→3-1s→3/PT
tyaŋ gare thah-Ø-an.
 then wound be-sAS-3S/PT

Yesterday I dropped a stone on his foot, and now there's a wound.

When both locative postpositions are used in a single sentence, the difference between them becomes clear. In example 113 above, *ukhiŋ-te* (dark-LOC) conveys the meaning of 'in the dark, by night', while in example 134 below, *ukhiŋ-ŋaŋ* (dark-inside) has the sense of 'in the dead of night' or 'in complete darkness'.

- 134 *thoŋi-ye, ukhiŋ-ŋaŋ tʊŋi rah-Ø-an ŋa-to-le,*
 old.woman-ERG dark-inside goat come.from.level-sAS-3S/PT say-TPP-PCL
nyakaŋeŋ pole-te ciy-Ø-u-no.
 nettle shrub-LOC throw.away-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

In the darkness, thinking that the goat had come, the old woman threw him into the nettle bush.

In example 135, the locative postpositions <te> and <-ŋaŋ> are translated as ‘to’ and ‘into’ respectively.

- 135 *jekha mi-ko nem-te ya-ŋa libi, to-kăi bhutbhute-ŋaŋ*
 big person-GEN house-LOC go-CNS after that-PM white.hot.fire-inside
jun-Ø-u-no.
 chase-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

Having gone to the chief’s house, he was chased into the centre of the white hot fire.

4.2 Comitative

morph:	<i>nama</i>
label:	with

The comitative postposition *nama* ‘with’ denotes accompaniment by indicating the person or things which take part in an action. Unlike many Kiranti languages, the Thangmi comitative postposition does not coordinate nominal arguments. Examples 136 to 140 below show commonly occurring instances of the comitative postposition *nama*. The postposition appears posterior to the noun which it modifies.

- 136 *chya nama cya-Ø!*
 salt with eat-s/IMP
 Eat it with salt!
- 137 *naŋ mīryaŋ su nama ya-na-n?*
 you yesterday who with go-2s-PT
 With whom did you go yesterday?

- 138 *gǎi ari-sa ma-mǎi-thyo, to nama jet loŋ-sa mi*
 I be.afraid-INF NEG-must-3sCOND that with work do-INF person
ma-hok-Ø-thyo.
 NEG-be-sAS-3sCOND

I needn't have been afraid, since he simply didn't have anyone to work with.

- 139 *nama ya-Ø-ta-le, di-ka cahuca nama cijyaŋ-Ø-an.*
 with go-sAS-IPP-PCL one-HNC man with speak-sAS-3S/PT

Having gone off with them, she spoke to one of the men.

- 140 *ca nama apa cijyaŋ-Ø-du, uma nama ma-cijyaŋ, lawa-kǎi*
 son with father speak-sAS-NPT wife with NEG-speak father-PM
nem duŋ-ŋaŋ woi bi-sa ma-pi.
 house within-inside also enter-INF NEG-give

The father speaks with his son but not with his wife, she doesn't even let him come inside the house.

The comitative postposition *nama* 'with' is also used to convey the sense of 'together', in which case the associated verb usually shows agreement for plural number, as in examples 141 and 142 below.

- 141 *ja-Ø-du, nama hen-ko!*
 okay-sAS-NPT with go-ADH

Okay, let's go together!

- 142 *baŋhe ra-ŋa-n, nama hok-i-n, thaŋmi kham*
 tomorrow come.from.level-1s-PT with be-1pPS-PT Thangmi language
loŋ-wa-n.
 do-1p→23-PT

The next day I came [to him] and we sat together and spoke Thangmi.

Thangmi has no verb 'to have', and possession of non-animate things is indicated by means of the comitative postposition *nama*, much in the way that possession in Nepali can be conveyed through the suffix *saŋga* 'with'. Examples 143 and 144 below illustrate *nama* conveying the possession of inanimate goods. When used in relation to an animate noun, *nama* 'with' denotes physical proximity and togetherness rather than possession or ownership, as in example 145 below. The English sense of 'having' brothers and sisters is conveyed in Thangmi using the

genitive case marker <-ko ~ -go> (GEN), in which case the associated verb shows agreement for plural number, as in example 146 below. Transliterations of comparable examples in Nepali are offered for sentences 143 to 146 to facilitate comparison. The semantics of ownership and being are further discussed in Chapter 7, Sections §1.1 and §1.2, where the copula verbs *tha-sa* and *hok-sa* ‘to be’ which indicate possession of non-portable or immovable objects, such as family members and houses, are explained.

143 *găi nama pepelek ma-hok.*

I with money NEG-be

I don’t have a penny [any money]. [*ma saṅga paisā chaina.*]

144 *naṅ nama me hok-Ø-du?*

you with fire be-SAS-NPT

Do you have a light? [*tīmī saṅga āgo cha?*]

145 *to nama sum-ka hu hok-eṅ-du.*

that with three-HNC younger.brother be-PAS-NPT

He has / there are three brothers with him. [*u saṅga tīn-janā bhāi chan.*]

146 *to-ko sum-ka hu hok-eṅ-du.*

that-GEN three-HNC younger.brother be-PAS-NPT

He has three brothers. [*usko tīn-janā bhāi chan.*]

When duplicated, as in *nama nama*, the comitative postposition *nama* ‘with’ means ‘together’. This reduplicative form resembles a similar reduplication in Nepali, *saṅga saṅgai* ‘together’. Examples of the reduplicative *nama nama* are given in 147 to 149 below.

147 *libi ma-ray-e, nalenṅ nama nama hen-ko.*

after NEG-come.from.level-s/NEG/IMP present with with go-ADH

Don’t come later, let’s go together now.

148 *nīs-ka nama nama caway-eṅ-du beryaṅ, nem-te*

two-HNC with with walk-PAS-NPT that.time house-LOC

ya-let-eṅ-an.

go-appear-PAS-3S/PT

The two of them, walking together, arrived at his house.

- 149 *'libi gǎ-ye duŋ-yiŋ naŋ-kǎi urou-na-ŋa-du, tyaŋ naŋ*
 after I-ERG within-ABL you-PM call-2s-1s-NPT then you
ra-Ø, to-yiŋ ni nis-ka nama nama hok-i-du.'
 come.from.level-s/IMP that-ABL we two-HNC with with be-1pPS-NPT
 'Then I will call to you from inside the house, and you must come in, and
 from that point, you and I will live together.'

The Thangmi comitative postposition *nama* 'with' combines with a number of verbs to render highly specific meanings: 'to be in peace' is conveyed by *sumaka nama hoksa* (lit. be with silence) as in example 150; 'to come across, meet accidentally' is conveyed by *nama yaletsa* (lit. appear with) as in example 151; 'to meet someone' is *nama thasa* (lit. be with) as in example 152 and 'to leave someone' is conveyed by *nama ǎlǎmtha thasa* (lit. be distant with) as in example 153 below.

- 150 *naleŋ sumaka nama hok-le hok-eŋ-du.*
 present silent with be-PCL be-pAS-NPT
 At present they are living together in peace.
- 151 *ya-ya woi, di-ka ucyaca huca nama ya-let-Ø-an.*
 go-go also one-HNC small child with go-appear-sAS-3S/PT
 As she was going, she came across a small child.
- 152 *'nan baŋthe nama tha-ko' ŋa-to-le ŋah-u-n-uŋ, wakhe*
 now tomorrow with be-ADH say-TPP-PCL say-3P-1s→3-1s→3/PT word
loŋ-sa-kǎi di ʈǎi-te hok-ta-i-le, loŋ-wa-n.
 do-INF-PM one place-LOC be-IPP-1pPS-PCL do-1p→23-PT
 'Now let's meet again tomorrow', I said to her, and finding a place to talk,
 we sat there and chatted.
- 153 *to-ko ka jet ni-to-le, camǎica woi to nama ǎlǎmtha*
 that-GEN this work see-TPP-PCL woman also that with distant
thah-Ø-an.
 be-sAS-3S/PT
 Seeing what he was doing, that woman also left him.

In the Thangmi language, one gets married 'with' rather than 'to' someone, as shown in example 154.

- 154 *to-ye di-ka camăica nama bore loŋ-Ø-u-no.*
 that-ERG one-HNC woman with marriage do-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

He married a woman.

In Thangmi, the sense of ‘without’ is conveyed using the comitative postposition *nama* ‘with’ in combination with a negated verb, as in example 155. There is no specific postposition or lexical form which is comparable to English ‘without’.

- 155 *camăi jekhapa nama ma-hok-tiniŋ nem dăi*
 daughter father’s.elder.brother with NEG-be-PFG house towards
yah-Ø-an.
 go-sAS-3S/PT

Daughter returned home without ever having sat with uncle.

If it yields a semantically plausible combination, the comitative postposition *nama* ‘with’ may be combined with other suffixes, such as <-guri> (IND) and <-be> (TOP), as in examples 156 and 157.

- 156 *uyu-ye ŋah-Ø-u-no ‘găi nama-be kanŋi racya, jakcho*
 mouse-ERG say-sAS-3P-3→3/PT I with-TOP fresh paddy wheat
hok-Ø-du, naŋ ma-cya thaŋun, naŋ ka-te hok-a! daŋ-to-le
 be-sAS-NPT you NEG-eat maybe you this-LOC be-s/IMP search-TPP-PCL
kyel-u-n-du’ ŋa-to-le cawah-Ø-an.
 bring-3P-1s→3-NPT say-TPP-PCL walk-sAS-3S/PT

The mouse said, ‘I only have raw paddy and wheat with me, and I fear that you can’t eat that, you stay here! I will go and find something and bring it back’, and saying this, he walked off.

- 157 *to huca woi hok-Ø-an, hok-Ø-du beryaŋ bubu nama*
 that child also be-sAS-3S/PT be-sAS-NPT that.time elder.brother with
ma-cijyaŋ-Ø-an, tete nama-guri cijyaŋ-Ø-an.
 NEG-speak-sAS-3S/PT elder.sister with-IND speak-sAS-3S/PT

That child also went to stay, and during the time of her stay, she never once spoke with elder brother, although she did speak with elder sister.

Finally, the comitative postposition *nama* ‘with’ occurs in Thangmi phrases calqued from the Nepali *rāmro saŋga khānuhos* ‘bon appétit’ (lit. please eat well) and *rāmro saŋga basnuhos* ‘be comfortable’ (lit. please stay well). Thangmi versions of these

popular Nepali sayings are frequently used in everyday speech, as demonstrated by examples 158 and 159.

- 158 *'tyaŋ sum-ka-kăi apraca nama cya-sa nik-i-du.'*
 then three-HNC-PM good with eat-INF receive-1pP-NPT

'Then the three of us shall be able to eat well.'

- 159 *tete jarphu-ko nem-te ulica uni apraca*
 elder.sister elder.sister's.husband-GEN house-LOC few day good
nama hok-Ø-an.
 with be-SAS-3S/PT

He only stayed at his sister's and brother-in-law's house for a few days.

4.3 Patient marking for direct and indirect objects

morphs: <-kăi ~ -găi>
 label: PM

The Thangmi patient marker <-kăi ~ -găi> (PM) is best translated as 'to' or 'for' and marks what in English grammar would be termed animate direct objects and all indirect objects in transitive verbal scenarios. When the patient marker <-kăi ~ -găi> (PM) is appended to an infinitive verb, the suffix conveys the supine meaning 'in order to'. The patient marker <-kăi ~ -găi> (PM) is one of the most commonly occurring postpositions in Thangmi and its distribution requires careful analysis.

Strictly speaking, Thangmi has an unmarked case but no absolute case, and Thangmi marks the nominal patient in transitive constructions in a manner reminiscent of Nepali. Finding a suitable label for the postposition <-kăi ~ -găi> has not been easy, and I have resisted using the terms 'accusative' and 'oblique' because these indicate case agreement and the Thangmi object marker <-kăi ~ -găi> (PM) is clearly a postposition. Rather than opting for a fashionable term such as 'anti-dative' to describe this grammatical category, I have chosen the more descriptive and conventional label 'patient marker' or (PM).

Animacy in transitive verbs is a salient category in Thangmi as illustrated by the patient marker <-kăi ~ -găi> (PM). Examples 160 to 164 show animate direct objects taking the marker <-kăi ~ -găi> (PM). Note that the patient marker <-kăi ~ -găi> (PM) suffixes directly to the nominal head, which may be a noun (example 163), a personal pronoun (examples 160 to 162) or an interrogative pronoun (example 164).

- 160 *gǎ-ye naŋ-kǎi baʔhe yo-na-ŋa-du.*
 I-ERG you-PM tomorrow look.at-2s-1s-NPT
 I will see you tomorrow.

- 161 *uni-ye gǎi-gǎi jyou-to-le, sebi yah-Ø-an.*
 sun-ERG I-PM burn-TPP-PCL skin go-sAS-3S/PT
 The sun burnt me, and my skin peeled off.

- 162 *gǎi naŋ-kǎi seny-e ɲe-na-ŋa-du.*
 I you-PM wood-INS hit-2s-1s-NPT
 I'll hit you with a piece of wood.

- 163 *nem-te ama-kǎi dikaca torta-to-le cawa-ŋa-n.*
 house-LOC mother-PM alone leave-TPP-PCL walk-1s-PT
 I left mum at home by herself and left [lit. walked away].

- 164 *to-te gǎ-ye su-kǎi woi ma-ŋosǎiy-u-n-thyo.*
 that-LOC I-ERG who-PM also NEG-recognise-3P-1s→3-3sCOND
 In that place I didn't know a single person.

Inanimate direct objects do not take the patient marker <-kǎi ~ -gǎi> (PM), thus: *gǎi isa cya-ŋa-du* (I food eat-1s-NPT) 'I am eating food' and explicitly not **gǎi isa-kǎi cya-ŋa-du* (I food-PM eat-1s-NPT). The patient marker <-kǎi ~ -gǎi> (PM) marks all indirect objects in transitive verbal scenarios, regardless of whether the direct object is explicit or implicit, and also regardless of whether the indirect object is animate or inanimate, as shown in examples 165 to 169.

- 165 *gǎi naŋ-kǎi saŋa-ko toŋ pi-na-ŋa-du.*
 I you-PM millet-GEN beer give-2s-1s-NPT
 I'll give you millet beer.

- 166 *to dikaca ma-cya-Ø-thyo, bakotek-guri to-ko uma-kǎi,*
 that alone NEG-eat-sAS-3sCOND half-IND that-GEN wife-PM
ŋa-to-le gǎi-go apa-ko ama-kǎi, piy-Ø-u-thyo.
 say-TPP-PCL I-GEN father-GEN mother-PM give-sAS-3P-3sCOND

He wouldn't smoke alone either, he would give half to his wife, meaning to say, my father's mother.

- 167 *ni nis-ka-kǎi to-te isa piy-i-n.*
 we two-HNC-PM that-LOC food give-1pPS-PT

In that place, we were given food.

- 168 *gǎ-ye apraca jet loŋ-ŋa libi, naŋ-kǎi kalijyaŋ naka miŋ*
 I-ERG good work do-CNS after you-PM year.after.next new cloth
pi-na-ŋa-du.
 give-2s-1s-NPT

The year after next, once I've worked well, I'll give you some new clothes.

- 169 *gǎi-gǎi cijyaŋ-sa ʃisen-Ø-ŋa-du bubu-ye na-Ø-ŋa-du*
 I-PM speak-INF teach-sAS-1s-NPT elder.brother-ERG put-sAS-1s-NPT
name lile.
 name Lile.

The name given to me by the elder brother who taught me to speak was Lile.

The patient marker <-kǎi ~ -gǎi> (PM) combines with the interrogative pronouns *hara* 'what' and *su* 'who' to produce *hara-kǎi* 'why' (lit. 'what-PM') and *su-kǎi* 'whom' (lit. 'who-PM') respectively, as shown in examples 170 to 173.

- 170 *hara-kǎi ma-cya?*
 what-PM NEG-eat

Why don't (you) eat?

- 171 *hara-kǎi rage tha-na-n?*
 what-PM anger be-2s-PT

Why have you become angry?

- 172 *hen-ko, hara-kǎi ma-hen-sa? naŋ-ko pepelek ma-hok-Ø-ta-le*
 go-ADH what-PM NEG-go-INF you-GEN money NEG-be-sAS-IPP-sAS-PCL
hara tha-Ø-du? naŋ cya-na-du sola-ko pepelek gǎ-ye
 what be-sAS-NPT you eat-2s-NPT snack-GEN money I-ERG
piy-u-n-du.
 give-3P-1s→3-NPT

Come on, let's go, why would you not go? What does it matter that you have no money? Whatever snacks you eat, I'll pay for.

- 173 *camăi thombe tha-Ø-ta-le 'nan su-kăi ra-sa?' ŋa-to-le*
 daughter surprise be-SAS-IPP-PCL now who-PM bring-INF say-TPP-PCL
hok-Ø-an.
 be-SAS-3S/PT

Totally shocked, the daughter sat down and thought 'now whom shall I bring?'

In more complex sentences, which include both an indirect and direct object, only the indirect object is marked, even when the direct object is animate. In example 174, for example, *humi* 'younger sister' remains unmarked:

- 174 *găi to-kăi humi ma-pi.*
 I that-PM younger.sister NEG-give
 I am not giving him [my] younger sister.

In *Nepali: A Complete Course in Understanding, Speaking and Writing*, Michael Hutt and Abhi Subedi devote two pages to a discussion of what they call the 'object marker' in Nepali, *-lāi*. They suggest that in sentences containing only one object, 'personal names, human nouns and human pronouns...should carry *-लाई* when they are the object of a verb, while inanimate nouns need not' (1999: 92). One of three exceptions to the rule is 'in contexts in which a human being is being treated as a commodity that can be bought or given away (giving a daughter in marriage, for example), in which case it will be treated as an inanimate noun and will not take *-लाई*' (1999: 93). The same rule applies to Thangmi, as illustrated by example 174 above.

Thangmi *<kăi ~ găi>* (PM) and Nepali *-lāi* are similar in both form and function. One set of idiomatic uses for the Thangmi patient marker *<kăi ~ găi>* (PM) includes feelings, emotions and descriptions of states, many of which are Nepali calques. Commonly occurring constructions denoting feelings are shown in examples 175 to 179. Readers familiar with Nepali will note the similarity between the Thangmi examples and the same constructions in Nepali.

- 175 *găi-găi nui-sa ali-ŋa-n.*
 I-PM laugh-INF like-1s-PT
 I like laughing.
- 176 *to beryaŋ găi-găi cya-sa ma-ali-Ø-thyo.*
 that that.time I-PM eat-INF NEG-like-SAS-3sCOND
 At that time I didn't like eating.

- 177 *găi-găi tila-ŋa-n, găi me cyatəŋ-si-ŋa-du.*
 I-PM be.cold-1s-PT I fire warm.by-REF-1s-NPT
 I'm cold, I shall warm myself by the fire.

- 178 *lak-te cum-to-le ŋah-Ø-u-no 'ka-kăi kapu kalăi-Ø-du,*
 hand-LOC hold-TPP-PCL say-SAS-3P-3→3/PT this-PM head hurt-SAS-NPT
baŋkal woi kalăi-Ø-du'.
 stomach also hurt-SAS-NPT
 Holding onto her hand, he said, 'her head hurts and her stomach also hurts'.

- 179 *thonə-kăi woi ma-ci-let-Ø-u-no, thonə-kăi rage*
 old.man-PM also NEG-CAUS-appear-SAS-3P-3→3/PT old.woman-PM anger
let-Ø-an.
 appear-SAS-3S/PT
 But he didn't release the old man, and the old woman got angry.

The patient object marker <-kăi ~ -găi> (PM) occurs in a number of other calques from Nepali, particularly in constructions such as 'how are you?', 'I'm fine', 'I don't know' and 'I'm sleepy'. In Nepali, all these phrases take the object marker *-lăi*. Sentences 180 to 184 below offer examples of constructions calqued, or even directly loaned, from Nepali which make use of the patient marker <-kăi ~ -găi> (PM).

- 180 *naŋ-kăi kasto hok-Ø-du.*
 you-PM how be-SAS-NPT
 How are you?

- 181 *găi-găi ninra kyel-ŋa-n.*
 I-PM sleepy come-1s-PT
 I'm tired [lit. sleepiness has come to me].

- 182 *bophura, găi-găi thaha ma-thah-Ø-an.*
 pity I-PM knowledge NEG-be-SAS-3S/PT
 I'm sorry, I didn't know.

- 183 *găi-găi saŋa-ko isa gap-Ø-an.*
 I-PM millet-GEN food be.enough-SAS-3S/PT
 I'm full of millet paste [I've had enough].

- 184 *gǎ-ye ñah-u-n-uŋ* ‘*gǎi-gǎi thaŋmi kham uchincǎi*
 I-ERG say-3P-1s→3-1s→3/PT I-PM Thangmi language very.little
ra-Ø-du, hara jet loŋ-sa?’
 come.from.level-sAS-NPT what work do-INF

So I said ‘I only speak a very little bit of Thangmi, what help can I be?’

When the Thangmi patient marker <-kǎi ~ -gǎi> (PM) co-occurs with an infinitive verb, the postposition conveys the meaning of ‘in order to’ and functions as a supine. Nepali *-lāi* is used with verbal infinitives in a similar manner. Sentences 185 to 188 illustrate this use of the Thangmi patient marker <-kǎi ~ -gǎi> (PM).

