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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 6

MORPHOLOGY OF SIMPLICIA

In this chapter, a morphemic analysis of the affixes in simplex forms of the Thangmi verb is provided. Simplicia, or simplex verb forms, are non-periphrastic finite indicatives which consist of the verb stem affixes indicating tense and agreement for person and number with the actant or actants involved in the verbal scenario. Five Thangmi verbal agreement affixes are *portemanteau* forms, i.e. single morphemes conveying more than one semantic feature. Complex verb forms, such as gerunds, participles, adhortatives, optatives, infinitives, imperatives and the various Thangmi periphrastic tense forms discussed in Chapter 7, are derived from the simplex forms analysed in this chapter.

In the analysis of Thangmi verbal morphology, zero morphemes appear as 'Ø' in the segmented verb form and are labelled in the interlinear morpheme gloss. While some linguists opt to label only overt verbal morphemes in the gloss (see van Driem 1987: 69), verbal agreement zero morphs are consistently marked throughout this grammatical description. Unlike Limbu, in which redundant and overt verbal morphemes may be dropped in the interest of efficiency or to prevent ambiguity (van Driem 1987: 69), Thangmi does not permit morphological 'short cuts'. Even when the meaning is abundantly clear from the context and from the morphological marking on the associated nominal elements in an argument, verbal agreement morphemes are never superfluous and may not be dropped.

On account of the terminological complexity of the issues discussed in this chapter, it is prudent to define the morphological categories and terms used at the outset. *Singularity* is defined as one actant and *plurality* as more than one actant. The *root* or *core syllable* is the syllable of a verb stem to which all verbal affixes are attached. In polysyllabic verb stems, the core syllable is the last syllable of the stem. In monosyllabic verb stems, the root or core syllable is the only syllable of the stem. An *affixal string* is a sequence of one or more affixes attached to the root or core syllable of the stem, either in prefixal or suffixal position. An *agent* is the most agentive actant in a transitive verbal scenario and is obligatorily marked by the ergative suffix in the preterite tense and optionally marked by the ergative suffix in non-preterite scenarios, as described in Section §3.2 of Chapter 5. A *patient* is the less agentive actant in a transitive verbal scenario. The patient may be a beneficiary, victim, undergoer or recipient of the action, and is marked by the patient marker <-kai ~ -gai> (PM) following the distribution outlined in Section §4.3 of Chapter 5.

An *object* is the peripheral or least animate third argument in a transitive verbal scenario, and is not reflected in the verbal agreement markers. A *subject* is the only actant of an intransitive or reflexive verb. In contrast with many Kiranti languages, Thangmi does not differentiate for dual number, nor does the language exhibit an inclusive versus exclusive distinction.

1. Affixal slots

A segmental morphemic analysis of Thangmi conjugational endings requires the positing of seven distinct functional positions, or *slots*, in the affixal string of a simplex verb. This affixal string can be subdivided into one prefixal slot and six suffixal slots to accommodate the complete Thangmi paradigm. Each slot or functional position in the affixal string of a verb is occupied by a definable set of morphemes. The morphemes which share a position in the string define the function of that position, and there is a tendency for semantically related morphemes to occupy the same slot.

It is generally accepted that the positing of slots facilitates the comparison of cognate verbal morphologies, as the sequence of affixal morphemes in Tibeto-Burman verbal conjugations reflects an 'ancient element order' in the proto-language (van Driem 1993c: 293). Slots are language-specific and analysis-dependent, and represent the non-random sequential ordering of morphemes in conjugated verb forms. In Thangmi, each slot may contain one or more morphemes. While most Thangmi verbal agreement morphemes may be assigned to a specific slot on the basis of formal arguments, in some cases, a morpheme cannot be assigned to a specific suffixal slot because it occupies a position which can only be described as anterior to certain suffixes and posterior to others in the suffixal chain. In these situations, I have assigned the morpheme to a suffixal slot on the basis of semantic and pragmatic considerations.

The morphemes which have been assigned to a slot on semantic grounds are the following: The first person plural patient or subject morpheme <-i> (1pPS) and the first person plural agent to second or third person patient *portemanteau* morpheme <-wa> (1p→23) have both been placed in suffixal slot 2, the number and person morpheme slot, although both suffixes could occupy an affixal position anywhere after the reflexive morpheme <-si> (REF), which occupies suffixal slot 1, and before the tense and tensed *portemanteau* morphemes of suffixal slot 6. The first person singular to third person *portemanteau* morpheme <-n> (1s→3) could occupy either suffixal slot 4 or 5, as it appears after the third person patient morpheme <-u> (3P) and before the preterite *portemanteau* morpheme <-uŋ> (1s→3/PT) which specifically indexes a transitive relationship between a first person agent and a third

person patient in preterite time. Because of the shared feature of first person singular involvement, the first person singular to third person *portemanteau* morpheme <-n> (1s→3) is placed alongside the first person singular actant morpheme <-ŋa> (1s) in suffixal slot 5, which may be thought of as the first person singular morpheme slot.

Like the first person singular to third person *portemanteau* morpheme <-n> (1s→3), the tensed *portemanteau* morpheme <-uŋ> (1s→3/PT) occurs only in the transitive scenario between a first person agent and a third person patient, and then always after the *portemanteau* morpheme <-n> (1s→3). The functional position of the suffix <-uŋ> (1s→3/PT) depends on which suffixal slot the morpheme <-n> (1s→3) is assigned to. As outlined above, for reasons of semantic consistency the *portemanteau* morpheme <-n> (1s→3) has been assigned to the fifth functional position, and so concomitantly the associated *portemanteau* suffix <-uŋ> (1s→3/PT) must occupy the following functional position, which is suffixal slot 6. Finally, the *portemanteau* morpheme <-no> (3→3/PT), which specifically indexes a transitive relationship between a third person agent and a third person patient in preterite time, could occupy a position anywhere between suffixal slots 4 and 6, since the morpheme follows the third person patient morpheme <-u> (3P) situated in suffixal slot 3. Given that all other morphemes indexing tense in Thangmi occupy the final functional position, suffixal slot 6, the tensed *portemanteau* morpheme <-no> (3→3/PT) has been assigned to this final position, the so-called tense and tensed *portemanteau* slot, on semantic grounds.

While many verbal agreement morphemes are common to both the intransitive, reflexive and transitive paradigms of Thangmi verbs, some morphemes have a more restricted distribution. The reflexive morpheme <-si> (REF) occurs only in reflexive verbal paradigms, while the preterite tense third person subject *portemanteau* morpheme <-an> (3S/PT) occurs only in reflexive and intransitive verbal paradigms and thus not in transitive verbal scenarios. The first person plural agent to second or third person plural patient *portemanteau* morpheme <-wa> (1p→23), the third person patient morpheme <-u> (3P), the first person singular to third person *portemanteau* morpheme <-n> (1s→3), the third person agent to third person patient preterite *portemanteau* morpheme <-no> (3→3/PT) and the first person agent to third person patient preterite *portemanteau* morpheme <-uŋ> (1s→3/PT) occur only in transitive verbal paradigms. The remaining agreement morphemes in Thangmi simplex verbs not listed above may occur in intransitive, reflexive and transitive paradigms.

Table 63 below presents an overview of the slots, their functions and the verbal agreement morphemes which fill them.

TABLE 63. AFFIXAL SLOTS AND AGREEMENT MORPHEMES FOR THANGMI SIMPLEX VERBS

pf	**Negative morpheme slot:**	
	<ma->	negative (NEG)
sf1	**Reflexive morpheme slot:**	
	<-si ~ -siy>	reflexive (REF)
sf2	**Person and number morpheme slot:**	
	<-Ø>	non-first person singular agent or subject (sAS)
	<-eŋ>	plural agent or plural subject (pAS)
	<-ni ~ -n>	second person plural actant (2p)
	<-i>	first person plural patient or first person plural subject (1pPS)
	<-wa>	first person plural to second or third person *portemanteau* (1p→23)
sf3	**Third person patient morpheme slot:**	
	<-u>	third person patient (3P)
sf4	**Second person singular morpheme slot:**	
	<-na>	second person singular actant (2s)
sf5	**First person singular morpheme slot:**	
	<-ŋa>	first person singular actant (1s)
	<-n>	first person singular to third *portemanteau* (1s→3)
sf6	**Tense and tensed *portemanteau* morpheme slot:**	
	<-du>	non-preterite tense (NPT)
	<-n>	preterite tense (PT)
	<-an>	preterite tense third person subject *portemanteau* (3S/PT)
	<-no>	preterite tense third to third *portemanteau* (3→3/PT)
	<-uŋ>	preterite tense first to third *portemanteau* (1s→3/PT)

Actant markers for agent, patient and subject are not evenly distributed across the affixal slots, nor are they parallel in function for all persons and numbers. Three distinct groups can be distinguished on the basis of morpheme function and distribution in the affixal string. Suffixal slot 2 functions as the person and number slot, and five agreement morphemes are located in this functional position. Suffixal slot 5, on the other hand, is restricted to morphemes indexing the involvement of a first person actant; while the final suffixal slot, functional position 6 in the sequence, houses five agreement markers, all of which signal tense.

A further distinction can be made between two types of person and number agreement morphemes. In the following sections of this chapter, I present an analysis of Thangmi flexional verb paradigms and describe the distribution and meaning of each affix which plays a role in the simplex verb. One group of affixes is used in finite simplex verb forms, while another set, the imperative person and number agreement suffixes, are used only in imperative verbal forms. The former are analysed in this chapter whereas the latter are discussed in Chapter 7.

2. Morphophonology of the verb root in simplicia

The suffixation of simplex person and number verbal agreement markers to a verb root may result in morphophonologically conditioned alterations. When followed by a vowel-initial verbal agreement suffix, Thangmi open-stem verbs are realised with one of three intervocalic glides: either /h/, /y/ or /w/. The morphophonology of intervocalic approximants is described in detail in Section §3 of Chapter 4.

3. The verb stem

In striking contrast to many Kiranti languages, Thangmi verbs show no paradigmatic stem alternations, except in two verbs. A Thangmi verb stem may consist of one or more syllables, and affixes are prefixed and suffixed directly to the stem. Aside from the regular and predictable morphophonological alternations described in Section §2 above and in Section §3 of Chapter 4, all but two Thangmi verb stems are regular. The two irregular verbs are *hen-sa* ‘to go’ and *cya-sa* ‘to eat’. Other Thangmi verbs, even when related in meaning or form to the two irregular verbs, do not exhibit the irregularities attested below for *hen-sa* and *cya-sa*.

3.1 The irregular verb *hen-sa*

The Thangmi verb *hen-sa* ‘to go’ has three interesting features. First, like the English verb ‘to go’, which has stem form alternates <go> and <went>, the Thangmi verb *hen-sa* ‘to go’ has stem forms <hen-> and <ya- ~ -ye> which are etymologically unrelated to one another. Verb stem suppletion for the Thangmi intransitive verb

hen-sa ‘to go’ can be categorised by the following rule: the stem alternate <hen-> occurs in combination with the adhortative <-ko> (ADH) and infinitive suffixes <-sa> (INF) only, and the verb stem <ya- ~ -ye> is used in all other verbal scenarios.[1] Contrastive examples are *hen-ko* (go-ADH) ‘let’s go’ versus *ya-ŋa-du* (go-1S-NPT) ‘I’m going’.

Second, the Thangmi verb *hen-sa* may be conjugated transitively as well as intransitively. When used intransitively, *hen-sa* means ‘to go’, whereas the transitive conjugation of the verb means ‘to take’. Stem suppletion occurs in the intransitive conjugation only, so no confusion arises about the intended meaning of a specific utterance. Finally, when conjugated intransitively, the stem <ya- ~ -ye> of the verb *hen-sa* ‘to go’, has the stem alternate <ye-> in combination with the verbal agreement morphemes for first person plural subject (1PPS) and second and third person plural subject (PAS), as in *ni yey-i-n* (we go-1PPS-PT) ‘we went’ and *to-baŋ yey-eŋ-du* (that-Pp go-PAS-NPT) ‘they go’. While the basic stem alternate in such forms is <ye->, according to the morphophonological rule for intervocalic approximants discussed in detail in Section §3 of Chapter 4, the realisation is <-yey> before /i/ and /e/, as summarised by the following diagram:

∑ /e/ → ∑ /ey/ / _/e/ and _/i/

Table 64 below illustrates the irregularities of the Thangmi verb *hen-sa* ‘to take’ and ‘to go’.

