

## Symbiosis between Documentary Linguistics and Linguistic Pragmatics

This paper explores a concrete example of the symbiosis between the fields of documentary linguistics and linguistic pragmatics, stressing not only the obvious ways in which documentary linguists' data can feed linguistic pragmatics, but also how the tools and methods of documentary linguistics can be repurposed to serve the aims of linguistic pragmatics.

One of the cornerstones of documentary linguistics is its emphasis on the coding and presentation of digital video. Here, linguistic pragmatics stands to benefit greatly: video offers linguists the ability to track deixis, gaze, and co-linguistic gestures, among other phenomena. In short, video brings the speech situation to life.

In the case at hand, the availability of coded video facilitated the discovery of a fact about Spoken Standard Tibetan that might have eluded notice otherwise. It is normally claimed that the direct evidential auxiliary *'dug* is used to report situations known through *direct sensory perception* (vision, touch, etc.), and that its indirect evidential counterpart *yod.red* is used to report situations presented as non-evidentially grounded *facts*. In spite of this, we discovered in the Tibetan & Himalayan Digital Library's corpus of transcribed and time-coded conversational videos a striking example of *yod.red* being used in a question and answer even though the target activity was in full view of both the questioner and the answerer [1]. Pursuing this, we then discovered cases where *yod.red* was used to describe the contents of photographs positioned directly in front of the speaker [2,3]. Soon, other aspects became clear: the use of *'dug* with a tag (*'dug.ga*) to direct attention to a new topic in the deictic sphere [4]; and the use of *yod.red* with an emphatic particle (*yod.red.da*) to present a fact as something the hearer didn't but really ought to know [5].

To sharpen our understanding, we then conducted and videotaped an experiment in which 18 subjects were presented with and queried about multiple visually perceivable situations. Half of the subjects were asked only *'dug* questions, and half only *yod.red* questions. Subjects' answers were transcribed, coded, and translated into English; and this data was time-aligned to the original videos. The results of this experiment corroborated our conclusion from the corpus data that the evidential *'dug* has an attention-directing function.

It is of some interest that our discovery of a non-necessary correlation between *direct evidence* and *attention-direction* in the use of *'dug* was an original insight into Tibetan linguistic pragmatics that emerged from consideration of the rich multimedia data that documentary linguistics makes available to linguistics at large.

Of greater interest, however, is that the fact that the experimental data was annotated using the same tools as the original corpus. That is, the experimental data was constructed as time-aligned XML using tools from the repertoire of documentary linguistics (and Tibetan language documentation in particular). By annotating and enriching the experimental data using the framework of documentary linguistics, we are providing yet another kind of radical text for Himmelmann's appropriately general definition of language documentation as "radically expanded text collection", and thus offering linguistic grist for documenters and theorists alike.

### References

- Himmelmann (1998). "Documentary and descriptive linguistics." *Linguistics* 36: 161-195.  
Tournadre & Dorje (2003). *Manual of Standard Tibetan*. Snow Lion Publications.  
*QuillDriver*. Part of Tools for Field Linguistics [<http://sourceforge.net/projects/fieldling>]  
*THDL Audio & Video Archive* [<http://www.thdl.org/avarch/mediaflowcat/home.php>]

**Data**

**Context:** Speaker and hearer in same room as woman making tea with Tibetan tea churner.

- (1) *khong ga re gnang gi yod red*  
she what do IMPFTV(IND)  
"What is she doing?"

*khong gsol ja bzo gi yod red*  
she tea make  
"She's making tea."

**Context for (2)-(5):** Describing a picture.

- (2) *khong gi ske dkrug nang logs la ya byu ru yod red*  
3p GEN necklace inside coral  
"There's coral on her necklace."

- (3) *khong gi 'og 'jug gi gong pa de/ o'o bod pa'i 'og 'jug gi bzo blta red da*  
"The collar of his shirt... Oh, it's a Tibetan shirt."  
*'dir ya thob chi chung chung cig yod red*  
here button small indef det.  
"There's a small button there."

- (4) *khong gi mgo la ya rgyan cha mang po 'dug ga*  
on her head jewelry much  
"There's a lot of jewelry on her head, isn't there?"  
*o'o 'dug*  
"Indeed."  
*dmar po cig 'dug ga 'di byu ru red dang*  
red one this coral copula  
"See that red piece? That's coral."  
*byu ru red shag o'o 'dug*  
coral copula  
"Yes, it must be coral. Indeed."  
*sngon po cig 'dug ga*  
blue one  
"And the blue piece?"  
*o'o o'o*  
"Uh huh."  
*'di g.yu red*  
this turquoise copula  
"That's turquoise."

- (5) *khong gi am cog ya'o rgyan cha mang po yod red da*  
she GEN ears jewelry a lot  
"(I'm telling you) there's a lot of jewelry on her ears."