

Proto-Tai reconstruction of ‘maternal grandmother’ revisited: **na:j A* or **ta:j A* ?

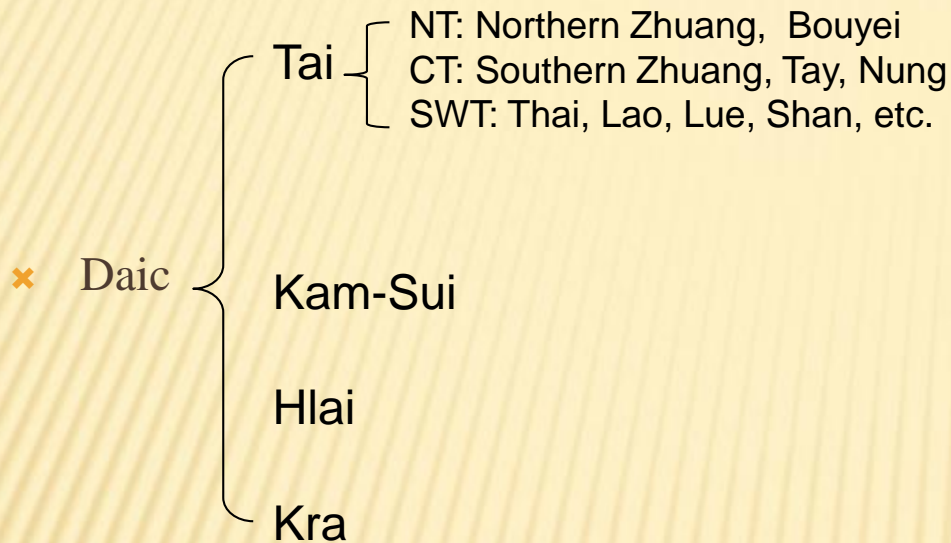
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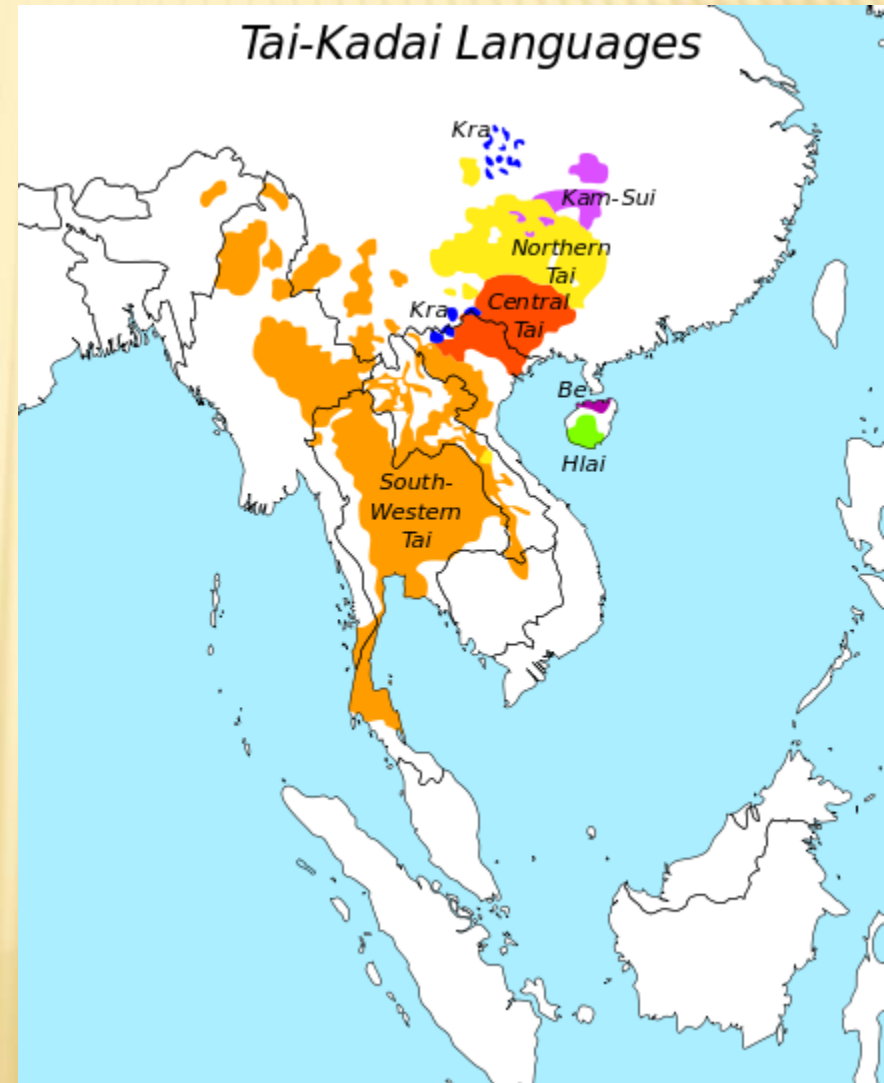
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SEALS23: The 23rd Meeting of The Southeast Asian Linguistics Society
(SEALS23 May 29 - 31, 2013 Chulalongkorn University)