TABLE 64. TRANSITIVE AND INTRANSITIVE NON-PRETERITE CONJUGATIONS OF THE THANGMI VERB *HEN-SA*

transitive	**to take**	**intransitive**	**to go**
hen-u-n-du	I take	*ya-ŋa-du*	I go
hen-u-na-du	you take	*ya-na-du*	you go
hen-Ø-u-du	he, she, it takes	*ya-Ø-du*	he, she, it goes
hen-wa-du	we take	*yey-i-du*	we go
hen-n-u-du	you(p) take	*ya-ni-du*	you(p) go
hen-eŋ-du	they take	*yey-eŋ-du*	they go

[1] The stem form <-ya> and the infinitive suffix <-sa> (INF) combine to form *ya-sa*, meaning ‘to feed’ rather than *‘to go’.

The stem <ya> 'go' of the verb *hen-sa* 'to go' is often reduplicated to convey intensified feeling or a sense of urgency, as in examples 1 and 2 below. This manner of reduplication has not been attested for any other verb.

1 *to cawah-Ø-an, ya-ya woi di-gore laca pole*
that walk-sAS-3S/PT go-go also one-CLF Indian.rhododendron trunk

ya-let-Ø-an, uma-ye ŋah-Ø-u-du uniŋ loŋ-Ø-u-no.
go-appear-sAS-3S/PT wife-ERG say-sAS-3P-NPT like do-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

So he set off, and after walking and walking he came to an Indian rhododendron tree and did exactly as his wife had told him to.

2 *libi ya-ya woi, chaŋ-te huca sony-e hen-Ø-u-du*
after go-go also bamboo.cradle-LOC child river-ERG take-sAS-3P-NPT

niy-eŋ-no.
see-pAS-3→3/PT

After running and running, they saw a child in a bamboo cradle being washed down the river.

3.2 The irregular verb *cya-sa*

The Thangmi verb *cya-sa* 'to eat' exhibits no suppletion, but does show a pattern of stem alternation similar to that described above for *hen-sa* 'to go'. The verb *cya-sa* is conjugated intransitively for human subjects and transitively for non-human agents. While non-human agents of the verb *cya-sa* 'to eat' are usually animals, as in examples 3 and 4 below, example 5 illustrates an 'animified' inanimate noun which can also 'eat'.

3 *loṇe-kai-guri rage let-Ø-ta-le, to-te hok-eŋ-du*
jackal-PM-IND anger appear-sAS-IPP-PCL that-LOC be-pAS-NPT

makar-pali cyah-Ø-u-no, ṭhoṇi oste-ko nem-te
monkey-p eat-sAS-3P-3→3/PT old.woman self-GEN house-LOC

yah-Ø-an.
go-sAS-3S/PT

Becoming angry, the jackal ate up all the monkeys that were there, and the old woman went back to her own house.

4 *makar-pali-ye saŋa cey-eŋ-no.*
monkey-p-ERG millet eat-pAS-3→3/PT

The monkeys ate the millet.

5 *'tony-e ni-ko maŋ sakalei cyah-Ø-u-du, sewa bubu',*
beer-ERG we-GEN body all eat-sAS-3P-NPT salute elder.brother

ŋa-to-le ŋah-Ø-u-no.
say-TPP-PCL say-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

'Beer totally consumes our bodies, I salute you, elder brother', she said.

In example 6 below, *cya-sa* is conjugated transitively for an animal agent, while in example 7, the same sentence is conjugated intransitively for a human subject. The object of consumption, *cici* 'meat', is the same in both cases.

6 *du-ye cici cyah-Ø-u-no.*
tiger-ERG meat eat-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

The tiger ate the meat.

7 *tete gai-go cici cyah-Ø-an.*
elder.sister I-GEN meat eat-sAS-3S/PT

Elder sister ate the meat that was mine.

Much like the verb *hen-sa* 'to go', *cya-sa* 'to eat' has a stem alternate <ce-> in combination with the verbal agreement morphemes for a first person plural actant (1p→23 or 1pPS) and a plural agent or plural subject (pAS), as in *ni cey-i-n* (we eat-1pPS-PT) 'we ate' and *to-baŋ cey-eŋ-du* (that-Pp eat-pAS-NPT) 'they are eating'. This stem alternation occurs regardless of the transitivity of the verb, so that the stem alternate <-ce-> is present in verbal strings when the agent is a non-human animate as well as when the subject is human. While the base stem alternate is <ce->, according to the morphophonological rule for intervocalic approximants discussed in detail in Section §3 of Chapter 4, the realisation before /i/ and /e/ is <-cey>, as summarised by the following diagram:

∑ /e/ → ∑ /ey/ / _/e/ and _/i/

While some other Thangmi verbs may be conjugated both transitively and intransitively, such as *ra-sa* 'to bring' (transitive) and *ra-sa* 'to come' (intransitive), no other Thangmi verbs exhibit stem alternation or suppletion outlined above for

hen-sa and *cya-sa*. The non-preterite conjugation of the Thangmi verb *cya-sa* 'to eat' is illustrated in Table 65 below.

TABLE 65. TRANSITIVE AND INTRANSITIVE NON-PRETERITE CONJUGATIONS OF THE THANGMI VERB *CYA-SA*

transitive	**non-human**	**intransitive**	**human**
cyah-u-n-du	I eat	*cya-ŋa-du*	I eat
cyah-u-na-du	you eat	*cya-na-du*	you eat
cyah-Ø-u-du	it eats	*cya-Ø-du*	he, she eats
ce-wa-du	we eat	*cey-i-du*	we eat
cya-n-u-du	you(p) eat	*cya-ni-du*	you(p) eat
cey-eŋ-du	they eat	*cey-eŋ-du*	they eat

4. Simplex person and number agreement morphemes

Simplex verb forms may contain up to three person and number agreement suffixes in any given string. An inventory of the simplex person and number agreement morphemes is given in Table 63 above. The morphemes in the first functional position occur as the initial elements after the verb stem while those in suffixal slot 6 make up the final elements in any given string.

Tables 66 to 68 below show the distribution of Thangmi person and number verbal agreement morphemes. Table 66 presents the agreement suffixes in intransitive verbs. Table 67 shows the agreement suffixes in reflexive verbs and Table 68 presents the suffixes for transitive verbs. Intransitive and reflexive conjugations use the same set of simplex agreement suffixes marking the involvement of person and number of grammatical subject. The only formal difference between the intransitive and reflexive conjugations is the presence of the reflexive marker <-si> (REF) anterior to any person and number agreement morphemes in reflexive verbal forms.

In Tables 66 to 68, the four morpheme strings under each agreement heading represent the non-preterite, the preterite, the non-preterite negative, and the preterite negative simplex forms respectively. The morpheme gloss labels are provided directly beneath each example, and the negative forms are listed below the corresponding affirmative strings.

TABLE 66. INTRANSITIVE MORPHEME STRINGS FOR THANGMI SIMPLEX VERBS

subject	non-preterite	preterite
1s	∑-*ŋa-du* ∑-1s-NPT	∑-*ŋa-n* ∑-1s-PT
	ma-∑ NEG-∑	*ma*-∑-*ŋa-n* NEG-∑-1s-PT
2s	∑-*na-du* ∑-2s-NPT	∑-*na-n* ∑-2s-PT
	ma-∑ NEG-∑	*ma*-∑-*na-n* NEG-∑-2s-PT
3s	∑-*Ø-du* ∑-sAS-NPT	∑-*Ø-an* ∑-sAS-3S/PT
	ma-∑ NEG-∑	*ma*-∑-*Ø-an* NEG-∑-sAS-3S/PT
1p	∑-*i-du* ∑-1pPS-NPT	∑-*i-n* ∑-1pPS-PT
	ma-∑ NEG-∑	*ma*-∑-*i-n* NEG-∑-1pPS-PT
2p	∑-*ni-du* ∑-2p-NPT	∑-*ni-n* ∑-2p-PT
	ma-∑ NEG-∑	*ma*-∑-*ni-n* NEG-∑-2p-PT
3p	∑-*eŋ-du* ∑-pAS-NPT	∑-*eŋ-an* ∑-pAS-3S/PT
	ma-∑ NEG-∑	*ma*-∑-*eŋ-an* NEG-∑-pAS-3S/PT

TABLE 67. REFLEXIVE MORPHEME STRINGS FOR THANGMI SIMPLEX VERBS

subject	non-preterite	preterite
1s	∑-*si-ŋa-du* ∑-REF-1s-NPT	∑-*si-ŋa-n* ∑-REF-1s-PT
	ma-∑-*si* NEG-∑-REF	*ma*-∑-*si-ŋa-n* NEG-∑-REF-1s-PT
2s	∑-*si-na-du* ∑-REF-2s-NPT	∑-*si-na-n* ∑-REF-2s-PT
	ma-∑-*si* NEG-∑-REF	*ma*-∑-*si-na-n* NEG-∑-REF-2s-PT
3s	∑-*si-Ø-du* ∑-REF-sAS-NPT	∑-*siy-Ø-an* ∑-REF-sAS-3S/PT
	ma-∑-*si* NEG-∑-REF	*ma*-∑-*siy-Ø-an* NEG-∑-REF-sAS-3S/PT
1p	∑-*siy-i-du* ∑-REF-1pPS-NPT	∑-*siy-i-n* ∑-REF-1pPS-PT
	ma-∑-*si* NEG-∑-REF	*ma*-∑-*siy-i-n* NEG-∑-REF-1pPS-PT
2p	∑-*si-ni-du* ∑-REF-2p-NPT	∑-*si-ni-n* ∑-REF-2p-PT
	ma-∑-*si* NEG-∑-REF	*ma*-∑-*si-ni-n* NEG-∑-REF-2p-PT
3p	∑-*siy-eŋ-du* ∑-REF-pAS-NPT	∑-*siy-eŋ-an* ∑-REF-pAS-3S/PT
	ma-∑-*si* NEG-∑-REF	*ma*-∑-*siy-eŋ-an* NEG-∑-REF-pAS-3S/PT

In transitive conjugations, the agreement suffixes mark the tense, person and number of the agent or patient, a transitive relationship between the agent and the patient, or a combination of the above. The distribution of the simplex person and number agreement suffixes in the 14 finite forms of transitive verbs is presented in Table 68 below.

Previous comparisons of Kiranti verbal agreement systems (van Driem, 1990, 1991(a), 1991(b)) show the conjugations of Kiranti verbs to reflect a split-ergative pattern in which third person actants are marked differently in the verb than are first and second person actants. In Kiranti languages, then, morphemes indicating involvement of a third person actant usually reflect a so-called accusative system in which distinct sets of morphemes index for a third person patient (3P) as opposed to a

third person agent or subject (3AS). On the other hand, morphemes denoting the involvement of a first or second person actant follow an ergative pattern in that one set of morphemes indexes for first or second person agent (12A) while another set denotes first or second person patient or subject (12PS). Moreover, number of actant has been seen to be 'indexed in the verb by different but apparently cognate morphemes for third person versus first and second person actants' (van Driem 1991(b): 346).

As the morphemic analysis of the Thangmi verbal agreement system demonstrates, Thangmi conforms to the Kiranti split-ergativity model in structure while it differs in the specifics. Where in Kiranti languages the marking of first and second person follows an ergative pattern and the marking of third person actants in the verb follows an accusative pattern, in Thangmi it is only the first person which is marked ergatively by verbal agreement suffixes, and the non-first person, i.e. the second and third persons, reflects an accusative pattern. The morphemes filling the second functional position, sf2, in the Thangmi affixal string offer an insight into the particular pattern of split ergativity in this language.

