Middle Voice Marking in Tibeto-Burman

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1.0 Introduction

Middle voice marking is very rarely recognized as such in the grammars written on Tibeto-Burman languages. It is often simply treated as a normal direct reflexive or as an intransitivizer. In order to draw the attention of scholars to the existence and function of middle voice marking in Tibeto-Burman languages, the present paper discusses the form and function of middle marking in several of these languages. We will first discuss key facts about middle marking in general, then discuss the individual Tibeto-Burman examples.

The middle situation is semantically like the direct reflexive situation in that the referent performing the action and one affected by the action are the same referent, that is, both involve self-directed action, but the middle voice situation differs from the prototypical direct reflexive situation in that the nature of that referent as initiator of the action and the nature of that referent as end point of the action are not as distinct as in the direct reflexive situation. There is what Kemmer (1993) refers to as a 'low elaboration of participants in an event' (Ch. 3), or, on a more general level, a 'low elaboration of events' (Ch. 6), as the subparts of the complex action involved in a middle situation are not as distinguishable as in a reflexive situation. This can be seen in comparing the Russian examples in (1) (from Kemmer 1994:203, citing Haiman 1983:796):[1]

(1) a. On utomil   sebja   b. On utomil-sja
         he exhausted RM   he exhausted-MM
         'He exhausted himself'   'He grew weary'

In (1a) the use of the reflexive marker *sebja* marks it as a reflexive event, emphasizing the conceptual distinction between the actor as initiator of the action and as endpoint of the action. Use of the middle marker, as in (1b), marks it as a spontaneous event, and involves no such clear distinction as in (1a).

Just as the reflexive can be seen as an intermediate semantic type between the two poles transitive and intransitive (Hopper & Thompson 1980:277), the middle can be seen as intermediate semantically between the reflexive and intransitive situations on the total transitive-reflexive-intransitive cline represented in Figure 1 (Kemmer 1993:73):

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[1]Abbreviations used in the examples: AGT agentive marker, ASP aspect marker, DAT dative marker, INST instrumental marker, MM unique middle marker, PP past participle, RECIP reciprocal marker, RM unique reflexive marker, R/M reflexive-middle marker. Arabic numbers refer to person, with sg, dl, pl being singular, dual, and plural, respectively.

Two-participant event	Reflexive	Middle	One-participant event

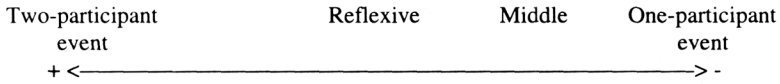+ <——> -

Figure 1: Degree of distinguishability of participants/events

Even when the verb used to code a reflexive or middle situation is syntactically transitive, as the reflexive and middle situations are not prototypical transitive situations, the marking of the whole clause can sometimes reflect the lower degree of transitivity. For example, many languages do not allow agentive marking of actors in such clauses, though such marking might be obligatory in normal transitive clauses.

There is no consistency in the marking of this category cross-linguistically. Only a minority of languages in the world have distinct marking for middle situations (e.g. Russian, Old Norse, Hungarian, Turkish). In other languages the marking of middle situations patterns with either prototypical reflexive situations, as in, for example, French, German, and Quechua, or with prototypical transitive and intransitive situations, as in English and Chinese (see examples below). In languages of both the French type and those of the English type (i.e. the two types of language that do not have distinct middle marking) there are three types of marking for the categories on this cline: transitive, intransitive, and reflexive. What is different between the two types of language is what semantic categories are covered by each type of marking. In languages of the French type, the form of the reflexive prototype is used to mark middle situations, as in the French example in (2), while in languages of the English type it is the form of the intransitive prototype or the transitive prototype, and not the reflexive prototype that is used to mark middle situations, as in the examples in (3):[2]

(2) Elle   se   lave les   mains.
3sg-fem R/M wash the-pl hands
'She washes her hands.'

(3) a. I rose from the chair.
    b. I washed my face.