INDEX ITEMS - 1



- Central Tai (CT) \neq Central Thai
(\rightarrow Standard Thai; Siamese)
- Northern Tai (NT) \neq Northern Thai
(\rightarrow Kam Muang)
- Southwestern Tai (SWT)
- Proto-Tai (PT)



INDEX ITEMS - 2

- ✗ Proto-initial: initials at time of tonal splits
- ✗ Tai Tones: 4 tone categories splitting into voiceless and voiced 10 tones

✗

| Proto-Initial | A | B | C | DL | DS |
|---------------|---|---|---|----|----|
| Voiceless | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Voiced | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |

- ✗ Fang-Kuei Li's Tai tone categories: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2, DL1, DL2, DS1, DS2
- ✗ **e.g. 10 tone categories in Debao Zhuang**

| A1↕ | A2↕ | B1↕ | B2↕ | C1↕ | C2↕ | DL1↕ | DL2↕ | DS1↕ | DS2↕ |
|------|-------|-------|---------|-------|--------|----------|---------|-------|--------|
| 353↕ | 31↕ | 55↕ | 33↕ | 24↕ | 213↕ | 55↕ | 33↕ | 55↕ | 21↕ |
| ma:↕ | ma:↕ | ma:↕ | ma:↕ | ma:↕ | ma:↕ | ma:t↕ | ma:t↕ | mat↕ | mat↕ |
| dog↕ | come↕ | soak↕ | blurry↕ | grow↕ | horse↕ | hapless↕ | scrape↕ | flea↕ | grain↕ |

INDEX ITEMS - 3

*Paired semantic content

e.g. *puu B1 jaa B2 taa A1 jaai A2*

ปู่ ย่า ตา ยาย

‘ancestors, paternal and maternal grandparents’

*Analogical change

One sound changes based on analogy with other words

e.g. *s[s] → sh[ʃ]* in some Southern Chinese Mandarin varieties

The irregularity of ‘maternal grandmother’ in representative Tai languages

| | ‘maternal grandmother’ | | | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Language | Southwestern Tai | | Central Tai | | Northern Tai | |
| | Siamese | Lao | Lungchow | Debao | Wuming | Tiandong |
| Modern form | <i>jaai A2</i> | <i>naai A2</i> | <i>ta:i A1</i> | <i>ta:i B1</i> | <i>ta:i A1</i> | <i>ta:i B1</i> |
| Proto-form reflected | <i>*ja:j A</i> | <i>*na:j A</i> | <i>*ta:j A</i> | <i>*ta:j B</i> | <i>*ta:j A</i> | <i>*ta:j B</i> |
| Agreement | None | Agreed with most SWT languages | Agreed with most CT languages | Agreed with most NT languages | Agreed with most CT languages | Agreed with most NT languages |

MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER

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Current reconstruction of ‘maternal grandmother’:

No *nta:j A* or *tna:j A*, but

naai A by Fang-Kuei Li (1971)

na:j^A by Pittayaporn (2009:336)