Certain Thangmi morphemes index for agent of a transitive verb and subject of an intransitive verb as opposed to patient, following an accusative pattern, such as the plural agent or plural subject morpheme <-eŋ> (pAS) and the singular agent or subject zero morpheme <Ø> (sAS). The accusative pattern is also reflected in Thangmi by the third person patient morpheme <-u> (3P) in suffixal slot three. However, the first person plural patient or subject morpheme <-i> (1pPS) which specifies patient and subject rather than first person plural agent, and the first person plural agent to second or third person patient *portemanteau* morpheme <-wa> (1p→23), both reflect an ergative pattern.

As this analysis demonstrates, Thangmi exhibits a pattern of split ergativity, similar but essentially different to that of the Kiranti type. In connection with this discussion, it is worthy of note that the Thangmi conjugation exhibits a significant level of morphological fusion reflected by a disproportionately large number of *portemanteau* suffixes, i.e. five out of fifteen.

TABLE 68. TRANSITIVE MORPHEME STRINGS FOR THANGMI SIMPLEX VERBS

subject	**non-preterite**	**preterite**
1s→2s	∑-*na-ŋa-du* ∑-2s-1s-NPT	∑-*na-ŋa-n* ∑-2s-1s-PT
	ma-∑ NEG-∑	*ma*-∑-*na-ŋa-n* NEG-∑-2s-1s-PT
1s→2p	∑-*ni-ŋa-du* ∑-2p-1s-NPT	∑-*ni-ŋa-n* ∑-2p-1s-PT
	ma-∑ NEG-∑	*ma*-∑-*ni-ŋa-n* NEG-∑-2p-1s-PT
1s→3	∑-*u-n-du* ∑-3P-1s→3-NPT	∑-*u-n-uŋ* ∑-3P-1s→3-1s→3/PT
	ma-∑ NEG-∑	*ma*-∑-*u-n-uŋ* NEG-∑-3P-1s→3-1s→3/PT
1p→23	∑-*wa-du* ∑-1p→23-NPT	∑-*wa-n* ∑-1p→23-PT
	ma-∑ NEG-∑	*ma*-∑-*wa-n* NEG-∑-1p→23-PT
s→1s	∑-*Ø-ŋa-du* ∑-sAS-1s-NPT	∑-*Ø-ŋa-n* ∑-sAS-1s-PT
	ma-∑ NEG-∑	*ma*-∑-*Ø-ŋa-n* NEG-∑-sAS-1s-PT
p→1s	∑-*eŋ-ŋa-du* ∑-pAS-1s-NPT	∑-*eŋ-ŋa-n* ∑-pAS-1s-PT
	ma-∑ NEG-∑	*ma*-∑-*eŋ-ŋa-n* NEG-∑-pAS-1s-PT
2/3→1p	∑-*i-du* ∑-1pPS-NPT	∑-*i-n* ∑-1pPS-PT
	ma-∑ NEG-∑	*ma*-∑-*i-n* NEG-∑-1pPS-PT
2s→3	∑-*u-na-du* ∑-3P-2s-NPT	∑-*u-na-n* ∑-3P-2s-PT
	ma-∑ NEG-∑	*ma*-∑-*u-na-n* NEG-∑-3P-2s-PT
2p→3	∑-*n-u-du* ∑-2p-3P-NPT	∑-*n-u-n* ∑-2p-3P-PT
	ma-∑ NEG-∑	*ma*-∑-*n-u-n* NEG-∑-2p-3P-PT

3s→2s	∑-*Ø-na-du* ∑-sAS-2s-NPT	∑-*Ø-na-n* ∑-sAS-2s-PT
	ma-∑ NEG-∑	*ma-*∑*-Ø-na-n* NEG-∑-sAS-2s-PT
3p→2s	∑-*eŋ-na-du* ∑-pAS-2s-NPT	∑-*eŋ-na-n* ∑-pAS-2s-PT
	ma-∑ NEG-∑	*ma-*∑*-eŋ-na-n* NEG-∑-pAS-2s-PT
3→2p	∑-*ni-du* ∑-2p-NPT	∑-*ni-n* ∑-2p-PT
	ma-∑ NEG-∑	*ma-*∑*-ni-n* NEG-∑-2p-PT
3s→3	∑-*Ø-u-du* ∑-sAS-3P-NPT	∑-*Ø-u-no* ∑-sAS-3P-3→3/PT
	ma-∑ NEG-∑	*ma-*∑*-Ø-u-no* NEG-∑-sAS-3P-3→3/PT
3p→3	∑-*eŋ-du* ∑-pAS-NPT	∑-*eŋ-no* ∑-pAS-3→3/PT
	ma-∑ NEG-∑	*ma-*∑*-eŋ-no* NEG-∑-pAS-3→3/PT

5. Prefixes

There is only one prefixal slot (pf) in the Thangmi verbal agreement system, and this is filled by the negative morpheme <ma-> (NEG).

5.1 The negative morpheme

morph:	<ma->
slot:	pf
label:	NEG

The negative morpheme <ma-> (NEG) is prefixed directly to the verb stem to negate the meaning of a verb. The negative morpheme <ma-> (NEG) is the only verbal prefix. In all non-preterite negative transitive and intransitive forms, the negative morpheme <ma-> (NEG) appears all by itself in combination with the verb stem (∑). The person, number and tense suffixes which appear in the corresponding non-preterite affirmative forms are then absent. Consequently, non-preterite negative forms show no agreement for person and number, and personal pronouns are often used to disambiguate the identity of the verbal actants, as shown in examples 8 and 9.

8 *hara cya-na-du?*
what eat-2s-NPT

What are you eating?

9 *gai hara woi ma-cya.*
I what also NEG-eat

I'm not eating anything.

In non-preterite negative reflexive forms, the negative morpheme <ma-> (NEG) appears in combination with the verbal stem (∑) accompanied by only the reflexive morpheme <-si> (REF). All the other suffixes present in the corresponding affirmative forms are dropped, as in example 10.

10 *gai kapu ma-uli-si.*
I head NEG-wash-REF

I'm not washing my hair / I won't wash my hair.

In negated preterite tense scenarios, however, the person and number agreement suffixes are present just as in the affirmative agreement string, as illustrated by examples 11 and 12.

11 *naŋ dese-te ya-na-n?*
you village-LOC go-2s-PT

Did you go to the village?

12 *gai ma-ya-ŋa-n.*
I NEG-go-1s-PT

I didn't go.

The negative morpheme <ma-> (NEG) can be attached to finite verb forms, optatives and imperatives. Negative notions expressed by English 'no one', 'nothing' and 'never' are rendered in Thangmi by the combination of an interrogative pronoun, the adverb *woi* 'also' and a negated verb. This process has been fully described in Section §6.3 of Chapter 5, and I refer the reader to the comprehensive list of examples contained there. For the present discussion, examples 13 to 15 below are sufficient to illustrate the point.

13 *su* *rah-Ø-an?*
who come.from.level-sAS-3S/PT

Who came?

14 *su* *woi* *ma-rah-Ø-an.*
who also NEG-come.from.level-sAS-3S/PT

No one came.

15 *hara* *woi* *ma-tha.*
what also NEG-be

Nothing is happening.

To respond negatively to a question, a negated form of the verb used in the question is offered in response. In informal, non-polite speech, the interjection *nai* 'no' may also be used, probably loaned from Nepali or Hindi, as illustrated by the dialogue shown in examples 16 and 17.

16 *naŋ* *ka-te-ko* *mi?*
you this-LOC-GEN person

Are you from here?

17 *nai,* *gai* *ka-te-ko* *ma-tha.*
no I this-LOC-GEN NEG-be

No, I'm not from around here.

To respond affirmatively, a range of different interjections are available to Thangmi speakers. In the Dolakhā dialect, the most commonly occurring affirmative interjections are *ãdai* 'yes', *laiyoho* 'yes, yeah, u-huh' and *ã* 'yeah, right'. While *ãdai* is perfectly acceptable in polite speech or when addressing elders, *laiyoho* and *ã* are distinctly informal and only heard in conversations between children, peers, family and close friends. In the Sindhupālcok dialect of Thangmi, the affirmative interjection *heʔe* ~ *heʔẽ* 'yes' is suitable for all situations, both polite and informal. A further interjection *adi* 'oh, I see' exists in the Sindhupālcok dialect, cognate with *ãdai* 'yes' in Dolakhā, which is used to express sudden comprehension or agreement.

The Thangmi negative morpheme <ma-> (NEG) is unmarked for tense, though the use of <ma-> (NEG) in finite forms with no accompanying person and number agreement affixes is a clear indication of non-preterite tense. This contrasts with many of the Kiranti languages which have tensed negative prefixes. The Thangmi negative morpheme <ma-> (NEG) is cognate with negative prefixes in other

Tibeto-Burman languages such as Limbu <mɛ-> (van Driem 1987: 104), Dumi <mə-> (van Driem 1993a: 124), Yamphu <mæn-> (Rutgers 1998:110) and Kulung <man-> (Tolsma 1999: 58). These Kiranti negative prefixes as well as the Thangmi negative morpheme <ma-> (NEG) are all reflexes of Proto-Tibeto-Burman **ma* 'negative' (Benedict 1972: 203).

6. Suffixes

There are six slots in the suffixal string of a Thangmi simplex verb and fifteen different verbal agreement morphemes which occur in the agreement paradigm. The slots and their fillers are discussed under the separate morpheme headings below.

6.1 The reflexive morpheme

morph:	<-si ~ -siy>
slot:	sf1
label:	REF

The reflexive morpheme <-si> (REF) occurs in all reflexive forms, where it indexes a reflexive relationship. This morpheme is the only suffixal slot 1 filler and is affixed immediately to the stem before any of the person and number suffixes, as in examples 18 to 21 below.

18 *gai myuŋ bu-si-ŋa-n.*
I cloth cover-REF-1s-PT

I wore clothes.

19 *gai uli-si-ŋa-du.*
I wash-REF-1s-NPT

I am washing (myself).

20 *naŋ kapu ḍi-si-na-n ra?*
you head comb-REF-2s-PT or

Have you combed your hair?

21 *guru-ye bu-si-sa nis-gore ḍiŋ-ḍiŋ ŋaŋ ubo kapu-te*
shaman-ERG cover-REF-INF two-CLF red and white head-LOC

chyu-si-sa ălămga miŋ tha-Ø-du.
tie-REF-INF long cloth be-sAS-NPT

Tied around his head, the shaman wears two long red and white pieces of cloth.

The reflexive morpheme <-si> (REF) has a regular allomorph <-siy> (REF) before a vowel-initial suffix in the verbal string. The allomorph <-siy> (REF) occurs in combination with the plural agent or plural subject marker <-eŋ> (pAS), as in examples 22 and 23 below, with the first personal plural patient or subject morpheme <-i> (1pPS), as illustrated in examples 24 to 27, and with the preterite tense third person subject *portemanteau* <-an> (3S/PT) as in example 115 below. When used in combination with the first personal plural patient or subject morpheme <-i> (1pPS), the reflexive morpheme <-si ~ -siy> (REF) conveys the sense of a reciprocity between actants 'doing something to/for each other'. Aside from the reflexive conjugation, there are no independent grammaticalised reciprocal forms in Thangmi.

22 *rage tha-Ø-ta-le, kiṇe-siy-eŋ-an, nunu kheiy-Ø-an.*
anger be-sAS-IPP-PCL fight-REF-pAS-3S/PT milk spill-sAS-3S/PT

Having become angry, they fought, and the milk spilled.

23 *jekha dese-ko camai-pali naka miŋ bu-siy-eŋ-du, naka*
big village-GEN daughter-p new cloth cover-REF-pAS-NPT new
jet lony-eŋ-du.
work do-pAS-NPT

Daughters from cities [lit. big villages] wear new clothes and have modern jobs.

24 *gai ama-ko-yiŋ ra-ŋa-n, to woi oste-ko-yiŋ*
I mother-GEN-ABL come.from.level-1S-PT that also self-GEN-ABL
ra-Ø-ta-le, ni ulam-te yo-siy-i-n.
come.from.level-sAS-IPP-PCL we road-LOC look.at-REF-1pPS-PT

I came from mother's place, she also left her place, and we saw each other again on the road.