- 185 *ni-kǎi dewa yo-sa-kǎi ucyapa-ko ca-ye*
 we-PM god look.at-INF-PM father’s.younger.brother-GEN son-ERG
urouy-i-thyo.
 call-1pps-3sCOND

Our father’s younger brother’s son had called us [to the city] to see the temples.

- 186 *libi libi gǎi to-kǎi yo-sa-kǎi ya-ŋa-n.*
 after after I that-PM look.at-INF-PM go-1s-PT

Much later I went to visit him.

- 187 *kucu-ye gǎi-gǎi cek-sa-kǎi polot-si-sa daŋ-Ø-u-du.*
 dog-ERG I-PM bite-INF-PM break.loose-REF-INF search-sAS-3P-NPT

The dog is trying to break loose in order to bite me.

- 188 *gǎ-ye doka tak-sa-kǎi ñiny-e camek*
 I-ERG wicker.basket weave-INF-PM stone-INS thin.bamboo
neh-u-n-du.
 beat-3P-1s→3-NPT

I’ll beat the thin bamboo with a rock to weave the carrying basket.

The patient marker <-kǎi ~ -gǎi> (PM) can also combine with a verb phrase if this yields a semantically plausible combination. In example 189, the third person singular conjugation of *kalǎisa* ‘to hurt’, *kalǎi-Ø-du* (hurt-sAS-NPT) ‘hurts’, acts like a noun and is translated by ‘pain’. In example 190, the verb also takes the role of a nominal head to mean ‘blind person’.

- 189 'ka kalăi-Ø-du-kăi hara loŋ-sa?' ŋa-to-le, găi-go jekha
 this hurt-SAS-NPT-PM what do-INF say-TPP-PCL I-GEN big
 tete-ye ŋah-Ø-u-no.
 elder.sister-ERG say-SAS-3P-3→3/PT

'What can we do about this pain?', my elder sister asked.

- 190 libi mesek ma-niy-Ø-u-du-kăi oŋgaŋe-ŋaŋ tham-Ø-u-no,
 after eye NEG-see-SAS-3P-NPT-PM hole-inside insert-SAS-3P-3→3/PT
 tyaŋ nasa-ye lup-Ø-u-no.
 then earth-INS fill.up-SAS-3P-3→3/PT

Then he [the jackal] inserted the blind person into the hole and then filled it up with earth.

The irregular allomorph <-găi> of the patient marker <-kăi ~ -găi> (PM) only occurs with the first person singular pronoun *găi* 'I', as in *găi-găi* (I-PM) 'for/to me', as illustrated in examples 191 and 192 below.

- 191 găi-găi pi-ŋa!
 I-PM give-s→1s/IMP
 Give [it to] me!

- 192 hok-Ø-du, găi-go ama-ye găi-găi arkapole-ŋaŋ
 be-SAS-NPT I-GEN mother-ERG I-PM walnut.tree-inside
 nik-Ø-ŋa-n.
 give.birth-SAS-1s-PT

Yes, Walnut Tree is [the village] where my mother gave birth to me.

The patient marker <-kăi ~ -găi> (PM) is also used to convey the meaning 'for', in the sense of 'for the sake of' or 'intended for', as shown in example 193 below. Once again, this particular function of the patient marker <-kăi ~ -găi> (PM) is very similar to Nepali *-lāi*, which can replace *-ko lāgi* 'for' in vernacular Nepali.

- 193 *'nan camăi-pali-kăi damari, ca-pali-kăi wari, kyel-ko*
 now daughter-p-PM son.in.law son-p-PM daughter.in.law bring-ADH
măi-Ø-du' ŋa-to-le, nis-ka thoŋe thoŋi-ye wakhe
 must-sAS-NPT say-TPP-PCL two-HNC old.man old.woman-ERG word
lony-eŋ-no.
 do-pAS-3→3/PT

'Now we must bring sons-in-law for our daughters and daughters-in-law for our sons', said the old man and old woman, discussing it.

The patient marker <-kăi ~ -găi> (PM) can co-occur with other suffixes, case endings and postpositions if these result in semantically plausible combinations. In such cases, the patient marker <-kăi ~ -găi> (PM) appears posterior to the number markers <-pali> (p) and <-baŋ> (Pp), and anterior to the individuating and topic markers <-guri> (IND) and <-be> (TOP), as illustrated in examples 194 to 196 and 410 below, and example 31 above.

- 194 *hok-Ø-du, hok-Ø-du, naŋ-kăi-guri?*
 be-sAS-NPT be-sAS-NPT you-PM-IND

Fine, fine, and how about you?

- 195 *to tha-Ø-ta-le, găi-găi-guri cya-sa ma-ali-Ø-thyo.*
 that be-sAS-IPP-PCL I-PM-IND eat-INF NEG-like-sAS-3sCOND

Because of that [leaf], I didn't like to smoke.

- 196 *habi cey-eŋ-du huca-pali-kăi nan kapu kalăi-sa thah-Ø-an,*
 before eat-pAS-NPT child-p-PM now head hurt-INF be-sAS-3S/PT
baŋkal woi kalăi-sa thah-Ø-an.
 stomach also hurt-INF be-sAS-3S/PT

The children who had eaten earlier started to get headaches and stomach cramps.

Example 197 below demonstrates various uses of patient marker <-kăi ~ -găi> (PM) in a single sentence.

- 197 *to mi-pali-kăi cum-eŋ-to-le, jekha mi-kăi cikhet-sa-kăi*
 that person-p-PM hold-pAS-TPP-PCL big person-PM show-INF-PM
kyel-eŋ-no, to woi thombe thah-Ø-an.
 bring-pAS-3→3/PT that also surprise be-sAS-3S/PT

Grabbing those wild-looking people, they brought them back to show them to the chief, and even he was astonished.

4.4 Ablative

morphs: <-yiŋ ~ -yiniŋ>
 label: ABL

In the Dolakhā dialect of Thangmi, the ablative is marked by the postposition <-yiŋ ~ -yiniŋ> (ABL). The allomorphic distribution is as follows: The form <-yiŋ> is a reduced form of the full ablative morpheme <-yiniŋ>, and this contracted morph is now so widely used by Thangmi speakers that the bisyllabic allomorph <-yiniŋ> is rarely heard. Thangmi speakers over the age of fifty report that they grew up using the allomorph <-yiniŋ> and that <-yiŋ>, the ‘newer’ form, has emerged over the last thirty years. While only one of the following examples includes the more archaic form <-yiniŋ> (ABL), I have nevertheless included it as an allomorph, both for historical reasons and out of deference to the older speech community who are convinced of its anteriority. The one example of the allomorph <-yiniŋ> (ABL) which I recorded comes from the village of Lāpīlān where many Thangmi speakers still use this form in preference to the reduced form <-yiŋ>. The situation in Sindhupālcok is different once again, and is addressed below.

The ablative suffix <-yiŋ ~ -yiniŋ> (ABL) denotes ‘from’ and ‘via’ in either a spatial or figurative sense, and also has the meaning of ‘by means of which’. Examples 198 to 202 demonstrate some of the spatial uses of the ablative postposition with pronouns and nouns.

- 198 *naŋ kuta-yiŋ kyel-na-n?*
 you where-ABL come-2s-PT

Where have you come from?

- 199 *guru-ye khora-yiŋ ŋiŋ-te paŋku kheiy-Ø-u-no.*
 shaman-ERG small.bowl-ABL stone-LOC water pour.out-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

The shaman poured water onto the stone from a small bowl.

- 200 *naŋ kundu ulam-yiŋ kyel-na-n?*
 you which road-ABL come-2s-PT

By which road did you come?

- 201 *to-yiŋ, ni nis-ka caway-i-n.*
 that-ABL we two-HNC walk-1pPS-PT

From there, the two of us set off walking [again].

- 202 *ni to doron-yiŋ duŋ-ŋaŋ biy-i-n.*
 we that hole-ABL within-inside enter-1pPS-PT

We entered inside through that hole.

The ablative suffix <-yiŋ ~ -yiniŋ> (ABL) is used in constructions to convey spatial or temporal distance. Examples 203 and 204 demonstrate two meanings of the Thangmi noun *uni* ‘sun’ and ‘day’, *uni-yiŋ* (sun-ABL) ‘from the sun’ and *uni-yiŋ* (day-ABL) ‘from [this/that] day’.

- 203 *ka ŋiŋ uni-yiŋ ros-Ø-an, adum hok-Ø-du.*
 this stone sun-ABL fall.from.height-SAS-3S/PT hot be-SAS-NPT

This stone has fallen from the sun, it’s hot.

- 204 *bore loŋ-Ø-u-du uni-yiŋ, apraca hok-Ø-an.*
 marriage do-SAS-3P-NPT day-ABL good be-SAS-3S/PT

Ever since he got married, things were good.

Sentences 205 to 207 offer further examples of the temporal uses of the ablative suffix <-yiŋ ~ -yiniŋ> (ABL).

- 205 *tyaŋ to isyaŋ-yiŋ bajareŋ torta-wa-n.*
 then that period-ABL tobacco leave-1p→23-PT

Then, from that day on, we gave up tobacco.

- 206 *to-yiŋ sunari aji ŋa-to-le woi ŋay-eŋ-no.*
 that-ABL Sunari mother.in.law say-TPP-PCL also say-pAS-3→3/PT

From that point on, she [the old woman] came to be known as Sunari Aji [lit. golden mother-in-law].

- 207 *yaŋ-yiŋ habi, oste-ko thar ŋa-sa-kǎi aŋal-eŋ-thyo.*
 today-ABL before self-GEN clan say-INF-PM be.ashamed-pAS-3sCOND
 Some time ago, Thangmi people were ashamed to talk of their own clan names.

Example 109 above uses *kham-te* (language-LOC) to express the sense ‘in the language’. Another way of articulating the same concept is by using the ablative postposition <-yiŋ ~ -yiniŋ> (ABL), as in 208 below, in combination with the Thangmi noun *wakhe* ‘word, sense, meaning, saying’.

- 208 *libi guru ra-Ø-ta-le, oste-ko wakhe-yiŋ*
 after shaman come.from.level-SAS-IPP-PCL self-GEN word-ABL
mut-Ø-u-du.
 blow-SAS-3P-NPT

Then the shaman comes and, speaking his own secret words, blows.

The ablative marker <-yiŋ ~ -yiniŋ> (ABL) may also be suffixed to adverbs, as in examples 209 and 210 below.

- 209 *to-ye ci-sa-kǎi hen-Ø-u-no, ya-ya woi di-ka*
 that-ERG throw.away-INF-PM take-SAS-3P-3→3/PT go-go also one-HNC
mi-ye nih-Ø-u-no, to-ye ǎlāmtha-yiŋ
 person-ERG see-SAS-3P-3→3/PT that-ERG distant-ABL
ŋosǎiy-Ø-u-no ka ti-Ø-du ŋiŋ.
 recognise-SAS-3P-3→3/PT this burn-SAS-NPT stone

He took it to throw away, but as he was walking, someone saw him and from some distance recognised that this was a precious [lit. burning] stone.

- 210 *duŋ-ŋaŋ ama camǎi-ye maŋǎi jyouy-eŋ-no,*
 within-inside mother daughter-ERG bread burn-pAS-3→3/PT
damari-ye priŋ-yiŋ yo-le nah-Ø-u-no.
 son.in.law-ERG outside-ABL look.at-PCL put-SAS-3P-3→3/PT
 Inside mother and daughter were baking bread, and from outside son-in-law looked at them.

For narrative effect, the ablative marker <-yiŋ ~ -yiniŋ> (ABL) is often used in conjunction with the postposition *ka* ‘throughout’ to give the sense of a long duration or ‘from...until...’, as in example 211.

- 211 *ḍiṇ-ḍiṇ gare-ye humi-kăi kapu-yiṇ koṇe-te ka*
 red rooster-INS younger.sister-PM head-ABL foot-LOC throughout
ci-thi-to-le mut-Ø-u-no.
 CAUS-touch-TPP-PCL blow-SAS-3P-3→3/PT

The shaman brushed the red cockerel against our younger sister, from her head to her toes, blowing all the while.

The ablative marker <-yiṇ ~ -yiniṇ> (ABL) may also be suffixed to nominalised verbs, as in examples 212 and 213, to convey the sense of ‘since...’.

- 212 *to-ye woi ṭuṇi-ko kosa ṭhum-Ø-u-du-yiṇ, sakalei wakhe*
 that-ERG also goat-GEN bone bury-SAS-3P-NPT-ABL all word
ci-nasăiy-Ø-u-no.
 CAUS-hear-SAS-3P-3→3/PT

So she told them everything that had happened since she buried the bones of the goat.

- 213 *uma rah-Ø-u-du-yiṇ, apa woi begale uma uniṇ thah-Ø-an.*
 wife bring-SAS-3P-NPT-ABL father also other wife like be-SAS-3S/PT

Ever since father had brought this wife, he too had become just like her.

The Sindhupālcok dialect of Thangmi uses <-giṇ> (ABL) instead of <-yiṇ ~ -yiniṇ> (ABL) to mark ablative arguments, as in example 214. Dolakhā <-yiṇ ~ -yiniṇ> is understood in Sindhupālcok, but the reverse is not the case, and speakers of the Dolakhā dialect categorically reject <-giṇ> as an ablative allomorph.

- 214 *to-giṇ to racya-kăi lembe-ye hatyap-sa.*
 that-ABL that unhusked.rice-PM bamboo.winnowing.tray-INS fan-INF

And from that point, that unhusked rice is fanned with a bamboo winnowing tray. [Sindhupālcok]

Two speakers of the Dolakhā dialect volunteered the forms <-i> and <-ṇi> as allomorphs of the ablative postposition <-yiṇ ~ -yiniṇ> (ABL), but these forms remain unverified by speakers outside their immediate families. It is likely that these forms represent highly local idiolects.

4.5 The postpositions *priŋ* ‘outside, without’ and *duŋ* ‘within’

morph:	<i>priŋ</i>
label:	outside, without
morph:	<i>duŋ</i>
label:	within

The Thangmi postpositions *priŋ* ‘outside, without’ and *duŋ* ‘within’ function as both adverbs and adjectives. While the postposition *priŋ* ‘outside, without’ cannot co-occur with either of the two locative suffixes, it can be combined with other nominal endings. Examples 215 and 216 demonstrate *priŋ* being used as an adverb and adjective respectively.

- 215 *wari sakalei amiy-eŋ-an ŋa-to-le, karati*
 daughter.in.law all sleep-pAS-3S/PT say-TPP-PCL sickle
khyak-si-Ø-ta-le, nem-yiŋ priŋ let-Ø-an.
 strap.on-REF-SAS-IPP-PCL house-ABL outside appear-SAS-3S/PT

Thinking that they were all asleep, the daughter-in-law strapped a sickle on [her belt] and crept outside.

- 216 *ama nui-Ø-ta-le ŋah-Ø-u-no ‘camăi, nem-te-ko*
 mother laugh-SAS-IPP-PCL say-SAS-3P-3→3/PT daughter house-LOC-GEN
sakalei jet camăi-ye loŋ-ko măi-Ø-du, damari-ye
 all work daughter-ERG do-ADH must-SAS-NPT son.in.law-ERG
priŋ-ko jet loŋ-Ø-u-du, rage ma-thay-e!’
 outside-GEN work do-SAS-3P-NPT anger NEG-be-s/NEG/IMP

Mother smiled and said, ‘daughter, the housework is what the daughter does, son-in-law’s work is outside of the house, now don’t get angry!’

Thangmi *duŋ* ‘within’ may co-occur with other nominal suffixes, including the locative postposition <-ŋaŋ> ‘inside’, thus *duŋ-ŋaŋ* (within-inside) ‘inside’. In allegro speech, the initial velar nasal /ŋ/ of the locative suffix may elide when *duŋ* ‘within’ and <-ŋaŋ> ‘inside’ are combined, thus *duŋ-aŋ* (within-inside) ‘inside’. Thangmi speakers reject the form **duŋ-te* (within-LOC). Examples 217 and 218 demonstrate *duŋ* ‘within’, with the genitive marker <-ko ~ -go> (GEN) and the locative marker <-ŋaŋ> ‘inside’ respectively.

- 217 *camăica-pali-ye puya peŋey-eŋ-du cahuca-pali-ye khoŋi,*
 woman-p-ERG seed sow-pAS-NPT man-p-ERG small.mattock
tokolok-e wa-si-Ø-du thăi-ŋaŋ to-to-le duŋ-ko
 hoe-INS plough-REF-SAS-NPT place-inside dig-TPP-PCL within-GEN
nasak piriŋ ci-let-to-le raŋ min-minca
 earth outside CAUS-appear-TPP-PCL unirrigated.field fine.and.grainy
lony-eŋ-du.
 do-pAS-NPT

Now the women sow the seeds while the men use small and large mattocks on the ploughed land and dig up the soil, bringing the deep earth to the surface and thus making the field level and free of clods.

- 218 *miŋ duŋ-ŋaŋ na-ko măi-Ø-du.*
 cloth within-inside put-ADH must-SAS-NPT

The clothes must be put inside.

4.6 The postposition *dăi* ‘towards’

morph:	<i>dăi</i>
label:	towards

The Thangmi adverb *dăi* ‘towards’ indicates direction and movement. For the sake of consistency, I have glossed *dăi* as ‘towards’ in all cases. In many instances, a fluid English translation requires other constructions such as ‘that way’ or ‘going off’. When following the noun *nem* ‘house’, as in *nem dăi* (house towards), *dăi* ‘towards’ is often best translated as ‘homewards’. Examples of the use the adverb *dăi* ‘towards’ are given in 219 to 222 below.

- 219 *sum oli uni ka hok-ta-i-le, nem dăi caway-i-n.*
 three four day throughout be-IPP-1pPS-PCL house towards walk-1pPS-PT

We stayed for three or four days and then set off home again.

- 220 *daŋ-sa mi-pali to dăi dorok-eŋ-an, libi di-ka*
 search-INF person-p that towards run-pAS-3S/PT after one-HNC
lak-te ăikuca cabu-to-le dorok-Ø-du niy-eŋ-no.
 hand-LOC large.knife carry-TPP-PCL run-SAS-NPT see-pAS-3→3/PT

The search party ran towards that place, and then they saw one person carrying a large knife and running away.

- 221 *'nan gǎi dikaca nem-te hara-kǎi hen-sa? nan ma-ya'*
 now I alone house-LOC what-PM go-INF now NEG-go
ŋa-to-le, to begale jekha dese dǎi cawah-Ø-an.
 say-TPP-PCL that other big village towards walk-SAS-3S/PT

'Now why should I go back home all alone? I won't go', [is what he thought], and he set off towards that other big village [Kathmandu].

- 222 *to mi woi warak dǎi dorok-Ø-an, ʈuŋi warak-te*
 that person also ridge towards run-SAS-3S/PT goat ridge-LOC
nih-Ø-u-no.
 see-SAS-3P-3→3/PT

That person also ran towards the ridge and saw his goat up there.

The adverb *dǎi* 'towards' is used in certain idiomatic expressions to convey the sense of 'on the one hand...and on the other'. In such expressions, the adverb is usually repeated for contrastive effect, as in example 223.

- 223 *ka dǎi ʈila aʈʈhe tha-Ø-du, dha dǎi pepelek-guri*
 this towards cold very be-SAS-NPT that.distant towards money-IND
uchinca tha-Ø-du.
 little be-SAS-NPT

On the one hand he's freezing, and on the other, he has only a little money [i.e. both options are bleak].

When combined, the pronoun *ka* 'this' together with the postposition *dǎi* 'towards', as in *ka dǎi* (this towards), may convey the meaning of 'around here', while *ka dǎi dha dǎi* (this towards that.distant towards) is best translated as 'here and there', as shown in examples 224 and 225 below. These constructions are analogous to Nepali *yatā-tira utā-tirā* 'over here and over there'.

- 224 *'nan ka dǎi su mi woi ma-hok-eŋ, nan su daŋ-sa,*
 now this towards who person also NEG-be-pAS now who search-INF
su nama bore loŋ-sa?' ɲa-to-le nis-ka-ye wakhe
 who with marriage do-INF say-TPP-PCL two-HNC-ERG word
lony-eŋ-no.
 do-pAS-3→3/PT

'There is simply no one around here, whom should we look for, with whom can they marry?', the two of them thought.

- 225 *ɬaye uma lawa-ko wakhe thah-Ø-an 'uma, gǎi sumaka*
 night wife husband-GEN word be-sAS-3S/PT wife I silent
hok-ɲa-du, nany-e ka nunu ka dǎi dha dǎi
 be-1S-NPT you-ERG this milk this towards that.distant towards
ma-loŋ-tiniŋ nah-o!'
 NEG-do-PFG put-s→3/IMP

At night, the couple talked [and he said] 'wife, I will sit quietly and you put the milk down without spilling it here and there!'

4.7 The postposition *ka* 'throughout'

morph:	<i>ka</i>
label:	throughout

The Thangmi adverb *ka* 'throughout' occurs in nominal arguments to indicate duration, distance or a length of time. Although always glossed as 'throughout', *ka* is often best translated as 'all during the...' or 'until'. Examples 226 to 228 below illustrate some of the uses of *ka* 'throughout'.

- 226 *ɬaye ka ɬhoiθhoi-Ø-thyo.*
 night throughout cough-sAS-3sCOND

He would cough all night.

