Tonal alternations in the Pumi verbal system

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Summary: This paper presents two hitherto unnoticed sets of alternations in the tonal systems of Northern Pumi. First, in some verbs, rising tone in the citation form alternates with falling tone in the perfective. Second, the verb “to go”, when combined with other verbs, presents tonal alternations which are not found elsewhere in the verbal system. A sample text is added in the appendix to illustrate the tonal phenomena discussed in the article.

Keywords: Pumi, Tonal alternation, Directional prefixes

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1. Introduction

Like most Qiangic languages (apart from Northern Qiang and Japhug Rgyalrong), Pumi dialects\(^2\) have tonal contrasts. On monosyllables, either two tone categories (Lu 2001:21, Matisoff 1997) or three (Ding 2001, 2003, Lu 2001: 97) are found depending on the dialect.

Earlier work on Pumi (Lu 1983:15-20, Fu 1998:18-20, Lu 2001) analyzes the tonal system of this language on the model of Chinese, transcribing all syllables as if they had an inherent tone. They do, however, mention some cases of sandhi and interaction between stems and affixes (Fu 1998:28-9, 88-9).

Matisoff (1997) is the first article to use Africanist transcription instead of the Chao Yuen-ren system for transcribing Pumi tones, a system which is better suited for a language typologically closer to the African type than to the Chinese one (Hyman 2007, Evans 2008). Although the focus of this article was mainly on comparative linguistics, he nevertheless offers a valuable description of tonal sandhi and tonal alternation phenomena at the word level.

Ding (2001, 2006, 2007) analyzes the Pumi tonal system as a Pitch-accent system\(^3\) and compares it to various Japanese dialects. Since his analysis is considerably more developed than those of his predecessors, it is worthwhile to describe it in more detail.

In the variety described by Ding, as in other dialects described by Lu (2001), monosyllables have three surface realizations: high (H), falling (F) and rising (R). He analyzes these categories as underlying H, HL and LH respectively. This analysis is justified by the patterns of tone spreading when an enclitic is added after a monosyllabic noun, as shown in Table 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Citation form</th>
<th>Realization with an enclitic</th>
<th>meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ʃi(^F)</td>
<td>ʃi(^H) ge(^L)</td>
<td>H.L louse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʃi(^H)</td>
<td>ʃi(^H) ge(^H)</td>
<td>H.H hundred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʃi(^R)</td>
<td>ʃi(^L) ge(^H)</td>
<td>L.H new</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The fact that the same tonal categories are realized as contour tones in citation form but appear as series of High and Low when a clitic is attached shows that an analysis in terms of syllable tone is not tenable for Pumi dialects, and that all contour tones of this language must be analyzed as combinations of high and low tones.

In polysyllabic words, the range of attested possibilities for a word of n syllables is much lower than \(3^n\), the number of categories which would be expected if each syllable had an underlying tone. Ding (2003:590 and 2007:14) describes the following categories (where F, H, L and R represent the surface realizations of the tones, respectively falling, high, low and rising): only four patterns on disyllabic words (instead of an expected \(3^2 = 9\)), six patterns on trisyllabic words (instead of 27) and seven on quadrisyllabic words.

Table 2 : Realization of the tonal categories in Xinyingpan Pumi (Ding 2007:14).

\(^2\) Pumi (a.k.a. Prinmi) is a cluster of at least two distinct languages spoken across Yunnan and Sichuan, mainly in Lanping county, Ninglang county (Yunnan), Muli county and Jiulong county (Sichuan). The total number of speakers is above 30,000. In Muli county, it is the main language among ethnic Tibetans, and speakers of Shixing, Kami Tibetan and other languages also learn it as a second language (Chirkova 2009:3).

\(^3\) Since the category of ‘Pitch Accent’ is difficult to define rigorously cross-linguistically (Hyman 2009), we will avoid this term in the present paper.
The categories C and D on bisyllabic words on the one hand and E and F on trisyllabic words are distinct only when a clitic or a compound word is added: with C and E categories, the high tone does not spread onto the next syllable, while it does with D and F categories. For instance, tõ\textsuperscript{H}pu\textsuperscript{H} ‘donkey’ and tʃɨ\textsuperscript{H}mɐ̃\textsuperscript{H} ‘dog hair’ pattern differently when a subsequent syllable is added: with tõ\textsuperscript{H}pu\textsuperscript{H}, which belongs to category D, the subsequent syllable has a high surface tone (for instance tõ\textsuperscript{H}pu\textsuperscript{H}k’ʉ\textsuperscript{H} “donkey head”), whereas with tʃɨ\textsuperscript{H}mɐ̃\textsuperscript{H}, which belongs to category C, it has a low surface tone (no example provided in Ding’s papers).

According to Ding’s analysis, two underlying properties are enough to yield the observed categories: the place of the high tone in the prosodic domain, and whether this high tone can spread on the next syllable. The number in the first column indicates which syllable in the prosodic domain is the locus of the high tone, and in the second column, + indicates that the high tone can spread, – indicates that it cannot, and X that either is possible in free variation. The underlying high tone spreads rightwards, so that syllables situated on its left are realized with a low tone. If the number of syllables in the prosodic domain is inferior to the place of the high tone (for instance, category C with a monosyllable, the high tone should be placed on the second syllable, but only one syllable is present in the prosodic domain), a rising tone results.

This analysis elegantly accounts for the data of the Xinyingpan variety; however, it will be shown below that some tonal alternations found in other Pumi dialects are difficult to explain using this model.

Since the regular tonal alternation patterns in nominal compounding observed in these Pumi dialects do not seem to exhibit exactly the same behavior as in the variety described by Ding, I will lay out basic facts about the tonal system of Shuiluo Pumi and describe tonal alternations in nouns (which are simpler) before discussing the problematic phenomena observed in the verbal system in the following sections.