25 *gai ŋaŋ uma, ni nem duŋ-ŋaŋ, oste-ko wakhe loŋ-siy-i-n.*
I and wife we house within-inside self-GEN word do-REF-1pPS-PT

My wife and I, inside our house, spoke privately to each other.

26 *ni nis-ka-kai maŋ asak-i-n, nama hok-ta-i-le ni*
we two-HNC-PM body itch-1pPS-PT together be-IPP-1pPS-PCL we
aghor-siy-i-n.
scratch-REF-1pPS-PT

Both of our bodies itched, and sitting together, we scratched one another.

27 *ni ucyaca thay-i-du beryaŋ, gai ŋaŋ hu*
we small be-1pPS-NPT that.time I and younger.brother
uli-si-sa-kai kapu-te paŋku lok-siy-i-n.
wash-REF-INF-PM head-LOC water pour-REF-1pPS-PT

When we were young, younger brother and I would wash by pouring water over each other's heads.

While all other person and number agreement morphemes are absent from negated non-preterite verb forms, the reflexive marker <-si> (REF) is retained as the sole suffix in negated non-preterite reflexive verbs. In such cases, the reflexive marker <-si> (REF) is suffixed directly to the verb stem, as in example 28 below.

28 *'ka uniŋ ma-thah-Ø-an-be, gai naŋ nama bore ma-loŋ-si',*
this like NEG-be-sAS-3S/PT-TOP I you with marriage NEG-do-REF
ŋah-Ø-u-no.
say-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

'If you don't mend your ways [lit. if it's not like this], then I won't marry you', she said.

Certain Thangmi verbs taken directly from Nepali are lexically reflexive even though they are not reflexive in Nepali, such as Thangmi *ghumaisisa* 'to wander, stroll, go for a walk' from Nepali *ghumnu* 'to turn round, wind, wander, go about', and Thangmi *ghurghursisa* 'to snore' from Nepali *ghurnu* 'to snore'. Illustrations of verbs borrowed from Nepali which take the reflexive conjugation in Thangmi are given in examples 29 to 31 below. Since these verb forms are borrowed directly from Nepali they are italicised in the interlinear gloss.

29 *naŋ miryaŋ ṭaye aṭṭhe ghurghur-si-na-n.*
you yesterday night very *snore*-REF-2s-PT

You snored a lot last night.

30 *gai ghumai-si-sa ya-ŋa-du.*
I *wander*-REF-INF go-1s-NPT

I'm going for a stroll.

31 *naŋ hara sămjhai-si-na-du?*
you what *think*-REF-2s-NPT

What are you thinking?

Reflexivity is a productive grammatical and verbal category in Thangmi and many transitive verbs have reflexive counterparts in which the subject performs the action upon himself, herself or itself. A few examples of related transitive and intransitive verbs are given in Table 69 below.

TABLE 69. RELATED TRANSITIVE AND REFLEXIVE THANGMI VERBS

transitive		**intransitive**	
aghorsa	to dig, scratch	*aghorsisa*	to scratch oneself with one's nails
busa	to cover	*busisa*	to wear
cuksa	to insert, pour	*cuksisa*	to jump on someone
disa	to rest	*disisa*	to rest oneself
ḍisa	to comb (someone's) hair	*ḍisisa*	to comb one's own hair
kheisa	to pour, spill	*kheisisa*	to pour on oneself
loksa	to drain, spill, overthrow	*loksisa*	to pour, spill on oneself
namsa	to smell, sniff	*namsisa*	to [be able to] smell oneself
niksa	to be pregnant, give birth to	*niksisa*	to be born
phosa	to make wet, drench	*phosisa*	to make oneself wet
sulsa	to hide, conceal something	*sulsisa*	to hide, conceal oneself
satsa	to kill	*satsisa*	to kill oneself, commit suicide
torsa	to bend, break	*torsisa*	to bend oneself, contort oneself
thurulsa	to masturbate someone	*thurulsisa*	to masturbate oneself
ṭisensa	to teach, explain	*ṭisensisa*	to learn, study
ṭoisa	to undress somebody	*ṭoisisa*	to undress oneself
ṭolsa	to clean, cleanse, rinse	*ṭolsisa*	to clean, cleanse, rinse oneself
ṭhansa	to move, transfer, change	*ṭhansisa*	to move oneself, be transferred
ṭhumsa	to bury	*ṭhumsisa*	to be buried
ulisa	to wash something	*ulisisa*	to wash oneself, bathe

In Thangmi, verbal stems are reduplicated to intensify or otherwise emphasise the action denoted by the verb, and thereby indicate persistence or vehemence. In reduplicated reflexive forms, the person and number suffixes are attached to the second stem. I have recorded only two examples of such doubling with reflexive verbs, both of which are unelicited sentences from narrative texts, and these are given below in 32 and 33. In such cases, both the verb stem and the reflexive morpheme <-si> (REF) are reduplicated, resulting in <∑-si-∑-si->.

32 *to* *nama* *sul-si-sul-si-Ø-ta-le,* *to-ye* *loŋ-Ø-u-du* *jet*
that with hide-REF-hide-REF-sAS-IPP-PCL that-ERG do-sAS-3P-NPT work

ḍap-Ø-u-no.
peep-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

She hid near him, and eavesdropped on what he was doing.

33 *libi* *ka* *wakhe* *humi-ye* *'lawa* *siy-Ø-an'* *ŋa-to-le*
after this word younger.sister-ERG husband die-sAS-3S/PT say-TPP-PCL

thaha *sai-Ø-du,* *bampre* *ṇe-si-ṇe-si-Ø-ta-le*
knowledge know-sAS-NPT rib beat-REF-beat-REF-sAS-IPP-PCL

kerep-Ø-du, *aji* *chuku* *sakalei* *kerep-eŋ-du.*
cry-sAS-NPT mother.in.law father.in.law all cry-pAS-NPT

After coming to know of her husband's death, younger sister cried while beating and beating her breast, her mother-in-law and father-in-law also both cried.

The Thangmi reflexive marker <-si> (REF) is a reflex of the Proto-Kiranti reflexive suffix *<-nši> (cf. Turin 1998a: 486) and is cognate with reflexive morphemes in other Kiranti languages such as Limbu <-siŋ> (van Driem 1987: 86), Dumi <-nsi> (van Driem 1993a: 125) and the Wambule middle suffix <si-> (Opgenort 2002: 280).

6.2 The non-first person singular agent or subject morpheme

morph:	**<Ø>**
slot:	sf2
label:	sAS

The singular agent or subject zero morpheme **<Ø>** (sAS) marks a second or third person singular agent in a transitive verbal scenario, and a third person singular subject in an intransitive or reflexive verbal scenario. The singular agent or subject zero morpheme **<Ø>** (sAS) thus marks the involvement of any non-plural and non-first person actant in a verbal string. While a more precise gloss for this morpheme might have been (23sAS), I have opted for the equally accurate but more streamlined (sAS).

The singular agent or subject zero morpheme **<Ø>** (sAS) is a frequently occurring suffixal slot 2 filler and follows an accusative pattern by marking the involvement of an agent or a subject rather than the patient in any given verbal scenarios. The singular agent or subject zero morpheme **<Ø>** (sAS) is situated posterior to both the verb stem and the reflexive morpheme <-si> (REF), but anterior

to the person and tense morpheme slots in the affixal string. All zero morphs are shown and labelled in the interlinear morpheme glosses. Examples 34 to 36 below illustrate the occurrence of the singular agent or subject zero morpheme <Ø> (sAS) in intransitive verbs, marking the involvement of a third person singular subject in the preterite and non-preterite tenses.

34 *naŋ-ko nem kuta hok-Ø-du?*
you-GEN house where be-sAS-NPT

Where is your house situated (where do you live)?

35 *uni yah-Ø-an, ṭila tha-Ø-du.*
sun go-sAS-3S/PT cold be-sAS-NPT

The sun has gone, and it's [become] cold.

36 *aikuca hul-ko mai-Ø-du.*
knife sharpen-ADH must-sAS-NPT

One must sharpen the knife.

In transitive verbs, the singular agent or subject zero morpheme <Ø> (sAS) occurs in three different combinations of affixal strings. First, it occurs in a transitive relationship between a second or third person singular agent and a first person singular patient, as in examples 37 and 38. In such instances, the singular agent or subject zero morpheme <Ø> (sAS) marks the agent that is doing or has done something to 'me'.

37 *kucu-ye gai-gai cek-Ø-ŋa-n.*
dog-ERG I-PM bite-sAS-1s-PT

The dog bit me.

38 *to camaica gai-go naṭe-te kuṭik-Ø-ŋa-n.*
that woman I-GEN cheek-LOC pinch-sAS-1s-PT

That woman pinched my cheek.

The singular agent or subject zero morpheme <Ø> (sAS) also occurs in transitive relationships between a third person singular agent and a second person singular patient, as in examples 39 and 40.

39 *kucu-ye naŋ-kai cek-Ø-na-du.*
dog-ERG you-PM bite-sAS-2s-NPT

The dog will bite you.

40 *libi naka miŋ niy-eŋ-to-le 'su-ye pi-Ø-na-n?' ŋa-to-le*
after new cloth see-pAS-TPP-PCL who-ERG give-sAS-2s-PT say-TPP-PCL
ŋay-eŋ-du beryaŋ, 'ka ni-ko tete-ye gai-gai
say-pAS-NPT that.time this we-GEN elder.sister-ERG I-PM
pi-Ø-ŋa-n' ŋah-Ø-u-no.
give-sAS-1s-PT say-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

When other people saw her new clothes they asked her 'who gave you that?', and she replied 'our elder sister gave them to me.'

Finally, the singular agent or subject zero morpheme <Ø> (sAS) occurs in transitive relationships between a third person singular agent and a third person singular or plural patient, as in examples 41 and 42 below.

41 *kucu-ye to-kai cek-Ø-u-du.*
dog-ERG that-PM bite-sAS-3P-NPT

The dog is going to bite him.

42 *naŋ-ko ama hara jet loŋ-Ø-u-du?*
you-GEN mother what work do-sAS-3P-NPT

What work does your mother do?

6.3 The plural agent or plural subject morpheme

morph:	<-eŋ>
slot:	sf2
label:	pAS

The plural agent or plural subject morpheme <-eŋ> (pAS) marks the involvement of a second or third person plural agent in a transitive verb and a third person plural subject in an intransitive or reflexive verb. Somewhat like the singular agent or subject zero morpheme <Ø> (sAS), the plural agent or plural subject morpheme <-eŋ> (pAS) is a number marker whose distribution follows an accusative pattern by indicating the involvement of an agent or subject rather than a patient. While a more precise gloss for this morpheme might have been (23pAS), I have opted for the equally accurate but more concise (pAS).

Taking into account its function, distribution and position in the affixal string, the plural agent or plural subject morpheme <-eŋ> (pAS) can best be seen as the plural counterpart to the singular agent or subject zero morpheme <Ø> (sAS). Neither of these two morphemes indicate the number of the subject in a second person intransitive or reflexive verb. The involvement of a second person singular or plural subject is rather marked by the specific morphemes <-na> (2s) and <-ni ~ -n> (2p) which are dealt with below.

The plural agent or plural subject morpheme <-eŋ> (pAS) is a suffixal slot 2 filler, and is situated posterior to the verb stem and to the reflexive morpheme <-si> (REF) in reflexive verbs, but anterior to the person and tense morphemes that follow in the affixal string.

The plural agent or plural subject morpheme <-eŋ> (pAS) has only one allomorph and no alternate form. Open-stem Thangmi verbs are realised with the glide /y/ in combination with the plural agent or plural subject morpheme <-eŋ> (pAS), as in example 43 below. Further details of the morphophonology of intervocalic approximants is described in detail in Section §3 of Chapter 4. The reflexive morpheme <-si> (REF) has a regular allomorph <-siy> (REF) before a vowel-initial suffix that follows in the verbal agreement system, such as the plural agent or plural subject morpheme <-eŋ> (pAS). The co-occurrence of these two morphemes is illustrated by examples 22 and 23 above.

