

Pronouns in Ranglong

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Abstract

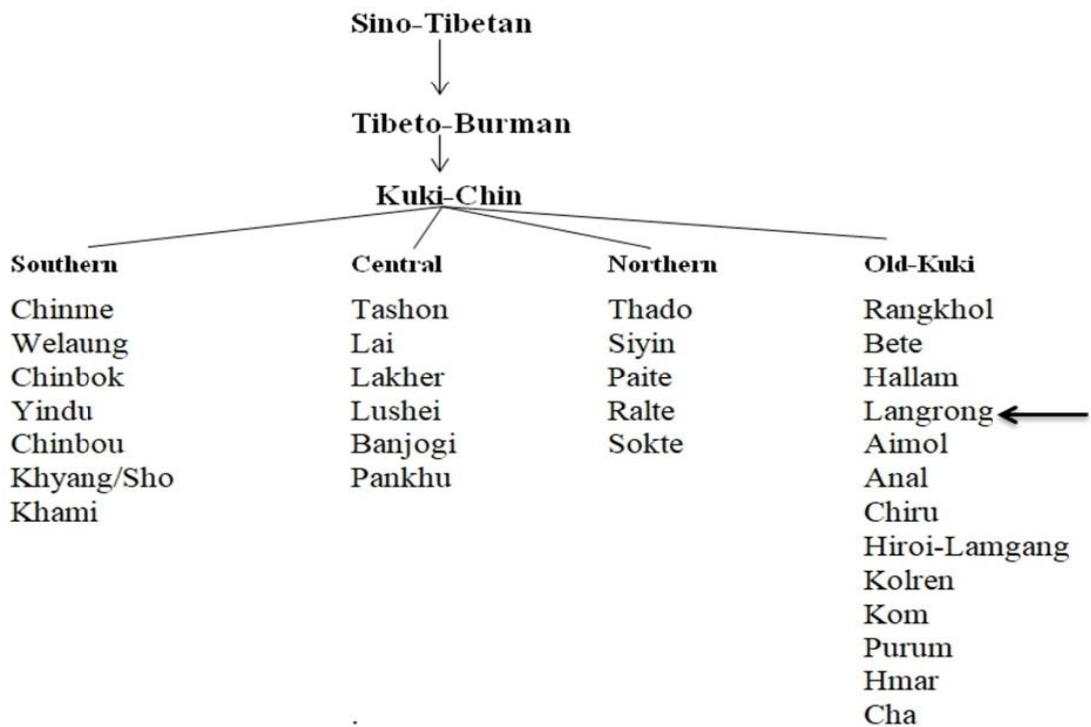
The paper "Pronouns in Ranglong" addresses the usage of pronouns in the Ranglong language. It identifies three distinct categories of pronouns: first person, second person, and third person. Structurally, the first and second person pronouns are monosyllabic, while the third person pronouns are bi-syllabic. Ranglong does not distinguish gender in its pronouns. The paper also discusses the morphological characteristics of these pronouns, focusing on their plural forms as well as demonstrative, interrogative, and reflexive pronouns.

Keywords: Ranglong, Pronoun, Person.