- 227 *'di uni ka raŋ-te jet loŋ-to-le, nyoŋi woi*
 one day throughout unirrigated.field-LOC work do-TPP-PCL evening also
isa ken uman-sa, gǎ-ye ma-mǎi.'
 food vegetable.curry cook-INF I-ERG NEG-must

'Having worked in the fields all day, she'll even cook dinner in the evening so I won't have to.'

- 228 *tyaŋ tam-Ø-du mi nan let-Ø-ta-le, yaŋ ka*
 then disappear-SAS-NPT person now appear-SAS-IPP-PCL today throughout
ma-si woi hok-Ø-ta-le.
 NEG-die also be-SAS-IPP-PCL

And then that lost person appeared, and it became clear that until this day he wasn't dead at all.

The Thangmi postposition *ka* 'throughout' often occurs after the locative suffix <-te> (LOC) to convey an intensified sense of 'all the way' or 'whole', as shown in examples 229 and 230 below.

- 229 *'hara thah-Ø-an?' ŋa-to-le, dese-te ka aŋik-eŋ-ta-le*
 what be-SAS-3S/PT say-TPP-PCL village-LOC throughout cry-pAS-IPP-PCL
caway-eŋ-an.
 walk-pAS-3S/PT

'What happened?' they cried, as they wandered all through the village.

- 230 *baŋthe syaŋ-yiŋ wakhe dese-te ka ŋah-Ø-u-no*
 tomorrow period-ABL word village-LOC throughout say-SAS-3P-3→3/PT
'găi-go ɖamari aŋthe săi-Ø-du guru hok-Ø-du'
 I-GEN son.in.law very know-SAS-NPT shaman be-SAS-NPT
ŋa-to-le.
 say-TPP-PCL

The next morning she told the whole village 'my son-in-law is a very powerful [knowledgeable] shaman'.

4.8 The postposition *habi* 'before, in front of'

morph: *habi*
 label: before

The Thangmi postposition *habi* 'before, in front of' occurs in nominal arguments to convey the temporal sense of 'before, first, previously', as in examples 231 and 232, or the spatial sense of 'in front of', as in example 233.

- 231 *ka-kăi li-sa habi raŋ-kăi sya wa-to-le*
 this-PM broadcast-INF before unirrigated.field-PM bull plough-TPP-PCL
na-ko măi-Ø-du.
 put-ADH must-sAS-NPT

Before broadcasting, the fields must be ploughed using an ox.

- 232 *cawa-sa habi, aji-ye maŋăi kwăi ɖamari-kăi*
 walk-INF before mother.in.law-ERG bread potato son.in.law-PM
piy-Ø-u-no.
 give-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

Before he left, his mother-in-law gave him bread and potatoes.

- 233 *ka nasăi-to-le, me let-Ø-ta-le to-ko habi*
 this hear-TPP-PCL fire appear-sAS-IPP-PCL that-GEN before
tiy-Ø-an, sakalei to-yiŋ dorok-eŋ-an.
 burn-sAS-3S/PT all that-ABL run-pAS-3S/PT

Hearing this, the fire lit in front of them, and all the people ran away from that place.

The Thangmi postposition *habi* ‘before, in front of’ may be reduplicated, in which case the meaning is intensified, as in ‘ages ago’ or ‘a long way in front’, illustrated by examples 234 and 235.

- 234 *habi habi sya-ye wah-u-du, dol-ŋaŋ makăi*
 before before bovine-INS plough-3P-NPT valley-inside maize
di-di-gore nis-nis bitta-ko pharak-ŋaŋ libi libi
 one-one-CLF two-two hand.measurement-GEN different-inside after after
makăi li-ko măi-Ø-du.
 maize broadcast-ADH must-sAS-NPT

A long time before one ploughs with an ox, the maize seeds must be scattered one or two hand-widths apart from each other in the ditches.

- 235 *habi habi, camăica-pali-ye racya peŋe-sa ray-eŋ-du.*
 before before woman-p-ERG paddy sow-INF bring-pAS-NPT

A long way in front [of the men], the womenfolk come sowing the paddy.

The Thangmi postposition *habi* ‘before, in front of’ is often found in combination with the genitive case marker <-ko ~ -go> (GEN), as in *habi-ko* (before-GEN) ‘the one before, the last one’, as in examples 236 to 238 below.

- 236 *habi-ko* *name sukaman nay-eŋ-du*, *libi* *nay-eŋ-du* *name-guri*
 before-GEN name Sukaman put-pAS-NPT after put-pAS-NPT name-IND
begale hok-Ø-thyo.
other be-SAS-3sCOND

The first name they gave me was Sukaman, but the later one was different.

- 237 *habi-ko* *uniŋ naleŋ* *ma-thah-Ø-an*, *naka naka wakhe*
 before-GEN like present NEG-be-SAS-3S/PT new new word
săiy-Ø-u-no, *naka nem*, *naka hok-sa thăi* *ni-to-le*
 know-SAS-3P-3→3/PT new house new be-INF place see-TPP-PCL
thombe thah-Ø-an.
 surprise be-SAS-3S/PT

But this time was not like the last trip, she came to know many many new things, stayed in a new place and was completely bowled over.

- 238 *di-ka* *naleŋ* *woi hok-Ø-du*, *to-ko* *habi-ko* *nis-ka*
 one-HNC present also be-SAS-NPT that-GEN before-GEN two-HNC
uma-ko *oli-ka* *ca-pali hok-eŋ-du*.
 wife-GEN four-HNC son-p be-pAS-NPT

At present, the last wife is still around, as are the four sons from the previous two wives.

4.9 The postposition *uniŋ* ‘like, as, than’

morph: *uniŋ*
 label: like

The Thangmi postposition *uniŋ* ‘like, as, than’ occurs in nominal arguments to express the meaning of sameness, likeness, comparison or equality, as in examples 239 to 242. Thangmi *uniŋ* ‘like, as, than’ resembles the functions of German *als*.

- 239 *to* *akrak uniŋ arŋik-Ø-du*.
 that frog like cry-SAS-NPT

She croaks just like a frog.

- 240 *jakcho-kăi uniŋ, nis-paṭak sya wa-ko mǎi-Ø-du.*
 wheat-PM like two-times bovine plough-ADH must-SAS-NPT

Just like with wheat, you have to plough twice [with an ox].

- 241 *ka uniŋ jet loŋ-tuŋ-le, bore-ko pepelek uchincăi*
 this like work do-1s/TPP-PCL marriage-GEN money very.little
piy-u-n-uŋ.
 give-3P-1s→3-1s→3/PT

Working in this manner, I managed to pay back a little of the money I had borrowed for my wedding.

- 242 *to tete woi gǎi-go tete uniŋ hok-Ø-du.*
 that elder.sister also I-GEN elder.sister like be-SAS-NPT

That woman is like my own elder sister.

The Thangmi postposition *uniŋ* ‘like, as, than’ also occurs posterior to the demonstrative pronoun *ka* ‘this’, as in example 243 below, in which *ka uniŋ* (this like) means ‘like this’.

- 243 *to-bany-e amum cey-eŋ-ta-le ka uniŋ thah-Ø-an*
 that-Pp-ERG mushroom eat-pAS-IPP-PCL this like be-SAS-3S/PT
ŋa-to-le ma-thaha sāiy-eŋ-no.
 say-TPP-PCL NEG-knowledge know-pAS-3→3/PT

They didn’t know that it would happen like this if they ate the mushrooms.

When the Thangmi postposition *uniŋ* ‘like, as, than’ appears in a sequence with *ka* ‘this’, as in the phrase *ka uniŋ* (this like) ‘like this’, the resultant meaning is best translated as ‘in this manner, in this way’, as shown by examples 244 and 245 below.

- 244 *ka uniŋ tha-Ø-ta-le, begale name thar piy-eŋ-no.*
 this like be-SAS-IPP-PCL other name clan give-pAS-3→3/PT

In this way, [Thangmi] people give other names and clans [when asked].

- 245 *dese-mi-pali ka uniŋ ŋay-eŋ-to-le dewa lony-eŋ-du.*
 village-person-p this like say-pAS-TPP-PCL god do-pAS-NPT

This is the way that village people propitiate the gods.

The postposition *uniŋ* ‘like, as, than’ often occurs in nominal arguments to convey a sense of surprise, make believe or pretence, similar to Dutch *als*, *alsof*. In such scenarios, the postposition is best translated by ‘as if’, as in examples 246 and 247 below. In example 248, since the father-in-law’s intent is to deceive, I have translated *uniŋ* as ‘make as if to...’.

- 246 *libi apa-guri huca-pali amiy-eŋ-du uniŋ ʃiʃiy-eŋ-an,*
 after father-IND child-p sleep-pAS-NPT like fall.from.level-pAS-3S/PT
uma-guri thombe thah-Ø-an.
 wife-IND surprise be-SAS-3S/PT

Thereafter the father and all the kids fell over as if they were asleep, and the wife was quite astonished.

- 247 *camāica ma-hok-Ø-du-be, to nem hara woi ma-tha-Ø-du*
 woman NEG-be-SAS-NPT-TOP that house what also NEG-be-SAS-NPT
uniŋ tha-Ø-thyo.
 like be-SAS-3S/COND

Since there were no women living there, the house felt as if it were empty.

- 248 *chuku-guri ami-Ø-du uniŋ loŋ-Ø-u-no, ŋaŋ*
 father.in.law-IND sleep-SAS-NPT like do-SAS-3P-3→3/PT and
amiy-Ø-an.
 sleep-SAS-3S/PT

Father-in-law made as if he were sleep, but then he actually fell asleep.

In example 249 below, the postposition *uniŋ* ‘like, as, than’ closely resembles the German *als*, and conveys the sense of ‘as, in the manner that...’.

- 249 *libi guru-ye ŋah-Ø-u-du uniŋ, di-ka ca nik-Ø-an.*
 after shaman-ERG say-SAS-3P-NPT like one-HNC son be.born-SAS-3S/PT

Then, as the shaman had predicted, a son was born.

5. Compounding and miscellaneous nominal suffixes

Outside of kinship terminology, compounding is an uncommon and unproductive feature of Thangmi word formation. The few existing compounds are limited to village names and to the faecal material of various species, as in *sya-kli* ‘cow dung’, composed of *sya* ‘bovine’ and *kli* ‘shit’, and *wa-kli* ‘chicken shit’, composed of *wa*

‘chicken’ and *kli* ‘shit’.⁶ Village names and other toponyms are some of the last vestiges of Thangmi nominal compounding, examples being *arkapole* ‘the village of Walnut Tree’, composed of *arka* ‘walnut, *Juglans regia*’ and *pole* ‘tree, stump, root, trunk’, and *rikhipole* ‘the village of Phāseluñ’, composed of *rikhi* ‘*Ficus lacor*’ and *pole* ‘tree, stump, root, trunk’. These toponyms are discussed in Section §2.4 of Chapter 2.

Certain Thangmi kinship terms consist of compounded or fused lexical items, as in *cacha* ‘grandson’ derived from a reduplication of the term *ca* ‘son’ in which the second element is aspirated, and *jekhapa* ‘mother’s elder sister’s husband, father’s elder brother’, a composite form derived from *jekha* ‘large, senior’ and *apa* ‘father’. The morphology of Thangmi kinship terminology is addressed in Section §7.5 of Chapter 2.

5.1 Diminutive

morph:	<-ca>
label:	DIM

The Thangmi diminutive particle <-ca> (DIM) is a productive morpheme which can be suffixed to nouns and adjectives. In common with many other Tibeto-Burman languages, the Thangmi diminutive particle <-ca> (DIM) is derived from the kinship term *ca* ‘son, offspring’, and combines with nominals to convey the meaning of ‘small, endearing’ or to convey the sense of diminutive.⁷ Commonly occurring uses include *nem-ca* (house-DIM) ‘little house, cottage, hut’, *dese-ca* (village-DIM) ‘hamlet’ or *seŋ-ca* (wood-DIM) ‘chippings, kindling’. The system is still productive and everyday speech is replete with diminutives, although not to the extent observed in European languages such as Dutch or Italian. The Thangmi diminutive suffix <-ca> (DIM) cannot be used with proper nouns or kinship terms, thus **Ram-ca* ‘little Rām’ and **humi-ca* (younger.sister-DIM) ‘little sister’ are rejected.

When used with animals, a semantic distinction exists between [animal]-GEN *ca* which indicates ‘offspring of [animal]’ and [animal]-DIM which indicates ‘small [animal]’, as in *kucu-ko ca* (dog-GEN offspring) ‘puppy’ versus *kucu-ca* (dog-DIM) ‘little doggie’, and *wa-ko ca* (chicken-GEN offspring) ‘chick’ versus *wa-ca* (chicken-DIM) ‘little chicken’. Example 250 below illustrates the use of the Thangmi diminutive particle <-ca> (DIM).

⁶ I have asked far and wide, but all speakers reject **mikli* ‘human shit’, from *mi* ‘person’ and *kli* ‘shit’. To convey the meaning ‘human excrement’, Thangmi speakers rather use a genitive construction, *mi-ko kli* (human-GEN shit).

⁷ Benedict (1972: 208) reconstructs **tsa* for ‘child, grandchild’.

- 250 *libi to ahum-te wa-ko ca aghyoh-Ø-u-du nasăiy-Ø-u-no,*
 after that egg-LOC chicken-GEN son cry-SAS-3P-NPT hear-SAS-3P-3→3/PT
ya-yoh-Ø-u-du beryaŋ, di-gore apraca wa-ca
 go-look.at-SAS-3P-NPT that.time one-CLF good chicken-DIM
nih-Ø-u-no.
 see-SAS-3P-3→3/PT

Later she heard a chick crying from inside that egg, and when she went to take a look, she saw a beautiful little chicken.

The Thangmi diminutive particle <-ca> (DIM) can co-occur with other nominal case endings, suffixes and postpositions if this results in a meaningful combination. When combined with other nominal suffixes, the diminutive particle <-ca> (DIM) is suffixed directly to the nominal head anterior to any case endings or postpositions, as in example 251 below.

- 251 *to ʈəni-ye oste ma-cya-tiniŋ, to wa-ca-kăi cya-sa*
 that old.woman-ERG self NEG-eat-PFG that chicken-DIM-PM eat-INF
piy-Ø-u-no.
 give-SAS-3P-3→3/PT

Without having eaten anything herself, that old lady fed the little chicken.

5.2 The topic marker *be*

morph:	<-be>
label:	TOP

The Thangmi topic marker <-be> (TOP) occurs in combination with nouns, pronouns, adjectives and verbs to focus the listener's attention on the item to which it is suffixed. Since the Thangmi topic marker <-be> (TOP) may be suffixed to any verbal or nominal constituent or clause, its distribution is extremely widespread, and most Thangmi speakers are barely aware that they use it. Somewhat like the Nepali particle *ta*, the function of the Thangmi topic marker <-be> (TOP) is to provide a background for the modified element or to establish a point of departure for the information that follows. Using the topic marker <-be> (TOP) makes the modified word or phrase the theme of the sentence, and often conveys a sense of light contrast

or distinction from other elements in the phrase.⁸ Examples 252 to 255 below illustrate standard uses of the Thangmi topic marker <-be> (TOP) in everyday speech.

- 252 *gǎi-be kutaleŋ woi ma-ya-ta-ŋa-ki.*
I-TOP when also NEG-go-IPP-1s-FNEG

My never having gone.

- 253 *gǎi-be isa cya-sa ma-thaŋ.*
I-TOP food eat-INF NEG-be.able

I just can't eat.

- 254 *gǎi aŋthe cya-ŋa-be, gǎi woi gǎi-go apa-ko apa uniŋ*
I much eat-CNS-TOP I also I-GEN father-GEN father like
si-ŋa-thyo.
die-1s-3sCOND

If I continued to smoke a lot, I would also die, just like my grandfather.

- 255 *ka uniŋ tha-Ø-du guru-ko jet: pepelek-be ma-khalam,*
this like be-sAS-NPT shaman-GEN work money-TOP NEG-receive
cya-sa-guri khalam-Ø-u-du!
eat-INF-IND receive-sAS-3P-NPT

This is what the work of shaman is like: he gets no money but he does get plenty to eat!

In example 256 below, the Thangmi topic marker <-be> (TOP) occurs on both nominal arguments in the phrase with the implication of contrast.

- 256 *gǎi-be ya-ŋa-n, to-be ma-yah-Ø-an.*
I-TOP go-1s-PT that-TOP NEG-go-sAS-3S/PT

Well, I went but he didn't.

In example 257 below, the Thangmi topic marker <-be> (TOP) highlights the agentivity of the first person in the ergative case, which in this context conveys a sense of powerlessness. The phrase *gǎ-ye-be hara loŋ-sa?* (I-ERG-TOP what do-INF) is

⁸ See Rutgers' description of the Yamphu theme suffix <-ko> (TH) (1998: 282-286) and Opgenort's analysis of the Wambule theme marker <-dā ~ -d> (THM) (2002: 186-187) for examples of comparable markers used for information structuring in Kiranti languages.

essentially rhetorical and could also be translated as ‘what on earth can *I* do now?’ or ‘what can I possibly do now?’.

- 257 *mi siy-Ø-an, gǎ-ye-be hara loŋ-sa?*
 person die-SAS-3S/PT I-ERG-TOP what do-INF

The person died, what can I do?

In a similar vein, the phrase in example 258 was used by a Thangmi speaker to highlight the involvement of an ergative third person singular actant, in the sense of ‘what’s *he* saying now’, or less literally, ‘*he*’s at it again’.

- 258 *to-ye-be hara isi-Ø-du?*
 that-ERG-TOP what say-SAS-NPT

What on earth is he saying?

In example 259, the speaker uses the Thangmi topic marker <-be> (TOP) to imply that the ‘other one’ is inherently or categorically unsuitable.

- 259 *begale-be ma-ja.*
 other-TOP NEG-okay

The other one is just not okay.

In example 260 below, the Thangmi topic marker <-be> (TOP) is used by the speaker to express her frustration that her friends have already eaten. The implication, as I understood it in the heat of the moment, was that she had hoped that they would wait. Her statement raises no expectation on the part of the listener that any more information will be forthcoming after this statement.

- 260 *to ban-pali-ye-be cey-eŋ-ta-le.*
 that friend-p-ERG-TOP eat-pAS-IPP-PCL

Those friends (of ours) have eaten.

The Thangmi topic marker <-be> (TOP) is used in example 261 to create a rhetorical question more along the lines of ‘you mean there’s none left for us?’. There is no expectation of receiving a serious answer.

- 261 *ni-kǎi-be hok-Ø-du ra ma-hok?*
 we-PM-TOP be-SAS-NPT or NEG-be

Is there any for us or not?

In example 262 below, the Thangmi topic marker <-be> (TOP) is used to abstract from a specific example to a general statement of fact, ‘he never does what I tell him’. The implication is that he won’t do what anyone else tells him to do either.

- 262 *gǎ-ye ŋah-u-n-du-be ma-loŋ.*
 I-ERG say-3P-1s→3-NPT-TOP NEG-do
 He simply doesn’t do what I tell him.

5.3 The individuating suffix *guri*

morph: <-guri>
 label: IND

The Thangmi individuating suffix <-guri> (IND) zooms in on, or singles out, the referent denoted by the modified constituent, and is parallel in distribution to the Nepali marker *cāhĩ*. The Thangmi individuating suffix <-guri> (IND) may be suffixed to any verbal or nominal constituent or clause, and functions to single out the entity or situation referred to from other options, regardless of whether the alternative possibilities are explicit or implicit. Examples 263 to 266 below illustrate standard uses of the Thangmi individuating suffix <-guri> (IND) in everyday unelicited speech.

- 263 *naŋ-guri kuta-yiniŋ ra-na-n?*
 you-IND where-ABL come.from.level-2s-PT
 Where have you come from?

- 264 *naŋ-ko chuku-guri kuta yah-Ø-an?*
 you-GEN father.in.law-IND where go-SAS-3S/PT
 So where has your father-in-law gone?

- 265 *to-ŋaŋ bubu-guri hok-Ø-an, gǎi-guri oste-ko nem*
 that-inside elder.brother-IND be-SAS-3S/PT I-IND self-GEN house
dǎi cawa-ŋa-n.
 towards walk-1s-PT
 Elder brother stayed in that place, and I set off back to my own house.

- 266 *naleŋ toŋ-guri cey-i-du, bajareŋ-guri ma-cya, nan hara*
 present beer-IND eat-1pPS-NPT tobacco-IND NEG-eat now what
tha-Ø-du?
 be-sAS-NPT

Now we drink beer but we don't smoke, now how about that?

In example 267 below, the Thangmi individuating suffix <-guri> (IND) occurs on both nominal arguments in the phrase and conveys a sense of contrast between the actants. Moreover, the implication in this sentence is that the speaker made the right choice by going.

- 267 *găi-guri ya-ŋa-n, to-guri ma-yah-Ø-an.*
 I-IND go-1s-PT that-IND NEG-go-sAS-3S/PT

Well, 'I' went but he didn't.

Example 268 below was offered as an answer to the question 'where did they go?'. The questioner knew that a group of people had been present moments previously, and noticed that they were no longer there. Both elements of the sentence are marked with the Thangmi contrastive individuating suffix <-guri> (IND), with no implication that one of the two ways is better.