2. Segmental inventory.

The dialects investigated in this study are the Mudiqing (木底箐, Ninglang, Lijiang, Yunnan) and Shuiluo (水洛, Muli, Liangshan Yi autonomous prefecture, Sichuan) varieties, which belong to the Northern Pumi language (see Figure 1).\(^4\) The tonal alternation patterns in both dialects are almost identical. These dialects are related to the Xinyingpan dialect, with which they are mutually intelligible according to my informants’ opinion. The data was collected during two field trips in July-August 2008 and February-March 2009 respectively. The present paper will mostly use data from the Shuiluo dialect.

\(^4\) My Mudiqing Pumi consultant Mr. Cao was born in 1962 and lives in Yongning township in a community of speakers of the Na language (see Michaud 2008 for more information about this language). He speaks Chinese, Na and Pumi. My Shuiluo Pumi consultant Ngag-dbang was a retired cadre. He lived in Qiaowa (the seat of the government in Muli county), was married to a speaker of Taoba Pumi (a very close variety) and spoke the language on a daily basis, though Chinese was naturally his main language.
Since the segmental phonology of Shuiluo Pumi differs from all previously described varieties (including the eight dialects in Lu 2001, among which it is closest to Taoba), I will first present a basic account of the vocalic and consonantal inventory of this language. The basic syllabic structure is C(r)(G)V(G), where C, V and G stand for consonant, vowel and glide respectively.

This syllabic structure is simpler than the one found in Lanping of Xinyingpan, as most consonant clusters have disappeared. The only attested clusters are br- and pr-, and br- freely alternates with dzw- in some words.

The list of attested rhymes is the following:

### Table 3: The rhymes of Shuiluo Pumi.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>i</th>
<th>e</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>u</th>
<th>o</th>
<th>ì</th>
<th>ë</th>
<th>ą</th>
<th>ó</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>ì</td>
<td>ë</td>
<td>ą</td>
<td>ó</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vu</td>
<td>-əu</td>
<td>-ou</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vi</td>
<td>-ei</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-jV</td>
<td>-je</td>
<td>-jə</td>
<td>-jɑ</td>
<td>-ja</td>
<td>-ju</td>
<td>-jo</td>
<td>-jă</td>
<td>-jō</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-wV</td>
<td>-wi</td>
<td>-wɛ</td>
<td>-wə</td>
<td>-w3</td>
<td>-wa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-w̃</td>
<td>-w̃</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-wi</td>
<td>-wéri</td>
<td>-wę</td>
<td>-wā</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The phonetic realization of these rhymes is not entirely straightforward: /wə/ is realized [u], the glide -w- is realized [-u-] after a coronal consonant and before a front vowel. /ə/ has three allophones: [i] after dental fricatives and affricates (as in tsʰ “to milk” [tsʰ], [n] after retroflex fricatives and affricates (as in tʂʰ “gall bladder”, [tʂʰ]) and as the labial trill [n] after bilabial stops (as in pʰ “to dig” [pʰ]). As in other attested forms of Pumi, no final consonants are found.

There are 40 consonant phonemes in Shuiluo Pumi:

### Table 4: The initial consonants of Shuiluo Pumi.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>p</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>k</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ph</td>
<td>tʰ</td>
<td>kʰ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ts</td>
<td>tɕ</td>
<td>tʂ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Unlike other Pumi dialects, Shuiluo Pumi has aspirated fricatives,\(^6\) and has a real trill [r] contrastive with the voiced fricative [ʐ]. The velar fricatives /x/ and /ɣ/ are realized as uvulars before back vowels, and as palatal fricatives before /i/.

### 3. The tone system of Shuiluo Pumi

Like the Niuwozi Pumi dialect studied by Ding, Shuiluo Pumi has three surface tonal categories on monosyllables, that can be described as high, falling and rising in isolation. This basic system on monosyllables is also remarkably similar to that of Shixing (Chirkova and Michaud 2009). For convenience, I use the Africanist tone marks (like Matisoff 1997), as summarized in the following table. Low pitch (which is either the effect of an underlying low tone or the realization of an absence of tone) will be transcribed with a grave accent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>example</th>
<th>meaning</th>
<th>Underlying analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ṣ njé</td>
<td>eye</td>
<td>A: 1, -spread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ṽ njé</td>
<td>red</td>
<td>B: 1, +spread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WithOptions njé</td>
<td>black</td>
<td>C: 2, -spread</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the time being, I follow Ding’s analysis. However, we will see that the analysis of the rising tone is not straightforward. On disyllabic nouns, four distinct patterns are attested:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>example</th>
<th>meaning</th>
<th>Ding’s analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ṽv HL</td>
<td>rwəbō</td>
<td>willow A: 1, -spread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ṽv HH</td>
<td>rwamí</td>
<td>mare B: 1, +spread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ṽv LH</td>
<td>rwamí</td>
<td>female yak C/D: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ṽv LR</td>
<td>r3dzə</td>
<td>alcohol E: 3, -spread</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We find here the same four surface categories presented by Ding (C and D can only be distinguished if a subsequent syllable is added). For trisyllables and quadrisyllables, there are not enough words in my lexicon to provide a comprehensive account of the possible surface forms. Contour tonal patterns are restricted to the last syllable of a phonological word, following a general cross-linguistic

\(^6\) These aspirated fricatives come from \{s+aspirated affricate\} clusters.
tendency (Zhang 2004:929).