In languages with unique marking for the reflexive (i.e. those with middle forms distinct from reflexive forms, such as Russian, and those without middle marking, such as English), it is usually possible to use a reflexive form, or a pronoun or noun interpreted as having reflexive meaning (such as *shēn* 'body' in example [4b] below), to a sentence which marks middle semantics in order to emphasize the dual semantic nature of the participant of the action. We saw the Russian example of this above (ex. [1a]); below are examples from English (ex. [4a]) and Chinese (ex. [4b]):

(4) a. I got myself up (and walked out the door).

    b. tián gūniáng zhàn qǐ shēn lái   fúzhe   ménkuàng
       Tian miss   stand up body come holding doorframe

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[2]In English it is also possible to use the '*get* passive' or a reflexive pronoun to express some middle semantic situations, e.g. *get dressed*, *enjoy oneself* (Kemmer 1993:184). See also ex. (4a).

chuǎnxī yīhuì   fāng   zǒu.
panting a.while only.then go
'Miss Tian stood herself up and, holding on to the doorframe, rested a while before leaving.'

In many of those languages where we know middle marking developed out of reflexive marking, as in French, this extended emphatic use of the reflexive simply became more consistent, lost its emphatic sense, and eventually became obligatory. In some cases, this loss of uniquely reflexive meaning led to the development of a unique middle form being created through repartition or reinforcement of the reflexive form, as in Dutch, where the original reflexive marker *zich* came to be used for middle situations, and now must be reinforced by -*zelf* (i.e. *zich-zelf*) to express reflexive situations (Kemmer 1993:184ff.). That is, as the originally emphatic use of the reflexive to mark middle situations became obligatory, a new reinforced form for reflexives began to be used, and these forms then developed into a system with distinct reflexive and middle marking.[3]

Semantic situation types often marked by middle marking in languages that have it include grooming actions, changes in body posture, emotions, cognitive actions, perception, spontaneous events, indirect middles (e.g. Classical Greek *ktâsthai* 'aquire [for oneself]', Latin *apīscor* 'get [for oneself]'), and naturally reciprocal events.[4] Very often these situations types will be obligatorily marked with middle marking, so that verbs coding these situations will be listed in dictionaries with the middle marker. These verbs are often known as 'deponents' following the use of this term for Latin verbs of this type.

Commonly in languages with middle marking, we find that that marking can also be used for reciprocals and collectives. Below are examples of the reciprocal use of the reflexive/middle marker in French:

(5) a. Les   deux hommes se   regardent.   b. Ils s'écrivent.
         the-pl two   men   R/M look-3pl   3pl R/M-write-3pl
         'The two men are looking at each other.'   'They write to each other.'

In looking for middle marking in Tibeto-Burman languages, we will be looking for a type of reflexive-like marking that is used for situations that in English and other non-middle marking languages would be marked with plain transitives or intransitives, but with middle marking in languages with unique middle marking. We will also be looking to see to what extent this marking also covers reciprocal and collective situations, or has a detransitivizing effect.

2.0 Dulong

The first example from a Tibeto-Burman language is that of Dulong/Rawang, a language spoken in southeast China and northeast Myanmar (Burma). The

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[3]In many languages with unique reflexive and middle markers, there is an eymological relationship between the two forms, as in Russian, though this is not always the case. For example the Latin mediopassive (middle) marker -*r* and the reflexive *se* have no etymological relationship.
[4]See Kemmer 1993, Appendix A, for a full listing of the categories of semantic middles.

examples given here are from the Sanxiang (三 鄉) Dulong dialect spoken in Gongshan county of Yunnan Province in China (see LaPolla 1995a). We will here only cite examples from this one dialect, though the phenomenon we will be talking about is general to dialects in both China and Myanmar.[5]

The Dulong middle voice is marked by the verbal suffix *-ɕɯ³¹*. Consider the following examples:[6]

(6) a. aŋ⁵³ sat⁵⁵-ɕɯ³¹
        3sg hit-R/M
        'He is hitting himself.'

     b. aŋ⁵³ mu⁵⁵guɑ⁵³-mi⁵⁵ kɔp⁵⁵-ɕɯ³¹
        3sg raincoat-INST cover-R/M
        'He is covering himself with the raincoat.'

     c. aŋ⁵³ tɯ³¹ɔŋ⁵³-ɕɯ³¹
        3sg curse-R/M
        'He is cursing himself.'

     d. aŋ⁵³ ɑ³¹-lɯp⁵⁵-ɕɯ³¹
        3sg happy-R/M
        'He is happy.'

     e. aŋ⁵³ eʔ⁵⁵wɑ⁵³ mit⁵⁵-ɕɯ³¹
        3sg this.way think-R/M
        'He is thinking this way.'

     f. aŋ⁵³ et⁵⁵-ɕɯ³¹
        3sg laugh-R/M
        'He is laughing.'