- 268 *to-baŋ-guri dha dăi yey-eŋ-an, ni-guri ka dăi*
 that-Pp-IND that.distant towards go-pAS-3S/PT we-IND this towards
hen-ko.
 go-ADH

They (that lot) went off that way, but we'll go this way.

Example 269 below is a variation of example 268, and an equally plausible answer to the question 'where did they go?'. Here too the questioner knows that a group of people were present moments previously, and notices that they have now gone. In this case, however, the combined use of the Thangmi topic marker <-be> (TOP) and the Thangmi individuating suffix <-guri> (IND) conveys a subtle meaning along the lines of, 'we know better than them, we'll go the right way'.

- 269 *to-baŋ-be dha dǎi yey-eŋ-an, ni-guri ka dǎi*
 that-Pp-TOP that.distant towards go-pAS-3S/PT we-IND this towards
hen-ko.
 go-ADH

Well they went off that way, but we'll go this way.

In contrast to example 257 above, in which the Thangmi topic marker <-be> (TOP) is used to convey a sense of powerlessness, the Thangmi individuating suffix <-guri> (IND) in example 270 below is used to make the phrase non-rhetorical and sincere. The speaker is asking what useful work she can do in light of the demise of a family member.

- 270 *mi siy-Ø-an, gǎ-ye-guri hara loŋ-sa?*
 person die-SAS-3S/PT I-ERG-IND what do-INF

The person died, what work should I do/be doing?

In example 271 below, the use of the Thangmi individuating suffix <-guri> (IND) leads the listener to assume that the speaker has not heard what was said. In contrast to example 258 above, in which the Thangmi topic marker <-be> (TOP) is used to convey a sense of surprise in a similar construction, the Thangmi suffix <-guri> (IND) is here used to seek clarification, because it zooms in on the referent of the modified constituent, i.e. the person speaking.

- 271 *to-ye-guri hara isi-Ø-du?*
 that-ERG-IND what say-SAS-NPT

What is he saying?

In example 259 above, the Thangmi topic marker <-be> (TOP) expresses a value judgement and strong opinion that 'as for the other one, it simply won't do'. In example 272 below, however, the Thangmi individuating suffix <-guri> (IND) is used to temper the force of an otherwise strongly worded statement. In this example, as in others, the Thangmi suffix <-guri> (IND) is associated with careful or diplomatic-sounding speech because it singles out or individuates the 'other one'.

- 272 *begale-guri ma-ja.*
 other-IND NEG-okay

The other one is most likely not okay.

In example 273 below, the Thangmi individuating suffix <-guri> (IND) is used in a sentence that is incomplete and will likely never be completed, ‘they have eaten, [but we haven’t yet...]’.

- 273 *to ban-pali-ye-guri cey-ey-ta-le...*
 that friend-p-ERG-IND eat-pAS-IPP-PCL
 Those friends (of ours) have eaten...

In contrast to example 261 above, in which the Thangmi topic marker <-be> (TOP) is used rhetorically to indicate dismay, the Thangmi suffix <-guri> (IND) in example 274 below indicates a genuine question. The expectation implicit in the question is that the answer will be affirmative, ‘yes, there is some left’.

- 274 *ni-kāi-guri hok-Ø-du ra ma-hok?*
 we-PM-IND be-SAS-NPT or NEG-be
 Is there any for us or not?

In example 275 below, the Thangmi individuating suffix <-guri> (IND) indicates that while the referent has not heeded the speaker’s request, there is every indication that he may listen to someone else. The sentence is incomplete and has the implication that ‘although he didn’t do what I asked him to, [he might do it if you ask]...’. The use of the Thangmi suffix <-guri> (IND) here is in clear contrast to example 262 above, in which the speaker is convinced that there’s no hope since the referent is simply recalcitrant.

- 275 *gǎ-ye ŋah-u-n-du-guri ma-loŋ...*
 I-ERG say-3P-1s→3-NPT-IND NEG-do
 He doesn’t do what I tell him...

6. Pronouns

6.1 Personal pronouns

Thangmi personal pronouns differentiate three persons and two numbers, and distinguish for proximal, distal and distant in the third person. The Thangmi pronominal system exhibits neither an inclusive/exclusive distinction, nor a specific category for dual as distinct from singular or plural. Plural forms are used when the number is more than one. The personal pronouns are listed in Table 46 below.

The pronouns *ka* ‘he, she, it (proximal)’, *to* ‘he, she, it (distal)’ and *dha* ‘he, she, it (distant)’ are actually demonstratives ‘this’, ‘that’ and ‘that (distant)’ respectively. In order to maintain consistency in the labels, I have opted to gloss all instances of these pronouns as ‘this’, ‘that’ and ‘that (distant)’, since their meaning is always clear from the context of the sentence. These demonstratives function both as adnominal modifiers and as nominal heads. In their latter form, *ka*, *to* and *dha* serve as third person pronouns for both human and non-human referents. Thangmi has a specific plural form for third person pronominal referents, *ka-baŋ* (this-Pp) ‘they (proximal)’, *to-baŋ* (that-Pp) ‘they (distal)’ and *dha-baŋ* (that.distant-Pp) ‘they (distant)’. These forms are derived from one of the three third person singular pronominal forms combined with the third person pronominal plural suffix <-baŋ> (Pp), discussed in Section §2.2 above.

TABLE 46. THANGMI PERSONAL PRONOUNS

<i>gǎi</i>	I	1s
<i>ni</i>	we	1p
<i>naŋ</i>	you	2s
<i>niŋ</i>	you(p)	2p
<i>ka</i>	he, she, it	3s (proximal)
<i>to</i>	he, she, it	3s (distal)
<i>dha</i>	he, she, it	3s (distant)
<i>ka-baŋ</i>	they	3p (proximal)
<i>to-baŋ</i>	they	3p (distal)
<i>dha-baŋ</i>	they	3p (distant)

Demonstratives cannot be pluralised using the plural suffix <-pali> (p), and informants reject **ka-pali* (this-p) for ‘these’, **to-pali* (that-p) for ‘those’ and **dha-pali* (that.distant-p) for ‘those (distant)’. When used adnominally, the third person singular demonstrative forms carry both singular and plural meaning, as in *ka* ‘he, she, it, this, these’, *to* ‘he, she, it, that, those’ and *dha* ‘he, she, it, that (distant), those (distant)’ as in examples 276 and 277 below. The pronominal plural forms *ka-baŋ* (this-Pp) ‘they (proximal)’, *to-baŋ* (that-Pp) ‘they (distal)’ and *dha-baŋ* (that.distant-Pp) ‘they (distant)’ are used as independent plural pronouns, and syntactically, therefore, as nominal heads but not adnominally to modify another nominal constituent.

- 276 *di-ka-ye* *ŋah-Ø-u-no* 'ban-pali, nan ka mi-pali-kǎi
 one-HNC-ERG say-SAS-3P-3→3/PT friend-p now this person-p-PM
ŋe-to-le *ka-baŋ-ko* *pepelek* *kat-ko* *mǎi-Ø-du*, *tyaŋ*
 beat-TPP-PCL this-Pp-GEN money steal-ADH must-SAS-NPT then
cya-ko *mǎi-Ø-du*.
 eat-ADH must-SAS-NPT

One of them said 'hey friends, we should beat these guys up, steal their money and then get something to eat'.

- 277 *sakalei-ye* 'ja-Ø-du' *ŋay-eŋ-no*, *to* *mi-pali-kǎi*
 all-ERG okay-SAS-NPT say-pAS-3→3/PT that person-p-PM
yey-eŋ-ta-le *cum-eŋ-no*, *to-bany-e* *woi* *to-baŋ-ko* *lak*
 go-pAS-IPP-PCL hold-pAS-3→3/PT that-Pp-ERG also that-Pp-GEN hand
cum-eŋ-no.
 hold-pAS-3→3/PT

They all said 'okay', and going up to those people, grabbed them and also grabbed their arms.

The unmarked, ergative, genitive and direct / indirect object forms of Thangmi personal pronouns are shown in Table 47 below.

TABLE 47. THANGMI PERSONAL PRONOUNS AND THEIR SUFFIXES

Unmarked	Ergative	Genitive	Patient Marker
<i>gǎi</i>	<i>gǎ-ye ~ ge</i>	<i>gǎi-go</i>	<i>gǎi-gǎi</i>
<i>nǐ</i>	<i>nǐ-ye</i>	<i>nǐ-ko</i>	<i>nǐ-kǎi</i>
<i>naŋ</i>	<i>nany-e</i>	<i>naŋ-ko</i>	<i>naŋ-kǎi</i>
<i>niŋ</i>	<i>niny-e</i>	<i>niŋ-ko</i>	<i>niŋ-kǎi</i>
<i>ka</i>	<i>ka-ye</i>	<i>ka-ko</i>	<i>ka-kǎi</i>
<i>to</i>	<i>to-ye</i>	<i>to-ko</i>	<i>to-kǎi</i>
<i>dha</i>	<i>dha-ye</i>	<i>dha-ko</i>	<i>dha-kǎi</i>
<i>ka-baŋ</i>	<i>ka-bany-e</i>	<i>ka-baŋ-ko</i>	<i>ka-baŋ-kǎi</i>
<i>to-baŋ</i>	<i>to-bany-e</i>	<i>to-baŋ-ko</i>	<i>to-baŋ-kǎi</i>
<i>dha-baŋ</i>	<i>dha-bany-e</i>	<i>dha-baŋ-ko</i>	<i>dha-baŋ-kǎi</i>

The first person singular personal pronoun *gǎi* ‘I’ has irregular forms in the ergative, genitive and in combination with the patient marker, *gǎ-ye* (I-ERG) or *ge* (I.ERG) ‘I (ergative)’, *gǎi-go* (I-GEN) ‘mine’ and *gǎi-gǎi* (I-PM) ‘to me, for me’, instead of **gǎi-ye* (I-ERG), **gǎi-ko* (I-GEN) and **gǎi-kǎi* (I-PM). The ergative forms *gǎ-ye* (I-ERG) or *ge* (I.ERG) exist in free variation. Examples of inflected pronominal forms are not provided here since they occur in practically every Thangmi sentence and are copiously illustrated throughout this grammar.

6.2 Morphemic analysis of personal pronouns

A number of Thangmi personal pronouns reflect known Tibeto-Burman roots and have cognates in extant Tibeto-Burman languages spoken in the surrounding area. Thangmi *gǎi* ‘I’ may well be related to Yamphu *ka* ‘I’ (Rutgers 1998: 90) and Kulung *koŋ* ‘I’ (Tolsma 1999: 30), which are all likely to be reflexes of Tibeto-Burman **ka* ‘I’ (Benedict 1972: 215). Thangmi *ni* ‘we’ is cognate with Chepang *ni ~ ŋi* ‘we’ (Caughley 2000: 160), while Thangmi *naŋ* ‘you (singular)’ is a clear reflex of Tibeto-Burman **naŋ* ‘thou’ (Benedict 1972: 93) and cognate with Chepang *naŋ* ‘you (singular)’ (Caughley 2000: 159) and Dhimal *na* ‘you, thou’ (King 1994: 126). Thangmi *niŋ* ‘you (plural)’ is cognate with Chepang *niŋ* ‘you (plural)’ (Caughley 2000: 161).

6.3 Interrogative pronouns

Thangmi interrogative pronouns occupy the same position in the syntagma that the corresponding non-interrogative part of speech would occupy. With the exception of *su* ‘who’, Thangmi interrogatives have an initial /k/ or /h/, as shown in Table 48 below.

TABLE 48. THANGMI INTERROGATIVE PRONOUNS

<i>kuta</i>	where, whither
<i>kutaleŋ</i>	when
<i>kundu</i>	which (one)
<i>kunyaŋ</i>	how (in which manner)
<i>hara</i>	what
<i>hani</i>	how many, how much
<i>su</i>	who

A further set of interrogative pronouns are constituted from the seven basic interrogative forms in combination with a nominal postposition, such as *kuta-yiŋ* (where-ABL) ‘where from, whence’ and *hara-kǎi* (what-PM) ‘why, for what reason’.

Nominal case endings and postpositions may be suffixed to an interrogative pronoun if these yield a semantically plausible combination, such as *su-ye* (who-ERG) ‘who’ (287 below), *su-ko* (who-GEN) ‘whose’ (19 and 79 above), *su-kǎi* (who-PM) ‘(to) whom’ (164 and 173 above); *hara-ye* (what-ERG) ‘what’ (285 below), *hara-ko* (what-GEN) ‘of what’ (120 above), *hara-te* (what-LOC) ‘in what’ (121 above) and *hani-te* (how.much-LOC) ‘for how much’ (288 below). In many short question forms, the verb may be absent since its involvement is taken to be implicit, as in examples 278 to 280.

- 278 *naŋ-ko* *name* *hara?*
you-GEN name what

What is your name (what are you called)?

- 279 *gǎi-gǎi* *ŋa-Ø-ŋa-n* *‘hu-ko* *nem-guri* *kuta?’*
I-PM say-SAS-1s-PT younger.brother-GEN house-IND where

He asked me, ‘where do you live, younger brother?’

- 280 *naŋ-kǎi* *hara?*
you-PM what

What do you need?

Further illustrations of sentences with one or more interrogative pronouns are offered below, in examples 281 to 289.

- 281 *‘kuta* *khalam-u-na-n?* *kuta-yiŋ* *kyel-u-na-n?’*
where meet-3P-2s-PT where-ABL bring-3P-2s-PT

‘Where did you find it? Whence did you bring it?’

- 282 *naŋ* *kutaleŋ* *ra-na-n?*
you when come.from.level-2s-PT

When did you come?

- 283 *gǎ-ye* *kundu* *thi-sa?*
I-ERG which touch-INF

Which one shall I touch?

- 284 *libi to-kǎi ηay-eη-du ‘kunyaη, hara-kǎi ca sat-u-na-n?’*
 after that-PM say-pAS-NPT how what-PM son kill-3P-2s-PT
ηa-to-le.
 say-TPP-PCL

Later they ask her, ‘how and why did you kill your son?’

- 285 *‘hara-ye cyah-Ø-u-du?’ ηa-to-le, di uni nem priη*
 what-ERG eat-sAS-3P-NPT say-TPP-PCL one day house outside
hok-Ø-ta-le ḍapuh-Ø-u-no.
 be-sAS-IPP-PCL spy-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

‘What is eating [my bread]?’ he thought, so one day, sitting outside his house, he eavesdropped.

- 286 *hani syak-Ø-an?*
 how.many strike-sAS-3S/PT

What time is it?

- 287 *naη-kǎi ka su-ye ηa-Ø-na-n?*
 you-PM this who-ERG say-sAS-2s-PT

Who told you this?

- 288 *to cahuca taη-Ø-du ‘ja-Ø-du, hani-te*
 that man be.happy-sAS-NPT okay-sAS-NPT how.much-LOC
piy-u-na-du? gǎi-gǎi pi-ηa, naη-kǎi libi pepelek
 give-3P-2s-NPT I-PM give-s→1s/IMP you-PM after money
pi-na-ηa-du.’
 give-2s-1s-NPT

That man is happy [and says] ‘okay, how much are you selling her for? Give her to me now and I will give you the money later.’

- 289 *su-ko huca kerep-Ø-du?*
 who-GEN child cry-sAS-NPT

Whose child is that crying?

Thangmi interrogative pronouns cover a range of meanings. In common with other languages of the Himalayan region, Thangmi interrogative pronouns appear in combination with adverbs and negated verb forms to articulate concepts expressed by negative pronouns in English, such as ‘nowhere’, ‘never’, ‘nothing’ and ‘no one’.

When reduplicated, the interrogative *kuta* ‘where’ conveys the sense of ‘where are all the places’ as in 290, more aptly captured by the Dutch expression ‘*waar...zoal...*’.

- 290 *naŋ-kǎi kuta kuta kalǎi-na-du?*
you-PM where where hurt-2s-NPT

Where are all the places that it hurts?

In combination with the adverb *woi* ‘also’ and a negated verb, *kuta* ‘where’ has the meaning of ‘nowhere, in no place’, as in example 291.

- 291 *hu-ko wakhe nasǎi-to-le, tete thombe*
younger.brother-GEN word hear-TPP-PCL elder.sister surprise
thah-Ø-an, yoh-Ø-u-no, kuta woi ma-hok.
be-SAS-3S/PT look.at-SAS-3P-3→3/PT where also NEG-be

Hearing younger brother’s voice, elder sister was surprised, and she looked around, but he was nowhere to be seen.

The interrogative pronoun *kuta* ‘where’ can also be used as a relative to mean ‘wherever’ or ‘at that time’, as shown in example 292, similar to Nepali *jahā ~ tyahā*.

- 292 *cawa-cawa woi, kuta ukhiŋ-Ø-du, to-te hok-eŋ-thyo.*
walk-walk also where become.dark-SAS-NPT that-LOC be-pAS-3sCOND

On their way, they would rest [and camp] at whichever place they had got to when it became dark.

The interrogative pronoun *kutaleŋ* ‘when’ can be reduplicated to mean ‘sometimes’, ‘on occasion’ or ‘from time to time’, as in example 293.

- 293 *to aŋthe se-Ø-du hok-Ø-thyo, tyaŋ gǎi-be di-di-gore*
that very taste-SAS-NPT be-SAS-3sCOND then I-TOP one-one-CLF
loŋ-to-le kutaleŋ kutaleŋ cya-ŋa-n.
do-TPP-PCL when when eat-1s-PT

It was so tasty, that from then on, I would smoke cigarettes sometimes, one at a time.

In combination with the adverb *woi* ‘also’ and a negated verb, *kutaleŋ* ‘when’ means ‘never’, as in example 294.

294 *găi kutaleŋ woi ma-ghurghur-si.*

I when also NEG-snore-REF

I never snore.

The interrogative pronoun *kutaleŋ* ‘when’ can be used as a relative to convey the future sense of ‘at that time’ or ‘when (in the future)’, as in example 295, similar to Nepali *jahile*.

295 *‘ca kutaleŋ jekha thaŋun ŋaŋ wari bore loŋ-to-le*
son when big maybe and daughter.in.law marriage do-TPP-PCL
sumaka hok-sa’.
silence be-INF

‘When my son is grown up, then maybe I can have a daughter-in-law and I will be able to live in peace’ [the old man thought].

The interrogative pronoun *kundu* ‘which’ is frequently seen in combination with the nominal postposition *uniŋ* ‘like’, to convey the sense of ‘how’ or ‘what/which quality’, as in examples 296 and 297.

296 *ka ulam kundu uniŋ hok-Ø-du?*
this road which like be-SAS-NPT

How is this road?

297 *naŋ-ko sebi kundu uniŋ hok-Ø-du?*
you-GEN skin how like be-SAS-NPT

What is your skin like?

When reduplicated, the interrogative pronoun *kundu* ‘which’ carries the meaning ‘a few (people)’, as in 298, just like Nepali *kunai kunai* from which the expression may have been calqued.

298 *kundu kundu jekha mi-ko nem-te jet loŋ-sa hok-eŋ-du,*
which which big person-GEN house-LOC work do-INF be-PAS-NPT
apraca tha-Ø-du.
good be-SAS-NPT

A few [people] find work in the houses of important people, which is good.

In combination with the adverb *woi* ‘also’ and a negated verb, the interrogative *hara* ‘what’ has the meaning of ‘nothing’ or ‘not...anything’, as in examples 299 and 300.

- 299 *wari sumaka hok-Ø-an, ka dǎi yoh-Ø-u-du,*
 daughter.in.law silence be-SAS-3S/PT this towards look.at-SAS-3P-NPT
hara woi ma-hok-Ø-du nem-te.
 what also NEG-be-SAS-NPT house-LOC

The daughter-in-law sat in silence, and looking this way, saw that there was nothing [to eat] at home.

- 300 *begale-be hara woi ma-ra, gǎi-go ulica jet hok-Ø-du*
 other-TOP what also NEG-bring I-GEN small work be-SAS-NPT
bajar-ŋaŋ.
 market-inside

I'm not bringing back anything else, I just have a little something to do at the market.

When reduplicated, the pronoun *hara* 'what' conveys 'what (plural)', 'what else' or 'all what things' as in 301 and 302, very similar to the Dutch phrase '*wat...zoal...*'.

- 301 *begale hara hara rah-u-na-du?*
 other what what bring-3P-2s-NPT

What else will you bring back?

- 302 *'damari, nan laŋi ni-ye ra-le na-wa-du, ni-ye*
 son.in.law now necklace we-ERG bring-PCL put-1p→23-NPT we-ERG
gwi-wa-du ma-ŋay-e, naŋ-kǎi ni-ye hara hara
 steal-1p→23-NPT NEG-say-s/NEG/IMP you-PM we-ERG what what
pi-wa-du.'
 give-1p→23-NPT

'Son-in-law, we have brought the necklace to you, please don't tell [them] that we are the ones who stole it, and we will give you all kinds of things', [they said].

One of the most salient uses of the interrogative *hara* 'what' is in the rhetorical question *hara loŋ-sa* (what do-INF) 'what to do?'. This idiom is attested throughout Nepal, in many of the Tibeto-Burman languages as well as in Nepali. It is unclear whether this idiom was once calqued from Nepali *ke garne* (what do-INF) 'what to do?' or whether there is evidence to show that languages such as Thangmi have always had native terms to express this somewhat fatalistic concept. In the Thangmi context at least, *hara loŋ-sa* encapsulates a range of meanings from the purely

rhetorical ‘what on earth can we do now?’ and practical ‘what is there left to do?’, to genuine expressions of doubt ‘what [as in ‘how’] to do?’ and ‘what can I/we do (to help)?’.

