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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the usage of the verb *snang* in the Zhollam dialect of Gagatang Tibetan, spoken in Weixi County, Diqing Prefecture, Yunnan, China, with comparison to other verbs. The form *snang* in the Zhollam dialect is pronounced as /ṣṇaŋ/ and it is mainly employed as follows: 1) copulative usage: for equational and/or identificational functions for a non-self-oriented speech without any specific evidentiality; 2) existential usage: for both the existence of the subject and the speaker's intimate awareness of that existence; 3) evidential usage as a verbal suffix: for representing the visual experience for a speech. Of these usages, the first usage is unique to the Zhollam dialect among the Tibetan dialects.

KEYWORDS

Khams Tibetan, copulative verb, existential verb, evidentiality, visual perception

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Multiple usages of the verb ‘snang’ in Gagatang Tibetan (Weixi, Yunnan)

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1 Introduction¹

The Written Tibetan (Wrt) verb *snang* is pervasive throughout many Tibetan dialects, where it usually means ‘to shine’ and is often extended to mean ‘to seem / to appear’. In this paper, I describe the functions of *snang* in Gagatang, a Tibetan dialect spoken in Northwestern Yunnan, and compare it to several other verbs and suffixes. In Gagatang, *snang* is used as an existential (predicative verb), as an evidential suffix and as a copulative (predicative verb). To the best of my knowledge, the description of *snang* as a copulative verb has not been reported for any other Tibetan dialect.

Gagatang Tibetan belongs to the Melung subgroup (Suzuki and Tshering mTshomo 2009) of the Sems-kyi-nyila group of Khams Tibetan² and is spoken in Gagatang Sub-village, Pantiang Village, Weixi County, Diqing Prefecture, Yunnan, China.³ Suzuki (2009b, 2011) reported other unique features of Gagatang, such as pharyngealisation and retroflexion of vowels due to the influence of *ra-btags*. Gagatang speakers, estimated at less than 1,000, mainly live in the three hamlets of Gaga, Shaoluo and Mulu. Most are bilingual in Tibetan and the Weixi dialect of Chinese. The use of Tibetan by the younger generation is growing increasingly infrequent and it is likely that Gagatang Tibetan will be endangered in the next generation.

The data in this paper are based on conversational texts supplemented with elicited data collected in Shaoluo [Zhol-lam], one of the three hamlets where Gagatang is spoken. The main collaborators are two women one in her forties and one in her twenties. There is little variation of the speech among the three dialects, but for the sake of care in the interest of dialectology, it is henceforth called “Zhollam dialect.”

¹An earlier version of this paper was presented at 43rd International Conference of Sino-Tibetan Languages and Linguistics (Lund, Sweden, 16-18 October 2010).

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²The dialectal classification in this paper follows Suzuki (2009a).

³Chinese name: 雲南省迪慶藏族自治州維西傈僳族自治縣攀天閣鄉嘎嘎塘村

2 Overview of *snang* in WrT and the modern dialects

In Written Tibetan, the verb *snang* has a range of meanings related to visual perception, including ‘to appear’ and ‘to seem’ (Zhang 1993: 1589). In various modern dialects in Khams Tibetan and Shar Tibetan,⁴ *snang* is used as a predicative verb,⁵ which expresses, among other things, ‘existence’ and ‘possession’ often with an evidential component.⁶

The modern reflex of WrT *snang* occurs in many dialects of Khams Tibetan and Shar Tibetan. Suzuki and dKon-mchog Tshe-ring (2009) describe its usage in the sKyangtshang dialect of Shar Tibetan. Additionally, it occurs in the Cone dialect (spoken in Zhuoni County, Gansu (dialectal affiliation as yet undetermined), and in Thewo Tibetan (spoken in Diebu and Ruorgai Counties, Gansu and Sichuan; dialectal affiliation undetermined) as well as in some dialects of Central Tibetan as an existential verb (Tournadre and Konchok Jiatso 2001). Hua and Klu-’bumrgyal (1993: 326) and Ebihara (2011) report that it occurs as an existential verb in the dParis dialect (spoken in Tianzhu County, Gansu; innovative nomadic Amdo) as an existential verb as well. In addition, in some Nubra dialects of Ladakh *snang* is used as an experiential auxiliary (personal communication, Bettina Zeisler 2011).

A brief introduction to the usages of *snang* in several Tibetan dialects encountered in my fieldwork and previous works is presented below, divided into a predicative verb and a verbal suffix.

2.1 *snang* as a predicative verb

The predicative verb has two main categories: copulative and existential. At present, a typical copulative usage has not been attested yet in any Tibetan dialects except Gagatang Tibetan or the dialects belonging to the mThachu subgroup.