If we look at the examples in (6) in terms of the semantic situation types coded by this suffix, we can see that they are all self-directed: the referent involved is both the source of the action and the end point of the action. In (6a,b,c) we have clear examples of prototypical direct reflexive situations, while in (6d,e,f) we have examples of situations that show the same marking, but are not prototypical direct reflexive situations; they are the type of situations that are marked with middle voice marking in languages that have distinctive middle voice marking, such as grooming actions, changes in body posture, emotions, cognitive actions, perception, spontaneous events, indirect middles, and some collective events.

The use of the reflexive/middle marker in Dulong is very similar to that of the reflexive pronouns in French, which also mark both reflexive and middle situations. From Table 1, below, we can see that Dulong and French have deponent middle marked verbs in some of the same semantic categories.[7]

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[5]The data used for this section are from my own fieldwork in China and Myanmar, and first appeared in LaPolla 1995a. I would like to thank Yang Jiangling, of Kongmu Village, Gongshan County, Yunnan Province, China, and James Khong Sar Ong, of Putao, Kachin State, Myanmar, for their help with the data.

[6]The actual form that the suffix in question takes in the sentence can be affected by the person and number of the actor, though as the differences in person do not affect the function of the suffix in question, third-person singular forms will be used for all the examples in this paper.

[7]Even in languages where the reflexive and middle markers have the same form, as in French and Dulong, there is a difference in the use of the two: middle marking is obligatory to achieve a particular meaning with certain verbs (e.g. Dulong et⁵⁵ 'to laugh at (someone)', et⁵⁵-ɕɯ³¹ 'to laugh, smile'; tɔɹ⁵⁵ 'to throw', tɔɹ⁵⁵-ɕɯ³¹ 'to run'), whereas reflexive marking does not change the meaning of the verb, only the relationship between the participants. Cross-linguistically there is variation as to which particular verbs will take middle marking, though there is great consistency as to which semantic categories of verbs will be marked with middle marking (Kemmer 1993).

Category	French	Gloss	Dulong	Gloss
grooming	s'habiller	'to wear'	gui⁵⁵-ɕɯ³¹	'to wear'
self-initiated action	se changer	'to change'	pɔʔ⁵⁵-ɕɯ³¹	'to change'
cognition middle	s'aviser (de)	'to think up'	mit⁵⁵-ɕɯ³¹	'to think'
emotion middle	se réjouir	'to rejoice'	ɑ³¹-lɯp⁵⁵-ɕɯ³¹	'to be happy'
indirect middle	s'appeler	'to be called'	lɑn⁵⁵-ɕɯ³¹	'to be called'

Table 1: Comparison of French and Dulong middle categories with deponents

In sentences where no undergoer aside from the actor appears, the appearance of -ɕɯ³¹ on the verb marks the fact that the actor is also the undergoer, that is, it is a direct reflexive. We saw this in examples (6a-c). Following is another example:

(7) aŋ⁵³ maɹ⁵⁵jɑŋ⁵³-mi⁵⁵ jɑŋ⁵³-ɕɯ³¹
     3sg mirror-INST look-R/M
     'S/he is looking at her/himself in the mirror.'

Were the verb in this sentence to not have the suffix -ɕɯ³¹, the sentence could only be used in a context where an undergoer distinct from the actor is understood from the context.

In sentences where an undergoer other than the actor appears in the sentence, and the verb is followed by -ɕɯ³¹, that undergoer is often a body part, as in the following examples:

(8) a. aŋ⁵³ ɲɯl⁵⁵ tɔt⁵⁵-ɕɯ³¹   b. aŋ⁵³ maɹ⁵⁵ tɕiʔ⁵⁵-ɕɯ³¹
         3sg fingernail cut-R/M   3sg face wash-R/M
         'S/he is cutting his/her fingernails.'   'S/he is washing his/her face.'

In these examples there seem to be prototypical transitive events, and in languages such as English and Chinese, in which some middle situations are marked the same as prototypical transitives, the marking does not differ from normal transitive marking, and the relationship between the agent and the body part affected has to be inferred (as in Chinese) or overtly marked with a genitive construction (as in English). Compare the Chinese sentence below with its English translation:

(9) Wǒ yào xǐ liǎn
     1sg want wash face
     'I want to wash my face.'