In compound words of two syllables, the following rule can be used to predict the tonal pattern of the resulting disyllable (rows indicate the first element and columns the second element of the compound):

**Table 7 : Examples of regular tonal change in composition.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>dó 'back'</th>
<th>rō 'skin'</th>
<th>sēi 'blood'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gwí 'bear'</td>
<td>gwí dó</td>
<td>gwí rō</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kwĩ 'cow'</td>
<td>kwĩ dó</td>
<td>kwĩ rō</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>γwĩ 'horse'</td>
<td>γwĩ dó</td>
<td>γwĩ rō</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The tonal patterns observed in Table 7 can be described as follows:

**Table 8 : Regular tonal change in composition.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>H</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>R</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>HH</td>
<td>HH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>LH</td>
<td>LH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>LH</td>
<td>LH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only two patterns are found: high-high and low-high. The tonal pattern of the disyllable only depends on the first syllable. A similar, though not identical rule is found in the neighboring Shixing language (Chirkova and Michaud 2009:549). However, this productive rule has a few exceptions, such as bípɜ̀ 'sand' from bí 'sand' and pɜ̀ 'flour, powder' (the expected form would be *bípá). These exceptions are best considered as older compounds, to which the regular rule is not applicable. The composition rules presented above do not only apply to compound nouns, but sometimes also to object+verb compounds, though the exact environment where these occur still deserves further research.

4 Regular alternations in the verbal system

The Pumi verb is very rich in affixes, most of which are monosyllabic. The longest suffix -mədərə is three syllables long, made from the nominalizing suffix -mə (itself a grammaticalized form of the noun mə̂ 'man'), the copula də̂ and the progressive suffix -rə. It is an evidential marker used in stories to report facts that the speaker has not witnessed himself. Although the etymology of this trisyllabic suffix is still synchronically transparent, it is fully grammaticalized, and the lexical tone of the verb spreads over the three syllables. The word máts.ɮɑ 'flour, powder' in Yongning Na, whose second syllable is possibly related to pɜ̀ (either as a cognate or as a loanword) also presents irregular tonal patterns (Michaud and Latami 2009:14). If it were not fully grammaticalized, one would not expect the tone spreading patterns described in this section. The copula, when it appears with nouns, does not show such peculiar behaviour: the high tone of monosyllabic nouns does not spread on the copula. In isolation, the copula followed by the progressive is realized dā-rə (or rather dā-rə), but in fluent speech it is often realized as low tone on both syllables as an effect of the intonation.

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7 The word máts.ɮɑ 'flour, powder' in Yongning Na, whose second syllable is possibly related to pɜ̀ (either as a cognate or as a loanword) also presents irregular tonal patterns (Michaud and Latami 2009:14).

8 If it were not fully grammaticalized, one would not expect the tone spreading patterns described in this section. The copula, when it appears with nouns, does not show such peculiar behaviour: the high tone of monosyllabic nouns does not spread on the copula. In isolation, the copula followed by the progressive is realized dā-rə (or rather dā-rə), but in fluent speech it is often realized as low tone on both syllables as an effect of the intonation.
Suffixes are toneless, and the intrinsic tone of the verbal stems spreads onto it. The following table shows tonal spreading patterns with a monosyllabic suffix (the progressive -ɾə) and with the trisyllabic -mədərə:10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 9 : Tonal spreading with monosyllabic verbs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zwi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zè</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tà</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The tonal spreading patterns of the first two tonal categories are straightforward. They can be represented in the following way:

(1) \( \sigma + \sigma \sigma \) \( \rightarrow \sigma + \sigma \sigma \)

The high tone is a single H tone underlyingly. It associates to the stem and spreads rightwards to all following suffixes, which are toneless.

(2) \( \sigma + \sigma \sigma \) \( \rightarrow \sigma + \sigma \sigma \) \( \rightarrow \sigma + \sigma \sigma \)

The falling tone is underlying composed of two tonal elements H and L. When suffixes are added to the stem, the high tone remains in situ, while the low tone is reassociated to the following suffix. The same analysis cannot be proposed for the rising tone if it is analyzed as LH, as the following result would be expected:

(3) \( \sigma + \sigma \sigma \) \( \rightarrow \sigma + \sigma \sigma \) \( \rightarrow \sigma + \sigma \sigma \)

We would obtain *tà-mədərə, an impossible form. In order to explain the attested form tà-mədərə, a solution would be to analyze the surface rising tone as an underlying low tone. The form tà-mədərə would be as such:

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9 Apart from the suffixes, directional prefixes and many discourse particles are toneless; in the appended story, toneless affixes and particles have no tone marks in the underlying form. The idea that underlying low-tone syllables must be distinguished from toneless syllables in Pumi is found in Greif (2010).

10 Many examples of verbs with this suffix can be found in the story in the appendix.
A rule against low-tone words (or rather the obligatory presence of a high tone in phonological words as in other Qiangic languages, see Evans 2008:484) would then change the last syllable of the word into a surface rising tone by insertion of a postlexical high tone.

A similar rule has been described for Yongning Na (Michaud 2008:186). In this analysis, low-rising words such as ɬuŋɛ̌ 'alcohol' cited in section 1 must be analyzed with a low tone pattern L as the underlying form. The only problem with this theory is the form of verbs with monosyllabic suffixes: the suffix is realized with a high tone, not a rising one. If the analysis of rising tone monosyllabic verbs as having an underlying low tone were correct, we would expect the form *tà-rə̀ instead of attested tà-rə́:

I do not have any elegant explanation to propose to solve this problem. Two analyses are possible. First, one could analyze rising tone monosyllables as underlying LH, and add a rule according to which a high tone following a low tone is deleted if it has to spread on more than one syllable. However, this analysis is problematic as it increases the complexity of the basic form and requires the addition of an arbitrary rule.

Second, if one maintains the analysis of the monosyllables as low tones, one must account for the high tone by a special rule. A possible solution is to suppose that low tone fails to spread on one-syllable suffixes, and that the postlexical high tone (automatically added in words without underlying high tone) associates with a toneless syllable. Therefore, no surface rising tone occurs. I will adopt the second option in this paper.