43 *ka ci-sa-kai ‘saŋa-ko puya thu-sa’ ŋay-eŋ-du.*
that throw.away-INF-PM millet-GEN seed weed-INF say-pAS-NPT

This process of throwing away [the weeds] is known as ‘weeding the millet’.

Examples 44 to 46 below illustrate the occurrence of the plural agent or plural subject morpheme <-eŋ> (pAS) in intransitive verbs, marking the involvement of a third person plural subject in both the preterite and non-preterite.

44 *to-baŋ cey-eŋ-du.*
that-Pp eat-pAS-NPT

They’re eating.

45 *huca-pali busikasi-te nampay-eŋ-du.*
child-p dirt-LOC play-pAS-NPT

The children are playing in the dirt.

46 *ni-kai unise sewa-ta-i-le caway-eŋ-an.*
we-PM daytime salute-IPP-1pPS-PCL walk-pAS-3S/PT

In the afternoon, thanking us, they walked home.

In transitive verbs, the plural agent or plural subject morpheme <-eŋ> (pAS) occurs in three different combinations of affixal strings. First, the morpheme is present in transitive relationships between a second or third person plural agent and a first person singular patient, as in examples 47 and 48 below, in which the morpheme <-eŋ> (pAS) marks the agents that are doing or have done something to 'me'. In these examples, the number of the agent is not marked in the verbal agreement suffixes. It is only apparent from context whether the agent is a second or third person.

47 *gai-gai-guri me ra-sa ci-ṭhoy-eŋ-ŋa-thyo.*
I-PM-IND fire bring-INF CAUS-send-pAS-1s-3sCOND

You(p) used to send me to bring fire.

48 *'libi jet loŋ-sa tete ŋaŋ gai-go ban kucu*
after work do-INF elder.sister and I-GEN friend dog

ray-eŋ-ta-le ci-moy-eŋ-ŋa-n, naleŋ ka uniŋ
come.from.level-pAS-IPP-PCL CAUS-survive-pAS-1s-PT present this like

tha-ŋa-n.'
be-1s-PT

'And then the elder sister who works as a helper and my friend the dog came and saved me, and now here I am.'

Second, the plural agent or plural subject morpheme <-eŋ> (pAS) occurs in transitive relationships between a third person plural agent and a second person singular patient, as in examples 49 and 50.

49 *naŋ-kai ca-pali-ye kaṭay-eŋ-na-n-be, to-baŋ-kai acyukuli*
you-PM son-p-ERG insult-pAS-2s-PT-TOP that-Pp-PM tickle

loŋ-o!
do-s→3/IMP

If the boys bother you, just tickle them!

50 *to beryaŋ, doroŋ-yiŋ di-gore uyu let-Ø-ta-le*
that that.time hole-ABL one-CLF mouse appear-sAS-IPP-PCL
aghyow-Ø-an 'tete, naŋ ka-te ma-hok-e, naŋ-kai
cry.out-sAS-3S/PT elder.sister you this-LOC NEG-be-s/NEG/IMP you-PM
sat-eŋ-na-du.'
kill-pAS-2s-NPT

At that time, a mouse came out of a hole and squeaked 'elder sister, don't stay in this place, they are going to kill you.'

Finally, the plural agent or plural subject morpheme <-eŋ> (pAS) occurs in transitive relationships between a third person plural agent and a third person singular or plural patient, as in examples 51 to 53 below. The involvement of a third person patient is unmarked in non-preterite third person agent to third person patient verbal scenarios, making the non-preterite transitive form formally identical to its corresponding non-preterite intransitive counterpart.

51 *peṇey-eŋ-du beryaŋ, camaica-pali-ye kari woi kariy-eŋ-du.*
sow-pAS-NPT that.time woman-p-ERG song also sing-pAS-NPT

At the time of sowing, the womenfolk also sing songs.

52 *kerep-ta-i-le hara loŋ-sa, guṭhi mi-pali kyel-eŋ-ta-le*
cry-IPP-1pPS-PCL what do-INF mourner person-p come-pAS-IPP-PCL
moro hen-eŋ-no.
corpse take-pAS-3→3/PT

Crying, well, what to do, all the mourners came and carried the corpse away.

53 *libi, to amum ci-min-sa-kai me mut-eŋ-no, tyaŋ*
after that mushroom CAUS-ripen-INF-PM fire blow-pAS-3→3/PT then
ci-min-eŋ-no.
CAUS-ripen-pAS-3→3/PT

And then, in order to cook those mushrooms they started a fire [lit. blew the fire] and prepared them.

As described above, only the negative morpheme <ma-> (NEG) appears with the verbal stem (∑) in negated non-preterite verbal forms and all suffixes which would be present in the corresponding non-preterite affirmative forms are absent. The only exception to this rule is the plural agent or plural subject morpheme <-eŋ> (pAS) which may occur suffixed to the verb stem in a negated non-preterite form to

emphasise the plurality of the negated verb or to underscore the absence of a number of actants, as in examples 54 and 55 below. Usually, however, the plural agent or plural subject morpheme <-eŋ> (pAS) does not occur in negated non-preterite verbal forms, and its appearance is the exception rather than the norm.

54 *yamiryaŋ-ko ca-pali apa ama-ye ŋay-eŋ-du hara woi*
nowadays-GEN son-p father mother-ERG say-pAS-NPT what also

ma-lony-eŋ 'naka jet ţisen-si-sa ya-ŋa-du' ŋa-to-le gwi
NEG-do-pAS new work teach-REF-INF go-1s-NPT say-TPP-PCL thief

ban nama yey-eŋ-du.
friend with go-pAS-NPT

Boys these days don't do anything that their parents tell them, 'I'm off to learn a new job' they say, and then they go off with their thieving friends.

55 *ălămtha cawa-sa ma-thany-eŋ, isa ken loŋ-sa*
distant walk-INF NEG-be.able-pAS food vegetable.curry do-INF

ma-saiy-eŋ.
NEG-know-pAS

They are not able to walk long distances, and they don't know how to cook.

6.4 The second person plural actant morpheme

morph:	<-ni ~ -n>
slot:	sf2
label:	2p

The second person plural actant morpheme <-ni ~ -n> (2p) occurs in all transitive, intransitive and reflexive scenarios involving a second person plural actant. The second person plural actant morpheme <-ni ~ -n> (2p) is a suffixal slot 2 filler, situated posterior to both the verb stem and the reflexive morpheme <-si> (REF), but anterior to other person morphemes and all tense morpheme slots in the affixal string.

The allomorphic distribution of the second person plural actant morpheme <-ni ~ -n> (2p) is as follows: <-ni> preceding a consonant and <-n> preceding a vowel, as represented in the figure below:

$$\text{<-ni ~ -n> (2p)} \rightarrow \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{/ni/ / _C} \\ \\ \text{/n/ / _V} \end{array} \right\}$$

Examples 56 and 57 below illustrate the occurrence of the second person plural actant morpheme <-ni ~ -n> (2p) in intransitive verbs in which it marks the involvement of a second person plural subject in both the preterite and non-preterite.

56 *amakaleŋ niŋ apok-te hok-ta-ni-le, naleŋ guru tha-ni-n.*
last.year you(p) cave-LOC be-IPP-2p-PCL present shaman be-2s-PT

Last year you(p) lived in a cave, now you(p) have become shamans.

57 *niŋ kapu ma-uli-si-tiniŋ ami-ni-du?*
you head NEG-wash-REF-PFG sleep-2p-NPT

Are you(p) going to sleep without having washed your hair?

In transitive verbs, the second person plural actant morpheme <-ni ~ -n> (2p) occurs in three different combinations of affixal strings. First, it occurs in a transitive relationship between a first person singular agent and a second person plural patient, as in examples 58 and 59.

58 *jekha mi taŋ-Ø-ta-le ‘nan niny-e hara*
big person be.happy-sAS-IPP-PCL now you(p)-ERG what
amat-n-u-du, gă-ye pi-ni-ŋa-du’ ŋah-Ø-u-no.
beg-2p-3P-NPT I-ERG give-2p-1s-NPT say-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

The chief was happy and then said ‘now, whatever you(p) ask for, I will give you’.

59 *‘gă-ye niŋ nama kutaleŋ kutaleŋ wakhe loŋ-ni-ŋa-thyo.’*
I-ERG you(p) with when when word do-2p-1s-3sCOND

‘Very occasionally I would tell you(p) about them’ [mother said].

The second person plural actant morpheme <-ni ~ -n> (2p) also occurs in transitive relationships between a second person plural agent and a third person singular or plural patient, as illustrated in examples 60 and 61 below.

60 *niny-e miryaŋ poiri-ko kari nasai-n-u-n?*
you(p)-ERG yesterday elder.brother’s.wife-GEN song hear-2p-3P-PT

Did you(p) hear sister-in-law’s song yesterday?

61 *libi* *aji* *ḍamari-kai* *'uma* *sat-n-u-n'* *ŋay-eŋ-to-le*
after mother.in.law son.in.law-PM wife kill-2p-3P-PT say-pAS-TPP-PCL

cum-eŋ-no.
hold-pAS-3→3/PT

Later, saying 'you(p) killed your wife', they held the mother-in-law and son-in-law.

Finally, the second person plural actant morpheme <-ni ~ -n> (2p) occurs in transitive relationships between a third person singular or plural agent and a second person plural patient, as in example 62 below. In such scenarios, the involvement of a third person agent must be marked by a third person agent or subject zero morpheme <Ø> (3AS), since this transitive form is formally identical to the second person plural intransitive conjugation. While acknowledged as a component of the verbal agreement system, this zero morpheme is not shown in the transliteration or in the interlinear gloss.

62 *kucu-ye* *niŋ-kai* *cek-ni-du*.
dog-ERG you(p)-PM bite-2p-NPT

The dog will bite you(p).

The Thangmi second person plural actant morpheme <-ni ~ -n> (2p) is a reflex of the Proto-Kiranti second person plural morpheme *<-ni> (cf. Turin 1998a: 487) and is cognate with second person plural morphemes in other Kiranti languages, such as Kulung <-ni> (Tolsma 1999: 68-69), Thulung <-ni> (Allen 1975: 48), Wambule <-ni> Opgenort (2002: 271) and Lohorung <-ni> (van Driem 1991a: 61-62).

6.5 The first person plural patient or first person plural subject morpheme

morph:	<-i>
slot:	sf2
label:	1pPS

The first person plural patient or first person plural subject morpheme <-i> (1pPS) occurs in all transitive scenarios involving a first person plural patient and in all intransitive or reflexive scenarios involving a first person plural subject. By specifically indexing patients and subjects, and not agents, the morpheme <-i> (1pPS) reflects an ergative agreement pattern.

The first person plural patient or first person plural subject morpheme <-i> (1pPS) is a suffixal slot 2 filler, situated posterior to both the verb stem and the reflexive morpheme <-si> (REF) in reflexive verbs, but anterior to the other person,

number and tense morpheme slots in the affixal string. Examples 63 and 64 below illustrate the occurrence of the morpheme <-i> (1pPS) in intransitive verbs, marking the involvement of a first person plural subject in both the preterite and non-preterite.

63 *ni-kai* *cya-sa* *ma-gap-i-n.*
we-PM eat-INF NEG-be.enough-1pPS-PT

There wasn't enough for us to eat.

64 *libi* *to* *bubu-ye* *pi-Ø-ŋa-du* *pepelek-e* *naka* *nem*
after that elder.brother-ERG give-sAS-1s-NPT money-INS new house

khem-tuŋ-le, *naleŋ* *hok-i-du.*
build-1s/TPP-PCL present be-1pPS-PT

Having built the house with elder brother's loan, we now live there.

The morpheme <-i> (1pPS) appears in all transitive verbal relationships between a second or third person singular or plural agent and a first person plural patient, illustrations of which are given in examples 65 and 66 below.