The form of the Chinese sentence is that of a normal transitive sentence, and the fact that the face to be washed is the speaker's own face must be inferred. The English translation also is in the form of a normal transitive, though here the fact that the face to be washed is the speaker's own is overtly marked by a genitive construction modifying the noun. In Dulong, on the other hand, the addition of the reflexive/middle marker on the verb overtly specifies, for example in (8a), that the

fingernails the actor is cutting are his or her own, and in (8b), that the face being washed is the actor's own.

In sentences with an undergoer other than the actor, and where the undergoer NP is not a body part, the referent of that NP will be understood to be in contact with the body of the actor, as in (10a), whereas if the form in (10b) is used, the snow being brushed off is understood to not be on the actor's body:

(10) a. aŋ⁵³ tɯ³¹wan⁵³ kɹɑʔ⁵⁵-cɯ³¹   b. aŋ⁵³ tɯ³¹wan⁵³ kɹɑʔ⁵⁵-ɹɑ³¹
     3sg snow   shake-R/M   3sg snow   shake-ASP
     'S/he is shaking off the snow   'S/he shook off the snow.'
     (from his/her body).'

Compare also the following examples:

(11) a. aŋ⁵³ mu⁵⁵guɑ⁵³ mi⁵⁵ sɯ³¹ɹɑ⁵³ kɔp⁵⁵-cɯ³¹
     3sg raincoat INST luggage cover-R/M
     'S/he is covering the luggage with the raincoat.'

    b. aŋ⁵³ mu⁵⁵guɑ⁵³ mi⁵⁵ sɯ³¹ɹɑ⁵³ kɔp⁵⁵
     3sg raincoat INST luggage cover
     'S/he is covering the luggage with the raincoat.'

In (11a), with the verb marked for the reflexive/middle category, the luggage being covered must be hanging on the shoulder or some other body part of the actor. In (11b), the luggage would not be in contact with the actor.

The following examples show that the object in contact with the actor's body does not even need to be possessed by the actor:

(12) a. aŋ⁵³ a³¹dzɯl⁵³ a³¹beʔ⁵⁵-cɯ³¹   b. aŋ⁵³ a³¹dzɯl⁵³ a³¹beʔ⁵⁵
     3sg mosquito hit-R/M   3sg mosquito hit
     'S/he is hitting the mosquito   'S/he is hitting the mosquito.'
     (on her/his body).'

The referent of 'mosquito' in (12a) must be a mosquito that landed on the actor's body, while that in (12b) must be one on the wall or some other place not in contact with the actor. Possession, then, is not the relevant factor involved in the use or non-use of the reflexive/middle suffix.

There is another use of the suffix -cɯ³¹ which we have yet to discuss. This is shown in (13) and (14):

(13) a. aŋ⁵³ cam⁵³ pai⁵⁵-cɯ³¹   b. aŋ⁵³ cam⁵³ pai⁵⁵
     3sg knife hang.on.hip-R/M   3sg knife hang.on.hip
     'S/he has a knife on.'   'S/he is putting on a knife.'

(14) a. aŋ⁵³ ɹɔʔ⁵⁵ pɯ³¹ sai⁵⁵ ti⁵⁵ tɑp⁵⁵ guɑ⁵⁵-cɯ³¹
     3sg clothing red   one piece put.on/wear-R/M
     'S/he is wearing a piece of red clothing.'

b. aŋ⁵³ ʝɔʔ⁵⁵   puɯ³¹ sɑi⁵⁵ ti⁵⁵ tɑp⁵⁵ guɑ⁵⁵
3sg clothing red   one piece put.on/wear
'S/he is putting on a piece of red clothing.'

In examples (13a) and (14a), the situation involved is presented as an existing state, while in (13b) and (14b) the situation is presented as an activity. What is involved in these examples is that use of -ɕɯ³¹ emphasizes the stative nature of the result of the action, while non-use of -ɕɯ³¹ expresses a simple transitive action.[8] Based on our understanding of the development of the use of -ɕɯ³¹ (see LaPolla 1995b), it seems that once -ɕɯ³¹ came to be used more and more to express middle situations, it came more and more to be associated with situations where there is a 'low elaboration of events.' Addition of this marker to a transitive verb then came to have a function similar to that of a 'stativizer': diminishing the conceptual separation of the events and participants involved, making the overall event more like a state.

Above we mentioned that, in languages without middle marking and languages with unique middle marking, the reflexive can sometimes be used to emphasize the dual semantic nature of the participant as initiator and endpoint of the action. Here we have just said that the reflexive/middle marker in Dulong can be used to reduce the conceptual separation of the two events and participants involved in the situation. These two statements seem to be contradictory, but in fact they are simply two aspects of the same phenomenon. Looking back at Figure 1, we can see that using reflexive marking in a single participant situation such as in examples (1a), and (4a,b) moves the perspective of the situation towards the left side of the cline, while using reflexive/middle marking in a two participant situation moves the perspective of the situation towards the right side of the cline. The marking then in both cases is moving the perspective towards the same area in semantic space.

The isomorphy of the reflexive, middle, and 'stativizing' markers in Dulong is most likely the result of a marker originally having only a reflexive use being extended to cover middle situations, and then, because of the nature of middles, being further extended to the use as a 'stativizer' (LaPolla 1995b).

In Dulong/Rawang the reflexive/middle form is not used for reciprocals (which are formed by adding the prefix ɑ³¹- to the verb), though it can be used for some collectives, such as *tuɯ³¹-xʌɯm⁵⁵-ɕɯ³¹* 'to get together (of a group of people)'.

3.0   Padam-Mishing

Based on the lexical items and example sentences given for Padam-Mishing (Eastern Tani) in Lorrain 1907, it seems this language also has a verbal suffix, *shu,* that marks a category which includes middle semantics. This suffix is defined by Lorrain (1907:199) as meaning 'self or selves (also a reflexive particle following verbs) = myself; yourself, himself, ourselves, etc., etc.' The semantic range covered

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[8]As can be seen from the translations of the sentences in (13) and (14), English uses different verbs to express this difference in meaning.

by this marking includes reflexives, middles, collectives, emphatics, and possibly reciprocals. Following are some examples:

(15) a. ngo mo-bi-**shu**-to   (emphatic)
          1sg make-ben-R/M-PF
          I built it for you myself.

(16) Ayé o dat-**shu**   kang   (spontaneous action middle)
          'The fruit has fallen and burst or split.'

(17) do dâr-**shu** toka   (benefactive middle)
          'Eat your fill (lit. = eat and fill yourself).'

(18) buɯ oː-dʒok-**shu**-to   (reflexive)
          3sg fall-graze-R/M-PF
          He has fallen and grazed himself.

(19) a. no-k   kentu   shuk-**shu**-toka   (groming middle)
          2sg-GEN ear.ornament take out-M/R-IMP
          'Take out your ear-ornament (from your own ear).'
(cf.: b. Nok kâk kâp dem shuk to-sho 'Let me take off your finger ring.')

(20) no dum-muit dem aipe shum-**shu** mang   (grooming middle)
          'You have not done up your hair nicely (i.e. not tied it in a nice knot).'

(21) uɯr-**shu**-toka   (grooming middle)
          wash-MD-IMP
          Bathe yourself!

(22) dotke do laje   lak-shuk-**shu**-toka   (grooming middle)
          food eat HORT hand-wash-MD-IMP
          'Let's eat (food), and wash your hands.'

(23) gok-shum-**shu** toka   (collective)
          'Call (them) together.'

(24) Jo dum-**shu** bo i ka/to i ka   (collective?)
          'Help me lift (it).'

(25) ngo pa-**shu**-to   (reflexive)
          1sg cut-R/M-PF
          'I have cut myself (with a dao).'

Following are some other verbs listed with the suffix in the dictionary. In the first two items *muin* is added before the reflexive/middle suffix to form the reciprocal.

(26) la muin shu   'to wrestle' (reciprocal/collective?)

gé-muin-shu   'to quarrel' (reciprocal/collective?)

gé-pém-shu   'to be stuck together' (reciprocal/collective?)

id ... it shu   'to try (to do, etc) by one's own efforts or w/o assistance'

ir-shu   'to learn' (cf. ir 'to teach')

ân-pâ-shu   'to feel'

kin-shu   'to feel, to experience, to know, to recollect'

ge-mo-shu   'to get one's self ready'

kép bom-shu   'to carry on the hip or under the arm'

kâ rik-shu   'to meet; to see (with the idea of meeting)'

ked-ge-shu   'to lean back'

We find the reflexive/middle suffix, and the two-morpheme reciprocal form, in related dialects as well. Following are examples of verbs listed with the reflexive/middle suffix or reciprocal form:

(27) Padam (Tayeng 1983)

ngil-yum su langka   'Smile!'

lak-suk su lang-ka   'Wash hand!'

gi'me su-to   'to be lost'

ngo-m lupo su lang-ka   'Talk to me'

mik-mue' pe'l-ri'k su lang-ka   'turn face to face'

ken-kai su nam   'to learn'

mi'te'su-nam   'to be proud'

pesu-nam   'to promise'

lumi'nsu-nam   'to quarrel'

poyan-sutoka   'to answer'

(28) Nishi (Dafla) (DasGupta 1969):

bing-ming-su   'to speak or chat (among ourselves)'

lak la(k)-su-to   'wash hand'

ngo ang-karr-su-ta-ri-ne   'I shall stroll about the house'

ngo-kam no-kam do-pa-su-laja   'Let us sit together'

I   too you too sit   hortative

Das Gupta (1969:29) mentions that in Nishi, 'Some roots add -s for diminutive', though it seems this may simply be a reduced form of the reflexive/middle marker, as 'smile' is a verb that commonly takes middle marking, and 'whisper' could mean 'talk to oneself'. (Cf. Padam ngil-lang-ka 'laugh!', ngil-yum su langka 'smile!'.)

(29) nyir-to   'laugh'   bing-to   'speak'

(coi coi) nyir-s-to   'smile'   bing-s-to   'whisper'

4.0 rGyalrong

Several dialects of rGyalrong (Nagano 1984:55, Jin et al. 1958:81) have a verbal prefix nə- which functions as a marker of indirect reflexives and middles,

and as an emphasiser of intransitiveness. This marker does not mark reciprocals, as this is marked by reduplication of the verb. Jin et al. (1958:81-82) give examples of four types of usage of the prefix nə-:

(i)   indirect reflexive ('expresses one's doing an action to something owned by oneself'), e.g.: ka-rzək 'to cut' > ka-nə-rzək 'to cut something of one's own'.

(ii)   spontaneous action ('expresses oneself undergoing an action'), e.g.: kə-ŋgri 'to collapse' > ka-nə-ŋgri 'to collapse (by itself/of itself)'

(iii)   to do something of one's own volition, e.g.: ka-kʃut 'to go out' > ka-nə-kʃut 'to go out of one's own volition'; ka-rjap 'to stand up' > ka-nə-rjap 'to stand up of one's own volition'.

(iv)   an event that happens to oneself, but is caused by something else, e.g.: ka-ʒdar 'to be afraid' > ka-nə-ʒdar 'oneself to be afraid (of something)'.

From the list of lexical items in Lin 1993, we can see that it too is lexicalized in verbs with middle semantics, such as emotion middles, body movement middles, etc. E.g.: ka-nə-rga 'like', ka-nə-na 'rest', ka-nə-jongsɛ 'stroll'.

In the Caodeng dialect of rGyalrong[9] we seem to have a situation similar to that in Dutch. In this dialect the nə- prefix seems to have lost much of its reflexive force, and so is supplemented or replaced by a direct reflexive marking prefix, gjɐ-. The meaning of the nə- prefix then is limited to expressing or emphasizing the responsibility of the actor for the action involved, often with a judgemental sense that the person brought the result on himself/herself. One interesting difference between sentences with only the nə- prefix and not the gjɐ- prefix is that clauses where the verb is marked with gjɐ- involve an actor that takes agentive marking, while those where the verb is only marked with nə- and not gjɐ- cannot take agentive marking. The marked nature of these transitive clauses can be seen from the inverse direction marking that is required in reflexive clauses. Following are examples of the use of these suffixes in Caodeng rGyalrong. Exx. (30) and (31b) have nə- alone; (32a,b) contrast the use of gjɐ- with and without nə-; (33) has an inanimate 'actor':

(30)   ogji? ó-ⁿge   te-**nə**-ⁿge?-kjə
       3sg 3sg-clothes PF-MM-put on-EVID
       He put on his clothes by himself (without help).

(31)   a.   ogji? mə-tə-ⁿdzaŋ?-nə? seko? ó-ta   ne-ntɐr-kjə
            3sg inadvertently   tree 3sg-top PF-fall-EVID
            He inadvertently fell down from the tree (objective statement).

       b.   ogji? mə-tə-ⁿdzaŋ?-nə? seko? ó-ta   ne-**nə**-ntɐr-kjə
            3sg inadvertently   tree 3sg-top PF-MM-fall-EVID
            He carelessly fell down from the tree (through his own fault).

[9]The data on the Caodeng dialect are from fieldwork by Jackson T.-S. Sun. I would like to thank him for making this data available to me, and for bringing the Padam-Mishing data to my attention.

(32) a. ogjiʔ-kə ogjiʔ to-gjɐ-səsmɐt-kjə
3sg-AGT   3sg   PF:INV-self-wound-EVID
He hurt himself (objective statement).

b. ogjiʔ-kə ogjiʔ to-gjɐ-nə-səsmɐt-kjə
3sg-AGT   3sg   PF:INV-self-MM-wound-EVID
He hurt himself (through his own fault) (Lit.: He hurt himself himself).

(33) kɔmʔ ogjiʔ tɦɔ-n-gjɐ-pɐ-kjə
door 3sg PF:INV-MM-self-close-EVID
The door closed by itself (lit.: closed itself).

In the Suomo dialect, there is a separate verb prefix for marking direct reflexives, *wuja ~wja*, possibly cognate with the Caodeng form. From the examples given by Jin et al. (1958:86-87) it seems this prefix is not used together with the *nə-* prefix. The question then is, does the Suomo dialect reflect a more advanced stage where the functions of *nə-* and *wuja* have become more clearly differenciated, or does the Caodeng dialect reflect the more advanced stage of a change where *nə-* is spreading to new uses? It is hoped that further fieldwork on rGyalrong dialects will be able to answer this question.

5.0 Mizo and other Chin languages
In Mizo (Lushai; Chhangte 1993, Lorrain & Savidge 1898) there is a verb prefix *in-* which marks reflexive, reciprocal, and middle semantics. As in Dulong, verbs taking the reflexive/middle marker are somewhat detransitivized, and so the ergative marker cannot be used in a clause where the verb has the *in-* prefix. Following are examples of reflexive and middle uses (from Chhangte 1993:93):

(34) a. âmaʔ leʔ âmaʔ â-in-mèèt
3PRO and 3PRO 3s-R/M-shave
'He is shaving himself.'

b. kéy-maʔ leʔ kéy-maʔ kâ-in-bia
1PRO-EMP and 1PRO-EMP 1s-R/M-speak.to
'I'm talking to myself.'

(35) a. kâ-laphiar   â-in-thìàt
1Poss-knitting 3s-R/m-undo
'My knitting got undone (by itself).' (sponateous action middle)

b. kôŋ kââ â-in-hôŋ
door 3sg-R/M-open
'The door is open (who knows who opened it).'

Reciprocals and reflexives/middles differ only in terms of the subject agreement marker, which is plural for reciprocals and singular for reflexives/middles.

Compare, for example, the reflexives in (34) and the reciprocals in (36), from Chhangte 1993:93.[10]

(36) a. bòŋ leʔ keeel án-in-sii
cow and goat 3s.pl-R/M-butt
'A cow and goat are butting (each other).'

b. kéy-maʔ leʔ náŋ-maʔ kán-in-bia
1PRO-EMP and 2PRO-EMP 1s.pl-R/M-speak.to
'We are talking to each other.'