Modern Forms

Standard Thai: *ja:j A2*; Other SWT: *na:j A2*

Northern Tai Languages: *ta:j B1*; *ta:j A1*

Central Tai Languages: *ta:j A1*; *ta:j B1*

FANG-KUEI LI'S EXPLANATION:

Standard Thai: *ja:j A2* is a case of analogical change with words of paired semantic contents

SWT *na:j A2* → *ja:j A2*

e.g. *puu B1 jaa B2 taa A1 jaai A2*
ปู่ ย่า ตา ยาย

NT & CT: *ta:j A1 / ta:j B1* is another case of analogical change with words of paired semantic contents

PT *na:j A* → *ta:j A1 (CT) / ta:j B1 (NT)*

e.g. **ta:A *na:j A* → *ta: A1 ta:j A1/B1*
ตา นาย ตา ตาย(ต่าย)

Problem with reconstruction **naaj A*

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It does not explain the tone difference of this word between NT (ta:i B1) and CT (ta:i A1).

‘maternal grandmother’

****na:j A* → *ta:j B1*?**

→ *ta:j A1*?

“the Northern dialects tend to have tone B1, rarely A1 for this word...while the Central dialects normally have tone A1, rarely B1” (Li 1971:338)

A NEW HYPOTHESIS

An alternative PT reconstruction:

**ta:j* A ‘maternal grandmother

For dissimilate this word from the otherwise homophonous word ‘to die’?

traaj* A (Li 1977:119)/p.ta:ja* (Pittayaporn 2009:96,357)

→ *ta:j* A1 ‘to die’ (NT, SWT) or *t^ha:j* A1 (Debao)/ *ha:j* A1 (Lungchow)/ *p^ha:j* A1 (Bao Yen)

NT: tone change: (PT) **taai* A > (NT) *taai* B1 ‘maternal grandmother’

SWT: MOA change: (PT) **taai* A > (SWT) *naai* A2 ‘maternal grandmother’

CT: the initials (PT) **t-* > (CT) *t-*, and (PT) **tr-* (or **p.t-*) > (CT) *t^h-/h-/p^h-*.

e.g. ‘maternal grandmother’ remains *ta:i* A1

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'to die' and 'maternal grandmother': from PT to modern Tai languages

'to die'

| Proto-Tai | Merger | | Modern Forms | Language |
|--|------------------------|--|--|------------|
| <i>*tra:j A</i> or <i>*p.ta:j A</i> | <i>*tr-/*p.t- ></i> | <i>t-</i> | <i>ta:j A1</i> | <i>SWT</i> |
| | | <i>t-</i> | <i>ta:j A1</i> | <i>NT</i> |
| | | <i>t^h/h-/p^h-</i> | <i>t^ha:j A1/ ha:j A1/ p^ha:j A1</i> | <i>CT</i> |

'maternal grandmother'

| Proto-Tai | Development | Modern Forms | Language |
|----------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|------------|
| <i>*ta:j A</i> | <i>*t- > *n- > n-</i> | <i>na:j A2</i> | <i>SWT</i> |
| | <i>*A > *B > B1</i> | <i>ta:j B1</i> | <i>NT</i> |
| | <i>*A > Preservation > A1</i> | <i>ta:j A1</i> | <i>CT</i> |

'MATERNAL GRANDFATHER'

NT, SWT, CT

**ta: A* → *ta: A1* 'maternal grandfather'

NT, SWT

**traa A / p*.ta:* → *ta: A1* 'eye'

CT

**traa A* → *tha: A1* 'eye' (Debao)/*ha: A1* (Lungchow)/*phja: A1* (Bao Yen)

ta: A1 = 'eye' = 'maternal grandfather' ≠ a taboo meaning

MORE EVIDENCE

方言 古人有之
乃若廣西之婁語
如稱官為溝王 母為米囊
外祖母為低 僕使曰齋粹
喫飯為報崖 若此之類
當待譯而後通

✘ Historical evidence

✘ In a 12th century book *Ling Wai Dai Da*

(Answering for the Lingnan Region) *volume 4 “Dialects”*

(《岭外代答》卷4《方言》)(1175~1189)

‘maternal grandmother’ is denoted by the Chinese character 低 (Middle Chinese *tiei A)
(Tai 2006:21-22)

