

LOLO-BURMESE SUBORDINATORS FROM CASE POSTPOSITIONS:
SEVERAL PARTIAL ETYMOLOGIES¹

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0.0 Introduction. In her study of the languages of the Bodic branch of Tibeto-Burman, Genetti (1986) demonstrated that the syncretism of case postpositions and clausal subordinators followed relatively-consistent paths of grammaticalization. With an analysis based on the localistic theory of case found in Diehl (1975), she demonstrated that the developmental paths of various subordinators were an extension "of four basic cases to the semantic domains of spatial, temporal, and logical relations."

Genetti's study added not only to our general understanding of the historical paths involved in the development of these subordinators, but also to our understanding of the semantics involved. Genetti's study was based on data from Bodic languages, but the analyses are certainly not restricted to those languages. Examination of subordinators in Lolo-Burmese languages demonstrates these analyses also provide insights into the etymologies of these subordinators.

1.0 Spatial > temporal > logical.² This particular pattern of extensions is already familiar to us from Indo-European languages. The concrete, spatial reference is first extended to the temporal sphere, then to the logical. Examples of this abound in Lolo-Burmese.

The evidence is found both in the variations in the range of meanings for various particles and in the paths of historical development.

In Written Burmese (=WB), the variation of spatial with temporal reference is evident in WB nok 'space behind; past time'; the variation of temporal with logical reference is evident in the meaning variation of forms such as yag 'when, if' and hmá 'only when, only if'. In Lahu, the particle corresponding to a non-preglottalized version of WB nok has both spatial and temporal dimensions: qh3?-n3 'space behind, future time, after'; in both Sani and Nasu, these forms have temporal/sequential dimensions: Sani n3-q3 55-44, Nasu s3-n3 55-55 'afterward'.

In Akha, the range for the particle ná begins spatially in ná k'ah paw 'behind (in space)', moves to temporal in ná k'ah 'after', and is extended to logical in ná 'if'.

For Lisu, Fraser (1922:40) notes, "htá⁴, strictly meaning 'when,' is sometimes loosely used for 'if'". This is an example of originally temporal sequencing being extended to logical sequencing. In the case of the Lisu particle nya³, the whole range from locative to temporal to logical is exemplified. Bradley (846) has nya³ listed as a locative particle. In his grammar, Fraser notes "the phrase gaw⁴lě³-nya³ = thereupon, is also used to indicate sequence, especially to connect sentences in continuous narration"; in this example, clearly it is the nya³ which indicates temporal sequencing. And, elsewhere Bradley (840) and Fraser (1922:40) list -nya³ as 'if', an indicator of logical sequencing. Thus, the whole chain is completed.

2.0 Commitative > purpose. As Fraser notes (1922:32), "Purpose is expressed by the conjunctive particle (a) bye³".

nu⁴ tá⁴ maw⁴ (a) bye³ la⁴ (a) law³
 you ACC/DAT. see PURP come PART
 '(I) have come for the purpose of seeing you'

Interestingly, the tá⁴ 'ACC/DAT' in the above example serves to mark either the accusative or the dative. Genetti reports the 'dative' as a frequent source of purpose conjunctions, but in this instance the dative does not appear to be the origin. Of the four Lisu examples given in Fraser, however, only two of them occur with tá⁴. The form

(a) bye³ is glossed as 'and'. It is significant that Fraser (1922:39) notes that it only conjoins noun phrases; as Fraser's designation "conjunctive particle" suggests, this is a conjunctive postposition. The sense of 'and' which I read into the postposition (a) bye³ is the committative sense reflected in English pairs such as:

June and Mary went to Florida.
 June went to Florida with Mary.

Thus, the Lisu example above glossed '(I) have come for the purpose of seeing you' is just as readily glossed as '(I) have come with the purpose of seeing you'.

3.0 Instrumental > 'because'. In several instances, subordinators meaning 'because' appear to have developed out of collocations featuring construction-final Instrumental postpositions. Among the forms Bradley (1979) gives for 'because of that' are several of interest here: (816; < 854 + 843) Akha k'óe mî neh/ heu mî neh, Lisu gaw⁴lě³nyi³.³ The Akha forms are charted below:

bâ	da	neh	
k'óe ⁴	mî	neh	['that' + mî neh]
heu ⁵	mî	neh	['this' + mî neh]
teu ⁶	mî	neh	['this' + mî neh]
		mî neh	
		mî	[shortened form of mî neh]

(Note: mî-a [final particle] "used in declarative statements about oneself, and indicates a past or present reaction or state of emotion, or a fact. It is never used for the future, nor does it occur with the negative." (see Bradley 851ff.))

At the core of the Akha examples is mî neh, a phrase apparently consisting of the clause-final particle mî followed by neh, a form apparently related etymologically to the Lolo-Burmese Instrumental/committative postposition.

The Lisu form gaw⁴lě³nyi³ consists of 'that' plus lě³nyi³, a phrase apparently consisting of the clause-final particle lě³ followed

by $\text{ny}13$, a form apparently related etymologically to the Lolo-Burmese instrumental/commitative postposition.

The PLB postposition *nay . Bradley's Proto-Loloish (1979) contains relevant data under two categories: the instrumental particle (850), and the accompaniment particle (849): INSTRUMENTAL WB nay '; COMMITATIVE (=ACCOMPANIMENT) WB nay ' Phunoi né Bisu né Akha nèh. These forms may represent a single provenience reconstructible as PLB *nay 'instrumental/commitative', but the proto-tone is unclear, with all three of the PLB proto-tones being suggested by one or more of the Lolo-Burmese reflexes: WB nay ' 'instrumental/commitative' (* accompaniment) Bisu né 'commitative' <*3 ; Akha nèh 'commitative' <*2 ; and, Phunoi né 'commitative' <*1 . The related instrumental particles in both the Lisu and the Akha subordinators reflect a proto-tone 3 source.

4.0 Conclusion. It is not clear that any of this paper is original but in a real sense, it was not intended to be. What this represents is a simple attempt at seeing if the diachronic account of the origins of conjunctions found in Genetti (1986; based in part on Diehl 1975) provided insights into the origins of conjunctions in Lolo-Burmese languages. It did.

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I shall be astonished if all my errors should prove minor and grateful to readers for their corrections. The only original 'contribution' of this paper must lie in personal idiosyncracies of organization and writing style. The attempt has been made to give full credit for the ideas through citations in the text, in the footnotes, and in the bibliography; however, at the same time the attempt has also been made to avoid turning this into an exercise in documentation.

In this paper, numbers in parentheses e.g., (816) refer to sets in Bradley's Proto-Loloish (1979), while numbers preceded by a number sign e.g., *155 refer to sets in Matisoff's The Loloish Tonal Split Revisited (1972). When the source cited is a dictionary, the reference given is the citation form of the item in question rather than a page number e.g., 'that' gaw^4 allows one to find this form in the back of Fraser's Lisu grammar.

For Lewis's Akha the tone marks have been changed. Using the vowel a as an example, the changes are given: high tone [á], mid tone [unmarked], low tone [à], high-stopped [á], and low-stopped [à].

²See section 3.97 in Matisoff's The Grammar of Lahu.

³While some of Bradley's examples have not been included here as irrelevant to the point under discussion, other examples have been added.

⁴ k'óe 'that'

⁵ heu 'this'

⁶ teu 'that which is nearer you than me'