Another calque from Nepali is *hani parăidu* ‘what does it cost?’ a combination of the Thangmi interrogative *hani* ‘how many, how much’ and the loaned *parăi-Ø-du* (*cost-SAS-NPT*) ‘it costs’, from Nepali *parnu* ‘to cost, fall’. There is no Thangmi native verb ‘to cost’, even though the indigenous Thangmi numeral system is quite extensive, as discussed in Section §9 of this chapter.

The pronoun *su* ‘who’ may be reduplicated, as illustrated by example 33 above and described in Section §2.2. As with other interrogatives, the pronoun *su* ‘who’ may be combined with the adverb *woi* ‘also’ and a negated verb, in which case it has the meaning of ‘nobody, no one’, as in examples 303 and 304 below.

- 303 *nalen woi thaymi ŋa-to-le, su-ye woi ma-ŋosăiy-en.*
 present also Thangmi say-TPP-PCL who-ERG also NEG-recognise-pAS

But even now, nobody knows who the Thangmi are.

- 304 *yoh-Ø-u-no, su woi ma-nih-Ø-u-no, sakalei thăi*
 look.at-SAS-3P-3→3/PT who also NEG-see-SAS-3P-3→3/PT all place
daŋ-Ø-u-no, kiji ma-hok.
 search-SAS-3P-3→3/PT blackie NEG-be

He looked around but saw no one, he searched everywhere, but Blackie wasn’t there.

The final interrogative to be discussed is *hanimyan* ‘how big’. Somewhat like Nepali *katro* ‘how big?’, it is rarely heard, and I have recorded only one example (305).

- 305 *tyaŋ ama-ye ŋa-Ø-ŋa-n ‘naŋ hanimyan-ko tha-ta-na-le, naŋ*
 then mother-ERG say-SAS-1s-PT you how.big-GEN be-IPP-2s-PCL you
ka-te hara jet loŋ-u-na-du?’
 this-LOC what work do-3P-2s-NPT

Then [recognising me] mother said, ‘my, how you have grown, now what work do you plan to do?’

Thangmi interrogatives can be concatenated in strings, much as in English we might say ‘what, why and when?’ when questioning somebody. Examples 306 and 307 demonstrate such interrogative concatenations.

- 306 *‘thangmi ηay-eη-no-be, thangmi ηay-eη-du, hara kuta*
 Thangmi say-pAS-3→3/PT-TOP Thangmi say-pAS-NPT what where
hok-Ø-du, ka mi su?’ ηa-to-le sakalei dany-eη-thyo.
 be-SAS-NPT this person who say-TPP-PCL all search-pAS-3sCOND
 ‘Thangmi, what’s a Thangmi? Where do they live and what kind of people
 are they?’, people said as they searched for them.

- 307 *to-ηaη ni-ye kutaleη woi kuta woi torta-to-le*
 that-inside we-ERG when also where also leave-TPP-PCL
ma-hen-ko ηa-wa-n.
 NEG-go-ADH say-1p→23-PT
 And there we promised never ever to break up [with one another] and leave.

6.4 The affable suffix *che*

morph: <-che>
 label: AFF

In Thangmi villages closer to Dolakhā bazaar, Thangmi speakers occasionally use the affable suffix <-che> (AFF) to convey a sense of friendship and goodwill on the part of the speaker. The suffix explicitly does not carry information about the addressee, and thus cannot be glossed as a non-honorific or informal suffix. I have recorded only three examples in unelicited speech, all of which are affixed to a second person pronoun as shown below.

- 308 *naη-che hara cya-na-n?*
 you-AFF what eat-2s-PT
 What have you eaten?
- 309 *niη-che su-ko-te cya-ni-n?*
 you(p)-AFF who-GEN-LOC eat-2p-PT
 At whose house did you(p) eat?
- 310 *naη-che-ko apa kuta yah-Ø-an?*
 you-AFF-GEN father where go-SAS-3S/PT
 Where has your father gone?

7. Adjectives

Unlike Tibeto-Burman languages such as Chinese or Lahu, which express adjectival concepts through intransitive verbs, Thangmi possesses parts of speech which may be called adjectives. As with other nominals, adjectives may take case endings and postpositions. Adjectives used adnominally generally precede the noun they modify, as in *jekha nem* (large house) ‘large house’ and *ălănga mi* (tall person) ‘tall person’. While also functioning as nouns, the sole example of a gendered adjectival pair is *thone* (old.MALE) ‘old male, old man, husband’ and *thoni* (old.FEM) ‘old female, old woman, wife’, as in *thone kucu* ‘old hound’ (old.MALE dog) versus *thoni kucu* ‘old bitch’ (old.FEM dog). Apart from *thoni* (old.FEM), no separate feminine forms are attested for adjectives.

Adjectives cannot be negated through affixes but are rather negated by their associated verb, for example: *to mi apraca hok-Ø-du* (that person good be-SAS-NPT) ‘he’s a good guy’ versus *to mi apraca ma-hok* (that person good NEG-be) ‘that person is no good’. Non-fluent speakers of Thangmi have been recorded attempting to negate adjectives following the pattern of Nepali *na-rāmro* (NEG-good) ‘bad, not good’, resulting in the ungrammatical Thangmi construction **ma-apraca* (NEG-good). Such constructions are rejected by fluent Thangmi speakers who see this as yet another indication of the encroaching influence of Nepali.

Many adjectives are derived from verb stems or from third person singular non-preterite verbal forms. Examples of adjectives derived from verb stems are presented in Table 49 below.

TABLE 49. THANGMI ADJECTIVES DERIVED FROM VERB STEMS

<i>ajik ~ ijik</i>	cold (of food)	< <i>ijiksa</i> ‘to be cold’
<i>cyucyum</i>	sharp, pointed	< <i>cyucyumsa</i> ‘to sharpen’
<i>gonthe</i>	round, spherical	< <i>gonthesa</i> ‘to make into a ball’
<i>kokorok</i>	bent, crumpled	< <i>koroksisa</i> ‘to be bent, crumpled’
<i>pecerek</i>	flattened	< <i>pecereksa</i> ‘to flatten, squash’
<i>pothok</i>	smooth, trim	< <i>pothoksa</i> ‘to smooth, trim’
<i>tila</i>	cold (weather)	< <i>tilasa</i> ‘to be cold (of weather)’
<i>ukhiŋ</i>	dark	< <i>ukhiŋsa</i> ‘to be dark, to set (of the sun)’

Many of the remaining Thangmi adjectives are reduplicated and phonaesthetic forms, such as *run-run* ‘weak, feeble’ or *op-op* ‘hot and sticky (of weather)’. Although

clearly reduplicated in the sense that one or more of the elements are repeated, these adjectives do not necessarily convey an intensified meaning. In fact, non-reduplicated forms such as **run* ‘weak’ or **op* ‘hot and sticky (of weather)’ do not exist. A list of reduplicative and near-reduplicative adjectives is provided in Table 50 below.

TABLE 50. REDUPLICATIVE AND NEAR-REDUPLICATIVE THANGMI ADJECTIVES

<i>phin-phinca</i>	light (in weight), thin, narrow
<i>bakal-cakal</i>	half-cooked, half-raw
<i>cereŋ-cereŋ</i>	glaring, scorching (of the sun)
<i>cyak-cyak</i>	shredded, sliced
<i>chok-chok</i>	complete darkness
<i>denderek</i>	coarse, rough
<i>ḍiŋ-ḍiŋ</i>	red, orange, purple
<i>ḍholoŋ-ḍholoŋ</i>	wide (in circumference)
<i>gum-gumca</i>	lukewarm, tepid
<i>ghoŋloŋ-ghoŋloŋ</i>	wide (of clothes), loose fitting, baggy
<i>hoŋloŋ-hoŋloŋ</i>	wide (of clothes), loose fitting, baggy
<i>hwaŋ-hwaŋ</i>	wide (space), spacious, open-feeling
<i>jenene</i>	sticky, gluey, gummy
<i>kakaṭak-kokoṭok</i>	lame, unable to walk
<i>koŋkolyaŋ</i>	bent, twisted
<i>kyac-kyac</i>	soft, marshy, muddy, clay-like, water-logged
<i>khuririŋ</i>	rounded, circular
<i>lenreŋ-lenreŋ</i>	dangling as if about to fall off, very loose
<i>nenreŋ-nenreŋ</i>	hanging as if about to fall off, very loose
<i>ŋyal-ŋyal</i>	soft, tender, gentle
<i>op-op</i>	hot, sticky (of weather)
<i>pen-pen</i>	sticky, muddy, clayey, slippery
<i>phin-phin</i>	smooth, flat, even
<i>ren-ren</i>	dragging along the ground
<i>reŋ-reŋ</i>	hasty, fidgety, rash, naughty
<i>run-run</i>	weak, feeble
<i>sorot-sarat</i>	pulled, stretched, extended
<i>thel-thel</i>	watery, wobbly
<i>ṭăi-ṭăi</i>	chewy, tough (of meat)
<i>ṭyaŋ-ṭyaŋ</i>	naked, undressed
<i>ṭhău-ṭhău</i>	hard, crunchy (of food)

The adjectives contained in Table 50 above are used both as adnominal modifiers, as in *bakal-cakal isa* (half-cooked food) ‘undercooked rice’, and as predicate adjectives, such as *isa bakal-cakal thah-Øan* (food half-cooked be-SAS-3S/PT) ‘the rice is undercooked’.

The above table is provided to facilitate comparison by permitting adjectives to be viewed alongside one another without needing to scour the lexicon. Many of these adjectives are no longer in common use and the collection of these forms has taken much time. Onomatopoeic adjectives may raise a smile on the face of the speaker or listener when uttered.

A number of Thangmi adjectives occur in adverbial phrases, in combination with a postposition. For example, the adjective *apraca* ‘good, nice, attractive’ carries the meaning ‘well’ when it occurs with a postposition in an adverbial phrase, as illustrated by the three contrastive examples below (311 to 313).

- 311 *tete-ye apraca miŋ toŋ-Ø-u-no.*
 elder.sister-ERG good cloth wash-SAS-3P-3→3/PT

Elder sister washed the good clothes.

- 312 *tete-ye miŋ apraca nama toŋ-Ø-u-no.*
 elder.sister-ERG cloth well with wash-SAS-3P-3→3/PT

Elder sister washed the clothes well.

- 313 *tete-ye apraca miŋ apraca nama toŋ-Ø-u-no.*
 elder.sister-ERG good cloth well with wash-SAS-3P-3→3/PT

Elder sister washed the good clothes well.

Thangmi adjectives most commonly combine with postpositions when used in their nominalised form, as in *gonthe-ko* ‘of Round Face’ or ‘Round Face’s’, from *gonthe* ‘round, spherical’, as shown in examples 314 and 315, or *tila-te* (cold-LOC) ‘in the cold’, from *tila* ‘cold’, as in example 316.

- 314 *jekha mi-ye gonthe-ko uma hen-sa*
 big person-ERG round.face-GEN wife take-INF
ma-thaŋ-Ø-u-no, nan begale wakhe loŋ-Ø-u-no.
 NEG-be.able-SAS-3P-3→3/PT now other word do-SAS-3P-3→3/PT

The chief hadn’t been able to take Round Face’s wife, so now he hatched another plan.

- 315 'gonthe-kăi nan du-ko nunu nat-sa tho-ko măiy-Ø-an,
 round.face-PM now tiger-GEN milk milk-INF send-ADH must-sAS-3S/PT
 tyay du-ye cyah-Ø-u-du, ηay si-Ø-du, to-ko uma găi-go
 then tiger-ERG eat-sAS-3P-NPT and die-sAS-NPT that-GEN wife I-GEN
 tha-Ø-du' ηah-Ø-u-no.
 be-sAS-NPT say-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

'I must send Round Face off to milk a tiger, then the tiger will eat him up
 and he will die, and then his wife will be mine', he thought.

- 316 'yamiryan-ko tila-te woi may-te thum-sa miη
 nowadays-GEN cold-LOC also body-LOC stick-INF cloth
 bu-siy-eη-du, ma-tilay-eη ra?'
 cover-REF-pAS-NPT NEG-cold-pAS or

'These days, they even wear these body-sticking clothes in cold weather,
 [are you telling me that] they're not cold?' [he said].

7.1 Colour adjectives

The Thangmi language has adjectives to express three colours: black, white and red. While older speakers insist that there were once terms for a greater range of colours on the spectrum, there is no persuasive evidence of this. According to Berlin and Kay's proposed evolution of colour terminology, as presented in their *Basic Colour Terms*, Thangmi would be an example of typical stage II language, having indigenous lexical items for 'black', 'white' and 'red' only. All other colour terms are borrowed from Nepali. Alongside the terms for these three primary colours, Thangmi has adjectives meaning 'dark' and 'light', but these cannot be used to modify the intensity of a colour. Thangmi colour terms and the associated adjectives expressing lightness and darkness from the Dolakhā dialect are presented in Table 51 below.

TABLE 51. THANGMI COLOUR ADJECTIVES

<i>ḍiη-ḍiη</i>	red
<i>kiji</i>	black
<i>ubo</i>	white
<i>athay</i>	light (as in brightness)
<i>ukhiη</i>	dark

Despite the limited range of lexical items to express colour that exist in Thangmi, the colour terms that do exist have a range of uses which warrant discussing in some detail. Alongside the standard meaning of *ubo* ‘white’, as illustrated by example 317, *ubo* ‘white’ can precede *mi* ‘person’ to render *ubo mi* (white person) ‘foreigner, white-skinned person’, as in examples 318 to 321.

- 317 *gǎi-go miŋ ubo hok-Ø-du, tara aye bu-si-ta-ŋa-le kiji*
 I-GEN cloth white be-SAS-NPT but much cover-REF-IPP-1s-PCL black
thah-Ø-an.
 be-SAS-3S/PT

My clothes are white, but because I have worn them for so long, they have become black.

- 318 *ubo mi-ko camāica-pali-ye oste-ko huca-kǎi cyocyō ma-pi*
 white person-GEN woman-p-ERG self-GEN child-PM breast NEG-give
isiy-eŋ-du.
 say-pAS-NPT

They say that white women don’t give their children the breast.

- 319 *ubo mi-ko pepelek aye hok-Ø-du.*
 white person-GEN money much be-SAS-NPT

White people have a lot of money.

- 320 *to isyaŋ ubo mi-pali demca ra-to-le*
 that period white person-p load bring-TPP-PCL
ray-eŋ-an.
 come.from.level-pAS-3S/PT

That same day some foreigners [lit. white people] came carrying their own packs.

- 321 *‘bore yo-sa-kǎi ra-ŋa-n’ to ubo mi-ye*
 marriage look.at-INF-PM come.from.level-1s-PT that white person-ERG
ŋa-Ø-ŋa-n.
 say-SAS-1s-PT

‘I have come to see the wedding’, the white man said to me.

The adjective *ubo* ‘white’ can also be combined with the noun *bajareŋ* ‘local tobacco’, giving *ubo bajareŋ* ‘cigarette’ (lit. ‘white tobacco’, as distinct from home-grown tobacco), as in example 322.

- 322 *to mi-ye di-gore ucyaca menca-yiŋ ubo bajareŋ*
 that person-ERG one-CLF small bag-ABL white tobacco
kăiy-Ø-u-no, gă-ye yo-le nah-u-n-uŋ.
 take.out-SAS-3P-3→3/PT I-ERG look.at-PCL put-3P-1S→3-1S→3/PT

That person took some white tobacco out of a small pouch, and I was watching.

The Thangmi adjective *ubo* can also mean ‘clean’, in which case it is often contrasted with *kiji* ‘black’, the latter then meaning ‘dirty’, as in example 323 below. In a South Asian linguistic context, combining the meanings of ‘white’ and ‘clean’ on the one hand, and ‘black’ and ‘dirty’ on the other, is by no means unusual. In Hindi, for example, *safed* ‘white’ is etymologically related to *sāf* ‘clean, fair, bright’.

- 323 *di uni ahe jhari yuw-Ø-an, to phow-Ø-an,*
 one day much rain come.from.above-SAS-3S/PT that be.wet-SAS-3S/PT
pho-Ø-ta-le to-ko kiji maŋ ubo thah-Ø-an.
 be.wet-SAS-IPP-PCL that-GEN black body white be-SAS-3S/PT

One day it rained really hard and he was totally drenched, and being so drenched, his dirty body became clean.

Alongside the standard use of *kiji* to mean ‘black’, as in examples 324 and 325, *kiji* ‘black’ can precede *mi* ‘person’ to render *kiji mi* (black person) ‘southerner, plainsman, Indian’, as in example 326.

- 324 *to-ko mus găi-go uniŋ kiji hok-Ø-du.*
 that-GEN hair I-GEN like black be-SAS-NPT

His hair is black like mine.

- 325 *to kiji semni-ko bore kityaŋ thah-Ø-an.*
 that black Tamang-GEN marriage three.days.ago be-SAS-3S/PT

That black-faced Tamang got married three days ago.

- 326 *ni-ko kucu-pali-ye kiji mi niy-eŋ-to-le aṭṭhe*
 we-GEN dog-p-ERG black person see-pAS-TPP-PCL very
aghyoy-eŋ-du.
 bark-pAS-NPT

When our dogs see dark people they bark a lot.

The adjective *kiji* ‘black’ can also be used as a proper noun. Slightly dark-skinned Thangmi children are often called *kiji* ‘Blackie’, either in their official papers, if they have any, or as a village nickname. One of the narrative texts which I recorded concerned a person named ‘Blackie’, as illustrated by example 327. Unlike Nepali, in which black hounds and dark male children may be called *kāle* ‘Blackie (MASC)’, while dark bitches and girls are referred to as *kālī* ‘Blackie (FEM)’, there is no gender differentiation for ‘Blackie’ in Thangmi, and boys as well as girls may be named *kiji*. Thangmi individuals may carry the nickname *kiji* ‘Blackie’ with them into adulthood.

- 327 *di-ka kiji name tha-Ø-du camāica hok-Ø-thyo.*
 one-HNC blackie name be-SAS-NPT woman be-SAS-3sCOND

There once lived a woman by the name of Blackie.

Just as *ubo* ‘white’ is used to mean ‘clean’, so too *kiji* ‘black’ can mean ‘dirty’ or ‘dark’, as in examples 328 and 329.

- 328 *naŋ-ko khien aṭṭhe kiji thah-Ø-an.*
 you-GEN face very black be-SAS-3S/PT

Your face has become very dirty [black].

- 329 *nany-e thapu thi-to-le lak kiji thah-Ø-an.*
 you-ERG fireplace touch-TPP-PCL hand black be-SAS-3S/PT

You touched the fireplace and your hand has become dirty [black].

The final use of *kiji* ‘black’ is as an intensifier for *chokchok* ‘darkness’ in the phrase *kiji chokchok* (black darkness), best translated as ‘complete darkness’, and illustrated by example 330.

- 330 *di uni thoŋi-ye kiji chokchok-te luma*
 one day old.woman-ERG black darkness-LOC partially.husked.rice
kăi-sa ci-loŋ-Ø-u-no.
 remove-INF CAUS-do-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

One day the old woman made her remove all the partially-husked rice in complete darkness.

In the Dolakhā dialect of Thangmi, the adjective *ḍiŋ-ḍiŋ* ‘red’ is used both to describe things that are permanently red, such as a cockerel’s comb (examples 331 and 332) and more temporary reds, such as flushed cheeks (example 333).

- 331 *nem thil-sa beryaŋ hyawasa-ŋaŋ ubo nasak,*
 house paint-INF that.time upper.part-inside white earth
nhawasa-ŋaŋ ḍiŋ-ḍiŋ nasak-e thil-eŋ-du.
 lower.part-inside red earth-INS paint-pAS-NPT

When it’s time to paint a house, they paint the upper with white earth and the lower with red.

- 332 *gare-ko jire ḍiŋ-ḍiŋ tha-Ø-du.*
 rooster-GEN crest red be-sAS-NPT

The crest of the cockerel is red. [Cockerels’ crests are red] [A cockerel’s crest is red]

- 333 *marci cya-Ø-ta-le cile ḍiŋ-ḍiŋ tha-Ø-du.*
 hot.chilli eat-sAS-IPP-PCL tongue red be-sAS-NPT

If you eat chillies your tongue will go red.

The adjective *ḍiŋ-ḍiŋ* ‘red’ can also be used idiomatically to convey the sense of ‘red-hot’, as in example 334.

- 334 *dorok-ca ra-Ø-ta-le uma-ye nah-Ø-u-du ḍiŋ-ḍiŋ*
 run-PSG come.from.level-sAS-IPP-PCL wife-ERG put-sAS-3P-NPT red
baŋi-te biy-Ø-an.
 pot-LOC enter-sAS-3S/PT

He came back [home] running and dove into the red-hot pot his wife had put ready.

In the Sindhupālcok dialect of Thangmi, however, a distinction is made between *keret* ‘red (permanent)’ and *jiŋ-jyŋ* ‘red (temporary)’. In the village of Cokaṭi, the adjective *keret* ‘red’ is used for clothes, coloured pens and blood, and *jiŋ-jyŋ* ‘red’ used to describe the sunset, someone’s face when hot, and irritated or inflamed eyes.