Some dialects belonging to the Rongbrag group⁷ of Khams Tibetan use *snang* as a copulative verb, but this usage is not typical (see the next subsection).

snang is used as an existential verb in dialects such as the Southern Route group,⁸ the Muli-nDappa group,⁹ the Chaphreng group,¹⁰ the sDerong-nJol group,¹¹ and the Sems-kyi-nyila group¹² of Khams Tibetan, and every dialect of Shar Tibetan. The case attested in Cone, Thewo, dParis, some dialects of Central Tibetan and the Nubra dialects of Lhadakh is also included in this usage. Bartee (2007: 361-362) describes the usage of *snang* in Dongwang Tibetan.¹³

⁴Shar Tibetan is mainly spoken in the northeastern area of Aba Prefecture, Sichuan.

⁵“Predicative verb” is a category of the verb, which is used both as an independent verb which means ‘be’ (copulative and existential; statement or judgement for the speech included) and as an auxiliary verb with a main verb (Hoshi 2003: 1).

⁶See Les Missionnaires Catholiques du Thibet (1899: 579) on the usage of *snang* in some dialects of Khams Tibetan. Zhang (1993: 1589) and Roerich (1985: 154-155) also describe its usage in Written Tibetan.

⁷Spoken in Danba County, Sichuan.

⁸Spoken in Yajiang, Litang, Batang, Mangkang, Zuogong and Chayu Counties, Sichuan and TAR.

⁹Spoken in Muli and Daocheng Counties, Sichuan.

¹⁰Spoken in Xiangcheng, Deirong and Xianggelila Counties, Sichuan and Yunnan.

¹¹Spoken in Deirong and Deqin Counties, Sichuan and Yunnan.

¹²Spoken in Xianggelila and Weixi Counties, Yunnan. The Zhollam dialect is included.

¹³Based on my dialectal classification, Dongwang Tibetan belongs to the Chaphreng group.

Briefly speaking,¹⁴ the differences of the usage as an existential verb are: most dialects of the Southern Route group use *snang* as an existential verb for a third person subject, including things and persons, whereas those of the sDerong-nJol group use it as an existential verb for non-human animate or inanimate third person subject. Shar Tibetan employs it in an existential third person as well as in possession.

2.2 *snang* as a verbal suffix

Almost all dialects which possess the usage of *snang* as an existential verb also often employ it as an evidential marker, however, the type of evidentiality represented by *snang* is different in each dialect or dialectal group. At present, I have no detailed observation on the usage of *snang* as a verbal suffix except for the Rongbrag group.

The dialects belonging to the Rongbrag group employ *snang* as a suffix of the copulative verb *yin*. In this case, *yin* is sometimes omitted and *snang* seems to be a predicative verb. This usage refers to a third person subject.

3 Description of *snang* in the Zhollam dialect

In the Zholam dialect, *snang* is realised as /^hṇoŋ/ ([ṇoŋ⁵⁵, ṇ⁵⁵o, ṇo:⁵⁵]) and serves the following functions:

- as a predicative verb
 - copulative usage (non-self-oriented enunciation, no specific evidentiality)
 - existential usage (also reflecting a specific evidentiality)
- as a suffix of a main verb
 - evidential usage (mainly reflecting a visual experience)

In this section, these three usages are described in comparison with other verbs or suffixes for each category.

3.1 Copulative usage

As a copula, *snang* serves equational and/or identificational functions, while including the speaker's attitude regarding the predication. In the Zhollam dialect, two affirmative copulas *snang* /'non/ and *yin* /'jũ/,¹⁵ and the negative counterpart of the latter *min* /'mẽ/¹⁶ are employed.

In the following, I will give examples of the affirmative usage:¹⁷

¹⁴Detailed descriptions and a careful choice of the terminology for every dialect are still missing. The following remarks are based on preliminary observations. Thus no examples are provided here.

¹⁵This form is sometimes pronounced as [zɪ:²⁴, zɪi:²⁴].

¹⁶This word might not be a direct descendant of WrT *min*, because a palatalisation of the initial is expected. Instead, a form like **man* can be hypothesised (personal communication with Bettina Zeisler 2011). But I apply a typical form of Wrtitten Tibetan here.

¹⁷I shall not provide a detailed gloss for each usage of *snang* in order to avoid a hasty generalisation, but I shall use CPV1 for *vin* and CPV2 for *snang*.

- (1) ʼŋa-φ ʼpi:-φ {ʼji/*-ŋəŋ}
1-ABS Tibetan-ABS CPV1/*CPV2
I am Tibetan.
- (2) ʼtɕʰuʔ-φ ʼpi:-φ {ʼji/*-ŋəŋ}
2-ABS Tibetan-ABS CPV1/*CPV2
You are Tibetan.
- (3) ʼma-φ-de ʼpʰa:-φ {ʼji / ʼŋəŋ}
this-ABS-TOP pig-ABS CPV1/CPV2
This is a pig.