65 *'bubu,* *naŋ-ko* *nem-te* *ni* *toŋ* *tun-sa* *khalam-i-du?',*
elder.brother you-GEN house-LOC we beer drink-INF receive-1pPS-NPT

to-ye *woi* *'khalam-n-u-du'* *ŋah-Ø-u-no,* *toŋ* *tha-to-le*
that-ERG also receive-2p-3P-NPT say-sAS-3P-3→3/PT beer strain-TPP-PCL

piy-Ø-u-no.
give-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

'Elder brother, can we get some beer in your house?' [they asked], and he replied 'sure it is' and, straining the beer, gave it to them.

66 *to-ye* *woi* *'ja-Ø-du'* *ŋah-Ø-u-no,* *hok-sa* *ṭhai*
that-ERG also okay-sAS-NPT say-sAS-3P-3→3/PT be-INF place

piy-i-n.
give-1pPS-PT

And that person said 'okay' and gave us a place to stay.

The first person plural patient or first person plural subject morpheme <-i> (1pPS) has only one allomorph and no alternate form. Open stem Thangmi verbs are realised with the glide /y/ in combination with the first person plural patient or first person plural subject morpheme <-i> (1pPS), as in example 67 below. The morphophonology of intervocalic approximants is discussed in Section §3 of Chapter 4. The reflexive

morpheme <-si> (REF) has a regular allomorph <-siy> (REF) before any vowel-initial suffixes that follow in the verbal agreement system, such as the first person plural patient or first person plural subject morpheme <-i> (1pPS). The co-occurrence of these two morphemes usually indicates a reciprocal relationship, as in examples 24 to 27 above.

67 *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.

The first person plural patient or first person plural subject morpheme <-i> (1pPS) is a reflex of the Proto-Kiranti inclusive morpheme *<-i> (van Driem 1991(b): 354). Thangmi makes no inclusive-exclusive distinction, and it is therefore to be expected that the reflex of the Proto-Kiranti inclusive marker would index the involvement of a plural first person in Thangmi, since both first person and plural number are implicit in any inclusive category. Moreover, when the Thangmi reflex is seen alongside reflexes of the inclusive proto-morpheme *<-i> in other Kiranti languages, it is clear that the above extrapolation is perfectly in accordance with the data. In Lohorung, for example, the suffix <-i> also denotes a first person plural patient or subject (van Driem 1991a: 59). In Thulung, <-i> marks the transitive relationship between a first person plural inclusive agent and a third person patient (Allen 1975: 48), while in Limbu, the verbal agreement suffix <-i> indicates plurality of subject and patient in the first and second persons (van Driem 1987: 95).

6.6 The first person plural to second or third person *portemanteau* morpheme

morph:	<-wa>
slot:	sf2
label:	1p→23

The first person plural agent to second or third person patient *portemanteau* morpheme <-wa> (1p→23) occurs in all transitive scenarios involving a first person plural agent. In affixal strings, the first person plural agent to second or third person patient *portemanteau* morpheme <-wa> (1p→23) occurs posterior to the verb stem but anterior to the tense and tensed *portemanteau* morphemes which occur in suffixal slot 6. The first person plural agent to second or third person patient *portemanteau* morpheme <-wa> (1p→23) can only be described as anterior to certain suffixes and posterior to others in the affixal chain. The morpheme has been assigned to suffixal slot 2, the person and number morpheme slot, on the basis of semantic considerations.

In previous writings, I have glossed this morpheme as (1pA), indicating only the involvement of a first person plural agent. The gloss has now been revised on account of the highly specific meaning and distribution of this morpheme, and because the present synchronic analysis also has a certain diachronic logic. The /w/ in the *portemanteau* suffix <-wa> (1p→23), marking the transitive relationship between a first person plural agent and a second or third person patient, may well derive from the Proto-Kiranti third person patient morpheme *<-u> (3P).

The first person plural agent to second or third person patient *portemanteau* morpheme <-wa> (1p→23) occurs in transitive verbal relationships between a first person plural agent and a second or third person patient as illustrated by examples 68 to 70 below.

68 *nem-te* *tete,* *ama,* *gai* *hok-ta-i-le,* *nem-ko* *jet*
house-LOC elder.sister mother I stay-IPP-1pPS-PCL house-GEN work

loŋ-wa-n.
do-1p→23-PT

Elder sister, mother and I lived at home and we did the housework.

69 *sola* *cya-ŋa* *libi,* *lipem* *yu-sa* *dum-Ø-an,* *piriŋ*
snack eat-CNS after snow come.from.above-INF finish-sAS-3S/PT outside

yo-wa-du-be *ulam* *ma-ni-wa-n!*
look.at-1p→23-NPT-TOP path NEG-see-1p→23-PT

Once we had finished our snack, the snow had stopped falling, and when we looked outside, we couldn't see the path any more!

70 *bubu* *ŋaŋ* *gă-ye* *di* *uni-ye* *torta-wa-n.*
elder.brother and I-ERG one day-ERG leave-1p→23-PT

One day, elder brother and I gave up [smoking].

6.7 The third person patient morpheme

morph:	<-u>
slot:	sf3
label:	3P

The third person patient morpheme <-u> (3P) occurs in transitive verbal scenarios involving a third person patient. Suffixal slot 3 is reserved for the third person patient morpheme <-u> (3P), which occupies a position posterior to the person and number

morphemes in suffixal slot 2 but anterior to the second person singular morpheme actant <-na> (2s) in suffixal slot 4.

The third person patient morpheme <-u> (3P) occurs in transitive strings involving a third person patient, except in transitive verbal scenarios between a first person plural agent and a third person patient where third person patient involvement is indicated by the (1p→23) *portemanteau* <-wa>. In the transitive third person plural agent to third person singular or plural patient form, in which the third person patient morpheme <-u> (3P) is also absent, the verbal string is formally identical to the corresponding third person plural intransitive form, a strong indication of an agent-subject accusative patterning.

In transitive verbs, the third person patient morpheme <-u> (3P) occurs in four different combinations of affixal strings. First, it appears in transitive relationships between a first person singular agent and a third person singular or plural patient, as in examples 71 and 72 below.

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

I work.

72 *gai ucya tha-ŋa-du beryaŋ, apa, sum-ka tete siy-eŋ-du*
I small be-1s-NPT that.time father three-HNC elder.sister die-pAS-NPT
nih-u-n-du beryaŋ, gai-go mesek-yiŋ raphil let-Ø-an.
see-3P-1s→3-NPT that.time I-GEN eye-ABL tear appear-sAS-3S/PT

When I was small, on seeing my father and three elder sisters dying, tears flowed from my eyes.

The third person patient morpheme <-u> (3P) also occurs in transitive relationships between a second person singular agent and a third person singular or plural patient, as in examples 73 and 74 below.

73 *'habi ŋa-ŋa, gă-ye ŋah-u-n-du jet loŋ-u-na-du ra*
before say-s→1s/IMP I-ERG say-3P-1s→3-NPT work do-3P-2s-NPT or
ma-loŋ?'
NEG-do

'First tell me, will you do the work that I say or not?'

74 *e bubu, naŋ hara loŋ-u-na-du?*
oh elder.brother you what do-3P-2s-NPT

Oh elder brother, what are you doing?

The third person patient morpheme <-u> (3P) also occurs in transitive relationships between a second person plural agent and a third person singular or plural patient, as in examples 75 and 76 below.

75 *'niŋ hara-kai ka-te kyel-ta-ni-le, ni-ko seŋ pal-n-u-n?*
you(p) what-PM this-LOC come-IPP-2p-PCL we-GEN wood cut-2p-3P-PT

nan niŋ-kai gă-ye nem duŋ-ŋaŋ na-ni-ŋa-du'
now you(p)-PM I-ERG house within-inside put-2p-1s-NPT

ŋah-Ø-u-no.
say-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

'Why did you come to this place and cut down our trees for wood? I am going to jail you both [lit. put you inside a house]', he said.

76 *to-ye ŋah-Ø-u-no, 'niŋ di uni-ye hani cawa-sa*
that-ERG say-sAS-3P-3→3/PT you(p) one day-ERG how.much walk-INF

thaŋ-n-u-du, to sakalei niŋ-ko'.
be.able-2p-3P-NPT that all you(p)-GEN

He said, 'whatever distance you can cover by foot in one day, well, that much is yours'.

Finally, the third person patient morpheme <-u> (3P) occurs in transitive relationships between a third person singular agent and a third person singular or plural patient, as illustrated by examples 77 and 78 below.

77 *to-ye ahum dah-Ø-u-du.*
that-ERG egg boil-sAS-3P-NPT

He's boiling an egg.

78 *ṭuṇi-ye khaṇou suk-Ø-u-no.*
goat-ERG door strike-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

The goat butted the door.

The Thangmi third person patient morpheme <-u> (3P) is a reflex of the Proto-Kiranti third person patient morpheme *<-u>. While the proto-morpheme *<-u> is

ubiquitously reflected in modern Tibeto-Burman languages, in Himalayan languages its reflexes are all suffixes, and in the Kiranti languages of eastern Nepal, reflexes of Proto-Tibeto-Burman *<-u> (3P) usually denote the involvement of a third person patient (van Driem 1991(b)). Examples include the Lohorung third person patient marker <-u> (van Driem 1991a: 59-60), the Limbu third person patient marker <-u> (van Driem 1987: 82) and the Kulung third person patient preterite morpheme <-u> (Tolsma 1999: 66). The Kiranti language Wambule is a notable exception. In Wambule, the morpheme <-u> in the verbal agreement system marks the involvement of a third person non-plural agent in transitive forms.

6.8 The second person singular actant morpheme

morph:	<-na>
slot:	sf4
label:	2s

The second person singular actant morpheme <-na> (2s) occurs in all intransitive, transitive and reflexive verbal scenarios specifically involving a second person singular actant. The fourth functional position in the Thangmi affixal string, suffixal slot 4, houses only the second person singular actant morpheme <-na> (2s) and no other affixal markers. The second person singular actant morpheme <-na> (2s) occupies a position posterior to the third person patient morpheme <-u> (3P) of suffixal slot 3 and anterior to the morphemes in the first person singular morpheme slot, suffixal slot 5, such as the first person singular actant morpheme <-ŋa> (1s) and the *portemanteau* morpheme <-n> (1s→3).

The second person singular actant morpheme <-na> (2s) is not present in the suffixal string of a Thangmi verb when the person of the agent of a transitive relationship is unspecified, e.g. in the singular agent to first person singular patient form 'he/she/it/you(s) *verb* me'. In Thangmi, only singular number is explicitly marked in this transitive relationship and the person of the agent is left unspecified. Consequently, the non-first person singular agent or subject morpheme <-Ø> (sAS) is used in place of the second person singular actant morpheme <-na> (2s) in such transitive utterances.

Examples 79 and 80 below illustrate the occurrence of the second person singular actant morpheme <-na> (2s) in intransitive verbs, marking the involvement of a second person singular subject in both the preterite and non-preterite.

79 *naŋ isa cya-na-n?*
you food eat-2s-PT

Have you eaten (food)?

80 *naŋ kuta ya-na-du?*
you where go-2s-NPT

Where are you going?

Examples 81 and 82 below illustrate the occurrence of the second person singular actant morpheme <-na> (2s) in reflexive verbs, marking the involvement of a second person singular subject in both the preterite and non-preterite.

81 *nany-e ka wakhe ṭisen-si-na-n-be, naŋ jekha mi tha-na-du.*
you-ERG this word teach-REF-2s-PT-TOP you big person be-2s-NPT

If you learn this stuff, then you will be an important person.

82 *naŋ oste uli-si-na-du?*
you self wash-REF-2s-NPT

Are you going to wash yourself?

In transitive verbs, the second person singular actant morpheme <-na> (2s) occurs in four different combinations of affixal strings. First, it occurs in a transitive relationship between a first person singular agent and a second personal singular patient in both the preterite and non-preterite, as shown in examples 83 and 84 below.

83 *gai ra-ta-ŋa-le pi-na-ŋa-du.*
I come.from.level-IPP-1s-PCL give-2s-1s-NPT

Once I've come, I'll give it to you.