The only other adjective used in Thangmi to convey a sense of colour or hue is *ariŋalya* ‘yellow-orange-red’, derived from the Nepali noun *ariṅāl* ‘hornet’ on account of the insect’s golden colouring. Although not widely used, Thangmi speakers incorrectly assert that *ariŋalya* ‘yellow-orange-red’ is an indigenous Thangmi colour word and not a loan. An example of its use is given in 335.

- 335 *saŋa peŋey-eŋ-du sum oli māina-ye, saŋa ariŋalya*
 millet sow-PAS-NPT three four month-ERG millet red.yellow
tha-Ø-ta-le min-Ø-du.
 be-SAS-IPP-PCL cook-SAS-NPT

Three or four months after it has been sown, the millet goes a golden-yellow colour and is then ripe.

In Thangmi, the adjectives *athan* ‘light’ and *ukhiŋ* ‘dark’ can combine with postpositions to mean ‘in the daylight’ or ‘in daytime’ and ‘in the dark’ or ‘at night’ respectively, as in examples 336 and 337. Younger Thangmi speakers also use *athan* ‘light’ as a noun to mean ‘light bulb’, as shown in example 338.

- 336 *athan-te caway-eŋ-ta-le, begale dese mi-ye niy-eŋ-du*
 light-LOC walk-PAS-IPP-PCL other village person-ERG see-PAS-NPT
ŋa-to-le, ŋaye sul-siy-eŋ-ta-le caway-eŋ-du.
 say-TPP-PCL night hide-REF-PAS-IPP-PCL walk-PAS-NPT

Had they walked in the daytime, then they might be seen by people from other villages, so they walked secretly at night.

- 337 *ukhiŋ-ŋaŋ, ubo mi-pali kiji icinis-eŋ-du.*
 dark-inside white person-p black appear-PAS-NPT

In the dark, [even] white people seem to be black.

- 338 *athan̩ sat-wa-du-be, dewa yo-sa mi kyel-Ø-ta-le*
 light kill-1p→23-NPT-TOP god look.at-INF person come-sAS-IPP-PCL
ni-kǎi ci-let-i-n.
 we-PM CAUS-appear-1pPS-PT

But even though we extinguished the light, a worshipper coming to the temple saw us and dragged us out.

Both *athan̩* ‘light’ and *ukhiŋ* ‘dark’ are derived from indigenous Thangmi verb forms, *athan̩sa* ‘to become light’ and *ukhiŋsa* ‘to become dark’ respectively, examples of which are given in 339 and 340 below.

- 339 *athan̩-Ø-an ŋa-to-le priŋ let-Ø-an, ukhiŋ*
 become.light-sAS-3S/PT say-TPP-PCL outside appear-sAS-3S/PT dark
nih-Ø-u-no ‘hara thah-Ø-an?’ ŋa-to-le duŋ-ŋaŋ
 see-sAS-3P-3→3/PT what be-sAS-3S/PT say-TPP-PCL within-inside
biy-Ø-an.
 enter-sAS-3S/PT

Thinking that it was light, he went outside only to see that it was still dark, ‘what happened?’ he thought to himself, as he went back inside.

- 340 *tyaŋ ɬaye tha-Ø-ta-le ukhiŋ-Ø-an, ni ariy-i-n.*
 then night be-sAS-IPP-PCL become.dark-sAS-3S/PT we be.afraid-1pPS-PT

Night fell and then it became really dark, and we were frightened.

8. Intensifiers and quantifiers

Intensifiers are modifying adverbs which increase or decrease the effect or quality of another element in a nominal phrase, usually a verb or an adjective, as in *aŋthe* ‘very, extremely’ and *uchinca* ‘less’. Quantifiers are modifying adverbs which increase or decrease the quantity of another element in a phrase, usually a verb or an adjective, as in *ahe* ‘a lot, much, many’ and *uchinca* ‘a little, few, some’. The Thangmi adverb *uchinca* functions as both an intensifier and a quantifier, and has an emphatic form *uchincǎi* ‘much less, very little, very few’, as in examples 184 and 241 above. Examples 341 to 343 below illustrate the use of the intensifiers *aŋthe* and *uchinca*, while examples 344 to 346 illustrate the use of the Thangmi quantifiers *ahe* and *uchinca*.

341 *miryaŋ aŋthe uni tow-Ø-an.*

yesterday very sun shine-SAS-3S/PT

Yesterday it was very sunny.

342 *ka isa, cici ŋaŋ kiji moŋe-ko ken-te aŋthe*

this food meat and black soybean-GEN vegetable.curry-LOC very

se-Ø-du.

be.tasty-SAS-NPT

This food is very tasty with meat and black soybean vegetable curry.

343 *bubu-ye gǎi-gǎi usare pi-Ø-ŋa-n, libi uchincǎi*

elder.brother-ERG I-PM medicine give-SAS-1s-PT after much.less

kalǎi-sa jah-Ø-an.

hurt-INF recover-SAS-3S/PT

Elder brother gave me some medicine, and after that it became much less painful.

344 *bore loŋ-u-n-du beryaŋ, ahe pepelek thah-Ø-an.*

marriage do-3P-1s→3-NPT that.time much money be-SAS-3S/PT

When I got married, it cost a lot of money.

345 *'ka ahe nem hok-Ø-du ʈhǎi, kuta kuta?' ni thombe*

this very house be-SAS-NPT place where where we surprise

thay-i-n.

be-1pPS-PT

'Where on earth is this place, in and amongst all these many houses?', we thought and were surprised.

346 *pepelek uchinca pi-Ø-ŋa-thyo, cya-sa-kǎi woi*

money a.little give-SAS-1s-3sCOND eat-INF-PM also

ma-gap-Ø-du.

NEG-be.enough-SAS-NPT

They gave me a little bit of money, but not even enough to eat.

9. Numerals

9.1 Simple numerals and their classifiers

Numerals are one of the most interesting features of Thangmi nominal morphology. Although the Nepali numeral system is now widely used by Thangmi speakers for numerals above ten, and often even for numerals above five, a native numeral system does still exist. Interesting features of the numeral system include notable dialectal variation in both the numerals themselves and their associated classifiers, as well as a rather unusual way of constructing the higher decades. These issues are discussed in this section.

Thangmi numerals are considered nominals on the basis of their morphosyntactic properties. They may occur as modifiers of nominal heads or appear independently as heads themselves. Numerals may take case endings and postpositions when occurring as independent nominals, and numeral classifiers are obligatory for all situations other than counting out loud or tallying a list. Table 52 below shows the Thangmi numeral forms for one to nine in the Dolakhā dialect.

TABLE 52. THANGMI NUMERALS FROM THE DOLAKHĀ DIALECT

1	<i>di</i>
2	<i>nis</i>
3	<i>sum</i>
4	<i>oli</i>
5	<i>walḡa</i>
6	<i>mat</i>
7	<i>ṇo</i>
8	<i>lā</i>
9	<i>kit</i>

Attributive forms of the numerals are used in most cases, and also sometimes for counting. These attributive forms are constructed by attaching one of the numeral classifier suffixes to the numeral. In spontaneous unelicited speech, numerals without classifiers are rarely heard. In example 347 below, while seemingly appearing without a classifier, *uni* ‘day’ actually functions as a classifier itself.

347 *gǎi walḡa uni libi yu-ḡa-du.*

I five day after come.from.above-1s-NPT

I’ll come back down in five days.

In example 348 below, in which the speaker is counting out loud, the Thangmi numerals occur as independent nominals.

- 348 *naŋ-ko kham-te 'di nis sum'-kăi hara ŋah-Ø-u-du?*
 you-GEN language-LOC one two three-PM what say-SAS-3P-NPT

How do you say 'one, two, three' in your language?

The most frequent instances of Thangmi numerals appearing without a classifier are in questions or statements pertaining to age, as in example 349.

- 349 *găi walŋa tha-ŋa-du beryaŋ, găi-go jekha tete-ko bore*
 I five be-1s-NPT that.time I-GEN large elder.sister-GEN marriage
thah-Ø-an.
 be-SAS-3S/PT

My eldest sister got married when I was five.

In the Dolakhā dialect, the numeral classifiers in use are <-ka> (HNC) for human referents and <-gore> (CLF) for non-human referents. The distribution of the Dolakhā dialect numeral classifiers corresponds closely to that of the Nepali numeral classifiers *-janā* 'human' and *-vaṭā ~ -ṭā* 'non-human'. Thangmi numerals from the Dolakhā dialect, from one to nine, are shown with their classifiers in Table 53 below.

TABLE 53. THANGMI NUMERALS AND NUMERAL CLASSIFIERS
 FROM THE DOLAKHĀ DIALECT

1	<i>di-ka</i>	one person	<i>dī-gore</i>	one of them, one thing, one piece
2	<i>nis-ka</i>	two people	<i>nīs-gore</i>	two of them, two things...
3	<i>sum-ka</i>	three people	<i>sum-gore</i>	three pieces
4	<i>oli-ka</i>	four people	<i>oli-gore</i>	four pieces
5	<i>walŋa-ka</i>	five people	<i>walŋa-gore</i>	five pieces
6	<i>mat-ka</i>	six people	<i>mat-gore</i>	six pieces
7	<i>ŋo-ka</i>	seven people	<i>ŋo-gore</i>	seven pieces
8	<i>lā-ka</i>	eight people	<i>lā-gore</i>	eight pieces
9	<i>kit-ka</i>	nine people	<i>kit-gore</i>	nine pieces

The numeral classifier for human referents <-ka> (HNC) is most probably derived from Thangmi *kapu* 'head'. This full form is still used in the Sindhupālcok dialect, where the numeral classifier for human referents is <-kapu> (HNC). Sentences

from the Dolakhā dialect using Thangmi numeral classifiers are shown in examples 350 to 355.

- 350 *ni nis-ka isa cya-ŋa libi hara loŋ-sa?*
we two-HNC food eat-CNS after what do-INF

What shall we two do after having eaten?

- 351 *gǎi sum ŋaŋ oli tha-ŋa-du beryaŋ, gǎi-go sum-ka tete*
I three and four be-1s-NPT that.time I-GEN three-HNC elder.sister
woi siy-eŋ-an.
also die-pAS-3S/PT

When I was between the ages of three and four, three of my elder sisters passed away.

- 352 *nan nem-te oli-ka thay-i-n ŋaŋ sakalei oste-ko mi-pali*
now house-LOC four-HNC be-1pPS-PT and all self-GEN person-p
tany-eŋ-an.
be.happy-pAS-3S/PT

Now that there were four of us in the house, all my relatives were happy.

- 353 *gǎi-go kham-te gǎi di-gore kari kariy-u-n-du.*
I-GEN language-LOC I one-CLF song sing-3P-1s→3-NPT

I shall sing a song in my language.

- 354 *gǎi jekha tha-ta-ŋa-le, gǎi-go sum-gore name thaha*
I big be-IPP-1s-PCL I-GEN three-CLF name knowledge
sǎiy-u-n-uŋ.
know-3P-1s→3-1s→3/PT

When I became older, I came to know that I had three names.

- 355 *‘ma-kaṭa, gǎi-gǎi amat-sa-kǎi sum-gore jake-ko maŋǎi, di-gore*
NEG-scold I-PM beg-INF-PM three-CLF rice-GEN bread one-CLF
wa, di kulin toŋ ra-to-le
chicken one small.earthenware.water.vessel beer bring-TPP-PCL
ra-Ø’ ŋa-Ø-ŋa-n.
come.from.level-s/IMP say-sAS-1s-PT

‘He won’t scold you. In order to request [my hand in marriage], just come bringing three rice breads, one chicken and one jug of beer’, she said.

In the Dolakhā dialect of Thangmi, the spirits of dead people, malevolent forest spirits, forest-dwelling wild men and gods all take the human numeral classifier <-ka> (HNC), as shown in examples 356 to 359 below. In Nepali, by contrast, gods are more usually referred to with the non-human numeral classifier *-vaṭā* ~ *-ṭā* ‘non-human’.

- 356 *amamakaleŋ ni-ko apa-ye di-ka apan*
 long.time.ago we-GEN father-ERG one-HNC forest.spirit
sat-Ø-u-no.
 kill-SAS-3P-3→3/PT

A long time ago, our father killed a forest spirit.

- 357 *nis-ka mi yey-eŋ-ta-le yoy-eŋ-du-be, nis-ka*
 two-HNC person go-PAS-IPP-PCL look.at-PAS-NPT-TOP two-HNC
apan uniŋ mi niy-eŋ-no.
 wild.man like person see-PAS-3→3/PT

Going off, these two people went to look around, and they saw two wild-looking people.

- 358 *to beryaŋ di-ka mosani kyel-Ø-ta-le ‘humi,*
 that that.time one-HNC spirit come-SAS-IPP-PCL younger.sister
di-gore maŋăi găi-găi pi-ŋa’ ŋah-Ø-u-no.
 one-CLF bread I-PM give-S→1S/IMP say-SAS-3P-3→3/PT

At that time, a spirit came by and said, ‘younger sister, give me a bread!’

- 359 *to dese-te di-ka dewa woi cawa-Ø-thyo.*
 that village-LOC one-HNC god also walk-SAS-3S/COND

[At that time] there was a god walking around in that village.

Animals often speak in Thangmi stories and are personified with the human numeral classifier <-ka> (HNC) in place of <-gore> (CLF) for non-human referents. An anecdote will serve to illustrate the point. I was once travelling on a bus with some Thangmi villagers, one of whom had a goat with him. When a policeman boarded the bus and asked how many of us were travelling to Kathmandu, the Thangmi villager muttered to himself, laughing, *oli-ka mi ŋa di-ka ṭuŋi* (four-HNC person and one-HNC goat) ‘four humans and a goat’, using <-ka> (HNC) for his goat instead of the grammatically correct <-gore> (CLF) for non-human referents.

Certain nouns do not require numeral classifiers because they function as units of measurement in and of themselves, as in example 355 above, where *kulin* ‘small earthenware jug’ does not take a classifier, or as in 347 above and 360 below, in which the Thangmi words *uni* ‘day’ and the Nepali loan *barsa* ‘year’ function as numeral classifiers themselves.

360 *naŋ hani barsa tha-na-n?*
 you how.many year be-2s-PT

How old are you?

In most scenarios, the interrogative pronoun *hani* ‘how much, how many’ takes a numeral classifier, as in examples 18 above and 361 below.

361 *to-ko ʈuŋi hani-gore hok-Ø-du?*
 that-GEN goat how.many-CLF be-SAS-NPT

How many goats does he have?

Numerals from the Sindhupālcok dialect of Thangmi differ slightly from their Dolakhā counterparts, as shown in Table 54 below. Moreover, in the few villages of Sindhupālcok district where Thangmi is still spoken, indigenous Thangmi numerals are more widely used for counting and enumeration than in Dolakhā.

TABLE 54. THANGMI NUMERALS FROM THE SINDHUPĀLCOK DIALECT

1	<i>dil</i>
2	<i>nis</i>
3	<i>sum</i>
4	<i>whali</i>
5	<i>whalɣa</i>
6	<i>mat</i>
7	<i>ŋo</i>
8	<i>laʔ</i>
9	<i>kit</i>

While the Dolakhā dialect of Thangmi has but two numeral classifiers, there are seven numeral classifiers attested in the Sindhupālcok dialect. The numeral classifiers of the Sindhupālcok dialect and the semantic classes of nominals with which they occur are given in Table 55 below.

TABLE 55. THANGMI NUMERAL CLASSIFIERS FROM THE SINDHUPĀLCOK DIALECT

form	semantic class of noun	gloss
<i>kapu</i>	humans	HNC
<i>gore</i>	houses, general things	CLF
<i>kău</i>	non-human animates	CLF2
<i>kulaŋ</i>	wood, round or short things	CLF3
<i>pa</i>	leaves, paper, thin or flat things	CLF4
<i>paŋe</i>	clothes, bamboo mats	CLF5
<i>pur</i>	trees, branches, long things	CLF6

In the Dolakhā dialect of Newar, according to Carol Genetti, numerals are ‘always followed directly by numeral classifiers’ and ‘classifiers are not used with any other nominal modification besides numerals’ (1994: 68). The same holds true for the Sindhupālcok dialect of Thangmi, with the exception of the noun *daŋ* ‘year’ which precedes the numeral ‘one’, as in *daŋ dil thah-Ø-an* (year one be-SAS-3S/PT) ‘one year ago’, but which follows all other numerals, as in *ca sum daŋ tha-Ø-du* (son three year be-SAS-NPT) ‘son is three years old’. An analysis of the close correspondences in the numeral classifiers of the Dolakhā dialect of Newar and the Sindhupālcok dialect of Thangmi is presented in Section §4.1 of Chapter 1.

Examples of numeral classifiers from the Sindhupālcok dialect of Thangmi are shown in 362 to 373 below. Since I have recorded so few examples of these classifiers, all of which are drawn from unelicited and natural speech, I have chosen to gloss them with numbers rather than attempting to find a fitting label for the semantic class which they describe. The distribution and use of the classifier <-gore> (CLF) for non-human referents is the same in both the Dolakhā and Sindhupālcok dialects, so I retain the label (CLF). Likewise, the Dolakhā human numeral classifier <-ka> (HNC) and the Sindhupālcok human numeral classifier <-kapu> (HNC) are cognate terms with exactly the same distribution, so I have chosen to gloss both with the same label. The remaining classifiers appear infrequently and are sequentially glossed as (CLF2), (CLF3), (CLF4), (CLF5) and (CLF6) respectively.

Examples 362 to 364 below illustrate the use of the classifier <-gore> (CLF) for non-human referents in the Sindhupālcok dialect.

- 362 *ki di-gore jhyeka jaṅkha-te aṭṭhe usruṭu-sa.*
 and one-CLF large rice.cooking.pot-LOC very stuff.in-INF

And then these [dried leafy greens] are all stuffed into a very large rice-cooking pot.

- 363 *si-Ø-du isyaṅ nem-ko laṅga-te nis-gore syeṅ-te*
 die-sAS-NPT period house-GEN courtyard-LOC two-CLF wood-LOC
ṇoṭ-gore uchiga syeṅ-ko ṇoṭ cali naṅāi-ye
 seven-CLF short wood-GEN seven stairs Himalayan.nettle-INS
chyu-sa.
 tie-INF

On the day of death, in the courtyard of the house of the deceased, a ladder is made out of two large poles of wood and seven smaller pieces of firewood, all bound together with twine made from Himalayan nettle.

- 364 *to nasye-kāi hara hara māi-Ø-du? ṇa-ṇa di*
 that first.death.rite-PM what what must-sAS-NPT say-CNS one
ṭoke jake, di-gore aṭum to me thapu-te
 unit.of.measurement unhusked.rice one-CLF egg that fire hearth-LOC
noṅ-sa.
 do-INF

For that first death ritual what is needed? It is said that one *mānā* of unhusked rice and one egg are put into the fireplace.

Example 365 below illustrates the use of the classifier <-kapu> (HNC) for human referents in the Sindhupālcok dialect.

- 365 *di uni, di-kapu mi ni-ko nem-te kyel-Ø-an.*
 one day one-HNC person we-GEN house-LOC come-sAS-3S/PT

One day, a man came to our house.

Examples 366 and 367 below illustrate the use of the classifier <-kāu> (CLF2) for non-human animates in the Sindhupālcok dialect.

- 366 *tinyaṅ di-kāu wa daṅ-sa.*
 then one-CLF2 chicken find-INF

Then one chicken is found.

- 367 *'to-giŋ, to isa, maŋiŋ, moŋe, makăi, di-kău wa-ca li*
 that-ABL that food bread soybean *maize* one-CLF2 chicken-DIM also
ka cya?areŋ-te tham-o.'
 this flat.wicker.mat-LOC insert-s→3/IMP

'And then, put that cooked food, that bread, the soybeans and maize and also one little chicken on that flat wicker mat' [the shaman said].

Example 368 below illustrates the use of the Sindhupālcok dialect classifier <-kulaŋ> (CLF3) for wood, round things or short things.

- 368 *tinyaŋ to si-Ø-du mi-ko name 'moro', to moro-ko*
 then that die-SAS-NPT person-GEN name moro that moro-GEN
the-ko jyamari-ye si-Ø-du mi-ko hapa hapa di-gore
 self-GEN son.in.law-ERG die-SAS-NPT person-GEN before before one-CLF
naŋăi-ko minca-te boro isa ŋo? puya-ko
 Himalayan.nettle-GEN rope.bag-LOC cooked.rice food seven seed-GEN
ane di-gore tokolo ŋa cakur-la?a-te sum-kulaŋ syeŋ-ko
 grain one-CLF hoe and eating-hand-LOC three-CLF3 wood-GEN
mekapul cabu?u-sa.
 dead.person's.fire carry-INF

Then that dead person is known as a *moro* [corpse] and that *moro*'s own son-in-law walks ahead of the corpse carrying a rope bag made of Himalayan nettles containing cooked food, seven grain seeds and a hand-held hoe; while in his right hand, he [the son-in-law] carries three pieces of small firewood burning with the dead man's fire.

Examples 369 to 371 below illustrate the use of the classifier <-pa> (CLF4) for leaves, paper and thin or flat things, in the Sindhupālcok dialect.