Disyllabic verbs have a much simpler pattern: the suffixes are always realized with low pitch, except with low-rising disyllabic verbs (that is, underlying low tone verbs), as the last syllable of the verb undergoes the same change as for monosyllabic verbs.

---

11 ‘[…] the L+L sequence cannot surface as such, due to a general prohibition against all-L phonological words (and a fortiori all-L utterances) in Na. The all-L sequence is avoided by post-lexical addition of a final M tone, which modifies L+L to L+LM[...]’

12 This idea was suggested by Alexis Michaud, but I remain responsible for any error in the analysis set out in this section.
Table 10: Tonal spreading with disyllabic verbs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic form</th>
<th>tone</th>
<th>meaning</th>
<th>realization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sënì</td>
<td>LH</td>
<td>to hear</td>
<td>sënì mə̀də̀rə̀</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>máčé</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>to search</td>
<td>máčwé mə̀də̀rə̀</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sūdju</td>
<td>HL</td>
<td>to think</td>
<td>sūdjù mə̀də̀rə̀</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>katsēi</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>to be small</td>
<td>katsēi mə̀də̀rə̀</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most prefixes are toneless, and are realized with a surface low tone,¹⁴ the default realization for toneless syllables. Among the directional prefixes, only the 'up' prefix has a high tone:

Table 11: Pumi directional prefixes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>direction</th>
<th>Shuiluo Pumi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>up</td>
<td>tó-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>down</td>
<td>nʒ-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>out</td>
<td>kʰɔ-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in</td>
<td>hʒ-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cislocative</td>
<td>də-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>translocative</td>
<td>tʰʒ-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The tone of this prefix regularly spreads rightwards onto the verb stem and the verb's own tone is disassociated (the same phenomenon has been noted in Fu 1998:28-9 for a different dialect). However, the high tone of the prefix can only cross one morpheme boundary: the suffix will remain toneless, and ends up with a surface low pitch.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{(8)} & \quad H (H,HL,L) \\
& \quad \sigma + \sigma + \sigma \\
\downarrow & \quad \rightarrow \\
& \quad \sigma + \sigma + \sigma
\end{align*}
\]

This phenomenon can be observed from the following examples (the perfective forms have either the egophoric¹⁵ -sã suffix or the non-egophoric one -ɕi).

Table 12: Spread of the high tone from the directional prefix.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>basic form</th>
<th>meaning</th>
<th>perfective</th>
<th>expected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tɕú</td>
<td>sour</td>
<td>tó-tɕú-ɕì</td>
<td>*tò-tɕú-ɕì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cʰi</td>
<td>wake up</td>
<td>tó-cʰi-sã́</td>
<td>*tò-cʰi-sã́</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gjǒ</td>
<td>lift</td>
<td>tó-gjó-sã́</td>
<td>*tò-gjó-sã́</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹³ This form has the non-egophoric volitive infix <w>.
¹⁴ Unlike Shixing where the tone of the verb spreads leftwards onto the prefix (Chirkova and Michaud 2009:550-551).
¹⁵ I adopt here Tournadre’s (2008) terminology rather than the terms ‘conjunct/disjunct’.
5 Irregular alternations

In the previous section, I have presented a basic account of the regular tonal alternations observed in the verbal system of Shuiluo Pumi. In the present section, I will turn to two sets of alternations that cannot be accounted for synchronically by a set of simple rules and are lexically determined.

5.1 Rising tone monosyllabic verbs

We observe that several rising tone monosyllabic verbs undergo tonal alternation in the perfective form, when a directional prefix is added. The directional prefix has low surface tone, the verb stem high surface tone and the suffix low surface tone (the first example suǎ in the table is a non-alternating verb):

**Table 13 : Examples of alternating rising tone verbs.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic form</th>
<th>Perfective form (1sg or 3sg)</th>
<th>expected</th>
<th>meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>swâ</td>
<td>kʰâ-swâ-sâ</td>
<td></td>
<td>I counted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tɕî</td>
<td>n̪̑-tɕî-sâ</td>
<td>*n̪̑-tɕî-sâ</td>
<td>I poured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lêi</td>
<td>n̪̑-léi-sâ</td>
<td>*n̪̑-lèi-sâ</td>
<td>I ploughed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ĕ̃i</td>
<td>tʰ̃-ĕ̃-sâ</td>
<td>*tʰ̃-ĕ̃-sâ</td>
<td>I scooped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gĭ̃</td>
<td>n̪̑-gĭ̃-sâ</td>
<td>*n̪̑-gĭ̃-sâ</td>
<td>I wore (clothes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>têi</td>
<td>n̪̑-têi-sâ</td>
<td>*n̪̑-têi-sâ</td>
<td>I wore (a hat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zî̆̃</td>
<td>də̆̃-zî̆̃-ɕî̆̃</td>
<td>*də̆̃-zî̆̃-ɕî̆̃</td>
<td>It became lighter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The resulting perfective forms with LHL tone pattern look like perfective forms of falling tone verbs. Unlike the alternations observed with the prefix tə́-, which can be explained as cases of assimilation, there is no evidence that the tone change observed here is caused by the directional prefixes. Some disyllabic verbs with low-rising tone pattern, such as kə̀tsěi ‘small’, also present this alternation: the perfective form of this stative verb is realized as nɜ̀-kə̀tséi-ɕì ‘it became small’.

These alternations are observed both in running speech (recorded stories, as the one in the appendix) and isolated sentences. Therefore, it cannot be an effect of intonation.