84 *gă-ye naŋ-kai them-them-na-ŋa-n tara naŋ ma-serek-na-n.*
I-ERG you-PM shake-2s-1s-PT *but* you NEG-wake.up-2s-PT

I shook you, but you didn't wake up.

The second person singular actant morpheme <-na> (2s) also occurs in a transitive relationship between a second personal singular agent and a third person singular or plural patient, in both the preterite and non-preterite tenses, as in examples 85 and 86.

85 *nany-e* *khaṇou* *ṭih-u-na-n* *ra?*
you-ERG door close-3P-2s-PT or

Have you closed the door or not?

86 *nany-e* *hara* *loŋ-u-na-du?*
you-ERG what do-3P-2s-NPT

What are you doing?

Third, the second person singular actant morpheme <-na> (2s) occurs in the transitive relationship between a third personal singular agent and a second person singular patient, in both the preterite and non-preterite tenses, as in examples 87 and 88.

87 *naŋ-kai* *kucu-ye* *cek-Ø-na-n-be,* *kucu-kai* *ṇew-o!*
you-PM dog-ERG bite-sAS-2s-PT-TOP dog-PM strike-s→3/IMP

If the dog bites you, hit it!

88 *to-ye* *naŋ-kai* *urou-Ø-na-du.*
that-ERG you-PM call-sAS-2s-NPT

He's calling you.

Finally, the second person singular actant morpheme <-na> (2s) occurs in a transitive relationship between a third personal plural agent and a second person singular patient, in both the preterite and non-preterite tenses, as in examples 49 and 50 above.

The Thangmi second person singular actant morpheme <-na> (2s) is a reflex of the Proto-Kiranti and Proto-Tibeto-Burman second person morphemes *<-na> (cf. Turin 1998a: 487). The Thangmi reflex is cognate with second person actant morphemes in Kiranti languages such as the Kulung second person singular preterite tense morpheme <-na> (Tolsma 1999: 64), the Thulung second person singular marker <-na> (Allen 1975: 48), the Wambule second person singular morpheme <-nu> Opgenort (2002: 272) and the second person marker in Lohorung <-na> (van Driem 1991a: 61).

6.9 The first person singular actant morpheme

morph:	<-ŋa>
slot:	sf5
label:	1s

The first person singular actant morpheme <-ŋa> (1s) occurs in all intransitive, transitive and reflexive verbal scenarios which involve a first person singular actant. The first person singular actant morpheme <-ŋa> (1s) is a suffixal slot 5 filler, appearing posterior to the second person singular actant morpheme <-na> (2s) and anterior to the final functional position, suffixal slot 6, occupied by the tense and tensed *portemanteau* morphemes.

The first person singular actant morpheme <-ŋa> (1s) marks the involvement of a first person singular actant in all intransitive, transitive and reflexive conjugations except in transitive verbal relationships between a first person singular agent and a third person singular or plural patient, where the involvement of a first person singular agent is indexed by the *portemanteau* morphemes <-n> (1s→3) and <-uŋ> (1s→3/PT). Examples 89 and 90 below illustrate the occurrence of the first person singular actant morpheme <-ŋa> (1s) in intransitive verbs, marking the involvement of a first person singular subject in both the preterite and non-preterite.

89 *gai ulam phat-to-le ra-ŋa-n.*
I road dig.deep-TPP-PCL come.from.level-1s-PT

Having dug the road, I came.

90 *naŋ hok-a, gai ya-ŋa-du.*
you be-s/IMP I go-1s-NPT

You stay, I'm off.

Examples 91 and 92 below illustrate the occurrence of the first person singular actant morpheme <-ŋa> (1s) in reflexive verbs, marking the involvement of a first person singular subject in both the preterite and non-preterite. Example 92 was provided by my assistant and language teacher after I attempted to make this statement but formulated the sentence incorrectly.

91 *gai miryaŋ myuŋ bu-si-ŋa-n.*
I yesterday cloth cover-REF-1s-PT

Yesterday, I wore clothes.

92 *gai kapu uli-si-ŋa libi, naŋ nama thaŋmi kham*
I head wash-REF-CNS after you with Thangmi language
ṭisen-si-ŋa-du.
teach-REF-1s-NPT

Once I've washed my hair, I'll learn some more Thangmi language with you.

In transitive verbs, the first person singular actant morpheme <-ŋa> (1s) occurs in four different combinations of affixal strings. First, it occurs in a transitive relationship between a first person singular agent and a second personal singular patient in both the preterite and non-preterite, where it marks the involvement of the first person agent, as shown in example 84 above and 93 below.

93 *'to ṇiŋ gai-gai pi-ŋa! naŋ-kai gai-go sakalei*
that stone I-PM give-s→1s/IMP you-PM I-GEN all
raŋ pi-na-ŋa-du', ŋah-Ø-u-no.
unirrigated.field give-2s-1s-NPT say-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

'Give me that stone! I will give you all my land', he said.

Second, the first person singular actant morpheme <-ŋa> (1s) also occurs in a transitive relationship between a first person singular agent and a second personal plural patient in both the preterite and non-preterite, in which it marks the involvement of the first person agent, as shown in examples 58 and 59 above, and example 94 below.

94 *gă-ye niŋ-kai miryaŋ pepelek pi-ni-ŋa-n.*
I-ERG you(p)-PM yesterday money give-2p-1s-PT

I gave you(p) money yesterday.

Third, the first person singular actant morpheme <-ŋa> (1s) occurs in transitive relationships between a second or third person singular agent and a first person singular patient in both the preterite and non-preterite, as shown in examples 95 and 96 below.

95 *'gai-gai hara hara ŋa-Ø-ŋa-du?', ŋa-to-le ya-ŋa-n.*
I-PM what what say-sAS-1s-NPT say-TPP-PCL go-1s-PT

'What kinds of things will he say to me?', I thought as I went.

96 *'gai hyate ya-let-ŋa-n, to-te ṭhoṇe mi-ye hok-sa*
I up.there go-appear-1S-PT that-LOC old person-ERG be-INF
ma-pi-Ø-ŋa-n!', ŋa-to-le ŋah-Ø-u-no.
NEG-give-SAS-1S-PT say-TPP-PCL say-SAS-3P-3→3/PT

'When I arrived all the way up there [i.e. heaven], the old man [who lives there] didn't let me stay!', he said.

Finally, the first person singular actant morpheme <-ŋa> (1S) occurs in transitive relationships between a second or third person plural agent and a first person singular patient in both the preterite and non-preterite, as shown in examples 97 and 98 below.

97 *to-ye ŋah-Ø-u-du 'gai-gai dese mi-ye hara*
that-ERG say-SAS-3P-NPT I-PM village person-ERG what
ŋay-eŋ-an thaŋun? oste-ko ca sat-Ø-u-du, 'moro'
say-PAS-3S/PT maybe self-GEN son kill-SAS-3P-NPT corpse
ŋay-eŋ-ŋa-du thaŋun'.
say-PAS-1S-NPT maybe

She thinks to herself, 'what do the villagers think of me? Maybe they're calling me a 'corpse' for killing my own son'.

98 *'kunyaŋ-be gă-ye ŋa-na-ŋa-du, gai nik-ŋa-du beryaŋ, gai-gai*
how-TOP I-ERG say-2S-1S-NPT I be.born-1S-NPT that.time I-PM
jekhama-pali-ye paṭasi-te pore-to-le
big.mother-P-ERG traditional.skirt-LOC bundle.up-TPP-PCL
ciy-eŋ-ŋa-n.'
throw.away-PAS-1S-PT

'And now I'll tell you how, when I was born, well at that time my step-mothers bundled me up in a skirt and threw me away' [he said].

In Kiranti languages, as well as in the Tibeto-Burman family in general, the velar nasal /ŋ/ usually figures prominently in morphemes indicating the involvement of a first person singular actant. As van Driem suggests, 'most first-singular morphemes in modern Kiranti languages consist of the velar nasal /ŋ/ with some associated vowel preceding or following the nasal' (1991b: 350). The Thangmi first person singular actant morpheme <-ŋa> (1S) is a reflex of either, or both, Proto-Kiranti morphemes *<-ŋ> and *<-ŋa>, which index the first person singular agent (1SA) and the first person singular actant in non-preterite time (1S/NPT) respectively (cf. Turin 1998a:

487). The Thangmi reflex <-ŋa> (1s) is cognate with first person singular morphemes in other Kiranti languages, such as the Limbu first person agent marker <-ŋ> (van Driem 1987: 99), the Dumi first person singular morpheme <-ŋ> (van Driem 1993a: 133), the Wambule first person singular marker <-ṅu> (Opgenort 2002: 275) and the first person singular marker in Lohorung <-ŋa> (van Driem 1991a: 58).

6.10 The first person singular to third person *portemanteau* morpheme

morph:	<-n>
slot:	sf5
label:	1s→3

In first person singular to third person (1s→3) forms, the *portemanteau* morpheme <-n> (1s→3) specifically indexes a transitive relationship between a first person singular agent and a third person patient. The *portemanteau* morpheme <-n> (1s→3) occupies a functional position before the tense and tensed *portemanteau* morphemes of suffixal slot 6 and after the third person patient marker <-u> (3P) in suffixal slot 3. On the basis of semantic and pragmatic considerations, the *portemanteau* morpheme <-n> (1s→3) is therefore assigned to suffixal slot 5.

Examples 99 to 102 below illustrate the occurrence of the *portemanteau* morpheme <-n> (1s→3) in transitive verbs. In these examples, the marker specifically indexes a relationship between a first person singular agent and a third person patient in both preterite and non-preterite scenarios.

99 *gai phase neh-u-n-du.*
I flour grind-3P-1s→3-NPT

I am grinding the flour.

100 *gă-ye seŋ cabuh-u-n-uŋ.*
I-ERG wood carry-3P-1s→3-1s→3/PT

I carried the wood.

101 *ya-ta-ŋa-le yoh-u-n-du-be, bubu-ko jet*
go-IPP-1s-PCL look.at-3P-1s→3-1s→3/NPT-TOP elder.brother-GEN work

loŋ-sa nem nih-u-n-uŋ.
do-INF house see-3P-1s→3-1s→3/PT

I went and looked, and I saw the place where elder brother works.

102 *gai ṭaye ami-sa ma-thaŋ-u-n-uŋ, to-ko khen gai-go*
I night sleep-INF NEG-be.able-3P-1s→3-1s→3/PT that-GEN face I-GEN
mesek-te usyah-Ø-an.
eye-LOC dance-SAS-3S/PT

I couldn't sleep that night, her face was dancing before my eyes.

6.11 Tense morphemes

morph:	<-du>
slot:	sf6
label:	NPT

morph:	<-n>
slot:	sf6
label:	PT

The Thangmi non-preterite tense morpheme <-du> (NPT) marks non-preterite tense in each and every transitive, intransitive and reflexive verbal scenario, and appears to be cognate with the Dzongkha copula *ḥdug <dû ~ du>*, rather than with any Proto-Kiranti morpheme.[2] The Thangmi non-preterite tense morpheme <-du> (NPT) conveys the meaning of non-past time and is a suffixal slot 6 filler along with other morphemes marking tense.

The Thangmi preterite tense morpheme <-n> (PT) conveys the meaning of past time and is a suffixal slot 6 filler. The morpheme <-n> (PT) marks preterite tense in transitive, intransitive and reflexive verbal scenarios unless there is a more specific tensed *portemanteau* which marks preterite tense and the person or number of actant. The three tensed *portemanteau* suffixes are: the morpheme <-an> (3S/PT), which marks a third person subject of an intransitive or reflexive verb in preterite time; the morpheme <-no> (3→3/PT), which marks a transitive relationship between a third person agent and a third person patient in preterite time; and the morpheme <-uŋ> (1s→3/PT), which marks the transitive relationship between a first person singular agent and a third person patient in preterite time.

In Thangmi, a distinction can be made between telic and atelic verbs on the basis of tense.[3] For telic verbs, the preterite tense ending <-n> (PT) indicates that the

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[2] འདུག་ in dBu-can script.