As shown in (1)-(3), / $\neg$ noŋ/ is only used in clauses with a 3rd person subject, as expected of a non-self-orientation,¹⁸ cannot occur in clauses with 1st and 2nd person subjects. But there is a certain overlap with / $\neg$ jĩ/, which can also be used in clauses with a 3rd person subject as in (3). The semantic difference between two verbs is related to the speaker's attitude regarding the proposition. / $\neg$ jĩ/ is especially used for an expression in which the subject is directly related to speakers and hearers:

- (4) a ʔkʰɿ-ϕ ʔpi:-ϕ ʔnoŋ
 3-ABS Tibetan-ABS CPV2
 S/He is Tibetan.
- b ʔkʰɿ-ϕ ʔpi:-ϕ ʔji
 3-ABS Tibetan-ABS CPV1
 S/He is Tibetan (so we are the same ethnic group).

(4a) is an objective statement of the fact, whereas (4b) expresses a certain relation with the speaker, i.e. it is a self-oriented enunciation. This distinction applies to sentence (3), if the speaker wants to tell more about the pig which is related to possession of the speaker, /'jĩ/ is also acceptable.

The negative counterpart is *min* /'mẽ/ for /'jĩ/, and *mi(?) snang* /'mi-nɔŋ/ for /'nɔŋ/.

- (5) ʼŋA-φ ʼli: bi: mə-φ {ʼmẽ/*ʼmi-ŋəŋ}
1-ABS farmer-ABS CPV1.NEG/*NEG-CPV2
I am not a farmer.
- (6) ʼtɕʰuʔ-φ ʼpi: -φ {ʼmẽ/*ʼmi-ŋəŋ}
2-ABS Tibetan-ABS CPV1.NEG/*NEG-CPV2
You are not Tibetan.
- (7) ʼkʰɣ-φ ʼsẽ zu mə-φ {ʼmẽ/ʼmi-ŋəŋ}
3-ABS cook-ABS CPV1.NEG/NEG-CPV2
S/He is not a cook.

¹⁸Tournadre & Sangda Dorje (2009) calls the concept of self-orientation/non-self-orientation, which I use in this paper, *égophorique* / *non-égophorique* (egophoric / non-egophoric).

/mẽ/ and /mi-ŋɔŋ/ again interchange as in (3) and (4) when the subject is a 3rd person:

- (8) a ʼma-ϕ-de ʼkʰɣ-kʰɔŋ ʼmi-ŋɔŋ ʱŋA-kʰɔŋ ʼjĩ
 this-ABS-TOP 3-GEN NEG-CPV2 1-GEN CPV1
 This is not his/hers but mine.
- b ʼma-ϕ-de ʱŋA-kʰɔŋ ʼjĩ ʼkʰɣ-kʰɔŋ ʼmẽ
 this-ABS-TOP 1-GEN CPV1 3-GEN CPV1.NEG
 This is mine and not his/hers.

(8b) reflects the speaker's attitude towards the enunciation, and selects the self-oriented type of copula /mẽ/ for the 3rd subject.

Note that the negation prefix /mi/ preceding /ŋɔŋ/ is different from the two ordinary prefixes *myi* /ni/ (non-perfect) and *ma* /ma/ (perfect). The native speakers suggest that the form /mi/ might originate from /mẽ/, a negation copula. If this analysis is correct, the negation of *snang* is *min snang*, which means that the construction of the verbal phrase with /ŋɔŋ/ differs from that with /jĩ/¹⁹. Due to the behaviour of /ŋɔŋ/ in interrogative phrases, /ŋɔŋ/ in the copulative usage does not seem to be a typical verb. The following yes-no question show a restriction of the interrogative prefix /ʔa/, which can precede almost all verbs, but not /ŋɔŋ/.

- (9) ʼtɕʰɰʔ-ϕ ʼli su-ϕ ʼʔa-{jĩ / *ŋɔŋ}
 2-ABS Lisu-ABS Q-CPV1/*CPV2
 Are you Lisu?
- (10) ʼma-ϕ-de ʼpʰa:-ϕ ʼʔa-{ʔjĩ / *ŋɔŋ}
 this-ABS-TOP pig-ABS Q-ʔCPV1/*CPV2
 Is this a pig?

Adding /ʔa/, the speaker always uses /jĩ/. /ʔa-ŋɔŋ/ cannot be used parallel to the affirmative expression, but completely ungrammatical. In other words, this means that the verbal construction differs with respect to /jĩ/ and /ŋɔŋ/; the former is quite the same as main verbs, but the latter is not a typical verb but a defective verb because of the specific negative form and the limitation of the interrogative form.²⁰

As shown in (9) and (10), the prefix /ʔa/ cannot make an interrogative sentence with /ŋɔŋ/, but there is another way to form an interrogative phrase, namely to add a suffix /jẽ/²¹ (following /jĩ/) or /mẽ/²² (following /ŋɔŋ/):

- (11) ʼtɕʰɰʔ-ϕ ʼʂɣ: lɔŋ wa-ϕ ʼjĩ ʼjẽ
 2-ABS person from Zhollam-ABS CPV1 Q
 Are you from Zhollam?