Alternating verbs should be synchronically analyzed as a fourth lexical tonal class, distinct from both falling tone and rising tone, with a distinct underlying representation. However, an analysis in terms of H and L tones cannot easily account for the data presented above. Since falling and rising tone verbs have been respectively analyzed as H, HL and L in the previous section, we are left with only two possibilities: either to consider alternating verbs as underlying LH, or to suppose the existence of a contrast between L and underlyingly toneless verbs.16

Proposing a category LH has one obvious advantage: we could unify the four tonal patterns found on monosyllables with those of disyllables shown in Table 4. However, the discussion in

---

16 One anonymous reviewer suggested that the alternation could be explained by assuming that the alternating verbs were LH underlyingly, with a leftward spread of the L tone on the prefix. He pointed out that such cases of leftward spread are attested in Pumi dialects (see for instance Ding 2001:76 concerning the v- prefix with the kinship terms). However, one would still have to explain why LH spreads leftwards with some verbs, and rightwards with others, and why in HL verbs the H tone does not spread leftwards. Besides, allowing leftward spread in the verbal system would unduly increase the complexity of the analysis. We adopt here the idea that only rightward spread is allowed.
section 3 has already shown that LH would account poorly for the spreading rules observed when various suffixes are added to the verb stem.

The other alternative, which I will adopt in this article, is to hypothesize that of the alternating and non-alternating rising tone verbs, one category is toneless and receives a default low tone like affixes or sentence particles, and the second one has an underlying L tone. According to the analysis in section 3, we would expect a prefixed monosyllabic verb with underlying Low tone to have the surface form LLH:

(9) \[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{L} \\
\sigma + \sigma + \sigma \\
\end{array} \quad \rightarrow \quad \begin{array}{c}
\text{L} \\
\sigma + \sigma + \sigma \\
\end{array}
\]

Non-alternating verbs are therefore verbs with underlying L tone. With toneless verbs, on the other hand, the insertion of a high tone is not accounted for by the rules presented in section 3. The surface tonal pattern LHL looks as if the HL had been inserted on the toneless verbal stem (a simple H tone would not do, as it would result in an LHH pattern):

(10) \[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{HL} \\
\sigma + \sigma + \sigma \\
\end{array} \quad \rightarrow \quad \begin{array}{c}
\text{HL} \\
\sigma + \sigma + \sigma \\
\end{array}
\]

This process could be interpreted either as a kind of polarity. However, a simpler solution might be possible. As mentioned in section 3, a postlexical H tone must be inserted in all-low phonological words. Since toneless syllables are normally realized with a surface low tone, the high tone insertion would have to appear in a word whose syllables are all underlyingly toneless. To explain the LHL tone pattern, we only need to add two specifications to the postlexical High tone insertion rule:

(i) In verbal forms where all syllables are underlyingly toneless, the postlexical H tone is inserted on last syllable of the morpheme that contains the second syllable, regardless whether it is an affix or a verbal stem.

(ii) Postlexical H tones cannot spread.

(11) \[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{(H)} \\
\sigma + \sigma + \sigma \\
\end{array} \quad \rightarrow \quad \begin{array}{c}
\text{(H)} \\
\sigma + \sigma + \sigma \\
\end{array}
\]

We need an additional rule to explain why toneless and Low tone verb stems share the same tonal patterns in non-prefixed verb forms:

(iii) In non-prefixed verb forms (when the verb stem is the first syllable of the phonological word), an L tone is inserted on toneless verbal stems.

Without rule (iii), we would expect the bare stem form to be realized with a high tone (13), and the form suffixed with -mədə to be realized as LLLH (14).

(13) \[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{(H)} \\
\sigma \\
\end{array} \quad \rightarrow \quad \begin{array}{c}
\text{(H)} \\
\sigma \\
\end{array}
\]

(14) \[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{(H)} \\
\sigma \\
\end{array}
\]

17 Presence of polarity in Pumi would be one further argument in favor of Evans’ (2008:484-5) idea that Qiangic languages, including Pumi, present tonal features thought to be characteristic of African tone languages.

18 Note that in this hypothesis, toneless verb stems do not follow the same tone rules as toneless affixes or sentence particles.

19 In disyllabic verbal stems such as nà-kàtśéi-kì “it became small” mentioned above, the high tone is placed on the second syllable.
With rule (iii), the non-prefixed verbal forms of toneless stems are virtually identical to L tone stems as in (15) and (16):

With rule (iii), the non-prefixed verbal forms of toneless stems are virtually identical to L tone stems as in (15) and (16):

(15) \[ \sigma \rightarrow L \]  
(16) \[ \sigma \rightarrow L \]

These alternations have never been described for Pumi dialects with three tones, but similar phenomena have been mentioned by Matisoff (1997) and Fu (1998), who both worked on two-tone dialects. Matisoff (1997:209) presents the following data:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Basic form</th>
<th>Prefixed form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>carry on shoulder</td>
<td>tʉ̀</td>
<td>t'o-tʉ́</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>collapse</td>
<td>pʰyĕ</td>
<td>tʰə-pʰyĕ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drop</td>
<td>dɨ</td>
<td>nə-dɨ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dry</td>
<td>ᵃᵇɣû</td>
<td>tə-ɑᵇɣû</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get</td>
<td>ʰdʒĩ</td>
<td>t-o-ʰdʒĩ / ε-ʰdʒĩ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hang</td>
<td>ʂʉ̀</td>
<td>t-o-ʂʉ́</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hide</td>
<td>ʰnôN</td>
<td>tʰə-nôN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mislay</td>
<td>mî</td>
<td>tʰə-mî</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pull out</td>
<td>ʰwō</td>
<td>t-o-ʰwō / tʰ-o-ʰwō</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rot</td>
<td>ʰdʒĩ</td>
<td>nə-ʰdʒĩ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>satiated</td>
<td>kwĩ</td>
<td>t-o-kwĩ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sew</td>
<td>dɨĩ</td>
<td>t-o-dɨĩ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>take with one</td>
<td>ʰzǚ</td>
<td>n-o-ʰz ámb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>understand</td>
<td>ʰtʃĩ</td>
<td>tʰ-o-ʰtʃĩ-fĩ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wear heat</td>
<td>twɑ̌</td>
<td>t-o-twɑ́</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wear clothes</td>
<td>gwĩ</td>
<td>t-o-gwĩ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Matisoff (1997:209-10) only briefly comments on this phenomenon: "In what appears to be the majority of cases, a verb under the low tone acquires the high tone after a directional prefix in Dayang [Pumi]". In the light of the Shuiluo Pumi data, it seems that Matisoff’s examples actually conflate two distinct phenomena: the systematic high-tone assimilation of the 'up' prefix tọ- on the one hand (these cases have been shaded in grey in the table) and the genuine tonal alternation occurring with all other directional prefixes (only seven examples in all).