[3] In this description of Thangmi grammar, telic verbs are taken to be those verbs which tend towards an end.

transition conveyed in the verb is complete or has taken place, while the use of the non-preterite tense marker <-du> (NPT) indicates that the transition conveyed is either taking place at the time of the utterance or has yet to occur. For Thangmi atelic verbs, on the other hand, the use of the preterite tense ending <-n> (PT) indicates that the state or action denoted by the verb in question was occuring at some point in the past. Concomitantly, the non-preterite tense marker <-du> (NPT) occurs in atelic verbs to indicate that an action or state is presently in effect. In terms of tense marking, Thangmi closely resembles the Kiranti languages Dumi (van Driem 1993a: 135-137) and Limbu in which 'the choice of tense…is contingent upon the moment of inception' (van Driem 1987: 89). Sentences 103 to 108 below illustrate tense marking in telic verbs through six contrastive examples.

103 *uni* *ti-Ø-du*.
sun burn-sAS-NPT

The sun will shine / The sun is about to start shining.

104 *uni* *tiy-Ø-an*.
sun burn-sAS-3S/PT

The sun is shining / The sun has broken through the cloud cover.

105 *uni* *to-Ø-du*.
sun rise-sAS-NPT

The sun will rise [in a moment] / The sun is about to rise.

106 *uni* *tow-Ø-an*.
sun rise-sAS-3S/PT

The sun has risen / The sun rose.

107 *uni* *nip-Ø-du*.
sun set-sAS-NPT

The sun will set [in a moment] / The sun is about to set.

108 *uni* *nip-Ø-an*.
sun set-sAS-3S/PT

The sun [has] set / The sun went under.

Example 104 above indicates that the sun is shining and uses the preterite tense form of the intransitive verb *ti-sa* 'to burn, to shine'. The non-preterite tense in example 103 indicates rather that the sun will shine later or is about to start shining. Similarly,

example 106 makes use of the preterite tense to indicate that the sun has risen in the sky, while the corresponding and contrastive form in 105, *uni to-Ø-du* (sun rise-sAS-NPT), using the non-preterite tense morpheme <-du> (NPT), indicates that the sun has not yet risen but is about to do so. Sentence 108 was uttered by a Thangmi speaker after the event, once the sun had actually set, while 107 was used to indicate that there was still a little time left to gather fodder for the goats before nightfall.

Verbs of perception in Thangmi are telic and take the preterite tense even when their English translation requires a present tense. For example, once when my village sister was cooking the nettle stew, she threw in too much salt and said, rather regretfully, *ahe chya se-Ø-du* (much salt taste-sAS-NPT) 'it'll taste (too) salty'. On eating the stew, her grandson later concurred, *ahe chya thah-Ø-an* (much salt be-sAS-3S/PT) 'it's very salty / it's too salty'.

In telic verbs which denote a process culminating in some form of transition, the preterite vs. non-preterite distinction relates to the moment of change. For example, the preterite tense *miŋ gaŋ-Ø-an* (cloth dry-sAS-3S/PT) 'the clothes have dried, the clothes are dry' indicates that a transition has taken place, whereas the use of the non-preterite tense in *miŋ gaŋ-Ø-du* (cloth dry-sAS-NPT) 'the clothes are drying' implies that the drying is taking place but that the moment of transition has not yet been reached. Likewise, the negative preterite *miŋ ma-gaŋ-Ø-an* (cloth NEG-dry-sAS-3S/PT) 'the clothes are not yet dry, the clothes have not yet dried' indicates that the process has started but that the transition has not occurred, while the negative non-preterite preterite *miŋ ma-gaŋ* (cloth NEG-dry) 'the clothes are not drying' implies that the process of drying itself it not occurring, let alone any transition to 'dryness'. On a similar note, the non-preterite tense of the verb *si-sa* 'to die', as in *to mi si-Ø-du* (that person die-sAS-NPT) 'that person is dying, that person will die' implies an imminent transition to death, while *to mi siy-Ø-an* (that person die-sAS-3S/PT) 'that person is dead, that person has died' indicates that the transition has occurred and that referent has indeed expired.

For other telic verbs in Thangmi, the preterite vs. non-preterite distinction centres around the moment of inception. A suitable example is provided by the verb *hen-sa* 'to go', in which *gai ya-ŋa-du* (I go-1s-NPT) 'I'll go, I'm going, I'll be on my way' contrasts with *gai ya-ŋa-n* (I go-1s-PT) 'I'm gone, I'm out of here, I'm off'. While the former example is heard by speakers getting up to leave and those on the verge of departing, the preterite tense example may be uttered by someone who has left in anger or by a speaker who is already on his way and is calling back to those who have remained behind.

In atelic verbs, tense is distinguished between past vs. non-past, comparable to tense distinctions familiar to speakers of English, as in *guru ŋah-Ø-u-du* (shaman

speak-sAS-3P-NPT) 'the shaman speaks' versus *guru-ye ŋah-Ø-u-no* (shaman-ERG speak-sAS-3P-3→3/PT) 'the shaman spoke'. In atelic verbs, the non-preterite marker <-du> (NPT) indicates that the state described is presently in effect and that it may continue into the future, while the preterite tense implies that the state denoted by the verb was effective in the past. Atelic verbs mark sustained activities or states of being, as shown in examples 109 to 112 below.

109 *uma cya-Ø-du ni-to-le, gai-gai woi cya-ŋa cya-ŋa ali-ŋa-du.*
wife eat-sAS-NPT see-TPP-PCL I-PM also eat-CNS eat-CNS like-1s-NPT

When I see my wife smoke, I really feel like smoking myself.

110 *libi bore nem-te ya-let-i-n, to-ŋaŋ isa*
after marriage house-LOC go-appear-1pPS-PT that-inside food

ken sakalei hok-Ø-thyo, to ni-to-le
vegetable.curry all be-sAS-3sCOND that see-TPP-PCL

cya-sa ma-ali-ŋa-n.
eat-INF NEG-like-1s-PT

Thereafter we came to the house of the wedding and there was all this food, but seeing that, I didn't feel like eating at all.

111 *'humi yoh-u-n-du, nany-e ŋah-u-na-du jet*
younger.sister look.at-3P-1s→3-NPT you-ERG say-3P-2s-NPT work

loŋ-u-n-du'.
do-3P-1s→3-NPT

'I will look after my little sister, I will do what you say' [he had said].

112 *pebu raŋ-ko jet woi loŋ-u-n-uŋ.*
irrigated.field dry.field work also do-3P-1s→3-1s→3/PT

I also worked in the fields.

6.12 The preterite tense third person subject *portemanteau* morpheme

morph:	<-an>
slot:	sf6
label:	3S/PT

The *portemanteau* morpheme <-an> (3S/PT) specifically indexes preterite tense and third person subject involvement in intransitive and reflexive verbs. The *portemanteau* morpheme <-an> (3S/PT) is a suffixal slot 6 filler along with other

suffixes marking tense. Examples 113 and 114 below illustrate the occurrence of the preterite tense third person subject *portemanteau* morpheme <-an> (3S/PT) in intransitive verbs, in which it marks the involvement of either singular or plural third person subjects.

113 *to* *nem-te* *yah-Ø-an.*
that house-LOC go-sAS-3S/PT

He went home.

114 *aji* *chuku* *sakalei* *kerep-eŋ-an.*
mother.in.law father.in.law all cry-pAS-3S/PT

The parents-in-law and everyone else burst into tears.

Examples 22 above and 115 below illustrate the occurrence of the preterite tense third person subject *portemanteau* morpheme <-an> (3S/PT) in reflexive verbs, in which it marks the involvement of either singular or plural third person subjects.

115 *baṭhe* *syaŋ* *băsinṭe* *serek-Ø-ta-le,* *soŋ-te* *ya-Ø-ta-le,*
tomorrow period morning arise-sAS-IPP-PCL river-LOC go-sAS-IPP-PCL
cuk-siy-Ø-an, *kutaleŋ* *woi* *ma-rah-Ø-an.*
insert-REF-sAS-3S/PT when also NEG-come.from.level-sAS-3S/PT

The following morning she got up, went to the river and jumped in, never to return.

6.13 The preterite tense third person to third person *portemanteau* morpheme

morph:	<-no>
slot:	sf6
label:	3→3/PT

The preterite tense *portemanteau* morpheme <-no> (3→3/PT) specifically indexes a transitive relationship between a third person agent and a third person patient in preterite time. The *portemanteau* morpheme <-no> (3→3/PT) is a suffixal slot 6 filler along with other suffixes marking tense. Examples 116 and 117 below illustrate the occurrence of the preterite tense *portemanteau* morpheme <-no> (3→3/PT) in transitive relationships between a third person singular agent and a third person patient in preterite time, while examples 118 and 119 illustrate the morpheme in transitive relationships between a third person plural agent and a third person patient in preterite time.

116 *naŋ-ko kapu su-ye uliy-Ø-u-no?*
you-GEN head who-ERG wash-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

Who washed your hair?

117 *ḍamari-ye oste-ko nem-te hen-sa wakhe loŋ-Ø-u-no,*
son.in.law-ERG self-GEN house-LOC go-INF word do-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

aji-ye 'nan di nis uni hok-a!' ŋah-Ø-u-no.
mother.in.law-ERG now one two day be-s/IMP say-sAS-3P-3→3/PT

Son-in-law talked about going back to his own house, but mother-in-law said 'please stay another day or two!'

118 *suwa ṭany-eŋ-to-le paŋku piy-eŋ-no, ma-lek-eŋ-no.*
tooth open-pAS-TPP-PCL water give-pAS-3→3/PT NEG-swallow-pAS-3→3/PT

They pushed open their teeth and gave them water, but they didn't swallow.

119 *sakalei bubu hu-ye 'ja-Ø-du' ŋay-eŋ-no,*
all elder.brother younger.brother-ERG okay-sAS-NPT say-pAS-3→3/PT

ŋaŋ usya hen-eŋ-no.
and dance take-pAS-3→3/PT

All the brothers agreed, saying 'okay', and set off with their dance.

6.14 The preterite tense first person to third person *portemanteau* morpheme

morph:	<-uŋ>
slot:	sf6
label:	1s→3/PT

The preterite *portemanteau* morpheme <-uŋ> (1s→3/PT) specifically indexes a transitive relationship between a first person agent and a third person patient in preterite time. The *portemanteau* morpheme <-uŋ> (1s→3/PT) is a suffixal slot 6 filler along with other suffixes marking tense. As is apparent from the following examples, the first person agent and third person agent transitive strings are elaborate and tautological in their morphological structure.

Examples 120 to 123 below illustrate the occurrence of the preterite tense *portemanteau* morpheme <-uŋ> (1s→3/PT) in transitive relationships between a first person singular agent and a third person patient in preterite time.

120 *gă-ye seŋ pal-u-n-uŋ.*
I wood chop-3P-1s→3-1s→3/PT

I chopped wood.

121 *gă-ye saiy-u-n-uŋ, naŋ naleŋ kuta ya-na-du?*
I-ERG know-3P-1s→3-1s→3/PT you present where go-2s-NPT

I've got it, so where are you off to now?

122 *gă-ye pepelek na-sa ma-thaŋ-u-n-uŋ, gai oste-ko*
I-ERG money put-INF NEG-be.able-3P-1s→3-1s→3/PT I self-GEN

nem-te ya-ŋa-n.
house-LOC go-1s-PT

I wasn't able to save any money [lit. be able to put], so I went back home.

The Thangmi preterite *portemanteau* morpheme <-uŋ> (1s→3/PT) is reminiscent of verbal agreement markers in other Kiranti languages and easily traceable to the Proto-Kiranti verbal agreement system proposed by van Driem. The Thangmi preterite *portemanteau* morpheme <-uŋ> (1s→3/PT) may be interpreted as a fusion of the Proto-Kiranti morpheme *<-u> denoting third person patient (3P) with the proto-morpheme *<-aŋ> denoting first person singular actant in preterite time (1s/PT). If this analysis is accepted, with regard to the *portemanteau* suffix <-uŋ> (1s→3/PT) at least, Thangmi is a living example of the Proto-Kiranti model and more canonically Kiranti in morphological structure than many extant Kiranti languages.