✘ Other languages in Daic language family

‘maternal grandmother’

*ta:i*⁴ Bouyei (NT)

*te*¹ Kam (Kam-Sui Branch of Daic),

*ta*⁴ Hlay (Hlay branch of Daic). (Tai 2006:22)

An exception in Wuming (of NT)

‘maternal grandmother’

| Proto-Tai | Development | Modern Forms | Language |
|----------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| <i>*ta:j A</i> | <i>*A > Preservation > AI</i> | <i>ta:j AI</i> | <i>Wuming</i> |

‘to die’

| Proto-Tai | Merger | Modern Forms | Language |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| <i>*tra:j A or *p.ta:j A</i> | <i>*tr-/*p.t- >r-</i> | <i>ra:j AI ‘to die’</i> | <i>Wuming</i> |

Another exception in Debao, Jingxi, and etc. (of CT)

‘maternal grandmother/grandfather’: from PT to modern CT languages

‘maternal grandmother’

| Proto-Tai | Development | Modern Forms | Central Tai |
|----------------|------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| <i>*ta:j A</i> | $*A > *B$ Areal feature with NT | <i>ta:j B1</i> | <i>Debao, Jingxi, etc.</i> |
| | preservation | <i>ta:j A1</i> | <i>Other CT</i> |

‘maternal grandfather’

| Proto-Tai | Development | Modern Forms | Central Tai |
|---------------|--|---------------|----------------------------|
| <i>*ta: A</i> | $*A > *B$ Analogical change with ‘maternal grandmother’ <i>ta:j B1</i> | <i>ta: B1</i> | <i>Debao, Jingxi, etc.</i> |
| | preservation | <i>ta: A1</i> | <i>Other CT</i> |

Development of **t-* and **tr-/*p.t-*: from PT to modern Tai languages

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| Proto-Initial | Proto-gloss | Modern Forms | Modern Languages | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|--|-------------------------|-----|
| <i>*t-</i> | 'maternal grandmother' | \Rightarrow <i>na:j A2</i> (Aberrant development on MOA of its initial because of merger 1) \downarrow \Rightarrow <i>ja:j A2</i> (Analogical change by the initial of <i>ja: B2</i> 'paternal grandmother') | Other SWT | SWT |
| | | \Rightarrow <i>ta:j B1</i> (Aberrant development on tonal change because of merger 1) | Standard Thai | |
| | | \Rightarrow <i>ta:j A1</i> (preservation) | NT, some CT | |
| | | \Rightarrow <i>ta:j A1</i> (preservation) | CT, some NT | |
| | 'maternal grandfather' | \Rightarrow <i>ta: A1</i> (preservation) | SWT, NT, CT | |
| | | \Rightarrow <i>ta: B1</i> (Analogical change by the tone of <i>ta:j B1</i> 'maternal grandmother') | Some CT (such as Debao) | |
| <i>*tr-</i> or <i>*p.t-</i> | 'to die' | \Rightarrow <i>ta:j A1</i> (merger 1: with 'maternal grandmother') | SWT, NT | |
| | | \Rightarrow <i>t^ha:j A1/ ha:j A1/ p^ha:j A1</i> (initial change) | CT | |
| | 'eye' | \Rightarrow <i>ta: A1</i> (merger 2: with 'maternal grandfather') | SWT, NT | |
| | | \Rightarrow <i>t^ha:j A1/ ha:j A1/ p^ha:j A1</i> (initial change) | CT | |

CONCLUSION

- ✘ It is proposed that the irregularity of this word in NT, CT and SWT is due to sound changes which served to dissimilate this word from the otherwise homophonous word 'to die' in NT and SWT.

NT: to die → maternal grandmother ☒ $*ta:j A \rightarrow ta:j B1$

SWT: to die → maternal grandmother ☒ $*ta:j A \rightarrow na:j A2$

CT: to die ≠ maternal grandmother ○ $*ta:j A \rightarrow ta:j A1$

- ✘ 'maternal grandmother' ≠ $*na:j A$
→ $*ta:j A$

ขอบคุณครับ
Thank You!

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