It seems there is a class of deponents in Mizo, judging from the list of lexical items in Lorrain & Savidge's dictionary, that include the prefix *in-*, such as the following, all of which involve middle semantics:

(37) *in-bual*   'to bathe, to wallow'
in-chhir   'to regret, to repent'
in-lâr   'to appear, to show oneself (as a spirit)'
in-shon   'to move'

In other Chin languages there is a prefix *ki-* or *ng'-* (depending on the dialect), the semantics of which covers reflexive, reciprocal, stative, intransitivizer, indirect benefactive, reflexive and passive meanings, all meanings commonly associated with middle marking. Henderson (Henderson 1965:99) in fact compares this marking to the reflexive/middle marking in French. Again many of the examples given of lexicalized forms are those commonly marked with middle marking in languages with unique middle voice marking. For example:

(38) Tiddim Chin (Henderson 1965:99):   *a-ki-cihi* 'it is called'
kisa   'to feel'

(39) Southern Chin (Jordan 1969:43-44):   *ng'thei* 'to learn'
ng'si   'to ask a question'

6.0   The Kiranti languages
In the Kiranti languages (Ebert 1994:52-54) there is a verbal suffix (Limbu *siŋ*, Bantawa *(na) ci*, Thulong *sit*, Chamling *nci~si*, Khaling *si*) that clearly covers both reflexive and middle semantics, and is often lexicalized in deponents. Examples:

(40) Thulong   lii-sit   'pretend'

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[10]The examples given by Lorrain & Savidge (1898:12) seem to have a simpler structure than those given by Chhangte. I am not sure if this is a dialect difference or simply a difference in explicitness of transcription, e.g.
(i)   ka   in-vêl
1sg R/M-hit
'I hit myself.'

lii-sit   'fit (into a container)'

(41) Chamling săr-si-ñă 'wash os.'
       năm-si-nă 'to dive'

(42) Limbu (van Driem 1987:87): warum-siŋ-ma? 'to bathe'
            hu?-siŋ-ma? 'to learn' (< hu?-ma? 'to teach')
            khɛt-chiŋ-ma? 'to run' (< khɛp-ma? 'to
chase')

7.0 The Tibeto-Burman languages of Uttar Pradesh

A number of the Tibeto-Burman languages of Uttar Pradesh in India also show a verbal suffix that seems to be a marker of both reflexives and middles. For example, in Rongpo (Sharma to appear, a) the suffix -*s* can be added to a transitive stem to derive an intransitive, most often having a reflexive or middle sense. Examples (-*pəng* is the infinitive marker):

(43) nhar-s-pəng 'to fall (by oneself)' (< nhar-pəng 'to fell')
   ur-s-pəng 'to wash oneself, to be washed' (< ur-pəng 'to wash')
   pin-s-pəng 'to get filled up by itself (by some natural process)' (< pin-pəng
         'to fill')

In the closely related language Byangsi (Sharma to appear, b), this suffix (pronounced *ʃi*) is also used for reciprocals, as in the follwoing examples:

(44) *duŋ-ʃi-mo* 'to beat each other' *tsim-ʃi-mo* 'to wrestle'

In these languages there are quite a few deponent verbs, again falling into the same semantic categories we saw above for Dulong, French and other middle marking languages. Following are some examples from Byangsi:

(45) *yar-ʃi-mo* 'to bathe (self)'
   cuk-ʃi-mo 'to wear clothing'
   pá-ʃi-mo   'to stroll'
   hlab-ʃi-mo 'to learn' (cf. *hlab-mo* 'to teach').[11]

8.0 Possible middle marking in other Tibeto-Burman languages

There are two more languages that seem to have middle marking, though the data from the sources available is too scanty to be sure. One is Taraon Mishmi (G. Devi Prasada Sastry 1984:126-7). In this language there is a verbal affix *tyu* that marks direct reflexives, and an extended form *thatyu* that marks middles, such as in *laŋthatyu* 'to enter', *abayàthatyu* 'to strike (oneself by an external agent)'. While

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[11]The parallels here with Dulong/Rawang (and Padam, Dhimal, and the Kiranti languages) are quite striking. What the actual connection among these systems is (if there is any) will be the subject of future research.

the author does not give many examples, he mentions the similarity between the uses of this form and the Sanskrit middle voice.

The other language is Dhimal. In Dhimal there is what King (1994) calls a 'reciprocal/reflexive' verb suffix that, much as in the Tani languages, has the form -*su*. King states confidently that this morpheme is cognate with the Limbu -*sing* and Bahing -*si* reflexive/middle markers, though does not give examples of its use.

9.0   Final comments
I hope that the discussion of middle voice marking in these Tibeto-Burman langauges will stimulate interest in this phenomenon and lead to greater discussion of the middle voice and other verbal categories, thereby improving our understanding of the morphosyntax of the Tibeto-Burman languages.

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