- 369 *noŋ-ta-le sum-pa mampra aja thibliŋ*
 do-IPP-PCL three-CLF4 *Macaranga.indica* leaf back.to.front
lap-ta-le isa lo?o-sa ki guru khasi-Ø-du.
 spread.out-IPP-PCL food pour.out-INF and shaman do.the.rite-SAS-NPT

Having done that, three leaves of the *Macaranga indica* are spread out [on the ground] and cooked food is served on them and the shaman commences the death ritual.

- 370 *to-giŋ di-pa phaŋgaŋeŋ-ko aja-te paŋku kyel-ta-le*
 that-ABL one-CLF4 Co.co.yam-GEN leaf-LOC water bring-IPP-PCL
nem-te sakhalī mi-kăi lat-cha ki dum-Ø-du.
 house-LOC all person-PM sprinkle-INF and finish-SAS-NPT

From that point, the leaf of a Co-co yam (*Colocasia antiquorum*) is brought and all the people at the house must sprinkle water on it, and then it [the ritual] is finished.

- 371 *'nan hapa me lyuŋ kyel-o, tinyaŋ sum-pa*
 now before fire stone bring-s→3/IMP then three-CLF4
mampra aja ibliŋ lap-o, tinyaŋ di-mana
Macaranga.indica leaf right.side.up spread.out-s→3/IMP then one-*mana*
di-muŋhi meke dap-o'.
 one-fistful meke fill-s→3/IMP

'Now, first of all, bring the fire stone [for the incense], then lay down three leaves of the *Macaranga indica* the right side up, and then fill them with one *mānā* and one fistful of *meke*' [he said].

Examples 372 and 373 below illustrate the use of the classifier <-paŋe> (CLF5) for clothes, bamboo mats and long flat things, in the Sindhupālcok dialect.

- 372 *tinyaŋ di-paŋe philya seny-e philya poŋoŋ-te*
 then one-CLF5 flat piece.of.wood-INS flat rock-LOC
sui-sa.
 beat-INF

Then it is beaten on a flat rock with a flat piece of wood.

- 373 *to-giŋ di-paŋe chaŋ ta-ko di-paŋe*
 that-ABL one-CLF5 cylindrical.wicker.basket weave-ADH one-CLF5
cya?areŋ ta-ko.
 flat.wicker.mat weave-ADH

And then one cylindrical wicker basket and one flat wicker mat must be woven.

I have collected a further set of numerals from the Thangmi community in Darjeeling, a culturally active and highly literate group of ethnic Thangmi. While most Darjeeling-born Thangmi no longer speak their language, some of the older immigrants who came to India from villages in Dolakhā and Sindhupālcok still do,

and the community printed a wall calendar in 1997 to promote Thangmi cultural awareness. In this calendar, Thangmi ordinal numerals are given in the Devanāgarī script and differ once again from those recorded in Dolakhā and Sindhupālcok. Table 56 below shows these ordinal numbers from one to nine in transliteration as they are presented on the wall calendar, including the final element <-gure> which is cognate with <-gore> (CLF), the classifier for non-human referents in both Dolakhā and Sindhupālcok.

TABLE 56. THANGMI ORDINALS FROM THE DARJEELING CALENDAR

1 st	<i>dig-gure</i>
2 nd	<i>niś-gure</i>
3 rd	<i>sum-gure</i>
4 th	<i>olī-gure</i>
5 th	<i>vāñg-gure</i>
6 th	<i>ṇok-gure</i>
7 th	<i>māt-gure</i>
8 th	<i>lāk-gure</i>
9 th	<i>khīt-gure</i>

A few points about the contents of Table 56 are worth noting. First, the calendar was compiled by ethnic Thangmi from Darjeeling whose first language is Nepali and who were most likely not attuned to the phonological differences between Thangmi and Nepali. Second, it appears that in the Darjeeling calendar the numerals for ‘six’ and ‘seven’, have been accidentally reversed. These two numerals are also the ones most likely to be forgotten by Thangmi speakers. It is unfortunate, however, that this error is now immortalised in print since the written word has a tendency to take on a level of orthodoxy and authenticity which the spoken word rarely achieves.

To facilitate comparison between the three numeral systems, Table 57 juxtaposes the numerals from one to nine in the Thangmi dialects of Dolakhā and Sindhupālcok and from the Darjeeling wall calendar.

TABLE 57. THREE CONTRASTIVE SETS OF THANGMI NUMERALS

	Dolakhā	Sindhupālcok	Darjeeling
1	<i>di</i>	<i>dil</i>	<i>dig</i>
2	<i>nis</i>	<i>nis</i>	<i>niś</i>
3	<i>sum</i>	<i>sum</i>	<i>sum</i>
4	<i>oli</i>	<i>whali</i>	<i>olī</i>
5	<i>wal̥ɣa</i>	<i>whal̥ɣa</i>	<i>vāṅg</i>
6	<i>mat</i>	<i>mat</i>	<i>ṇok</i>
7	<i>ṇo</i>	<i>ṇo</i>	<i>māt</i>
8	<i>lā</i>	<i>laʔ</i>	<i>lāk</i>
9	<i>kit</i>	<i>kit</i>	<i>khīt</i>

9.2 Numeral decades

In Thangmi, *dicip* ‘ten’ is a numeral compound composed of two elements: The unit number morpheme *di* ‘one’ is the first syllable, and the decimal morpheme <-cip> is the second element. Thus, in Dolakhā, *dicip* ‘ten’ is derived from *di* ‘one’ and the decimal morpheme <-cip>. In Sindhupālcok, *dhicip* ‘ten’ derives from *dil* ‘one’ and the decimal morpheme <-cip>, while in Darjeeling, *digcip* ‘ten’ derives from *dig* ‘one’ and the decimal morpheme <-cip>.

In the Dolakhā variety of Thangmi, the dialect which forms the focus of this grammar, decades from twenty to ninety are constructed as compounds consisting of the relevant unit number morpheme together with *dicip*, the compound for ‘ten’. For example, *oli-dicip* ‘forty’ derives from *oli* ‘four’ and *dicip* ‘ten’ (lit. ‘four-ten’). Although rarely heard, the indigenous Thangmi forms for decades are in occasional use, and are presented in Table 58 below.

TABLE 58. DECADES FROM THE DOLAKHĀ DIALECT OF THANGMI

20	<i>nis-dicip</i>
30	<i>sum-dicip</i>
40	<i>oli-dicip</i>
50	<i>wal̥ɣa-dicip</i>
60	<i>mat-dicip</i>
70	<i>ṇo-dicip</i>
80	<i>lā-dicip</i>
90	<i>kit-dicip</i>

In both the Sindhupālcok dialect and the Darjeeling wall calendar, the decades from twenty to ninety are constructed slightly differently. In these two dialects, decades are constructed using the unit number morpheme together with the decimal morpheme <-cip>, but without the element *dil* or *dig* ‘one’. Sindhupālcok and Darjeeling decades are shown in Table 59 below.

**TABLE 59. DECADES FROM THE SINDHUPĀLCOK DIALECT OF THANGMI
AND THE DARJEELING WALL CALENDAR**

	Sindhupālcok	Darjeeling
20	<i>nis-cip</i>	<i>niś-cip</i>
30	<i>sum-cip</i>	<i>sum-cip</i>
40	<i>whali-cip</i>	
50	<i>whalḡa-cip</i>	
60	<i>mat-cip</i>	
70	<i>ṇo-cip</i>	
80	<i>laʔ-cip</i>	
90	<i>kit-cip</i>	

For Thangmi numerals between ten and twenty, the numeral ten, *dicip*, precedes the unit number morpheme in all dialects, as in *dicip-walḡa* ‘fifteen’, from *dicip* ‘ten’ and *walḡa* ‘five’ (lit. ‘ten-five’). Examples 374 to 376 illustrate Thangmi numerals between ten and twenty as drawn from natural conversations between speakers of the Dolakhā dialect of the language.

- 374 *bāsintē serek-Ø-ta-le cawah-Ø-an, to-ye di ṭhāi-te*
morning arise-SAS-IPP-PCL walk-SAS-3S/PT that-ERG one place-LOC
dī-ka camāica dicip-nis-gore laṇi khyak-si-Ø-du
one-HNC woman ten-two-CLF necklace strap.on-REF-SAS-NPT
nih-Ø-u-no.
see-SAS-3P-3→3/PT

In the morning he got up and set off, and in one place he saw a woman wearing twelve necklaces.

- 375 *gǎi dicip-walɥa tha-ŋa-du beryaŋ, gǎi-go apa-ko apa*
 I ten-five be-1s-NPT that.time I-GEN father-GEN father
runrun thah-Ø-an.
 weak.and.ill be-SAS-3S/PT

When I was fifteen, my grandfather became weak and ill.

- 376 *thaŋmi-ko nem-te mosani ci-po-sa-kǎi 'dicip-mat ɲiŋ*
 Thangmi-GEN house-LOC spirit CAUS-chase-INF-PM ten-six stone
hap-sa' ŋay-eŋ-du.
 throw-INF say-pAS-NPT

Driving spirits from a Thangmi house is known as 'throwing the sixteen stones'.

In the Dolakhā dialect, the numeral 100 is formed by adding a second *dicip* 'ten' to the compounded string that already denotes ninety *kit-dicip*, resulting in *kit-dicip-dicip* '100' (lit. '[9 x 10] + 10'). I have not heard the Thangmi numeral for 100 used in Sindhupālcok, nor does it occur on the Darjeeling wall calendar.

Based on comparative evidence from Limbu, a different analysis of the unit number numerals *kit* 'nine' and *dicip* 'ten' may be proposed. In Limbu, <-kip> is found in the decades 40, 50, 60, 70, 80 and 90 as a suffix, and in 100 as the root, for example *likip* 'forty' and *phaŋkip* 'ninety' (van Driem 1987: 33). The Thangmi morpheme *kit* 'nine' may be cognate with the Limbu morpheme <-kip>, and Benedict identifies Limbu *gip* with a poorly attested Tibeto-Burman decimal root **gip* (1972: 19 and 94), of which the Thangmi decimal morpheme <-cip> may be a reflex.

The remaining non-decade numerals higher than twenty but lower than 99 are formed by using the unit number morpheme together with the decimal morpheme to specify the decade, and then adding a further unit number morpheme as a suffix, as in *sum-dicip-oli* 'thirty-four' from *sum* 'three', *dicip* 'ten' and *oli* 'four', or *nis-dicip-walɥa* 'twenty-five' from *nis* 'two', *dicip* 'ten' and *walɥa* 'five'. Further illustrations of complex numbers are given in examples 377 and 378 below.

- 377 *adum tha-Ø-du ɬǎi-ŋaŋ nis-dicip-di-yiŋ uni sum-dicip-kit-te*
 warm be-SAS-NPT place-inside two-ten-one-ABL day three-ten-nine-LOC
ka racya-ko puya bo-Ø-du.
 throughout paddy-GEN seed sprout-SAS-NPT

In warm places the rice seeds sprout in twenty-one to thirty-nine days.

- 378 *găi nis-dicip-di tha-ŋa-du beryaŋ, găi-go bore thah-Ø-an.*
 I two-ten-one be-1s-NPT that.time I-GEN marriage be-sAS-3S/PT
 When I was twenty-one, I got married.

10. Adverbs of time and the adverbs *woi* ‘also’ and *jukun* ‘only’

The Thangmi language has an impressive set of indigenous time adverbials. While the terms used for days of the week and months of the year are loans from Nepali, indigenous Thangmi temporal adverbs exist and their widespread use and range of meanings extend beyond those of the corresponding Nepali terms. There are separate and distinct Thangmi lexical items for four days in the past to four days in the future, and from three years back to the year after next. Although not strictly part of nominal morphology, a number of Thangmi adverbial constructions are discussed in this section for reasons of expediency.

10.1 Periods of a day

Thangmi specifies four periods in any given day: ‘morning’, ‘daytime’, ‘evening’ and ‘night’, which roughly correspond to their equivalents in Nepali. I should stress at this point that glosses and the English adverbs used in translation should not be thought of as we would understand them in the West, but rather understood in their South Asian context, in which any time after breakfast may be termed ‘afternoon’ and any time after 2 p.m. may be referred to as ‘evening’. Thangmi temporal adverbs for the periods of a day are shown in Table 60 below.

TABLE 60. PERIODS OF A THANGMI DAY FROM THE DOLAKHĀ DIALECT

<i>băsinŋe</i>	morning
<i>unise</i>	daytime
<i>nyoŋi</i>	evening
<i>ŋaye</i>	night

Examples 379 and 380 below illustrate the use of the Thangmi temporal adverb *băsinŋe* ‘morning’.

- 379 *băsinŋe serek-ta-i-le, nobi caway-i-n.*
 morning arise-1PP-1pPS-PCL downhill walk-1pPS-PT
 In the morning we got up and set off down the hill.

- 380 *tyaŋ lawa-ye-guri bāsinte-ko pecerek isa nama*
 then husband-ERG-IND morning-GEN stale.and.leftover food with
amum-ko ken cya-Ø-ta-le, ca camăi-kăi woi
 mushroom-GEN vegetable.curry eat-SAS-IPP-PCL son daughter-PM also
pi-to-le.
 give-TPP-PCL

And then the husband ate the leftover food from the morning with some mushroom curry, also giving some to his sons and daughters.

Examples 381 and 382 below illustrate the uses of the Thangmi temporal adverb *nyoŋi* ‘evening’ while examples 383 and 384 illustrate the meanings of *ɬaye* ‘night’.

- 381 *nyoŋi, uma huca-pali oste oste-ko jet-yiŋ nem-te*
 evening wife child-p self self-GEN work-ABL house-LOC
kyel-eŋ-an.
 come-pAS-3S/PT

In the evening, [his] wife and children, returning from their own jobs, all came home.

- 382 *nyoŋi tha-ŋa libi, saŋa-ko demca cabuy-eŋ-to-le nem-te*
 evening be-CNS after millet-GEN load carry-pAS-TPP-PCL house-LOC
ray-eŋ-du, nem-te ray-eŋ-to-le, bhetere-te
 bring-pAS-NPT house-LOC bring-pAS-TPP-PCL woven.bamboo.mat-LOC
mor-eŋ-to-le nay-eŋ-du.
 roll.up-pAS-TPP-PCL put-pAS-NPT

When it’s evening, they bundle the millet into loads and carry it home; and once it has been brought home, they roll it up in woven bamboo mats and store it away.

- 383 *humi ɬaye let-sa ari-Ø-du, to-kăi*
 younger.sister night appear-INF be.afraid-SAS-NPT that-PM
ma-cic-ariy-e!
 NEG-CAUS-be.afraid-s/NEG/IMP

Younger sister is afraid to go out at night, so don’t frighten her!

- 384 *ni ɬaye ulam-ko nem-te hok-i-thyo, di-ka naka mi*
 we night road-GEN house-LOC be-1pPS-3sCOND one-HNC new person
kyel-Ø-ta-le ni-kăi poy-i-n.
 come-SAS-IPP-PCL we-PM chase-1pPS-PT

We spent the night sitting on the road until a stranger came along and chased us away.

The adverb *unise*, ‘daytime’, has a similar meaning to the Nepali term *diũso*, and is used to describe any time from soon after breakfast to just before dusk, as in example 385. When combined with the suffix *ka* ‘throughout’, the Thangmi adverb *unise* has the meaning ‘all day’, as shown in example 386.

- 385 *unise tha-Ø-du, guru-pali habi syaŋ-ko nem-te*
 daytime be-SAS-NPT shaman-p before period-GEN house-LOC
yuy-eŋ-du.
 come.from.above-pAS-NPT

Then it’s daytime, and the shamans come back down to the first house at which they started the day before.

- 386 *‘hara tha-na-n? unise ka hara-kăi kerep-na-n?’*
 what be-2s-PT daytime throughout what-PM cry-2s-PT

‘What’s up? Why have you been crying all day?’

Thangmi *beryaŋ*, ‘the time at which’ or ‘at that time’, evidently derived from Nepali *ber* ‘period of time’, is a relative term which always takes the non-preterite tense, regardless of the tense in the scenario of the main clause. In this manner it works somewhat like a proper gerund in which the focus is on the preceding and modifying clause, ‘at the time I was eating...’, rather than the ensuing main clause ‘...he called’. A range of examples with main clauses in different tenses will serve to illustrate the point. Examples 344 and 351 above, and 387 below, illustrate scenarios which are clearly in the past, example 46 above and 388 below are general statements of fact or advice, and in 389 and 390, the main clauses are in the present.

- 387 *caway-i-du beryaŋ, di-ka mi-ko nem-te hok-i-n.*
 walk-1pPS-NPT that.time one-HNC person-GEN house-LOC stay-1pPS-NT

When walking, we ended up staying in this person’s house.

- 388 *ahe phasa ra-Ø-du beryaṇ syākli li-sa*
 much wind come.from.level-sAS-NPT that.time manure scatter-INF
ma-ja.
 NEG-okay

If it's very windy, then the manure must not be scattered.

- 389 *toṇ cya-ṇa-du beryaṇ, bajareṇ naleṇ woi cya-ṇa-du.*
 beer eat-1s-NPT that.time tobacco present also eat-1s-NPT

When I drink beer, only then do I still smoke tobacco.

- 390 *naleṇ gāi-gāi nembo cya-Ø-du nih-u-n-du beryaṇ,*
 present I-PM other.person eat-sAS-NPT see-3P-1s→3-NPT that.time
cya-sa ma-ali.
 eat-INF NEG-like

Now, when I see others smoke, I don't feel like smoking.

10.2 Past and future days

From the vantage point of a foreign learner, one of the most pleasing features of Nepali is that there exist single-word temporal adverbs for 'the day before yesterday', 'the day after tomorrow' and even 'the day after the day after tomorrow'. After the tongue-twisting English solutions for expressing these relatively simple concepts, Nepali is refreshingly to the point. Nepali has separate lexical items to express from *asti*, 'the day before yesterday' to *kānekorsī*, 'four days from now'. In terms of temporal adjectives, Nepali has more in common with many Tibeto-Burman languages in the area than it does with its genetically close cousin language Hindi, in which *kal* means both 'yesterday' and 'tomorrow', and *parsō* means both 'the day before yesterday' and 'the day after tomorrow'. Thangmi, on the other hand, as shown in Table 61 below, has separate lexical items from four days in the past to four days in the future.

**TABLE 61. THANGMI ADVERBS FOR PAST AND FUTURE DAYS IN
THE DOLAKHĀ DIALECT**

<i>kimityaŋ</i>	four days ago
<i>kityaŋ</i>	three days ago
<i>cityaŋ</i>	the day before yesterday
<i>miryaŋ</i>	yesterday
<i>yaŋ</i>	today
<i>baŋhe</i>	tomorrow
<i>citabas</i>	the day after tomorrow
<i>kinabas</i>	three days from now
<i>kitriŋbas</i>	four days from now

Far from being archaic or unused, these temporal adverbs pepper daily conversations and bilingual Thangmi speakers are aware that Nepali does not possess a similarly diverse range of expression. Most interestingly, older and fluent Thangmi speakers attempt to export the concepts encoded by these temporal adverbs into their Nepali speech, resulting in grammatically impossible constructions such as **niko asti* and **niko niko asti* by which they mean ‘the day before the day before yesterday’ and ‘four days ago’ respectively. Examples 391 to 397 below and 36 and 325 above illustrate the use of the adverbs shown in Table 61.

- 391 *kimityaŋ, bubu-ko uma dorok-Ø-an.*
four.days.ago elder.brother-GEN wife run-SAS-3S/PT

Four days ago, elder brother’s wife ran away.

- 392 *găi cityaŋ ra-ko măi-Ø-thyo, oste-ko*
I day.before.yesterday come.from.level-ADH must-SAS-3sCOND self-GEN
mi ma-thaŋ-Ø-ta-le ma-ra-ŋa-n.
person NEG-be.well-SAS-IPP-PCL NEG-come.from.level-1s-PT

I was meant to come the day before yesterday, but because a relative of mine was ill, I didn’t make it.

- 393 *găi isa cya-ta-ŋa-le, yaŋ hara woi ma-loŋ.*
I food eat-IPP-1s-PCL today what also NEG-do

Once I’ve eaten, I’ll do nothing today.

- 394 *găi baṭhe naŋ-ko ama-ko nem-te toŋ tun-sa-kăi*
 I tomorrow you-GEN mother-GEN house-LOC beer drink-INF-PM
yu-ŋa-du.
 come.from.above-1s-NPT

I'll come down tomorrow to drink beer at your mother's house.

- 395 *citabas gă-ye to ṭhoŋe-ko mesya*
 day.after.tomorrow I-ERG that old.man-GEN buffalo
kăiy-u-n-du.
 buy-3P-1s→3-1s→3/NPT

I'll buy that old man's buffalo the day after tomorrow.

- 396 *guru-pali kinabas kari kariy-eŋ-to-le usyay-eŋ-du.*
 shaman-p three.days.from.now song sing-pAS-TPP-PCL dance-pAS-NPT

In three days from now, the shamans will sing songs and then dance.

- 397 *mi si-ŋa libi, to-ko kitriŋbas mumpra loŋ-ko*
 person die-CNS after that-GEN four.days.from.now death.ritual do-ADH
măi-Ø-du.
 must-sAS-NPT

Four days after someone dies, the death rites should be conducted.