Introduction

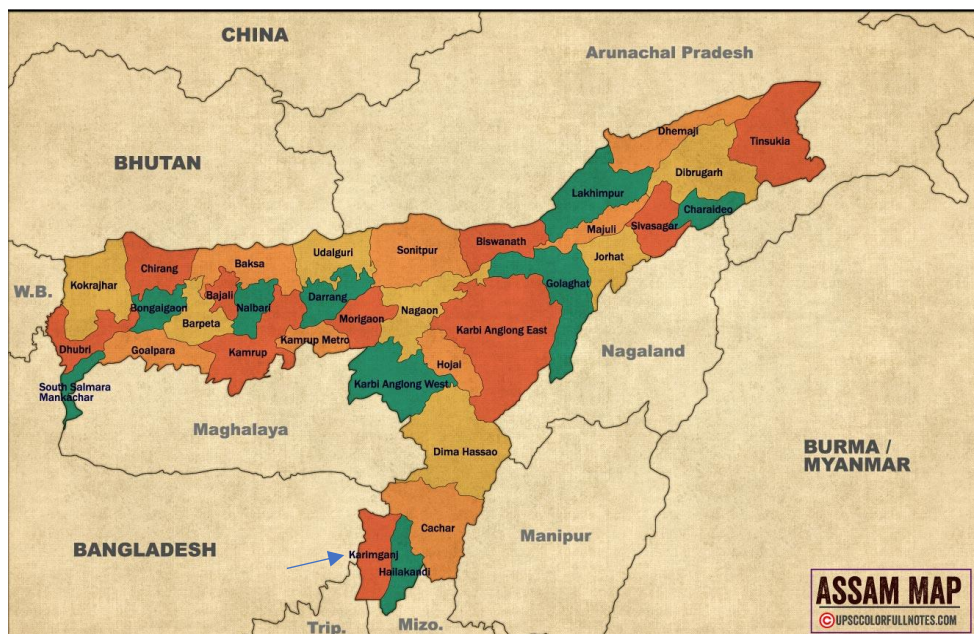
Ranglong is one of the sub-tribes of Halam community of Tripura. Ranglong was divided into Old Kuki by Grierson in (1904). "In Assam, they are concentrated in the Patherkandi revenue circle of Karimganj district, mostly on the bank of the river Longai bordering Tripura and Mizoram. A few villages are also under the Katlicherra revenue circle of Hailakandi district, and Sonai revenue circle of Cachar district of Assam." The total population is 37436 according to 2022 study. The data collected for the present paper is collected focusing in Karimganj district, assam. Many writers and scholars have written on Ranglong sub-grouping but here is only one stated.

Grierson's Sub-grouping of Kuki-Chin languages



Map of Assam

Map of Assam



The red part shown with an arrow is the Karimganj district of Assam, where the data has been collected for the paper.

1. Overview of Pronoun

Pronouns play a crucial role in the structure of sentences by linking elements and maintaining coherence in discourse. They also reflect grammatical features such as gender, number, and case, which can vary significantly across languages. Pronouns can be used to substitute for a noun phrase (or a single noun).

2.1.1. Personal Pronoun

In Ranglong the personal pronoun can be distinguished in three persons namely first, second, and third person and two numbers namely singular and plural. There is no gender distinction in the third person for Ranglong and it is a common feature shared by most of the TB languages. The third person can refer to both masculine and feminine. The plural form of personal pronouns is marked by affixation.

Table No:1. Personal Pronoun

Person	Singular	Plural
First person	<i>koi</i>	<i>koi-ni</i>
Second person	<i>nəŋ</i>	<i>nəŋ-ni</i>
Third person	<i>əma</i>	<i>əma-ni</i>

The plural form of the personal pronoun is formed by using the plural marker *-ni*.

Ranglong	Noun (Human)	<i>nupaŋ</i> ‘girl’	<i>nupaŋ-ŋai</i> ‘girls’
	Noun (Animal)	<i>ui</i> ‘dog’	<i>ui-ŋai</i> ‘dogs’
	Noun (Inanimate)	<i>in</i> ‘house’	<i>in-ŋai</i> ‘houses’

The plural marker *ni* is only seen used with the personal pronoun and not in any other case. To pluralise the noun for human, animal and inanimate the plural marker *ŋai* is used. There is so difference in using for human, animal, and inanimate.

2.2. Demonstrative Pronouns

In linguistics, a demonstrative pronoun is a pronoun that is used to point to specific things, often indicating their relative location or distance from the speaker. Demonstrative pronouns are critical for the cohesion and clarity of discourse, as they help to specify which particular objects or ideas are being referred to in a given context. Cross-linguistically, the forms and usages of demonstrative pronouns can vary widely, reflecting different cultural and spatial orientations. For instance, some languages have more than two degrees of

demonstrative distinctions, indicating not just near and far, but various other relative distances and even visibility status. Demonstrative pronoun in Ranglong is formed by adding proximal prefixes *hi-* and distal prefix *so-* to the demonstrative root *va*. Such as *hi-va-hi* ‘this’ and *so-va-so* ‘that’. Demonstrative pronoun can be pluralized by adding the general plural morpheme /*ηai*/ to the demonstrative pronoun in the nominal adjunct position.

Table No. 2. Demonstrative pronoun

Ranglong	Proximate	Distal
Singular	<i>hivahi</i> ‘this’	<i>sovaso</i> ‘that’
Plural	<i>hivahi ηai</i> ‘these’	<i>sovaso ηai</i> ‘those’

The plural marker – *ηai* is used to pluralise the demonstrative pronoun. Besides that, the plural marker *ηai* is used to pluralise the human noun, animal.

2.3. Interrogative Pronouns

An interrogative pronoun is used to form questions, allowing speakers to inquire about specific information. Across different languages, the forms and uses of interrogative pronouns can vary significantly, offering valuable insights into the syntactic and semantic structures of questions and how different cultures approach inquiry and information gathering.

Table No. 3. Interrogative Pronoun

Ranglong	Gloss
<i>tu-mo</i>	‘who’
<i>tu-kom-mo</i>	‘whom’
<i>tu-ta-mo</i>	‘whose’
<i>hoη-mo</i>	‘what’
<i>ho-tik-mo</i>	‘when’
<i>ho-van-mo</i>	‘where’

<i>hoŋ-sik-mo</i>	‘why’
<i>ho-va-mo</i>	‘which’
<i>hon-tin-mo</i>	‘how’

The root *tu-* for ‘who’ can be seen attached to form ‘whom’ and ‘whose’. Whereas, the root *ho-* for ‘what’ can be seen attached to form when, where, why, which, and how. Interrogative pronoun is always accompanied by a question marker *-mo*. Cited below are the few examples of Interrogative pronoun.

1. *tu-mo* Joe
 who-Q Joe
 ‘Who is Joe?’

2. *hoŋ-mo nəŋ nə-ramiŋ*
 what-Q2SG 2SG-name
 ‘What is your name?’

2.4. Reflexive Pronoun

A reflexive pronoun is used when the subject and the object of a sentence are the same entity, effectively reflecting the action back onto the subject. Reflexive pronouns are essential for expressing actions where the subject acts upon itself, emphasizing self-involvement or self-directed actions. In Ranglong, reflexive pronoun consists of a personal pronoun followed by a bound root *-niŋ* ‘own’. It can also be seen that the bound root is compounded only with the pronoun and not to the noun. The suffix *-niŋ* is attached with both the singular and plural form. The morphological structure of reflexive pronouns in Ranglong are illustrated below:

Table no.4. Reflexive pronouns in Ranglong

Person	Singular	Plural
First person	<i>koi-kə-niŋa</i> ‘myself’	<i>koini-ŋə-niŋa</i> ‘ourselves’
Second person	<i>nəŋ-ŋə-niŋa</i> ‘yourself’	<i>nəŋni-ŋə-niŋa</i> ‘yourselves’
Third person	<i>nəŋ-ŋə-niŋa</i> ‘himself/herself’	<i>nəŋni-ŋə-niŋa</i> ‘themselves’

The sentence construction in Ranglong using reflexive pronouns is as shown in the examples.

3. *koi kə-niŋa* *buan-kə-tʰo*
 1SG 1SG-own food-1SG-cook
 ‘I cook food myself.’

4. *koini nə-niŋa* *buan nei-tʰo*
 1PL 1PL-own food cook-do
 ‘We cook food ourselves.’