Fu (1998:88-9) notices 21 verbs in her corpus which undergo tone change when a directional
prefix other than tó- is added. Her list includes the following (all tone 24, low rising tone):

Table 15: Alternating verbs in Fu (1998).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Basic form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Basic form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>烂 rotten</td>
<td>bʒi</td>
<td>换 change</td>
<td>ʒdʒu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>天阴 dark</td>
<td>dʒuŋ</td>
<td>还 give back</td>
<td>tsʰue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>（棍子）断 break</td>
<td>dən</td>
<td>垮 collapse</td>
<td>bie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>脱落 to get off</td>
<td>gə</td>
<td>撕 tear off</td>
<td>tʰe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>脱臼 dislocate</td>
<td>ti</td>
<td>卖 sell</td>
<td>ʃtʃi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>剩余 remain</td>
<td>xa</td>
<td>弄垮 cause to collapse</td>
<td>pʰie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>听见 hear</td>
<td>noŋ</td>
<td>拿 take</td>
<td>ʃuɑ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>灭 destroy</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>送 give</td>
<td>ʃtʃyn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>采 pick up</td>
<td>qʰa</td>
<td>跑 run</td>
<td>bʒin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>抽烟 smoke (= drink)</td>
<td>tʰin</td>
<td>扔 throw</td>
<td>ʃtʃʰuɑ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>连接 link</td>
<td>ʃtʃʰuɑ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Several etyma are found in both Matisoff’s and Fu’s lists: "rot" and "collapse", but since their fieldwork research was based on entirely different wordlists, relatively few comparable etyma are found. By contrast, I collected vocabulary on Shuiluo and Mudiqing Pumi using the same basic list, and as a result find many common etyma between these two varieties, allowing a better evaluation of how stable the tonal alternation is across Pumi dialects. In my data, I find the following list of examples belonging to the fourth category:

Table 16: Alternating verbs in Shuiluo and Mudiqing Pumi.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shuiluo</th>
<th>Mudiqing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>scoop</td>
<td>ʂʰɑ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leak</td>
<td>zɔ̌</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ride</td>
<td>dzɛi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plant</td>
<td>lɛi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wear (hat)</td>
<td>tɛi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pour</td>
<td>tɕi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wear</td>
<td>ɡǐ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>remember</td>
<td>tʂǐ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drink</td>
<td>tʰǐ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flee</td>
<td>tsʰǐ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>break</td>
<td>dzɨ̌</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>light</td>
<td>ɡǐ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fat</td>
<td>tsʰwɔ̌</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flee</td>
<td>pʰɛ́</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fly</td>
<td>bɨ́̌</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>run</td>
<td>dzɛ́</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From this list, we observe that not all verbs are alternating in both dialects, even when we find cognates. Five exceptions are found (out of 13 verbs with cognates in both dialects). In Mudiqing there are two falling tone verbs dʐẽ́ ‘break’ and tsʰə́ ‘fat’ corresponding to alternating tone verbs in Shuiluo, and one rising tone verb dʑẽ́ ‘light’ without alternation (past kʰə-dʑẽ̀-ɕí) whereas its cognate in Shuiluo has alternation. Similarly, in Shuiluo we find two falling tone verbs çī ‘sell’ and şū ‘hide’ corresponding to alternating verbs in Mudiqing.

The tonal correspondences are even more complex if Fu’s (1998) data are taken into consideration. Although a few items in her list correspond to alternating verbs in Shuiluo or Mudiqing (‘give’, ‘hear’ = ‘understand’, ‘smoke’ = ‘drink’), in other cases they correspond to falling tone verbs, for instance tsʰué24 ‘give back’, whose cognates are tsʰwɛ́ in Shuiluo and tsʰwî in Mudiqing.

These puzzling exceptions can be accounted for by supposing a process of analogical leveling at the expense of the alternating verbs: alternating verbs, which are much less numerous than either rising tone or falling tone verbs, tend to become falling tone verbs (or in one case, a rising tone verb) by generalizing the surface tone found on the prefixed verbal forms. In this hypothesis, whenever a verb has tonal alternation in any Pumi dialect, regardless of the fact that other dialects may have falling tone in the corresponding etymon, the verb in question ought to be reconstructed in proto-Pumi as belonging to the fourth tonal category, that is alternating verbs.

We find no cases of a correspondence between a high tone verb and an alternating verb across dialects,20 and this is expected since alternation verbs never behave like high-tone verbs either in prefixed and non-prefixed form; an analogical change from high-tone to alternating or vice-versa would not be motivated phonetically.

In summary, for the Northern Pumi dialects under investigation, I propose that we must distinguish four, not three tonal classes on monosyllabic verbs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 17 : Monosyllabic verbs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>toneless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toneless</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For disyllabic verb stems, we find five tonal categories:

Table 18 : Disyllabic verbs.