A few points arise from the above examples. First, Thangmi temporal adverbs need not necessarily relate to the present moment or the moment of speaking. For example, in 397 above, *kitriŋbas*, which is glossed as 'four days from now', is better translated as 'four days after', since in this context it relates to a general statement rather than a specific instance. On the whole though, as can be seen from the other examples, Thangmi temporal adverbs are used in concrete situations, i.e. 'tomorrow' rather than 'the day after' or 'a day later'. The prevalence of such examples has been the deciding factor in determining the phrasing of the glosses. In Thangmi there is no modifying term such as the Nepali *palṭa* 'change, turn, time', as in *bholi palṭa* 'the next day'. In Thangmi, whether the adverb *baṭhe* means 'tomorrow' or 'the day after' can only be determined by context.

It is apparent that the four adverbs denoting days past contain the Thangmi element <-yaŋ> 'today', identical with the noun *yaŋ* 'today'. The remaining initial segments of the four adverbs, <mir->, <cit->, <kit-> and <kimit-> do not yield to immediate analysis. There is no obvious link between the Thangmi numeral *kit* 'nine', and *kityaŋ* 'three days ago'. The final segment <-bas>, as in *citabas*, *kinabas*

and *kitriŋbas* may well reflect some proto-morpheme **bas* meaning ‘day after’, also reflected in the initial syllable in *baŋhe* ‘tomorrow’. Supporting evidence comes from the Sindhupālcok dialect of Thangmi in which the adverb denoting ‘tomorrow’ is *bāise*, also a likely reflex of **bas* ‘day after’. Finally, the segment <cit- ~ cita->, which appears as the initial segment in both *cityaŋ* ‘the day before yesterday’ and *citabas* ‘the day after tomorrow’, evidently denotes ‘two days from now in the past or future’.

While the above examples deal with defined or completed time, the Thangmi adverb *yamiryaŋ* ‘nowadays, these days, presently’ deals with a less specific and non-finite time period. The adverb *yamiryaŋ* is made up of two elements: a reduced form of *yaŋ* ‘today’ as an initial segment and *miryaŋ* ‘yesterday’ as a second element. In a similar vein, there are a range of ways to express ‘nowadays’ in Nepali, two of which are *ājabholi* and *hijoāja*. The former is made up of the two segments *āja* ‘today’ and *bholi* ‘tomorrow’, while the latter Nepali adverb is comprised of *hijo* ‘yesterday’ and *āja* ‘today’. In terms of their morphological construction then, *yamiryaŋ* (Thangmi) and *hijoāja* (Nepali) are reminiscent of each other. Examples 398 to 400 illustrate different uses of the adverb *yamiryaŋ*.

- 398 *yamiryaŋ gǎi ma-thaŋ tha-ŋa-le, usare cya-ŋa-le hok-ŋa-du.*
 nowadays I NEG-be.well be-1s-PCL medicine eat-1s-PCL be-1s-NPT

On account of being ill these days, I am taking medicine.

- 399 *to beryaŋ yamiryaŋ-ko uniŋ se-Ø-du bajareŋ*
 that that.time nowadays-GEN like taste-SAS-NPT tobacco
ma-hok-Ø-thyo.
 NEG-be-SAS-3sCOND

In those days, tasty cigarettes like the ones you get these days weren’t to be had.

- 400 *thaŋmi di-ka apa ama-ko huca-pali thay-eŋ-le woi,*
 Thangmi one-HNC father mother-GEN child-p be-pAS-PCL also
yamiryaŋ di-ka-ye di-ka-kǎi ma-ŋosǎiy-eŋ.
 nowadays one-HNC-ERG one-HNC-PM NEG-recognise-pAS

Even though all Thangmi people are the descendants of the first Thangmi father and mother, these days we don’t even recognise one another.

The Thangmi temporal adverb *nokkhol* ‘some time ago’ expresses a time period of non-specific length and depth. The adverb *nokkhol* ‘some time ago’ is used in

colloquial speech when the speaker is unsure of the exact time that a certain event took place, as in example 401. The adverb is most often encountered in its emphatic or intensified form, *nokkhol-ăi*, together with the suffix <-ăi> (CON), as in example 402.

- 401 *nokkhol to-ye thaŋna miŋ ciy-Ø-u-no.*
 some.days.ago that-ERG old cloth throw.away-SAS-3P-3→3/PT
 He threw his old clothes away a few days ago.

- 402 *tete nem-te ma-hok, nokkhol-ăi yah-Ø-an.*
 elder.sister house-LOC NEG-be some.time.ago-CON go-SAS-3S/PT
 Elder sister isn't at home, she left some time ago already.

10.3 Past and future years

Although not quite as rich as the adverbs for days, which extend four days into the past as well as for days into the future, a set of Thangmi temporal adverbs exists for years past and future. As can be seen in Table 62 below, there is a greater range of adverbs for expressing past years (up to three years back) than future ones (no further than the year after next). This is to be expected since past years have definitely occurred, while future ones have an element of uncertainty about them. The adverb *amamakaleŋ* 'a (very) long time ago' is included in Table 62 because it shares some morphological features with the other adverbs presented, despite the fact that it indicates non-specific time.

TABLE 62. THANGMI ADVERBS FOR PAST AND FUTURE YEARS
 IN THE DOLAKHĀ DIALECT

<i>amamakaleŋ</i>	a (very) long time ago
<i>amasmakaleŋ</i>	three years ago
<i>asmakaleŋ</i>	two years ago
<i>amakaleŋ</i>	last year
<i>tarul</i>	this year
<i>kalyaŋ</i>	next year
<i>kalijyaŋ</i>	the year after next

All of the adverbs denoting years past and future presented in Table 62 above, excluding *tarul* ‘this year’, contain the element <kal>. Both as a substantive and as an adverb, *kāl* has a range of meanings in Indo-Aryan languages, ranging from ‘time’ to ‘tomorrow’ (Turner 1997: 90). The Thangmi element <kal> attested in adverbs expressing years past and future would appear to be a loan from Indo-Aryan *kāl*, ‘time’. A morphemic analysis of the adverb *kalyañ* ‘next year’ would therefore be: <kal> ‘time, tomorrow’ combined with <-yañ> ‘today’, resulting in a literal meaning of ‘tomorrow year’. Examples 403 to 407, and example 356 above, illustrate the use of the seven temporal adverbs presented in Table 62.

403 *găi-go pepelek amasmakaleñ gwi-y-Ø-u-no.*

I-GEN money three.years.ago steal-SAS-3P-3→3/PT

My money was stolen three years ago.

404 *asmakaleñ jekha tete siy-Ø-an, ni sakalei kerep-i-n.*

two.years.ago big elder.sister die-SAS-3S/PT we all cry-1pPS-PT

Elder sister died the year before last, and we all cried.

405 *ban-pali nama amakaleñ gă-ye naka nem khem-u-n-uñ.*

friend-p with last.year I-ERG new house build-3P-1s→3-1s→3/PT

Last year, I built a new house with the help of my friends.

406 *‘tarul bore loñ-u-na-n, kalyañ hara tha-Ø-du?’*

this.year marriage do-3P-2s-PT next.year what be-SAS-NPT

‘This year you got married, what will next year bring?’

407 *hu-ye tarul bore loñ-ña-be, kalijyañ*

younger.brother-ERG this.year marriage do-CNS-TOP year.after.next

to-ko ca camăi tha-Ø-du.

that-GEN son daughter be-SAS-NPT

If younger brother marries this year, by the year after next he will have a son or a daughter.

10.4 Telling the time

Perhaps since watches and wall clocks are not widespread in the Thangmi area, the Thangmi language has calqued Nepali constructions to tell the time. The Nepali question *kati bajyo?* ‘what time is it?’ is composed of *kati* ‘how much, how many’ and *bajyo*, the third person singular preterite form of the verb *bajnu* ‘to ring, strike,

sound’. Thangmi uses a similar construction: *hani syak-Ø-an?* (how.much strike-SAS-3S/PT) ‘what time is it?’, composed of *hani* ‘how much, how many’ and the third person singular preterite form of the verb *syaksa* ‘to ring, strike, sound’. While unit number morphemes are used to indicate the hours, there is no way to express ‘half past...’ or ‘quarter to...’ in Thangmi. If needed, the words for fractions of hours are borrowed from Nepali. The only numeral fraction attested in Thangmi is *bakoṭek* ‘half’, as in *bakoṭek ulam* (half road) ‘half way (in a journey)’, also illustrated by example 408 below.

- 408 *găi thombe tha-ŋa-n, to uni to-ye bakoṭek*
 I surprise be-1s-PT that day that-ERG half
ciy-Ø-u-no, to găi kum-to-le cya-ŋa-n.
 throw.away-SAS-3P-3→3/PT that I pick.up-TPP-PCL eat-1s-PT

I was so surprised, but that same day he threw away half of one of those cigarettes, so I picked it up and smoked it.

The construction for asking ‘at what time...?’ in Thangmi differs slightly from its Nepali counterpart, *kati baje* ‘at what time?’, on account of the inclusion of the noun *beryaŋ* ‘time’. Examples 409 to 411 below and 286 above illustrate Thangmi constructions for telling the time.

- 409 *hani syak-Ø-du beryaŋ hen-sa?*
 how.much strike-SAS-NPT that.time go-INF

At what time will you leave?

- 410 *sum syak-Ø-an.*
 three strike-SAS-3S/PT

It’s three o’clock.

- 411 *nis syak-Ø-du beryaŋ, jakcho ara-sa hen-ko*
 two strike-SAS-NPT that.time wheat cut.with.sickle-INF go-ADH
măi-Ø-du.
 must-SAS-NPT

At two o’clock, we should go and harvest the wheat.

10.5 The adverb *libi* ‘after, behind’

morph:	<i>libi</i>
label:	after

The Thangmi adverb *libi* ‘after, behind’ occurs freely as an adverb or in nominal arguments to convey the temporal sense of ‘after, later’ in time, as in examples 412 to 415 below.

- 412 *gǎ-ye naŋ-kǎi libi urou-na-ŋa-du.*
I-ERG you-PM after call-2s-1s-NPT

I’ll call you later.

- 413 *tyaŋ libi, saŋa-ko puya li-ko mǎi-Ø-du.*
then after millet-GEN seed scatter-ADH must-SAS-NPT.

After that, the millet seeds must be scattered.

- 414 *peŋey-eŋ-du di nis mǎina libi, to saŋa nama ʈhare*
sow-PAS-NPT one two month after that millet with weed
boy-eŋ-du, to-kǎi pun-to-le ci-ko mǎi-Ø-du.
sprout-PAS-NPT that-PM uproot-TPP-PCL throw.away-ADH must-SAS-NPT

One or two months after sowing, in amongst the millet, weeds sprout up and these have to be pulled out and thrown away.

- 415 *tyaŋ libi racya min-Ø-du.*
that after paddy ripen-SAS-NPT

After that the paddy ripens.

When reduplicated, the Thangmi adverb *libi* ‘after, behind’ has one of two possible meanings. Either the meaning is intensified, as in *libi libi* ‘a long way after’, and illustrated by examples 416 and 417, or *libi libi* conveys the spatial sense of ‘behind’, as in examples 418 and 419.

- 416 *ja-Ø-du, susto ya-Ø, naŋ-ko libi libi gǎi woi*
okay-SAS-NPT slow go-s/IMP you-GEN after after I also
ra-ŋu ra?
come.from.level-PER or

Fine, travel safely, shall I trail behind you a little ways?

- 417 *libi libi, cahuca camăica-ye tokolok-e gonthe*
 after after man woman-ERG hoe-INS round.clod.of.earth
them-to-le ucya ucya lony-eη-du sya wa-sa habi,
 break.up-TPP-PCL small small do-pAS-NPT bull plough-INF before
jakcho liy-eη-du.
 wheat broadcast-pAS-NPT

Afterwards, the men and womenfolk break up the round clods of earth with their hoes and make the earth fine and level; and before the bull is used to plough the fields again, they broadcast the wheat.

- 418 *libi libi, cahuca-pali-ye jet lony-eη-du.*
 after after man-p-ERG work do-pAS-NPT

The menfolk do their work, coming behind.

- 419 *libi libi, alam ηaη guru take tap-to-le*
 after after ritual.flag and shaman-ERG shaman's.drum beat-TPP-PCL
usya-sa caway-eη-du.
 dance-INF walk-pAS-NPT

Behind comes the shaman's ritual flag, and the shamans come beating their drums and dancing.

I have recorded only one example of the Thangmi adverb *libi* 'after, behind' in combination with another postposition or case marker. Example 98 above illustrates the use of the genitive case marker <-ko ~ -go> (GEN) together with the postposition *libi* 'after, behind', as in *libi-ko* (before-GEN) 'the last one, the one [who came] after'. However, the Thangmi adverb *libi* 'after, behind' does occur in the widely used phrase VERB-*ηa libi* (VERB-CNS after) 'after having...', as in examples 420 and 421.

- 420 *min-ηa libi, raη-ηaη ti, aprou,*
 cook-CNS after unirrigated.field-inside wicker.basket carrying.strap
karati cabu-to-le yey-eη-du, ka jet aye camăica-pali-ye
 sickle carry-TPP-PCL go-pAS-NPT this work more woman-p-ERG
lony-eη-du.
 do-pAS-NPT

Once it's ripe, wicker baskets, carrying straps and sickles are carried to the field—this work is more often done by the womenfolk.

- 421 *gǎ-ye-guri aye toŋ tun-ŋa libi, apraca almaŋ-ŋa-du.*
 I-ERG-IND much beer drink-CNS after good dream-1s-NPT

When I drink a lot of beer, I have great dreams.

10.6 The adverb *woi* ‘also’

morph: *woi*
 label: also

The adverb *woi* ‘also, even’ takes no nominal suffixes or postpositions. Examples 422 and 423 below illustrate the use of the adverb *woi* in its meaning as ‘also’.

- 422 *gǎi-gǎi woi apraca hok-Ø-du, naŋ naleŋ kuta-yiŋ*
 I-PM also fine be-SAS-NPT you present where-ABL
ra-na-du?
 come.from.level-2s-NPT

I’m also fine, where are you coming from now?

- 423 *ubo mi-ko coi ubo woi tha-Ø-du ra ma-tha?*
 white person-GEN blood white also be-SAS-NPT or NEG-be

Is the blood of white people also white?

The adverb *woi* can also be used in phrases whose meaning is contrary to what the listener might expect. In such cases, as in examples 424 and 425 below, the adverb *woi* is best translated as ‘even’.

- 424 *kutaleŋ kutaleŋ pǎtrika cabu-to-le arŋik-sa jet woi*
 when when newspaper carry-TPP-PCL shout-INF work also
loŋ-u-n-uŋ.
 do-3P-1s→3-1s→3/PT

From time to time I would even work selling newspapers.

- 425 *dorok-ŋa libi, di-gore phesu gal-te ya-let-i-n, to woi*
 run-CNS after one-CLF sheep cage-LOC go-appear-1pPS-PT that also
ŋi-si-Ø-du.
 close-REF-SAS-NPT

After running [downhill], we finally arrived at a sheep hut, but even that was closed.

The adverb *woi* is often appropriately translated by English ‘too’, as in example 426 below and examples 70 and 213 above.

- 426 *begale uma-ko sum-ka ca thay-eŋ-an, ucyaca ca*
other wife-GEN three-HNC son be-pAS-3S/PT small son
nik-Ø-ta-le, to woi siy-Ø-an.
 give.birth-SAS-IPP-PCL that also die-SAS-3S/PT

His new wife went on to have three sons, but as she was giving birth to the last one, she too died.

As described in Section §6.3 of this chapter, the adverb *woi* ‘also’ is used in conjunction with interrogative pronouns to negate their meaning, as in examples 291, 294, 299 and 303 above.

10.7 The adverb *jukun* ‘only’

morph: *jukun*
 label: only

The adverb *jukun* ‘only’ is attested in the Sindhupālcok dialect of Thangmi only, in which it marks one element in a nominal phrase to the exclusion of others. Speakers of the Dolakhā dialect of Thangmi use the Nepali loan word *mātra* ‘only’, and usually in its emphatic form *mātrāi*, as there is no indigenous Thangmi alternative. Example 427 below illustrates the use of the adverb *jukun* ‘only’ in the Sindhupālcok dialect.

- 427 *to jukun ami-Ø-du, gǎi ma-ami.*
 that only sleep-SAS-NPT I NEG-sleep
 Only he’s asleep, I’m not.

11. Some bound nominal elements

A number of Thangmi nouns are constituted from bound elements whose meaning is transparent. Since these bound lexical items are unproductive, perhaps even ancient, nominal affixes, they are not glossed in the examples used to illustrate the grammatical description, nor are they separately marked in the lexicon. While some

of the nominal roots to which these bound forms are attached are lexical items in modern Thangmi, the meanings of others are not transparent.⁹

11.1 The ‘person’ morph

morph:	<-mi>
label:	person

The bound morph <-mi> indicates human referents and is found as a suffix in Thangmi kinship terms, ethnonyms and clan names. The bound suffixal morph <-mi> is clearly cognate with the Thangmi noun *mi* ‘person, human’, and occurs in the bound forms *humi* ‘younger sister’, *akyangmi* ‘a Thangmi clan name’, *Thangmi* ‘Thangmi’ and *Roimi* ‘Newar’.

11.2 The ‘grain or usable plant matter’ morph

morph:	<ja>
label:	grain, usable plant matter

The bound morph <ja> ‘grain, usable plant matter’ is found in at least three Thangmi lexical items relating to grains or usable plant matter, mostly as the initial element in polysyllabic words. Examples include *jakcho* ‘wheat, *Triticum sativum*’, *jake* ‘uncooked rice, *Oryza sativa*’ and *jakhore* ‘basket for storing rice and other grains’. Other possible Thangmi cognates are *bajareŋ* ‘locally-grown tobacco, *Nicotiana tabacum*’, *jabi* ‘small bag made of nettle fibre’, *aja* ‘leaf’, *racya* ‘paddy, rice in the field, harvested but unhusked rice, *Oryza sativa*’, *puya* ‘seed, shoot of a plant’ and *yak* ‘giant taro, *Alocasia indicum*’. Cognates of the Thangmi bound morph <ja> ‘grain’ in other Tibeto-Burman languages include the Wambule suffix ‘grain’ <-ja> (Opgenort 2002: 128), Dumi *dza...* ‘rice, cooked grain’ (van Driem 1993a: 375), Limbu *ya?* ‘unhusked rice; paddy’ (van Driem 1987: 541) and Kulung *ja* ‘cooked rice’ (Tolsma 1999: 210).

11.3 The ‘round and fairly hard internal body organ’ morph

morph:	<sek>
label:	round and fairly hard internal body organ

The bound morph <sek> ‘round and fairly hard internal body organ’ is found as the final element in the Thangmi lexical items *aŋeŋsek* ‘kidney’, *loŋsek* ‘heart’, *mesek* ‘eyeball’ and *papasek* ‘testicle, gonad’, and as the first element in the Thangmi verb

⁹ See Opgenort (2002: 126-130) for a helpful discussion of noun classifying suffixes in Wambule and their cognates in related Tibeto-Burman languages.

seksa ‘to flower, bloom, blossom’. The bound morph <sek> is cognate with Proto-Tibeto-Burman **sey* ‘fruit’ (Benedict 1972: 27), other extant reflexes of which include the Wambule suffix ‘fruit’ <-si ~ -ci> (Opgenort 2002: 129), Limbu *seÖ* ‘pit, seed, kernel (of husked grain)’ (van Driem 1987: 507) and Kulung *se* ‘fruit’ (Tolsma 1999: 230) and *sisi* ‘testicles, seeds’ (Tolsma 1999: 232).

11.4 The ‘tree or wood’ morph

morph:	<-seŋ ~ -siŋ>
label:	tree, wood

The bound morph <-seŋ ~ -siŋ> ‘tree, wood’ is related to the Thangmi noun *seŋ* ‘firewood, wood’ and is a reflex of Proto-Tibeto-Burman **siŋ* ‘tree, wood’ (Benedict 1972: 55). The bound morph <-seŋ ~ -siŋ> ‘tree, wood’ is found as the final element in many Thangmi lexical items denoting species of trees, as in *bosiŋ* ~ *busiŋ* ‘alder, Nepal black cedar, *Alnus nepalensis*’, *brusiŋ* ‘the wild cherry tree, *Prunus puddum*’, *kosaseŋ* ‘a species of tree, *Cephalanthus naucleoides*’, *nunuseŋ* ‘the tree, *Ficus neriifolia*’ and *ʈukusiŋ* ‘a species of tree, *Fraxinus floribunda*’. Other reflexes include the archaic and largely defunct word for ‘forest, jungle, wood’, *teŋseŋ* ~ *teŋsiŋ*, and the ritual Thangmi word *marəŋseŋ* ‘the bier used for carrying the corpse, which is made from bamboo or wood’. Cognates in other Tibeto-Burman languages of Nepal include the Wambule suffix ‘tree, wood’ <-si ~ -ci ~ -chi> (Opgenort 2002: 129), Kulung *siŋ* ‘firewood’ (Tolsma 1999: 231), Dumi *sĕ* ‘wood, stick, log, lumber, timber, firewood; tree’ (van Driem 1993a: 418), Limbu *siŋ* ‘wood’ (van Driem 1987: 511) and Yamphu *siŋ* ‘firewood’ (Rutgers 1998: 577).