5. *nəŋ nə-niŋa* *kekək rasuk-ro*
 2SG 2SG-own shoe wash-IMP
 ‘You wash the shoe yourself.’

6. *nəŋni nə-niŋa* *tʰou-u-ro*
 2PL 2PL-own do-PL-IMP
 ‘You do it yourself.’

7. *əma ə-niŋa* *andit*
 3SG 3SG-own love
 ‘She loves herself.’

8. *əmani ə-niŋa* *ə-sier-u*
 3PL 3SG-own 3SG-read-PL
 ‘They read themselves.’

2.5. Indefinite Pronoun

An indefinite pronoun refers to nonspecific persons or things, conveying a sense of generality or ambiguity rather than identifying a specific entity. Its usage often reflects the speaker's intent to generalize or refer to a nonspecific subset of a group. Like many other Tibeto-Burman languages, there is no distinct form of indefinite pronouns in Ranglong. Indefinite pronoun in the language is derived from *tu-* ‘who’ and adding diminutive *-te* to it. Indefinite pronoun like ‘someone’ is formed by using the numeral *aŋkʰət* ‘one’ in

combination with *mi* ‘people’. Indefinite pronouns like everyone /everybody are formed by adding *-dora* ‘collective’ with *mi* ‘people’. Indefinite pronouns like something and everything is formed by indicating its quantity. *a-lak-te* is used to represent ‘something’ where the *lak* means less and *te* is the diminutive. Same in case of ‘everything’ *a-lom-a* where *lom* means all.

Table no.5. Indefinite Pronoun in Ranglong

Ranglong	Gloss
<i>midora</i>	‘everybody’
<i>mik^hət</i>	‘someone’
<i>əloma</i>	‘everything’
<i>ə-lak-te</i>	‘something’

9. *mi-əŋk^hət* *hivan ə-hoŋ*
 someone here 3SG-come
 ‘Someone comes here.’

10. *midoran* *koi ə-na-dit-u*
 everybody 1SG 3SG-1-love-PL
 ‘Everybody loves me.’

Negative indefinite like ‘nobody’, ‘none’, and ‘no one’ is used by *tute* along with the negative marker *mək*.

Table No. 6 Negative Indefinite pronoun

Ranglong	Gloss
<i>tute</i>	‘nobody’

11. *tute* *hivahin* *ə-hoŋ* *om-mək*
 Nobody here 3SG-come EXIST-NEG
 ‘Nobody comes here.’

12. *tute om-mək*
None EXIST-NEG
'None of them are there.'

13. *tute hivan ə-om om-mək*
No one here 3SG-stay EXIST-NEG
'No one stays here.'

3. Conclusion

In conclusion, the Ranglong language's personal pronouns are categorized into three persons (first, second, and third) and two numbers (singular and plural), with no gender distinction in the third person, a common trait among Tibeto-Burman languages. It can also be traced that the 2nd person singular pronoun reflexes the Proto Tibeto-Burman form 'nəŋ' (Benedict 1972). The third person pronouns are gender-neutral and the plural form is marked by the suffix *-ni*. Demonstrative pronouns are created by adding proximal *hi-* and distal *so-* prefixes to the root *va*, with pluralization formed by adding the plural morpheme /*ŋai*/. Interrogative pronouns are formed with roots *tu-* and *ho-*, accompanied by the question marker *-mo*. Reflexive pronouns consist of a personal pronoun followed by the bound root *-niŋ*, which is used with both singular and plural forms. The language lacks distinct indefinite pronouns, instead deriving them from the root *tu-* with diminutive or collective suffixes. This structural complexity highlights Ranglong's unique approach to pronouns within the broader context of Tibeto-Burman languages

Abbreviation:

- 1- First person
- 2- Second person
- 3- Third person
- EXIST- Existential
- IMP- Imperative
- NEG- Negative
- PL-plural
- Q- question marker
- SG- Singular

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