---

20 As was pointed out by an anonymous reviewers.
No direct evidence of a toneless category has been found in either monosyllabic or disyllabic nouns, which seem to lack this kind of tonal alternation at least in Shuiluo Pumi, but traces of it could potentially be found in seemingly irregular nominal compounds (such as those mentioned in section 2). No definite historical explanation for this phenomenon can be given until the issue of Pumi tonogenesis has been properly addressed. This topic lies beyond the scope of this paper, as it would require a systematic comparison with other Qiangic languages.

5.2 The verb ‘to go’

When a monosyllabic verb is suffixed with the non-egophoric form ʂə̃̂ of the verb ‘to go’, this verb undergoes unusual tone changes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic form</th>
<th>Suffix with the verb ‘to go’</th>
<th>expected</th>
<th>meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dzá</td>
<td>dzá-ʂə̃̂-mə́də́rə́</td>
<td>*dzá-ʂə̃̂-mə́də́rə́</td>
<td>went to sit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tó</td>
<td>tó-ʂə̃̂-mə́də́rə́</td>
<td>id.</td>
<td>went to see</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʒə̌</td>
<td>ʒə̀-ʂə̃̂-mə́də́rə́</td>
<td>*ʒə̀-ʂə̃̂-mə́də́rə́</td>
<td>went to sleep</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the basic verb is high tone, the tone of ʂə̃̂ is assimilated, and the high tone propagates again onto the suffix, quite unlike the high tone of the directional tə́-, which, as we have seen, cannot propagate across more than one morpheme boundary.

When the verb is falling tone, ʂə̃̂ becomes low-toned, and so does the following prefix. This form is expected from the rules proposed in section 2:

(17)  

Finally, when the preceding verb is in the rising tone, we observe an entirely unexpected alternation: ʂə̃̂ becomes high tone, and this high tone spreads onto the following suffix. No matter which underlying representation one chooses for ʂə̃̂, one cannot explain this phenomenon. Even assuming that ʂə̃̂ were a toneless stem for instance, one would expect L-L-LLR *ʒə̀-ʂə̃̂-mə́də́rə́, not L-H-HHH.

As with the preceding alternation, I have no theoretical analysis to propose that would solve this problem. In present-day Shuiluo Pumi, this verb is highly irregular: it has four unpredictable forms cə̌- (basic form) cə̌- (egophoric with directional prefixes), ʂə̃̂ (non-egophoric) and ɕə̂

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>tone</th>
<th>Basic form</th>
<th>Perfective 1sg (or 3sg)</th>
<th>meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LH</td>
<td>rə́gí</td>
<td>hɔ̀-rə́gí-så</td>
<td>to hug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>ɕúwá</td>
<td>nì-ɕúwá-så</td>
<td>to wring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HL</td>
<td>tɕéswä</td>
<td>kʰ-tɕéswä-så</td>
<td>to throw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>rə́dô</td>
<td>kʰ-rə́dô-så</td>
<td>to step across</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toneless</td>
<td>kə́tsēi</td>
<td>nə-kə́tsēi-ɕi</td>
<td>to be small</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Whether these unpredictable forms are the result of preservation of ancient alternations or secondary idiosyncrasies must be left for future investigations.

6. Conclusion

This article has documented and analyzed several tonal alternations in the verbal system of Shuiluo Pumi. It demonstrated that four tonal classes must be distinguished for monosyllabic verbs, and five for disyllabic verbs. The issue of tonal alternations in noun phrases (including tri- and quadric-syllabic nominal compounds), and of the effect of intonation on tone realization is left for further research. An important issue would be to determine whether evidence for the contrast between toneless vs. L tonal classes found in verbal morphology can be brought to light in the domain of nominal morphology.

Properly understanding the alternation patterns of Pumi is not only of interest for historical linguistics and theoretical phonology, it also has a considerable practical importance for transcribing Pumi stories correctly, as is illustrated in the excerpt from a Pumi traditional story presented in the Appendix.

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21 Most of these forms are attested in the story in the appendix.
Appendix: A sample story in Shuiluo Pumi

The glosses generally follow the Leipzig Glossing Rules, except for the following:

AGENT agentive
ASSER assertive
T
EGO egophoric
MOD modal
NAR narrative
N.EGO non-egophoric
OBL oblique
VOL volitive
SIMULT simultaneous

Clitics, indicated by = rather than -, differ from genuine suffixes in that only the rising tone can spread on them, the high tone cannot spread rightwards on clitics in this variety of Pumi, unlike in the variety described by Ding (2003).

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{tšakʰwɔ́} & \quad \text{pà} & \quad \text{rú} = \text{mə} & \quad = \nu \quad \text{tóní} \\
\text{tšakʰwɔ́} & \quad \text{pà} & \quad \text{rú} = \text{mɔ́} & \quad = \nu \quad \text{tóní} \\
\text{pig_head} & \quad \text{divination} & \quad \text{divinate} = \text{NMLZ} & \quad = \text{GE} & \quad \text{story} \\
\end{align*}
\]

The story of the one who made divination with a pig head.

01 \(\text{zêní} \quad \text{zêní} \quad \text{mádz̚} \quad \text{hmũ} = \text{mə} \quad \text{tá-tsó}
\]

\(\text{zêní} \quad \text{zêní} \quad \text{mádz̚} \quad \text{hmũ} = \text{mó} \quad \text{tá-tsó}
\)

Before before poor_man beg = NMLZ one-CL

Once upon a time, there was a poor beggar.

02 \(\text{hmũ} \quad \text{giêlğɛ} \quad \text{úní} = \text{kʰje} \quad \text{dzɛ̃-mədæɾə}
\]

\(\text{hmũ} \quad \text{giêlğɛ} \quad \text{úní} = \text{kʰje} \quad \text{dzɛ̃-mədæɾə}
\)

Beg while this_way time go-NAR

He was begging around.