¹⁹This analysis could imply an existence of the affirmative counterpart *yin snang*, however, it is not attested.

²⁰The construction /ʔa-ŋɔŋ/ is possible when /ŋɔŋ/ is used as an existential verb. See 3.2.

²¹This form is pronounced not only as [jẽ²⁴], but also as [je²⁴ fiã⁵⁵].

²²This form is pronounced not only as [mẽ²⁴, mjẽ²⁴], but also as [me²⁴ fiã⁵⁵].

- (12) ʼma-φ-de ʼpʰa:-φ ʼnɔŋ ʼmẽ
 this-ABS-TOP pig-ABS CPV2 Q
 Is this a pig?

In sentence (11), /ʼnɔŋ/ can also be used, but the meaning changes a little. It serves to confirm the speaker's knowledge:

- (13) ʼtɕʰuʔ-φ ʼsɣ: lɔŋ wa-φ ʼnɔŋ ʼmẽ
 2-ABS person from Zhollam-ABS CPV2 Q
 You are from Zhollam, aren't you?

The answer to questions (11) and (12) can be formed only with /ʼjĩ/ (negative /ʼmẽ/) and /ʼnɔŋ/ (negative /ʼmi-nɔŋ/) respectively. So as an answer to (13), /ʼjĩ/ must be used.

Wh-questions show no restriction of the above-mentioned type, because /ʼʔa/ is not used:

- (14) ʼkʰɣ-φ ʼkwɔ̃-φ ʼnɔŋ
 3-ABS who-ABS CPV2
 Who is s/he?

There is one example in which only /ʼnɔŋ/ is used for the 1st person subject:

- (15) ʼŋa-φ ʼkwɔ̃-φ {ʼjĩ / ʼnɔŋ}
 1-ABS who-ABS *CPV1/CPV2
 Who am I?

(15) is acceptable only when the speaker lost his/her memory, because of which the non-self-oriented copula is selected.

To summarise the usage of /ʼnɔŋ/ as a copulative verb, we can point out the followings:

- /ʼnɔŋ/ is mainly used for non-self-oriented enunciation (almost all cases are the 3rd person subjects)
- /ʼnɔŋ/ is a defective verb, because:
 - it requires a unique negation prefix
 - it cannot co-occur with an interrogative prefix

3.2 Existential usage

In its existential function, *snang* expresses both the existence of the subject and the speaker's intimate awareness of that existence. In the Zhollam dialect, two affirmative existential verbs *snang* /ʼnɔŋ/ and *yod* /ʼjũʔ/,²³ and the negative counterpart of the latter *med* /ʼɲeʔ/ are employed.

In the following one can find examples of /ʼnɔŋ/ and /ʼjũʔ/ in affirmative clauses:²⁴

²³This form is sometimes pronounced as [ʒuʔ²³¹, ʒo:²³¹, ʒu:²³¹].

²⁴For the reason mentioned in footnote 17, I shall use EXV1 for *yod* and EXV2 for *snang* as a gloss.

- (16) ʼŋA-ϕ ʼpʰa:-ϕ {ʼjuʔ/*-ŋɔŋ}
 1-ABS pig-ABS EXV1/*EXV2
 I have a pig. (possessive)
- (17) ʼto: ʼpʰa:-ϕ {*ʼjuʔ/-ŋɔŋ}
 there pig-ABS *EXV1/EXV2
 There is a pig. (existential)
 (situation: introducing to the addressee the speaker's pigsty)
- (18) ʼŋA-de ʼloŋ ba tʂʰu-nɔ̃ {*ʼjuʔ/-ŋɔŋ}
 fish-TOP river-INE *EXV1/EXV2
 The fish is in the river. (locational)
 (situation: answer to the question "where are there fish?")

The simple verb /ʼjuʔ/ occurs in clauses which contain 1st person possessors. The simple verb /-ŋɔŋ/ occurs in locational clauses with 3rd person subjects, when the information can be visually confirmed by the speaker. Note that the latter verb is not used for a possessive phrase, only for an existential or locational phrase.

Clauses which express 3rd person possession, 1st person existence and all clauses with 2nd person subjects differ from the constructions presented above. Clauses with 3rd person possessors are expressed with /ʼjuʔ-ŋɔŋ/, i.e. /ʼjuʔ/ followed by the evidential suffix /ŋɔŋ/,²⁵ as:

- (19) ʼkʰɣ-ϕ ʼpʰa:-ϕ ʼjuʔ-ŋɔŋ
 1-ABS pig-ABS EXV1-EVD
 S/He has a pig. (possessive)

The form /ʼjuʔ-ŋɔŋ/ is also used as an existential verb for the 3rd person, as:

- (20) ʼna ka ʼmɔ̃ⁿdo ʼtʂɔ:-ϕ ʼjuʔ-ŋɔŋ
 here person one-ABS EXV1-EVD
 Here is one person. (existential)
 (situation: the speaker saw from a window a person in the room)

The existence of the 1st person is expressed by another verb *bzhugs* /ʼʂo:/, *bzhugs sdod* /ʼʂo: ʰde:/ or /ʼʂo: ʰduʔ/ 'stay' can be used instead of an existential verb.

- (21) ʼŋA-ϕ ʼtʂʰoŋ-ϕ ʼʂo:-dA-jĩ
 1-ABS home-ABS stay-PRS-CPV
 I am at home. (locational)
 (situation: answer in the conversation with a telephone)

²⁵It is possible that /-ŋɔŋ/ in this usage is an elliptical form of the combination verb plus /-ŋɔŋ/. The omitted word can be /ʼjuʔ/. In (17) /-ŋɔŋ/ can alternate with /ʼjuʔ-ŋɔŋ/, which means that the speaker has just seen a pig there. Contrarily, /-ŋɔŋ/ itself as an existential usage cannot take any suffixes.

The verbs /ʔso:/, /ʔso: ^{hi}de:/ and /ʔso: ^{hi}duʔ/ are used for a 3rd person if one hopes to emphasise the existence of an animate being, especially a human being, as:

- (22) ʔA ba-φ ʔe^hoŋ-{φ/nɔ̃} {ʔso: ^{hi}duʔ/ʔso:-dA-jĩ}
 daddy-ABS home-{ABS/INE} stay/stay-PRS-CPV
 Daddy is home.

/ʔso: ^{hi}duʔ/ can be followed by /ŋoŋ/ as an evidential suffix. This will indicate the speaker's visual experience of the existence, as:

- (23) ʔA ba-φ ʔe^hoŋ-{φ/nɔ̃} ʔso: ^{hi}duʔ-ŋoŋ
 daddy-ABS home-{ABS/INE} stay-EVD
 I have seen daddy in the house.

The treatment of the 2nd person is similar to that of the 1st person.

- (24) ʔe^huʔ-φ ʔp^ha:-φ ʔjuʔ-ŋoŋ
 2-ABS pig-ABS EXV1-EVD
 You have a pig. (possessive)
 (situation: the speaker knows this fact well)

- (25) ʔe^huʔ-φ ʔe^hoŋ-{φ/nɔ̃} ʔso: ^{hi}duʔ
 2-ABS home-{ABS/INE} live
 You are at home. (locational)
 (situation: heard from the addressee this fact with a telephone)

To sum up, /ʔjuʔ/ is used for the existence of all the animate and inanimate things (where it may be followed by a suffix /ŋoŋ/) as well as for the possession, i.e. things and animate beings under the subject's control. /ʔŋoŋ/, on the other hand, is used only to convey the existence of non-human beings which can be visually experienced by the speaker.

In the following section, negative phrases are described. The negative counterpart of /ʔjuʔ/ is /ʔneʔ/, which also can be followed by /-ŋoŋ/ when conveying an evidential meaning. In fact, /ʔneʔ/ is often followed by /-ŋoŋ/, because the speaker may confirm a non-existence after a kind of visual experience. The use of /ʔneʔ/ alone is rarely found.²⁶

- (26) ʔA-φ ʔp^ha:-φ {ʔneʔ-ŋoŋ/*ʔma-ŋoŋ}
 1-ABS pig-ABS EXV1.NEG-EVD/*NEG-EXV2
 I do not have a pig. (possessive)

- (27) ʔto: ʔp^ha:-φ {ʔneʔ-ŋoŋ/ʔma-ŋoŋ}
 there pig-ABS EXV1.NEG-EVD/NEG-EXV2
 There are no pigs. (existential)
 (situation: the speaker looked at the pigsty and confirmed this fact)

²⁶The negation verb form appears in elicitation, it is thus grammatically acceptable. Its form is /ʔma-ŋoŋ/.

The interrogative phrase can be formed by adding a prefix /ʔa/ or one of the suffixes /jẽ/ or /mẽ/. Note that /ʔa/ is usually employed in front of /nɔŋ/ or /juʔ-nɔŋ/, as:

- (28) ʔto: ʔpʰa:-φ ʔa-nɔŋ
 there pig-ABS Q-EXV2
 Is there a pig? (existential)
 (situation: pointing a pigsty)
- (29) ʔtɕʰuʔ-φ ʔtɕʰi-φ ʔa-juʔ-nɔŋ
 2-ABS house-ABS Q-EXV1-EVD
 Do you have a house? (possessive)
- (30) ʔtɕʰuʔ-φ ʔpʰa:-φ ʔjuʔ jẽ
 2-ABS pig-ABS EXV1 Q
 Do you have a pig? (possessive)

In order to reply to the question (28), /nɔŋ/ cannot be used alone, but /juʔ/ must be added as /juʔ-nɔŋ/ for an ordinary affirmative phrase.

If the interrogative suffix /mẽ/ is added to /juʔ-nɔŋ/ and /neʔ-nɔŋ/, the interrogative phrase reflects the speaker's attitude of having some doubt as to the truth of the statement, as:

- (31) ʔtɕʰuʔ-φ ʔpʰa:-φ ʔjuʔ-nɔŋ mẽ
 2-ABS pig-ABS EXV1-EVD Q
 Do you really have a pig? (though you live in a city)

/juʔ/ and /neʔ/ can be followed by /jĩ/, which is identical with the copulative verb,²⁷ but is followed by a particle /fia/ (undetermined future) or /pa/ (determined future), as in:²⁸

- (32) a ʔlɔ ʔmʲbje: ʔsə tɕẽ-φ ʔjuʔ-fia-jĩ
 tomorrow time-ABS EXV1-FUT1-CPV
 (I) have a (free) time tomorrow. (I think so.)
- b ʔlɔ ʔmʲbje: ʔsə tɕẽ-φ ʔjuʔ-pa-jĩ
 tomorrow time-ABS EXV1-FUT2-CPV
 (I) surely have a (free) time tomorrow.
- (33) ʔŋa-φ ʔpʰa:-φ ʔneʔ-fia-jĩ
 1-ABS pig-ABS EXV1.NEG-FUT1-CPV
 I do not have a pig. (And I am not going to keep one.)

The forms /fia-jĩ/ and /pa-jĩ/ can also follow most stative verbs, but nor /nɔŋ-fia-jĩ/ nor /nɔŋ-pa-jĩ/. Neither /fia-mẽ/ nor /pa-mẽ/ are attested.

Concerning the polysyllabic verb /ʃo: ʰde:/ or /ʃo: ʰduʔ/, the prefixes will be added to the second syllable²⁹ as:

²⁷This /jĩ/ is one of the sentence final morphemes, which are pronounced without an independent tone.

²⁸I shall not provide a detailed gross for each particle and I shall use FUT1 for /fia/ and FUT2 for /pa/.

²⁹Some verbs consisting of two syllables are marked on their second syllable with a prefix.

- (34) a ʔA bA-ϕ tɕʰoŋ-ϕ ʃso: ʔa-^hdu?
 daddy-ABS home-ABS Q-live
 Is daddy home?
- b ʔA bA-ϕ tɕʰoŋ-ϕ ʃso: ʔma-^hdu?
 daddy-ABS home-ABS NEG-live
 Daddy is not home.

/ʃso: ^hde:/ also can be followed by /ŋoŋ/ when expressing an evidential component.
 The construction of the affirmative existential phrase can be concluded as follows:

- (35) a existential usage for 3rd persons: /ʔŋoŋ/
 ʔtsʰə-ϕ ʔŋoŋ
 dog-ABS EXV2
 The dog is (here/in the kennel).
- b possessive usage for 1st person: /ʔjuʔ/
 ʔtsʰə-ϕ ʔjuʔ
 dog-ABS EXV1
 (I) have a dog.
- c possessive usage for 2nd and 3rd persons, and existential usage, especially
 based on the speaker's visual experience: /ʔjuʔ-ŋoŋ/
 ʔtsʰə-ϕ ʔjuʔ-ŋoŋ
 dog-ABS EXV1-EVD
 (i) (He) has a dog.
 (ii) The dog is here (visual experience, e.g. I have just seen).
- d emphasis on the existence of an animate being: /ʃso:/, /ʃso: ^hde:/
 ʔtsʰə-ϕ ʃso: ^hde:
 dog-ABS live
 The dog is/lives (here/in the kennel).

To summarise the usage of /ʔŋoŋ/ as an existential verb, we can point out the followings:

- /ʔŋoŋ/ is used only for the existence of non-human 3rd persons
- The behaviour of /ʔŋoŋ/ in affirmative, negative and interrogative sentences is, different from the copulative usage, quite parallel to a main verb, but:
 - the negation form /ʔma-ŋoŋ/, while grammatically correct, rarely appears in the natural speech
 - it does not take any suffixes
- /ʔŋoŋ/ preceded by /ʔjuʔ/ is not an existential verb, but a verbal suffix (see the next section)

3.3 Evidential usage

When *snang* is added to a main verb or an adjective in a clause, it serves an evidential function. Unlike in the preceding two usages, it has a neutral tone and cannot co-occur with the negation and interrogative prefixes, indicating that /-ŋɔŋ/ is a suffix of the verb. In the Zhollam dialect, there are two suffixes which are related to the evidential category: *snang* /-ŋɔŋ/ and *grag*³⁰ /-^hka^ɿ, -^hka/.³¹

/-ŋɔŋ/ is used for an enunciation, the status of which is *visually* experienced by the speaker and has already been part of the speaker's knowledge. Note that all other sensory information is excluded and represented by /-^hka^ɿ, -^hka/.

The following two sentences reflect the speaker's visual experience:

- (36) ʃiŋ-φ -^hkẽ-mə-ŋɔŋ
 field-ABS dry-PFT-EVD
 The field has become dry.
 (situation: the speaker has seen the dry field)
- (37) ʔa ma -^hɔŋ-φ ʔ^hɔŋ tɕa-φ ʔma-^htA-ŋɔŋ
 recently tree-ABS peach-ABS NEG-bear-EVD
 The tree did not bear peaches recently.
 (situation: the speaker has seen the tree not bearing peaches)

The following two sentences reflect the speaker's judgement based on a visible situation:

- (38) ʃiə^ɿ-ŋɔŋ
 well-EVD
 Alright./That's good.
 (situation: the speaker has seen and confirmed that is good)
- (39) -ʔa-^hpja-ŋɔŋ
 Q-good-EVD
 Are you/Is it good?

The next three sentences reflect the speaker's knowledge based on visual experience:

- (40) ʔ^hpa^ɿ ja:-φ ʔ^hdza ʔdzɛ: ʔjuʔ ʔna ʔsa ʔma-t^he:-ŋɔŋ
 dish-ABS many EXV thus eat NEG-can-EVD
 There are so many dishes that (I) cannot completely eat (them).

In this case, the speaker has just seen the quantity of dishes (=visual experience) and given up to eat all of them.

³⁰This form might correspond to *grag* which designates a hearsay (Les Missionnaires Catholiques du Thibet 1899: 164) as well as to *grags* used in Milarepa as a main verb with the meaning 'known as.' Another meaning might be included, which is rather similar to *snang*: 'appear to one's ears' or 'make itself be auditively perceived' (personal communication with Bettina Zeisler 2011).

This form is widely employed in Kham Tibetan dialects.

³¹In the speech of the elder generation, the pronunciations [tʰa, tʰa] are also attested.

- (41) ʻɕə WA-φ ʻsa ma ʻsa ma na xo ʼtʰo:-φ ʻsa-ŋəŋ
mouse-ABS stealthily crop-ABS eat-EVD N.B.³²
The mouse eats crops stealthily.

In this case, the speaker has ever seen the mouse eating crops before (=visual experience) and does not define an action of a mouse.

- (42) ʼlə mɣ-φ ʼŋA-lə ʼfi gA-fi gA-ŋəŋ
PSN-ABS 1-DAT love-RDP-EVD
Lhamo (*lha mo*) seems to like me.

In this case, the speaker's feelings are based in what he observes as Lhamo's actual attitude.

Example (43) might be misunderstood in that /-ŋəŋ/ would be used as an existential.

- (43) ʼkʰɣ-da-de ʻɕwe ɕAW ʼtʰaʼ:-ŋəŋ
3-NML-ABL school far-EVD
The school is far from his (house).

Although /-ŋəŋ/ refers to the existence of the school, it is not an existential verb because of the different tone. It is thus a suffix functioning as evidential marker.

The use of /-ʰkaʼ/ is based on non-visual experience:

- (44) ʼŋA-φ ʼtu:-{kaʼ/*ŋəŋ}
1-ABS hungry-EVD
I am/feel hungry.
- (45) a ʼma ʼɕʰe ŋi-φ ʼhke hto-kaʼ
this boiled meat-ABS solid-EVD
This boiled meat is tough.
- a ʼma ʼɕʰe ŋi-φ ʼhke hto-ŋəŋ
this boiled meat-ABS solid-EVD
This boiled meat is tough.

(45a) is based on a feeling of the speaker after s/he chewed the boiled meat. If one confirms the solidness of the meat through the sense of touch such as with a fork or chopsticks, /-ŋəŋ/ is used instead of /-kaʼ/ as in (45b).

- (46) a ʼkoŋ tso-φ ʼhtɕi:-ŋəŋ
work-ABS busy-EVD
(I am) busy on the work. (as a general status)
(situation: an enunciation how many the speaker's work exists)
- b ʼkoŋ tso-φ ʼhtɕi:-kaʼ
work-ABS busy-EVD
(I am) busy on the work. (working now)
(situation: the speaker feels this work makes him/her busy)

³²The Zhollam dialect has an ergative construction, but the ergative marking is not obligatory.

Typically, (46a) appears in the answer to a question “how is your work?” whereas (46b) appears in that to a question “are you busy?” The former should be uttered in front of the desk of the speaker, and it implies a feeling of the speaker “you look, there are so many documents.”

When making a statement about the addressee, one can use neither /ṇɔŋ/ nor /^hka^ʃ/, as in:

- (47) ʔtɕ^huʔ-φ ʔfi dɔ^ʃ:-pə-ts^hi:
 2-ABS tired-PFT-ACH
 You are tired.

(an expression corresponding to Chinese *ni xinku le*)

To summarise the usage /-ṇɔŋ/ as a verbal suffix, we can point out the followings:

- The information source is only based on the visual experience, not including other sensory informations (compare (44) and (45))
- With respect to a visual experience, the time of having obtained the information has no relation to the use of /-ṇɔŋ/ (compare (41) and (42))

4 Conclusion and some remarks

The three usages of *snang* in the Zhollam dialect are summarised and compared to other verbs and suffixes in each function as follows:

1. copulative usage

- /-ṇɔŋ/: non-self-oriented speech, i.e. the subject is normally a 3rd person
- /ʔjiʔ/: self-oriented speech, i.e. the subject is attracted in the speech

2. existential usage

- /-ṇɔŋ/: existence of non-human 3rd person, based on a visual experience
- /ʔjiʔ/: possession of all the persons of which 2nd and 3rd persons take a suffix /-ṇɔŋ/, and also existence of non-human 3rd person with the suffix

3. evidential usage as a verbal suffix

- /-ṇɔŋ/: representing visual experience of information
- /-ka^ʃ/: representing direct sensory experience except the visual experience

The usage as a copulative verb stem is unique to the Zhollam dialect,³³ it is not attested in other Tibetan dialects. From the viewpoint of the formation of the verbal phrase, we should

³³The usage in the Zhollam dialect is quite common to the Melung subgroup of the Sems-kyi-nyila group including the mThachu dialect and the Daan dialect.

note that the copulative /ṽṇoŋ/ and the existential /ṽṇoŋ/ are different, and that the latter behaves like a main verb, but the former behaves as a main verb only in an affirmative phrase.

As a typological remark, it can be pointed out that the three usages of *snang* in the Zhollam dialect quite correspond to those of *'dug* (pronounced as /duk/) in Ladakh (personal communication with Bettina Zeisler 2011). Bielmanier (2000: 93-108) describes the usage of /duk/ in detail, in which only one example as a copulative verb (in my term) in the Nurla dialect of Lower Ladakh is included (2000: 93, example (60)).

As a brief mention about a historical development of /ṽṇoŋ/, we can suppose that the original usage of /ṽṇoŋ/ as a predicative verb is existential, and the usage as a copulative is due to a recent grammaticalisation of this word; in affirmative sentences it behaves like a main verb, but in negative and interrogative constructions it cannot behave like a main verb. In this sense, *snang*, as employed in the Zhollam dialect, originated as an existential verb, similar to other Tibetan dialects, where it is used. But its further development as a copulative verb is particular to the Zhollam dialect, or the mThachu subdialect group.³⁴

ABBREVIATIONS

1	1st person	DAT	dative	NML	nominaliser
2	2nd person	EVD	evidential marker	PFT	perfect
3	3rd person	EXV	existential verb	PRS	present
ABL	ablative	FUT	future	PSN	person name
ABS	absolutive	GEN	genitive	Q	question marker
ACH	achievement	LOC	locative	RDP	reduplication
CPV	copulative verb	NEG	negative	TOP	topic marker

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³⁴One should notice: lack of a form corresponding to WrT *red*, which is used as a copulative verb in the other surrounding dialects around the mThachu subgroup. This word, in fact, is used as a stative verb (adjective) 'be well/alright' pronounced /'fiə̃˥˥/ as shown in (38) (cf. Suzuki 2011: 483). In addition, the construction as *yod nang* is not attested in the surrounding dialects, in which *yod red* is used instead. Therefore *snang* seems to substitute the whole field of *red* employed in the other dialects. This fact might be a key for explaining the development of the usage of *snang* in the Zhollam dialect.

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Appendix: Phonological system of Gagatang Tibetan

vowels

normal	i	e	ɛ	a	ə	ɜ	ʌ	ɑ	ɔ	o	u	ʊ	ø	ʏ	ɤ	ɹ
pharyngealised		eˀ	ɛˀ	aˀ	əˀ	ɜˀ		ɑˀ	ɔˀ	oˀ						
retroflex						ɜˀ										

Short/long and non-nasalised/nasalised features are also distinct.

consonants

p ^h	t ^h			k ^h	
p	t	t̪		k	ʔ
b	d	d̪		g	
	ts ^h	t̪s ^h	tɕ ^h		
	ts	t̪s	tɕ		
	dz	d̪z	dʒ		
	s ^h	s̪ ^h	ɕ ^h	x ^h	
	s	s̪	ɕ	x	h
	z	z̪	ʒ	ɣ	ɦ
m	n		ɳ	ŋ	
m̥	n̥		ɳ̥	ŋ̥	
	l	l̪			
	l̥				
w			j		

Consonant clusters including a preaspiration, a prenasalisation, and/or a glide are attested.

tones

ˉ : high-level ˊ : rising ˋ : falling ˆ : rising-falling/mid-level