03 \(\text{tá-hnó} \quad = \text{bo} \quad \text{rwɔ́} \quad \text{tž} \quad \text{tá-ká} \quad \text{bã} = \text{wɔ̌}
\]

\(\text{tá-hnó} \quad = \text{bo} \quad \text{rwɔ́-} \quad \text{tž} \quad \text{tá-ká} \quad \text{bã} = \text{wɔ̌}
\)

One-day = TOP yak herd one-household house:GEN-LOC

tá-mədæɾə

tá-mədæɾə

arrive-NAR

A partially similar story is found in the Tibetan ro-sgrung cycle (Robin and Klu-rgyal 2005:177-193). This story was recorded from Ngag-dbang in Muli in February 2009. We present here only one fourth of the entire story, for want of space. The recording will be made available on the LACITO Archive (http://lacito.vjf.cnrs.fr/archivage/) eventually.
One day, he arrived at a place where there was a household of yak herders.

There was a shepherdess milking yaks.

As she was milking yaks, one half of her turquoise pendant fell down.

He had plenty of time, and watched her milking yaks.

As she was milking yaks, one half of her turquoise pendant fell down.

It fell on the grass.

She did not notice it when it fell on the grass.
At that moment, the yak defecated on her turquoise.

After a while, as she finished milking her yak, the shepherdess took the milk to her tent.

The beggar went inside her house to beg.

Now, one-moment yak milk end when TOP

The shepherdess took the milk to her tent.

The beggar went inside her house to beg.²³

²³ This sentence shows an example of the alternation treated in section 5.2. Note also the irregular form h₃-ɕò of the verb “to go”.

11 utí hmĩ = mə = ti tá-madəra
u-tí hmĩ = mó = ti tá-módaró
this beg = NMLZ this see-NAR

The beggar saw it.

12 təbó tə-ʦʰê rwã tə-ʦʰâ = kʰje = bo
təbó tə-ʦʰê rwã tə-ʦʰâ = kʰje = bo
now one-moment yak milk end when TOP

After a while, as she finished milking her yak,

13 rwã- ɭ- hōbã nẽ hjũ = po h₃-zã = kʰje = bo
rwã- ɭ- hōbã nẽ hjũ = pó h₃-zã = kʰje = bo
yak herd girl milk tent = under PFV:IN-take = when = TO

the shepherdess took the milk to her tent.

14 utí hmĩ = mə = ti tə- bã = wō h₃-ɕɔ
u-tí hmĩ = mó = ti tə- bã = wō h₃-ɕɔ
this beg = NMLZ this she house:GEN-LOC PFV:IN-go.N.3.VOL

təbo, hmĩ-ʃɔ-madəra

then beg-go-NAR

The beggar went inside her house to beg.²³

15 “təbó běi tə-kʰwã sɨtɕʰê tə-ʦʰi ɕʰê-ku
təbó běi tə-kʰwã sɨtɕʰê tə-ʦʰi ɕʰê-ku
now rice one-bowl breakfast one-CL feed-IMP

tʰzê hmĩ-ku” tɕ < w > ʃ-madəra
He said, ‘Please, give me a bowl of rice for breakfast.’

Then, the people from this family gave him a meal.

As he was halfway through his meal,

The shepherdess noticed that her turquoise pendant was missing.

‘My turquoise is so valuable,

‘My turquoise is so valuable,

My turquoise is so valuable,

My turquoise is so valuable,
now, it is lost, what can I do?”, she thought.

She searched for everywhere in the house, in the tent, and on the pasture, but could not find it.

The turquoise was lost.

She searched for everywhere in the house, in the tent, and on the pasture, but could not find it.

The turquoise was lost.

The shepherdess was about to cry.

“My turquoise was so beautiful, and it is lost.
What a waste!" she said, and was about to cry.

She told the beggar: "Don't you have some trick, wouldn't you know how to practice divination, by any chance?"

"I know divination a little." Just before, he had seen the turquoise going under the yak dung.

Then the beggar said "I know divination a little."

He just before yak-dung = CL = under turquoise it = under

Then, he had seen the turquoise going under the yak dung.

He was not worried at all.
He said "I know divination a little."

"In this case, please make a divination, we will provide you with anything you need, whatever you use to divinate."

The beggar wanted to eat meat.

"To do divination, I don’t need anything else,
if you give me the head of a pig, it will be just fine.

They said “Thank you”, and immediately gave him a pig’s head.

Bring me a pig’s head,

I need a pig’s head.”

They said “Thank you”, and immediately gave him a pig’s head.

Then, he inserted a wood stick into the pig head,

He pierced the pig head, and inserted (the wood stick) into it.
tēbō gūtō = wō pārō-mādārə

Then, he cooked it on the hearth.

Also some recite-DUR "...." say < N.EGO:VOL > -NAR

He also recited something like "....",

swā-jí bō tsā-bje tjō la mā-bō-mādārə

As the pig head was about to be cooked,

He took out the pig head from the stick where it was.

While he was reciting, he thrust (the stick) around in a disorderly way.
He thrust it in all directions, towards the inside of the tent, towards the outside, on the altar,

After a while, as he knew that the turquoise was under the yak dung,

He thrust it on the corner of the door.

After a while, as he knew that the turquoise was under the yak dung,
he thrust it outside the tent, on the pasture.

After a while, he thrust it towards the yak dung where the turquoise was.

He said: "Isn’t it your turquoise here on the ground?"

The people of this house were very glad.
These people believed it was true and said: “Thank you so much, how extraordinary, you are an uncommon man, thank you!”

They said that he knew divination, that the poor beggar knew divination. They told everyone.

They said that he knew divination, that the poor beggar knew divination.
References
Fu Ailan 1998. *Pumiyu dongci de yufa fanchou* [the categories of the Pumi verb], Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe.