

Grammar of Bumthang

A Language of Central Bhutan

FIRST DRAFT

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Dzongkha Development Commission

Royal Government of Bhutan

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Introductory Letter

This *Grammar of Bumthang* is the first attempt at a comprehensive, authoritative grammar in English of the major regional language of north-central Bhutan. (to be completed)

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Author's Preface

The language policy of the Royal Government of Bhutan is a Buddhist approach to a multilingual society. The Middle Path is the equilibrium between two complementary policy guidelines: the advancement of Dzongkha as the single national language and *lingua franca* of Bhutan and the preservation of and respect for all Bhutan's native languages.

Abbreviations

adh.	adhortative
adj.	adjective
adv.	adverb
art.	article
Ch.	Chinese
col.	collective suffix
dem.	demonstrative
Dz.	Dzongkha
emp.	emphatic
e.p.	experienced past
erg.	ergative
gen.	genitive
ger.	gerund
i.p.	inferred past
inf.	infinitival future
interj.	interjection
loc.	locative
n.	noun
Nep.	Nepali
nom.	nominalizing suffix
num.	numeral
opt.	optative
part.	past participle
pl.	plural
postp.	postposition
pro.	pronoun
Q	interrogative suffix
sg.	singular
tel.	telic
Tib.	Tibetan
v.	verb
vol.	volitional future

Transcriptions

Two mutually compatible systems of transcription are used in this book, and one system of transliteration. The first system of transcription is Roman Dzongkha, the standard of rendering Dzongkha, the national language of Bhutan, in the international Roman script. The second system is the Roman Bumthang, a phonological transcription of the Bumthang language. Written Dzongkha spellings of names in the Bhutanese 'Ucen script are provide between parentheses.

Roman Dzongkha is based on the phonology of the standard or prestige dialect of Dzongkha spoken in Wang (Wañ) and Thê (Thed) as the Thimphu (Thim-phug) and Punakha (sPu-na-kha) valleys are traditionally called. Roman Dzongkha makes use of twenty-two letters of the Roman alphabet (the F, Q, V and X are not used) and of three diacritics: the apostrophe ['], the diaereis or *Umlaut* ["] and the circumflex accent [^]. A complete description of Bhutanese romanization is provided in the *Guide to Roman Dzongkha*. A brief outline of Roman Dzongkha is given here.

The apostrophe at the beginning of a syllable indicates high register tone in syllables beginning with a nasal, approximant, liquid other than /r/ or a vowel. Elsewhere the tone of a syllable can be predicted on the basis of the initial consonant: Syllables beginning with a voiceless or an aspirated plosive or affricate or with a voiceless sibilant or liquid or with /h/ are pronounced in the high register tone. Low register syllables are those beginning with a voiced or devoiced plosive, affricate or sibilant, or with /r/.

An apostrophe after an initial consonant indicates that the initial is devoiced. The low register vowel following a devoiced consonant is characterised by breathy phonation. Bhutanese whose native language is not Dzongkha generally fail to distinguish voiced from devoiced initials. The initials of a Dzongkha syllable are listed in TABLE 1. The consonants -n, -m, -ng, -p, -k and -sh also occur as finals.

TABEL 1: Dzongkha Initial Consonants

	high tone		low tone	
	voiceless	aspirated	voiced	devoiced
velar plosives	k	kh	g	g'
palatal plosives	c	ch	j	j'
retroflex plosives	tr	thr	dr	dr'
dental plosives	t	th	d	d'
bilabial plosives	p	ph	b	b'
bilabial-palatal affricates	pc	pch	bj	bj'
alveolar affricates	ts	tsh	dz	
palatal sibilants	sh		zh	zh'
alveolar sibilants	s		z	z'

	high tone	low tone
voiced velar nasal	'ng	ng
voiced palatal nasal	'ny	ny
voiced dental nasal	'n	n
voiced bilabial nasal	'm	m
voiced palatal approximant	'y	y
voiced lateral	'l	l
voiceless lateral		lh
voiced labiovelar approximant	'w	w
voiced apical trill		r
voiceless apical fricative		hr
voiceless glottal approximant		h

Dzongkha distinguishes thirteen vowel. Vowel length is distinctive. The diaeresis marks the inherently long vowels ä [æ:], ö [œ:] en ü [y:]. The vowels a, e, i, o, u also occur as long vowels, in which case they are marked by a circumflex accent â, ê, î, ô, û. Vowel length is not indicated on a vowel before the final -ng because vowels lengthen automatically before final -ng if it has, in fact, not disappeared. The historical rules of apophony in Dzongkha appear to be more complex than those of Lhasa Tibetan (van Driem 1993b).

TABLE 2: Dzongkha Vowels

i	î	ü	u	û
e	ê	ö	o	ô
		ä	a	â

The transcription system used for Bumthang and the related languages Kheng and Kurtöp is largely based on Roman Dzongkha. Bumthang romanization is explained in the Chapter Two on Bumthang phonology. Outside of the glossary, Bumthang, Kheng and Kurtöp words are italicized, unless they are placed between morpheme brackets. Phonetic transcriptions in International Phonetic Alphabet are placed between square brackets. People's names are given in Dzongkha. Toponyms within Bumthang District are given in their Bumthang pronunciation.

Written Dzongkha in the 'Ucen (dBu-can) script is transliterated in the following Tibetological transliteration: k, kh, g, ŋ; c, ch, j, ñ; t, th, d, n; p, ph, b, m; ts, tsh, dz, w; ź, z, ħ; y, r, l; ś, s, h; a, i, u, e, o. Transliterated written forms are provided between parentheses. Syllables are separated by a hyphen in transliteration where they are separated by the triangular dot known as the tshâ (tshag) in written Dzongkha. The tshâ is not used in modern Dzongkha when what used to be two consecutive syllables in Old Tibetan have collapsed into a single syllable in modern Dzongkha.

Chapter One

About the Bumthang Language

The Bumthang language or Bumthangkha, as it is known to its speakers, is the *kha* 'language' of Bumthang, the northern half of Central Bhutan. There are approximately 30,000 speakers of Bumthang. Closely related to Bumthang are the languages Kheng and Kurtöp. Kheng is spoken by approximately 40,000 people south of Bumthang in the district of Zh'ängang, known in Bumthang as Zhramzhrong. Kurtöp is spoken by approximately 10,000 people east of Bumthang in Lhüntsi district. It is linguistically defensible to consider Bumthang, Kheng and Kurtöp as three distinct dialect groups of a single Greater Bumthang Language. The differences between the various dialects of Kheng appear to be just as great as the differences between any one of these dialects and a randomly chosen dialect of Bumthang. An important structural difference between Bumthang on one hand and Kheng and Kurtöp on the other is the fate of finals. In Kheng and Kurtöp finals have disappeared, resulting in the lengthening of the preceding vowel, whereas Bumthang has preserved the original situation, e.g. Bumthang *ka* 'snow' vs. *kak* 'blood' as against Kheng and Kurtöp *ka* [ka] 'snow' vs. *kâ* [ka:] 'blood'. Bumthang dialects do not exhibit distinctive vowel length.

Sir John Claude White (1909: 13) noted that Bhutanese people of different linguistic stock lived to the east of the Dzongkha speaking area: "Amongst the people of the East who live beyond the Pele-la the bulk of the population is not of Tibetan origin, nor do they speak Tibetan. I give a few words they use, spelt phonetically, which seem to me different to those of Tibetan derivation. *Gami* = fire, *Nut* = barley, *Mai* = house, *Tyu* = milk, *Yak* = hand, *Tsoroshai* = come here. Their origin is not clear, but... They are of a different type to those in the west, smaller in stature, the complexion is darker and features finer cut, and their dress is different." On the basis of the words he cites — in modern phonetic notation [gami], [nat], [mai], [ju], [jak] and [tso-ro shai] — it is clear that White was speaking of the Bumthang language.

Bumthang belongs to the East Bodish branch of the Tibeto-Burman language family. The other East Bodish languages are: (1) Dzala, spoken in northeastern Bhutan by about 15,000 people, (2) Mangde (also known as Henkê or 'Nyenkha), the language of the Black Mountains with approximately 10,000 speakers, (3) Chali, with approxi-

mately one thousand speakers in the village of Chali and a few neighbouring hamlets on the left bank of the Kuri River in eastern Bhutan, and (4) Dakpa, spoken on the eastern border and in rTa-wang in the Indian state of Arunācal Pradeś, (5) Mön, spoken by less than one thousand people in the Black Mountains. Bumthang is classified by Aris (1979a: xv, 122, 1979b: 10) as a member of the branch of the Tibeto-Burman language family which Shafer (1954, 1974) called 'East Bodish'. In Shafer's phylogeny, East Bodish constitutes one out of three branches of Bodish, alongside West Bodish (sBal-ti, Bu-rig) and Old Bodish (Tibetan, Dzongkha and other languages descended from Old Tibetan). Shafer's Bodish is, in turn, one of the branches of Bodic, which is one of the major branches of Tibeto-Burman. Shafer's names are somewhat misleading in that, in Shafer's assessment, it is not the Old Bodish languages but the East Bodish languages which are the more conservative and which tend to retain archaic traits. This idea appears to be supported by a number of the phonological traits of Bumthang described in this book and by the comparative phonological studies by Mazaudon and Michailovsky (1994).

Shafer's study of East Bodish was based entirely on a language called 'Dwags'. The data which Shafer studied were taken from Hodgson's (1853) 'Tákpa' material, which Shafer incorrectly identified with the Tibetan dialect of Dags-po, situated southeast of Lha-sa, south of the gTsañ-po and west of the Koñ-po area. Hodgson's 'Tákpa' data, however, originate from rTa-wang, a former Tibetan vassal state northeast of Bhutan which is known in Tibetan sources as the Dag-pa Tsho-lña 'The Five Hosts of the Dakpa' (Aris 1979a: xvi). In rTa-wang, two languages are spoken which Aris (1979a: 120-2) calls 'Northern' and 'Central Monpa'. 'Northern Monpa', which Aris demonstrates is related to Bumthang, is the language which is called Dakpakha in Bhutan, spelt Dwags-pa. The 'Central Monpa' of rTa-wang is Tshangla or Shâ-chop, which happens also to be the major language of eastern Bhutan. Shafer's (1954, 1955, 1974) comparative study of 'Dwags' and 'Proto-East Bodish' should therefore be read as applying collectively to the languages of the Bumthang group, which Aris (1979a) was the first to identify as East Bodish languages.

The description of Bumthang presented in this book represents the Bumthang research results of the Linguistic Survey of Bhutan (sKad-rigs Ma-ḥdra-baḥi dPye-ñib). First, the phonology of Bumthang is described. Then there follows a description of the most salient grammatical morphemes and morphological regularities in Bumthang. Finally, there is a Bumthang-English glossary.

J'aka Dzong in Bumthang

The Bumthang Valley with the Dzong to the left

Chapter Two

Bumthang Phonology

Bumthang has four main dialects, which not coincidentally coincide with the four main geographical and administrative divisions within Bumthang district, viz. *Chunmat* (Chu-smad), *Chogor* (Chos-ḥkhor), *'Ura* (U-ra) en *Tang* (sTañ). Henceforth, the Bumthangpa toponyms *'Ura*, *Chutö*, *Tang*, *Chunmat* and *Chogor* will not be italicized in this book. It is opportune to point out that the local pronunciation of toponyms throughout Bhutan often preserves valuable information about Bhutan's distant past. This, in fact, forms the very basis of the study of historical toponymy. For example, the lofty Thrumshingla pass, which lies within Bumthang, is *Phrumsengya* in Bumthang, which shows that the etymology assumed by the the modern Dzongkha spelling Thrumshingla (Khrum-śing-la) is not historically correct. There exists a tendency in Bhutan to force proper Classical Tibetan (Chöke) etymologies and spellings onto place names in Bhutan which actually have far older names. These older local names in many cases lack a Classical Tibetan etymology, which makes them more difficult to understand, but their local pronunciation preserves highly valuable information which should be cherished as it holds the key to part of Bhutan's unknown past.

In writing this grammar I have worked together closely with the Bhutanese scholar Dr'âsho Sanggä Dôji of *Chutö* (Chu-stod), who is my old friend and a native speaker of the Tang dialect of Bumthang, upon which this grammar is based. The innovative proposals regarding Bumthang *'Ucen* orthography and Bumthang romanization were conceived by Dr'âsho, as will be pointed out below. Other Bumthang speakers whom I consulted are the twenty-seven year old painter Pêma Döndr'u (Padma Don-grub) of *Zungnge* (Zuñ-ñe) in Chunmat, Shêrap-la (Shes-rab-la), former gap (rgedpo) of *'Ura*, Jambe *'Ngödr'u* (ḥJamdbal dÑos-grub) from *Dur* (Dur) in Chogor, Minjur (Mi-ḥgyur), former gap of *Camkhar* (lCam-mkhar) in Chogor, Sanggä Zâm (Sañs-rgyas Zañmo), a woman from *Dazur* (mDaḥ-zur) in Tang and Chödrö (Chosgron), a woman from *Tahung* (rTa-hung) in Tang.

The dialect of Trongsa (Kroñ-gsar), west of Bumthang and east of the Mangde speaking area, may be considered to be a dialect intermediate between Bumthang and Kheng. Unlike the Bumthang dialects, the loss of final occlusives in the Trongsa dialect has led to vowel lengthening, just as in Kheng and Kurtöp. The speakers of this dialect also

do not identify themselves as Bumthangpas. The dialect is known as Trongsabi Kha (Kroñ-gsar-paḥi Kha) ‘language of Trongsa’ and is also sometimes called Nupbi Kha (Nub-paḥi Kha) ‘language of the West’. The latter descriptive name, however, is also used to designate the Hâ dialect of Dzongkha spoken in the westernmost part of Bhutan.

2.1. Initial consonants

The consonants which may occur at the beginning of a Bumthang syllable are listed in TABLE 3, along with their proposed equivalents in Bhutanese ’Ucen script. The ingenious ’Ucen spellings for the Bumthang apical trilled fricative series are those proposed by Dr’âsho Sanggâ Dôji. The romanizations of these unique Bumthang phonemes are based on Dr’âsho’s Bhutanese ’Ucen orthography. A phonetic description of these speech sounds is provided below.

TABLE 3: Bumthang Initial Consonants

	voiceless	aspirated	voiced
velar plosives	k ཀ	kh ཁ	g ག
palatal plosives	c ཅ	ch ཅ	j ཇ
retroflex plosives	tr ཇ	thr ཇ	dr ཇ
dental plosives	t ཇ	th ཇ	d ཇ
bilabial plosives	p ཕ	ph ཕ	b བ
alveolar affricates	ts ཅ	tsh ཅ	dz ཅ
palatal sibilants	sh ཇ		zh ཇ
alveolar sibilants	s ཇ		z ཇ
glottal approximant	h ཇ		
palatal-glottal fricative	hy ཇ		
velar nasal			ng ཇ
palatal nasal			ny ཇ
dental nasal			n ཇ
bilabial nasal			m ཇ
palatal approximant			y ཇ
labiovelar approximant			w ཇ
lateral liquid	lh ཇ		l ཇ
apical trilled fricative	shr ཇ	hr ཇ	zhr ཇ
apical trill			r ཇ

Thirty-two Bumthang initial consonants have the same sound value as in Dzongkha: **k, kh, g, c, ch, j, tr, thr, dr, t, th, d, p, ph, b, ts, tsh, dz, sh, zh, s, z, h, ng, ny, n, m, y, w, lh, l, r**. Bumthang does not have the eight devoiced consonants of Dzongkha (**g', j', d', b', bj', dr', zh', z'**), nor does it have the four bilabial-palatal affricates (**pc, pch, bj, bj'**). In Roman Bumthang, the retroflex consonants are indicated just as in Roman Dzongkha, by writing an **-r** after the letter: **tr, thr, dr**. Retroflex consonants in Bumthang occur mainly, but not exclusively, in loan words from Dzongkha and Chöke.

There are four Bumthang initials, which are different than what we encounter in Dzongkha: **hy, shr, hr, zhr**. In Bhutanese 'Ucen script these sounds look like clusters, but they are phonologically single initial consonants. An unusual Bumthang phoneme is **hy**, e.g. *hyawang* [h^hawaŋ] 'lamasery' (Dz. lha-khang).

Bumthang is extraordinarily rich in rhotic sounds. In addition to the apical trill **r**, Bumthang has a complete initial series of apical trilled fricatives **shr, hr** and **zhr**. Like Roman Bumthang **hy**, the symbols **shr, hr** and **zhr** do not represent retroflex sounds or consonant clusters, but single initial consonant phonemes unique to the Bumthang language. The **shr** is a voiceless apical trilled fricative [ʃ̺], e.g. *shra* [ʃa] 'meat', *shrai* [ʃai] 'drool, drivel', *shraima* [ʃaima] 'toothless harrow', *shrap* [ʃap] 'veranda', *shram* [ʃam] 'shoe' (Dz. lham); *shrup* [ʃup] 'sheath', *shrung* [ʃuŋ] 'shake everything into place (e.g. things in a sack), heave whilst sobbing', *shrokseng* [ʃokseŋ] 'juniper' (Dz. shupashing); *shror-do* [ʃorodo] 'an extra chore performed in addition to the main task assigned in order to show devotion to one's boss' (Dz. zhor-kha). The **hr** is an aspirated apical trilled fricative [ʃ^h], e.g. *mai hram-mala* [ma^ham-mala] 'they will break the house down', *hrak-hrok* [ʃ^hak-ʃ^hok] 'mixed up', *hrai!* [ʃ^hai] 'come!'. The **zhr** is a voiced apical trilled fricative [ʒ̺], more fully voiced than the Czech phoneme ř, e.g. *zhra* [ʒa] 'what', *zhror* [ʒor] (dialect form for standard Bumthang *churma*) 'native beer' (Dz. chang), *zhrap* [ʒap] 'layer of butterfat on top of salted Bhutanese tea', *zhrong* [ʒoŋ] 'worm', *zhruti* [ʒuti] 'bamboo species'.

2.2. Register tone

Just as in Dzongkha, the distribution of the low and high register tone in Bumthang is predictable to some extent. Syllables with voiced plosives, affricates or fricatives are in low register tone (**g, j, dr, d, b, dz, zh, z, zhr**). Syllables with voiceless or aspirated initials, including voiceless liquids and fricatives, are in the high register tone (**k, kh, c,**

ch, tr, thr, t, th, p, ph, ts, tsh, sh, s, h, hy, lh, shr, hr). Only syllables beginning with a voiced continuant (ng, ny, n, m, y, r, l, w, or a vowel) may be in either the high or the low register tone.

TABLE 4: Bumthang Continuant Consonants
in Low and High Register Tone

low tone		high tone	
ng	ང་	'ng	ང་
ny	ཉ་	'ny	ཉ་
n	ན་	'n	ན་
m	མ་	'm	མ་
y	ཡ་	'y	དབྱའ་
w	མ་	'w	དབྱའ་
l	ལ་	'l	ལ་
r	ར་	'r	དབྱའ་

Just as in Roman Dzongkha, the high register tone is indicated in such Bumthang syllables by an apostrophe at the beginning of a syllable, e.g. *'ai* 'who' (ཨའི་) vs. *auya* 'jackal' (འུ་ལུ་ཡ་), *'ya* 'deposit at the bottom of copper pans' vs. *ya!* 'grab it!'. In contrast to Dzongkha, Bumthang syllables beginning with initial **r** may also be in high register tone, e.g. *'rat* (དབྱའ་ར་) 'bamboo fibre for weaving traditional Bhutanese bowls' vs. *rato* 'root', *'ri* (དབྱའ་རི་) 'start, beginning' vs. *ri* (རི་) 'hill, mountain', *'ra* (དབྱའ་ར་) 'hair on scalp' vs. *ra* (ར་) 'goat', *'rok* (དབྱའ་རོག་) 'river', *'rewa* (དབྱའ་རེམ་) 'tool for removing ears of wheat from the stalks'.

2.3. Initial clusters

In contrast to Dzongkha and quite distinct from the retroflex series, however, Bumthang has eight initial consonant clusters of which **-r** is the second element: **kr, khr, gr, pr, phr, br, mr, 'mr**. Therefore, in Bumthang, the combinations ཀ་ར་ and ར་ར་, for example, represent the initial cluster **kr** and **pr** and not single retroflex phonemes as in Dzongkha, e.g. *krong* 'village', *khrangkhrang* 'crane (bird)', *grangka grangae* 'count!' (literally 'count the counting!'), *gran* 'compete', *pra* (dialect form for *priu*) 'rhesus monkey' (as opposed to *raksha* 'golden lan-

gur'), *prat-mala* 'fight', *wet neng ngat phratsang* 'you and I shall get into conflict', *brat-mala* 'scratch', *branma* 'Tatary buckwheat' (*Fagopyrum tataricum*, Nep. *tīte phāpar*, Dz. bj'ô, written: byoḥo), *mrat* 'paddy', *'mrat* 'flour to thicken soup with', *'mran* 'blackhead, sebum'.

TABLE 5: Bumthang Initial Clusters with -r

	high tone voiceless	high tone aspirated	low tone voiced	high tone voiced
velar plosives	kr 𑄧	khr 𑄨	gr 𑄩	
bilabial plosives	pr 𑄪	phr 𑄫	br 𑄬	
bilabial nasals			mr 𑄭	'mr 𑄮

Bumthang has five initial consonant clusters of which -l is the second element: **kl**, **gl**, **pl**, **bl**, **ml**, e.g. *klatpa* 'brains', *glabä* 'hit!', *ble* 'four', *maplagae* 'don't make noise!', *plakta* 'noise', *blakbloga* 'sloppy, spilt' [said of fluid or of handwriting], *blaktang* 'spilt fluid, goo, sticky mass, viscous slime', *mlakmloga* 'viscous, syrupy, oozing', *mlaksa* '[you] are soiling [your hand] in something sticky'.

TABLE 6: Bumthang Initial Clusters with -l

	high tone voiceless	low tone voice
velar plosives	kl 𑄧	gl 𑄩
bilabial plosives	pl 𑄪	bl 𑄬
bilabial nasals		ml 𑄭

The Bumthang phoneme -w forms clusters with the velar initials, e.g. *kwa* 'tooth', *khwi* 'dog', *khwe* 'water', *khwit* 'too big, oversize', *gwi* 'hip'. The -w in such clusters is often pronounced like the French glide [w]. For example, Bumthang *kwi* [kwɨ] 'round woven bamboo

mat to underset pots and pans' is pronounced just as French *cuit* 'cooked'.

TABLE 7: Bumthang Initial Clusters with -w

	high tone voiceless	high tone aspirated	low tone voiced
velar plosives	kw ཀྱ	khw ཁྱ	gw གྱ

2.4. Final consonants

In Bumthang the consonants **k**, **t**, **p**, **ng**, **n**, **m**, **h** and **s** may occur as finals, e.g. *brak* 'cliff' (Dz. bj'â, written: byag < Old Tib. brag), *pat* 'leech' (Dz. pêp, written: padpa), *tawa phop* 'instep', *zon* 'two', *sum* 'three', *naphang* 'nose', *ya!* 'grab it!' vs. *yah!* 'watch out!' vs. *yak* 'yak'. The sibilant /s/ only occurs as a final in forms of the experiential past tense, in which case it may also occur as a post-final, e.g. *tups* 'cut', *dos* 'slept'.

TABLE 8: Bumthang Final Consonants

-k	ཀྱ
-t	ཁྱ
-p	གྱ
-ng	ངྱ
-n	ནྱ
-m	མྱ
-s	སྱ
-h	ཧྱ

2.5. Vowels

The Bumthang vowel are listed in TABLE 9. As mentioned above, length is not a distinctive feature of Bumthang vowels. Therefore, the Roman Dzongkha diacritic, the circumflex accent [^], is not used in Roman Bumthang. In rapid speech, the vowel sequence ae in Bumthang is realised as ä.

TABLE 9: Bumthang Vowels
in Low and High Register Tone

low tone		high tone	
a	ཨ་	'a	ཨྱ་
e	ཨེ་	'e	ཨེྱ་
i	ཨི་	'i	ཨིྱ་
o	ཨོ་	'o	ཨོྱ་
u	ཨུ་	'u	ཨུྱ་
ä	ཨཱ་	'ä	ཨཱྱ་
ö	ཨེྱ་	'ö	ཨེྱྱ་
ü	ཨུྱ་	'ü	ཨུྱྱ་

Chapter Three Nominal Morphology

This chapter treats Bumthang pronouns, nouns and the major endings which nominal parts of speech take, and finally Bumthang numerals and articles.

3.1. Pronouns

The Bumthang personal pronouns are listed in TABLE 10. In Bumthang, three persons and singular and plural number are distinguished, resulting in six pronominal categories. There is no dual, nor is there an inclusive vs. exclusive distinction in the first person.

TABLE 10: Bumthang personal pronouns

	absolutive		ergative	
	singular	plural	singular	plural
1st	ngat	nget	ngai (ngaile)	ngei (ngeile)
2nd	wet	yin	wi (wile)	yinle
3rd	khit	bot	khi (khile)	boi (boile)

In the dialect of Chunmat, the second person plural pronoun is *in* instead of *yin* 'you' [pl.], and the ergative form of the first person singular pronoun is *ngui* instead of *ngai* 'I' [erg.], e.g. *ngui kha-mi-go* 'I don't understand' (Dz. Nga ha-mi-g'o). The form of the third person singular pronoun in the Chogor dialect is *chit* 'he, she', although the form *khit*, pronounced [k^hjit], is also attested. The demonstrative *gon* 'that, the other' is often used instead of *khit*. Bumthang *Gon* is translated Dzongkha both as *kho* 'he' and as *zhenmi* 'the other'.

The most important interrogative pronouns and adverbs in Bumthang are: '*ai* 'who', e.g. *khit 'ai yo?* 'who are you?', '*aji* 'who' [erg.], e.g. '*aji bus* 'who did that', '*aji* 'whose', e.g. '*aji cala* 'whose stuff', '*ai-do* 'to whom', '*zhra* 'what', '*ao* 'where, whither', e.g. '*ao gai-ge?* 'where are we going?', '*angi* 'whence', e.g. *wet 'angi yo?* 'where are you from?', '*zhrabudze* 'how much', '*adoro* 'how', '*arba* 'when'.

3.2. Nouns and nominal suffixes

The plural suffix in nouns is <-tshai>, e.g. *minbotsa-tshai* ‘women’, *cala-tshai* ‘stuff, articles’. Adjectives in Bumthang follow the noun they modify, e.g. *yam khangma* ‘long road’, *mi bong khangma* ‘tall person’ (literally ‘man of tall length’).

The final **-t** in the absolutive forms of the pronouns appears to be a marker of the absolutive <-t> with a zero allomorph after the final **-n** of *yin* ‘you’ [pl.]. However, this ending does not occur other than in personal pronouns.

The ergative suffix in nouns is <-le>. Nouns and plural pronouns may take the collective suffix <-gampo>, comparable in meaning to Dzongkha <-chachap>. In such cases, the ergative suffix <-le> follows <-gampo>. The ergative suffix in personal pronouns, on the other hand, is <-i> with the exception of the second person plural pronoun *yin* ‘you’ [pl.], which takes the ergative suffix used in nouns and therefore has the ergative form *yinle*. Ergative pronouns in <-i> may also take the ergative suffix for nouns <-le> in addition to <-i>, e.g. *ngai* ~ *ngaile* ‘I’ [erg.], *wi* ~ *wile* ‘you’ [erg.], *ngei* ~ *ngeile* ‘we’ [erg.]. Pronominal forms with a double ergative ending <-ile> have contrastive meaning, e.g. *ngeile* ‘we, and not somebody else’ [erg.].

As opposed to a canonical ergative, the Bumthang ergative is not an obligatory marking of the agent of a transitive verb, e.g. *ngat zam zus* ‘I [abs.] ate rice’ vs. *ngai zam zus* ‘I [erg.] ate rice’. Just as in Dzongkha and modern Tibetan, the ergative category in Bumthang expresses a higher degree agentivity or volition on the part of the subject. This is why the ergative suffix occurs primarily, but not exclusively, as a marker of the agent of a transitive verb. This type of ergative does not appear to be a rare or unusual phenomenon. A comparable difference in meaning is found between the ergative and absolutive cases in Bats, a Northeast Caucasian language, which, in the words of Comrie (1981: 53), is ‘entirely one of control’.

The personal pronouns have special genitive forms, which exhibit some superficial resemblance to the ergative forms.

TABLE 11: Bumthang personal pronouns

	genitive		dative	
	singular	plural	singular	plural
1	ngae-, ngale	nge-, ngele, ngegi	ngado	ngedo
2	we-, wele	yinde	wedo	yindu
3	khi-, khile	böegi, boile	khidu	bodo

The original genitive suffix in nouns is <-le>, but the suffix <-gi> has also become widespread under the influence of Dzongkha and Chöke, e.g. *yak-gi* 'nyiphang' 'tail of the yak, yaktail'. The allomorph of the genitive suffix after nominals which end in a vowel is <-e> (in Chunmat and 'Ura <-i>). This allomorph is etymologically related to the genitive suffix allomorph occurring after vowels in Dzongkha, viz. <-i> (written: -hai), e.g. *ngae* 'apae meng' 'my father's name', *ngae charo-gi meng* 'my friend's name'. The allomorph <-e ~ -i> sometimes occurs in combination with the suffix <-gi>, e.g. *po-i gi chewa* 'the fangs of a snake'. A comparable phenomenon is observed in Dzongkha where two allomorphs of the genitive suffix are used together, apparently superfluously.

Bumthang also distinguishes emphatic forms of the genitive which are formed by attaching the genitive suffix allomorph <-e> to the emphatic suffix <-ra> [< Tib. rañ 'self'], e.g. *nga-rae* 'my own', *nge-rae* 'our own', *we-rae* 'your own' [sg.], *yin-rae* 'your own' [pl.], *khi-rae* 'his own, her own', *bo-rae* 'their own'.

The dative forms of the personal pronouns listed in TABLE 11 are regular. The suffix is the same as the morpheme which marks the dative in nouns and the supine in verbs. In Bumthang, the dative and supine are not two separate categories but two separate manifestations of a single grammatical category, which I call 'telic'. The telic category marks the syntactic constituent which represents the goal towards which a situation expressed by a verb is directed. The telic suffix marks both nouns as well as the supine verbal complements of verbs. The traditional names 'dative' and 'supine' describe the two ways in which the unitary function of the Bumthang telic suffix finds expression when combined with different parts of speech

The form of the telic ending is <-QO>, whereby both the segments <Q> and <O> are variables. The vowel <O> represents a vowel harmonic variable with the realisation /u/ after the closed vowels /i/ or /u/

in the preceding syllable and with the realisation /o/ in all other environments, e.g. *nga-do 'wai!* 'bring it to me!', *we-do bi-mala* 'I shall give it to you', *khi-du be!* 'give it to him!', *shar-do* 'to the east', *yin-du* 'to you, for you' [pl.].

The phonological value of the consonant <Q> is a function of the preceding final. After final /k/, the variable <Q> is realized as /g/, yielding the form <-gO>, e.g. *Thimphuk-gu* 'naar Thimphu'. After final /-ng/, the phonological value of <Q> is /ng/, giving the form <-ngO>, e.g. *krong-ngo* 'to the village, in the village'. After final /-p/ or /-t/, the variable <Q> is realized as /t/, yielding the form <-tO>, e.g. *thap-to ku-lae!* 'put it in the oven!' [*kut-mala* 'to put, place'], *yakbit-tu* 'on the back of the hand'. After all other final consonants, the variable <Q> is realized as /d/, giving the form <-dO>, e.g. *yam-do* 'on the road, on the way'.

When noun lacks a stem final consonant, the stem of the noun is said to be either hard or soft. Whether the stem of a noun or a verb is hard or soft is a lexical given. The terms 'hard' and 'soft' have been taken from the grammar of Dzongkha, where the terms designate two groups of stems with different morphophonological behaviour. Open stems which behave like closed stems are called 'hard', whereas 'soft' open stems take different allomorphs of certain grammatical endings. In the case of the Bumthang telic ending, hard stems are followed by the allomorph <-dO>, whereas soft stems take the allomorph <-rO>, e.g. *bo-do* 'to them', *yin-gampo-ro* 'to you' [col.pl.], *bot-gampo-ro* 'to them' [col.], *mai-do* 'home, at home'. The suffix <-nang> 'inside, within' is often used in combination with the telic ending, e.g. *mor-nang-ngo* 'inside the old vagina'. The morphophonology of the telic ending after verbs works the same way, but this is treated in the following chapter.

As distinct from the dative sense of the telic category, Bumthang has a locative suffix <-na>, e.g. *yak-na* 'in the hand', *ju-na tog-ae!* 'fondle [her] breast!'. In certain contexts either suffix is equally apt, e.g. *mi-ru bi-mala* 'I shall give it to the man', *mi-na be!* 'give it to the man!'. Certain verbs appear to govern the telic <-QO> as well as the locative <-na> with a corresponding difference in meaning, e.g. *nat-do phan-mala* 'recover from an illness [tel.]', *nat-na phan-mala* 'cure an illness [loc.]'.

3.3. Numerals and articles

The Bumthang numerals are listed in TABLE 12. The element *neng* in compound numerals is just the conjunction 'and'. In the dialects of 'Ura and Chunmat, the form of the conjunction is *ning*. Like all other languages of Bhutan, Bumthang counts according to a vigesimal system based on the *khæ* 'score'. A score of scores *nyishu* 'four hundred' represents the next higher stage of the system. In numerals greater than *nyishu*, scores are not counted with the word *khæ*, but with the word *tsa*, e.g. *khæ-thek* 'one score, i.e. twenty' but *nyishu-thek neng tsa-thek* 'a score of scores plus one score, i.e. four hundred and twenty'. When more than one conjunction is used in numerals above four hundred, the first will be *neng* 'and', and the second *doma* 'and'. A score of *nyishu* is a *khæchen* 'eight thousand', and a score of *khæchen* is a *yangchen* 'one hundred sixty thousand. TABLE 13 gives a comparison of the numerals up to one score in the *Tangpa* and 'Urapa dialects.

TABLE 12: Numerals

1	thek	11	chwaret	21	khaethek neng thek
2	zon	12	chwa'nyit	22	khaethek neng zon
3	sum	13	chusum	23	khaethek neng sum
4	ble	14	cheble		etc.
5	yanga	15	chänga		
6	grok	16	chöegrok	40	khæzon
7	'nyit	17	cher'nyit	60	khaesum
8	jat	18	charjat		etc.
9	dogo	19	chödodogo		
10	che	20	khaethek		
400	nyishuthek	420	nyishuthek neng tsathek		
800	nyishuzon	440	nyishuthek neng tsazon		
1200	nyishusum	460	nyishuthek neng tsasum		
	etc.		etc.		
481	nyisyuthek neng tsable doma thek				
482	nyishuthek neng tsable doma zon				
483	nyishuthek neng tsable doma sum				
	etc.				

8000	khaechenthek
160 000	yangchenthek

TABLE 13: Numerals (Tangpa and 'Urapa dialects)

	Tang	'Ura		Tang	'Ura
1	thek	thek	11	chwaret	choware
2	zon	zon	12	chwa'nyit	chowa'nyis
3	sum	sum	13	chusum	chusum
4	ble	blä	14	cheble	cheblä
5	yanga	yanga	15	chänga	chä'nga
6	grok	grok	16	chöegrok	chegrok
7	'nyit	'nyis	17	cher'nyit	cher'nyis
8	jat	jat	18	charjat	cherjat
9	dogo	dogo	19	chöedogo	chedogo
10	che	che	20	khaethek	khaethek

The numeral *thek* 'one' is also used in the sense 'a/an, a certain', e.g. *phecung-thek* 'a bag'. There are also Bumthang postpositions which act as articles or demonstratives, e.g. the postposition *o* 'this'. The postposition *di* 'the' is possible a loan from Dzongkha, e.g. *phecung-di* 'the bag'. Although by no means rare, these postpositions do not occur with great frequency. As in Dzongkha, these demonstrative or article-like postpositions immediately follow the noun they modify, preceding any plural or case endings which there may happen to be, e.g. *min-botsa-o-tshai* 'these women'.

Bumthang has separate numerals for 'one' and 'two' when counting filled vessels or receptacles. This is reminiscent of the Dzongkha numeral *g'ang* 'one' used in the same way. These Bumthang numerals are *bleng* 'one' and *gwa* 'two', e.g. *jappar bleng 'wai* 'bring one cup of tea', *jappar gwa 'wai* 'bring two cups of tea'.

Chapter Four Verbal Morphology

A Bumthang verb is not conjugated for person or number of subject, object or other actant. The finite verb is inflected for tense and aspect. As a matter of convenience, conjugated verbs in sample sentences are often given a third person singular translation. In explaining each Bumthang tenses, whichever dialect has the simplest morphophonology for that particular tense is chosen as the point of departure from which to discuss the dialects with a more elaborate morphophonology. It has not been ascertained whether or not each of the four dialect areas is internally homogeneous. It is particularly uncertain whether the dialect of *Chutö* typifies the entire Tang dialect area because, for example, the experienced past tense in the dialect of Dr'âsho Sanggä Dôji is identical to that of the 'Urapa dialect, whereas the inferred past tense is formed in the same way as in the Chunmat and Chogor dialects.

4.1. Present tense

The present tense suffix in the dialect of Chogor is <da>, *ngat wet kran-da* 'ik miss you', *chit gä-da* 'he's going', *bri num-da* 'he is smelling [it]'. Just as in Dzongkha, there is a morphophonologically relevant distinction in Bumthang between verbs with a hard stem and verbs with a soft stem. Verbs with a closed stem, i.e. with a final consonant, are hard. An open verb stems is either hard or soft. In the Chogor dialect, a soft stem verb takes an epenthetic /t/ before the ending <da>, e.g. *chit zhego zut-da* 'he is eating food' < zu 'eat', *bot zon rat-da* 'the two of them are coming' < ra 'come', *yö rat-da* 'it is raining' (literally 'rain comes'), *chi nga-do tiru bit-da* 'he is giving me money' < bi 'give', *ngai tosang-le phecung-di bit-da* 'my friend is giving me the bag', *ngat yat but-da* 'I am working' < bu 'do', *'ot-da* 'brings' < 'o 'bring', *set-da* 'dies' < se 'die'. Hard open stems do not take an epenthetic /t/, e.g. *tshü-da* 'seeks', *ngat 'ngon throi-da* 'I am weeding', *nget gä-da* 'we are going'. Closed stems are hard as well, e.g. *dot-da* 'sleeps', *chit nyit-da* 'he is sitting', *lap-da* 'says, tells', *pok-da* 'hits, strikes', *lok-da* 'returns, comes back', *bran-da* 'recognizes', *khan-da* 'knows', *ngam-da* 'tastes good', *khrang-da* 'climbs'.

TABLE 14: Morphophonology of Present Tense Endings

Chogor	Tang
<-da> (epenthetic /t/ in soft stems)	<-sa> after /p, k, m, ng/
	<-ta> after soft stems and after /t/
	<-za> after hard open stems
	<-da> after /n/
'Ura	Chunmat
<-sa> after a voiceless final consonant	<-sa> after /p, t, k, m, ng/
<-za> after a vowel or a voiced consonant	<-ta> after soft stems
	<-za> after /n/ and after hard open stems

In the dialect of Tang, the present tense ending is <-ta> after soft stems and stems ending in final /t/, e.g. *zu-ta* 'eats, is eating', *bi-ta* 'gives', *nyit-ta* 'sits', *dot-ta* 'sleeps'. It is <-da> after stems ending in final /n/, e.g. *bran-da* 'recognizes', *khan-da* 'knows'. The ending is <-sa> after other closed stems, e.g. *lap-sa* 'says, tells', *glap-sa* 'hits, strikes', *lok-sa* 'comes back, returns', *ngam-sa* 'tastes good', *shropse khrang-sa* 'he is shinnying up' (literally 'he is climbing, a-shinnying'). It is <-za> after open hard stems, e.g. *tshü-za* 'seeks', *shropse gai-za* 'he shinnied up to it' (literally 'he went there, a-shinnying').

In the dialect of 'Ura, the present tense ending is <-sa> after stems ending in a voiceless consonant, e.g. *khit nyit-sa* 'he is sitting', *dot-sa* 'sleeps', *lap-sa* 'says, tells', *pok-sa* 'hits, strikes', *lok-sa* 'returns, comes back'. In all other environments it is <-za>, e.g. *yö ra-za* 'it is raining' (literally 'rain comes'), *khit zhego zu-za* 'he eats food', *khi nga-do tiru bi-za* 'he gives me money', *nget gai-za* 'we are going', *bot sum ra-za* 'the three of them are coming', *ngai tosang-nge phecung-thek bi-za* 'my friend gave me the bag', *tshü-za* 'seeks', *bran-za* 'recognizes', *khan-za* 'knows', *khlang-za* 'climbs', *ngam-za* 'tastes good'.

In the dialect of Chunmat, the present tense ending is <-sa> after stems ending in final /m/, /ng/ or a voiceless consonant, e.g. *ngam-sa* 'tastes good', *hrang-sa* 'climbs', *bri num-sa* 'he is smelling at it', *dot-sa* 'sleeps', *nyit-sa* 'sits', *lap-sa* 'says, tells', *pok-sa* 'strikes, hits'. It is <-ta> after soft stems, e.g. *zu-ta* 'eats', *long ra-ta* 'a breeze is blowing' (literally 'a breeze comes'), *sho' long ra-ta* 'a strong wind is blowing' (literally 'a strong wind comes), *lok ra-ta* 'comes back, returns', *bi-ta* 'gives'. The ending is <-za> after open hard stems or stems ending in final /n/, e.g. *tshü-za* 'seeks', *gai-za* 'goes', *bran-za* 'recognizes', *khan-za* 'knows'.

The negative of the present tense is formed through prefixation of the negative morpheme <me->, in Chunmat <mi->, e.g. (Tang, Chogor) *me-yan-da* 'does not obey', ('Ura) *me-yan-za*, (Chunmat) *mi-yan-za*. In the interrogative, the vowel in the present tense ending changes from /a/ to /e/, e.g. *Zhra but-de?* 'What are you doing?'. Negative prefixes are invariably attached to the root of a verb. In the case of polysyllabic verb stems, the root is the last syllable of the stem, e.g. *khami-go* 'I don't understand'.

4.2. Experienced past tense

The experienced past tense expresses an event or situation in the past which the speaker has experienced himself. We shall return to the meaning of this tense in the next section.

TABLE 15: Morphophonology of Experienced Past Tense Endings

Chogor	Tang
<p><∅> after /k/ and /ng/, whereby /k/ is dropped</p>	<p>in Chutö as in 'Ura</p>
<p><-s> in other environments</p>	<p>elsewhere as in Chogor</p>
'Ura	Chunmat
<p><-s></p>	<p><-s> after hard stems and after /t/</p>
	<p>elsewhere <∅>, whereby the stem final is dropped if it happens to be /k/</p>

In the dialect of 'Ura, the experienced past tense ending is <-s> regardless of the nature of the final segment of the verb stem to which it is affixed, e.g. *ngat wet kran-s* 'I have missed you', *gai-s* 'went', *pha-s* 'it's done, happened' (Nep. 'bhayo'), *zu-s* 'at', *thong-s* 'drank', *dema ngat khvak-s* 'I arrived yesterday', *ngui tshüs* 'I sought', *pron-s* 'crashed a party or prayer service', *sham-s* 'set the table', *throi-s* 'up-rooted' (e.g. plants), *bri num-s* 'has smelled at it', *ngai seng thu-s* 'I've chopped the wood', *tup-s* 'cut', *khro-s* 'has bathed', *tsamadü 'nyor-'nyor thung-s* 'we had lots of sex' (whereby *tsamadü* 'much', 'nyor-'nyor' 'sex', *thung* 'commit, perform'), *Mera Sakteng gai-do 'nyam-s* 'he felt like going to Mera and Sakteng'. Stem final /t/ is dropped before the suffix of the experienced past tense, e.g. *dos* 'slept' < *dot* 'sleep', *nyis* 'sat, stayed' < *nyit* 'sit, remain'.

In other Bumthang dialects, the experienced past tense suffix also has the form <-s> after soft stems and after stem final /t/, e.g. *ngat zus* 'I've eaten', *bis* 'gave', *yat bus* 'worked', *gon ras* 'he has come', *ngat*

dangma lok ras 'I came back yesterday', 'os '[I] have brought it'. In other Bumthang dialects, stem final /t/ is also dropped before the experienced past tense ending, e.g. *dos* 'slept' < *dot* 'sleep'.

In the Chunmat dialect, a zero allomorph of this ending occurs in other environments than these, e.g. *ngui lap* 'I said', *tshü* 'sought'. In the dialect of Chogor, the zero allomorph occurs only after stem final /k/ and /ng/, whereas the allomorph <-s> occurs in all other environments, e.g. *ngai dangma thung* 'I saw it yesterday', but *chi khors* 'he took it away', *chi tshüs* 'he sought', *ngai laps* 'I said', *ngai brans* 'I recognized', *ngams* 'It has come to be delicious'. In both Chunmat and Chogor, stem final /k/ is dropped before the zero allomorph of the experienced past tense ending, e.g. Chogor: *dangma ngat khra* 'I arrived yesterday' < *khra* 'arrive', Chunmat: *ngat dangma hra* 'I arrived yesterday' < *hra* 'arrive', Chogor: *dangma ngai po* 'I hit him yesterday' < *pok* 'hit, beat'.

In all dialects other than that of 'Ura, the verb 'to go' has an irregular past tense form in <-e>, *gai-e* 'went', e.g. *konye mai-do pron-do gai-e* 'He went to 'crash' the other house [in the hope of being able to partake of the meal]'. With the exception of the verb 'to go', the experienced past tense in the Chutö dialect is formed as in 'Ura, i.e. with the suffix <-s>. In other Tang dialects the same morphophonological rules seem to apply as in Chogor.

The negative of the experienced past tense is formed in the same way in all tenses: by the past tense negative prefix <ma->, whereas the experienced past tense ending has a special allomorph <-t> in negative forms after soft stems and a zero allomorph in other environments, e.g. *ma-zu-t* 'didn't eat', *ngai khi-do tiru ma-bi-t* 'I didn't give him any money', *ma-se-t* 'didn't die', *ma-sut* 'didn't kill', *ma-tshü* 'didn't seek', *ma-thor* 'didn't pluck', *khit ma-gai* 'he didn't go', *seng ma-thu-t* 'didn't chop the wood', *khit khakso ma-yang* 'he didn't stand up', *ma-rat* 'he has not come'.

4.3. Inferred past tense

Alongside the experienced past tense, Bumthang has an inferred past tense. The ending of the inferred past tense in the dialects of Chogor and Chunmat is <-na>, e.g. *nyit-na* 'has remained, has sat down' (Dz. dö-nu), *chit gä-na* 'he has gone' (Dz. so-nu), *khit tarshing shropse khrang-na* 'he shinnied up the prayer flagpole'. In the dialect of 'Ura the ending of the inferred past tense is <-zumut>, and in Tang with the

exception of Chutö it is <-simut>, e.g. 'Ura: *khit gai-zumut* 'he is gone', Tang: *khit gai-simut*.

The Bumthang experienced past tense is comparable in meaning to the Dzongkha past tense in <-ci ~ -yi>, wherea the inferred past tense correponds to the Dzongkha past tense in <-nu>. The experienced past tense expresses an event or action in the past which the speaker has himself experienced or, in the case of question to the second person, which the person addressed is assumed to have personally experienced or observed. By contrast, the inferred past tense expresses an event or situation which the speaker has not himself experienced, but which he is able to infer has transpired on the basis of his observations or knowledge of the results in the present of the inferred past tense event. This explains why the experienced past tense is most often used when the subject is a first person, seldom when the subject is a second person, and sometimes when the subject is a third person. Under normal circumstances, one will say *ngai tshüs* 'I sought', and not **ngai tshüna*, because it is difficult to conceive of a situation whereby the speaker was looking for something but did not experience this process personally. One will therefore say *ngat zus* 'I have eaten' (Dz. z'a-yi), but about someone else one may say either *chit zus* ('Ura: *khit zus*) 'he has eaten' (Dz. kho z'a-yi) or *chit zu-na* ('Ura: *khit zu-zumut*) 'he has eaten' (Dz. kho z'a-nu). The choice is determined by epistemological considerations. However, there is no person agreement as such in the Bumthang verb.

In the sentence *charo-le nga-do bi-s* '[my] friend has given it to me', only the experienced past tense can be used under normal circumstances because the speaker, who is the beneficiary in this sentence, must have experienced the event himself. Similarly, in the sentence '*ami khü-ru zhego bis* 'mother has fed the dog' (literally 'mother [erg.] has given food to the dog'), the choice of past tense indicates that the speaker has himself observed the event described, whereas the speaker who uttered the sentence '*ami zama kher-na* 'mother [erg.] has cooked rice' only observed the results of mother's efforts after the fact but did not remain in the kitchen all the while as it was happening. This is why the inferred past tense is the usual form to employ when establishing a present tense state or condition which is the result of a process which one has not personally observed, e.g. *po khrong-na* 'he needs a shave' (literally 'body hair has sprouted up').

The lexical meaning of some verbs influences the choice of tense, e.g. the verb <zhit> 'forget' takes the inferred pat tense even with a first person subject, e.g. *zhit-na* 'I forgot', because the speaker did not

consciously experience the process of forgetting. I have devoted much attention to this distinction in Dzongkha (van Driem 1992, 1993d).

Just as with the experienced past tense, the negative of the inferred past tense is formed through prefixation of the past tense negative morpheme <ma->, but in most dialects the inferred past tense morpheme undergoes no allomorphic changes in the negative, remaining <-na>, e.g. *ma-nyit-na* 'he didn't stay'. In some locollects, however, the inferred past tense morpheme does have a special negative allomorph <-da>, e.g. *ma-nyit-da* 'he didn't stay'.

4.4. Experienced imperfective

A verb in the experienced past tense can take an imperfective aspectual ending <-ba>, the initial consonant of which /b/ is but weakly voiced and often sounds like [p], e.g. *boi mai kher-ba* 'they've built their house', *ngat zu-ru 'nyam-ba* 'I feel like eating', *dangma-gi zhego ngamba* 'yesterday's food tasted good', *ngai khit thung-ba* 'I saw him', *tun-ba* 'showed', *tiru chong-ba* 'produced the money', *khör-ba* 'took away', *ngui lap-ba* 'I said', *ngui bran-ba* 'I recognized', *ngui dangma thung-ba* 'I saw it yesterday', *tshü-ba* 'sought', *khit gai-ba* 'he went', *ngat khörak-ba* 'I arrived, I've been there'. The suffix <-ba> is realized as /-wa/ in allegro speech, particularly after stem final /r/ or /ng/, e.g. *wi churma thong-wa ya?* 'did you drink beer?', *wi ngat thung-wa?* 'did you see me?'. The allomorph <-a> of the imperfective suffix occurs after soft stem verbs, whereby the experienced past tense ending <-s> is retained, e.g. *ngadzi zhego zusa ya?* 'have you had breakfast?', *ngei yat busa* 'we did the work', *bisa* 'gave'. In 'Ura, forms of the type *zuspa* 'has eaten' are attested.

There are no distinct negative forms of the imperfective past tense. Therefore, a form like *ma-nyit* 'didn't sit, didn't stay' corresponds both to *nyis* 'sat, stayed' as well as *nyitba* 'sat, stayed'.

4.5. Copula

In Bumthang the copula *wen* 'is' and its negative counterpart *min* 'is not' may connect two substantives and thereby establish the identity of the referent (Nep. *ho* 'is', *hoina* 'is not'). In general, the interrogative suffix <-ga> is affixed to the finite at the end of an interrogative clause, but the special interrogative suffix <-na> is affixed to the copula *wen* 'is' or *min* 'is not', e.g. *wen-na* 'isn't that so?'.

The copulas *na* 'there is' and *mut* 'there is not' are used in existential, locational and attributive senses, i.e. 'there is', 'to be somewhere', 'to have a quality' (Nep. *cha* 'is', *chaina* 'is not'), e.g. *chan mut* 'it doesn't matter' (literally 'there is no difference'; Dz. khê mê, written: khyad med). The copula *mut* takes the same endings as other verbs, e.g. *minbotsa-tshai kakcan mut-da* 'the women aren't any good'. The copula *na* is used to indicate location, e.g. *mi-'mui-mala-i cala-tshai mai-do na* [not-sell-inf.-nom. things-pl. house-in is] 'the stuff that's not for sale is in the house'.

4.6. Periphrastic perfect

Het Bumthang perfect is a periphrastic tense formed by the auxiliary *wen* 'is' in combination with the past participle of the verb. The past participle is derived from the experienced imperfective form of the verb through suffixation of the nominalizing ending <-i>, e.g. *nyitbai* 'sat' < *nyitba* 'sat', *zusai* 'eaten' < *zusa* 'ate'. The Bumthang nominalizing suffix can also be attached to an infinitive form of the verb, although this does not yield a past participle, e.g. *mi-'mui-mala-i cala-tshai mai-do na* [not-sell-inf.-nom. things-pl. house-in is] 'the stuff that's not for sale is in the house'. The Bumthang nominalizing suffix <-i> is probably etymologically related to the Tibetan post-vocalic allomorph <-hi> of the genitive suffix.

The opposition experienced vs. inferred is neutralized in the periphrastic perfect, which is used indifferently with respect to all three persons, e.g. *nge tshübai wen* 'we have sought', *khit yangbai wen* 'he has stood up', *khi zusai wen* 'she has eaten', *wet zhego zu-sai ya?* 'have you eaten?', *khraapai wen* 'he has arrived', *wet lapbai wen* 'you are the one who said it', *bot dotpai wen* 'they have slept'. In 'Ura, past participles occur of the type *zuspi* 'eaten', e.g. *wet zhego zu-spi-ge?* 'have your eaten food? (whereby *ge* is the 'Urapa form of the interrogative suffix).

The Bumthang perfect not only expresses an event or situation in the past with present time relevance but also serves to establish the identity of the agent who performed an activity, e.g. *ngai thongbai wen* 'I have drunk, I am the one who has drunk' as a response to the question as to who drank. In this function the past participle is also used attributively, e.g. *Thimphuk-gu gai-wai mi khit wen* [Thimphu-in go-part. person he is] 'He is the one who went to Thimphu', *seng thus-pai jai-do nyit-na* [wood chop-part. atop-tel. sit-i.p.] 'he is the one who has been sitting on the chopped wood'.

The negative of the periphrastic perfect is formed by means of the negative copular auxiliary *min* 'is not'. The allomorph <-gi> of the past participial ending is used in the negative instead of <-i>, e.g. *tshübagi min* 'has not sought'. After soft stem verbs, both the allomorph <-i> occurs to which the allomorph <-gi> too is affixed, e.g. *zusaigi min* 'has not eaten'. Here again the allomorphy of the nominalizing suffix is identical to that of the genitive suffix.

4.7. Infinitival future

The future ending is <-mala> in the dialects of Chogor and Chunmat, *ngat wet kran-mala* 'I shall miss you', *minbotsa-o-tshai-gampo-ro tiru bi-mala* [woman-these-pl.-col.-tel. money give-inf.] 'I shall give some money to these women', *wet yampat gä-mala ya?* 'are you going away tomorrow?', *ra-mala* 'I shall come', *bot bri num-mala* 'they will smell at it', *charo-do tiru bi-mala* 'I shall give the money to my friend', *mai-do gai-mala* 'I'll go home', *ruk-mala* 'we'll put it away, we'll clean it up', *sut-mala?* 'are they going to slaughter [the pig]?', *dot-mala* 'will sleep'. In the dialects of 'Ura and part of Tang, the future ending is <-sang>, e.g. *dot-sang* 'shall sleep', *zu-sang* 'shall eat'.

The ending <-mala> is also affixed to the verb to denote the action or event as such, i.e. to give the infinitive of the verb, e.g. *mrü-mala* 'scratch, carve out, squeeze out'. In other words, there is a verbal category in Bumthang the meaning of which covers both of what in English is felt to be future and infinitival meaning. This is vaguely similar to the use of the Nepali infinitive in <-ne>, but Nepali also has other infinitival endings and other future tenses. Forms in <-mala ~ -sang> are used with auxiliary *wen* 'is', e.g. *gaimala wen* 'I shall go, I am to go' ('Ura: *gaisang wen* 'I shall go, I am to go'). Such a construction portrays the event as a situation which will take place according to schedule or some tacitly assumed scheme of things, *wet yampat gai-sang wen-na?* 'Are you leaving tomorrow?' This question is not a query about what the person addressed wants to do, but about his intended plan of action or programme.

4.8. Volitional future

The Bumthang volitional future in <-ge> expresses an action which the subject of the sentence intends to carry out or an event about which the subject is very sure that it will take place in the future. This is why the volitional future is apt to express an action which will be realized in the immediate future, and why it is often used when the subject is a first person about whose future intentions the speaker generally has a good deal of knowledge, *nyit-ge* 'I will sit', *zu-ge* 'I will eat', *ju-ge* 'I will fuck'. The infinitival future in <-mala> merely expresses a future possibility, whereas the volitional future expresses the wish, intent or decision of the subject about a future event and in this way expresses an almost certain future, e.g. *khit nyit-mala* 'he will [probably] stay on' vs. *ngat zu-ge* 'I will eat', *yat bu-ru gai-ge* 'I am going off to work'. With the infinitival future in <-mala> the speaker assumes a possible future, e.g. *wet nyit-mala, wen-na?* 'you're going to be staying on, aren't you? (Nep. *timī basne, hoina?*). With the volitional future, by contrast, the speaker either asserts or questions the intent or will of the subject about the event denoted by the verb, e.g. *wet nyit-ge, wen-na?* 'you intend to stay, don't you?' (Nep. *timī baschau, hoina?*).

The negative of the volitional future is formed by addition of the negitive prefix <me->, in Chunmat <mi->, whereby the suffix <-ge> is dropped, e.g. *ngat me-nyit* 'I won't sit down, I won't stay', *khit me-gai* 'he won't leave', *me-ju* 'I won't fuck', *me-sut* 'I won't kill', *khit mi-zu* 'he won't eat', *ngat khakso mi-yang* 'ik sta niet op', *ngat cok me-cok* 'I won't shit' (literally 'I won't defaecate faeces'), *khit mi-ra* 'he won't come'. In the interrogative, the volitional future suffix <-ge> is dropped before the interrogative suffix <-ga>, e.g. *wet cho-rang nyit-ga* [you here-emp. sit-Q] 'Did you want to sit here?'

The suffix <-na> can be added to a volitional future form to indicate that the utterance represents newly acquired knowledge on the part of the speaker, knowledge about which the speaker has reason to believe is an accurate representation of reality but not beyond the shadow of a doubt, e.g. *yampat-nanmun gai-do nyam-ge-na* 'he'll be pleased to be leaving soon'. This Bumthang suffix <-na> is comparable in meaning to the Dzongkha suffix <-wä ~ -bä>, which also expresses the epistemological stance of the speaker with respect to the contents of the utterance. When the volitional future ending <-ge> has been compounded by the ending <-na>, then the volitional future suffix <-ge> is not dropped in the negative, e.g. *khit nyit-ge-na-ga* 'Is he going to

stay?’ (whereby <-ga> is the interrogative suffix) — *mi-nyit-ge-na* ‘no, he won’t stay’.

4.9. Supine

The supine is the function of the Bumthang telic category expressed by the suffix <-QO> when this is attached to a verb. In this suffix, <O> represents a vowel harmonic variable with the phonological value /u/ when the vowel in the preceding syllable is either of the closed vowels /i/ or /u/. In all other environments, its phonological value is /o/, e.g. *sut-du* ‘in order to kill’, *dot-do* ‘in order to sleep’, *nyit-du* ‘in order to sit’, *nget mento thor-do gai-ge* ‘we are going to pick flowers’. The phonological value of the variable represented by <Q> depends on the stem final of the verb. (1) After final /k/, the telic ending is <-gO>, e.g. *khit pok-go ngat gai-ge* ‘I’m going there to give him a beating’, *ruk-gu gai-ge* ‘we are going to put everything back in its place’, *wet cok cok-go ma-gai-ya?* ‘Didn’t you just go off to shit?’. (2) After stem final /-ng/ the ending has the form <-ngO>, e.g. *thong-ngo* ‘in order to drink’, *yung-ngu gai-ge* ‘I shall go to fetch it’. (3) after final /-p/ the ending has the value <-tO>, e.g. *tup-tu* ‘in order to cut’, *thap-to ga-lae!* ‘go away (i.e. somewhere else) to argue!’, *lap-to gai-ge* ‘we are going off to tell [them]’. (4) After all other final consonants and after hard open stem verbs the telic ending has the form <-dO>, e.g. *tor-do ga-lae!* ‘go sow!’, *ju phor-do ga-lae!* ‘go to fondle her breasts!’, *pron-do* ‘in order to crash a party or prayer service’, *sham-do* ‘in order to set the table, in order to display wares on a table’ (Dz. bkram-ni), *bri num-du gai-ge* ‘I am going to smell at it’, *mrü-do* ‘in order to squeeze it out’, *tshü-do* ‘in order to look for it’, *'ngon throi-do* ‘In order to extirpate weeds’. In contrast to the morphophonology of the telic suffix when attached to nominal parts of speech, the telic suffix also has the form <-dO> after verb stems in final /t/, e.g. *thot-do* ‘in order to join’, *dot-do* ‘in order to sleep’. After soft open verb stems the initial of the telic suffix has the phonological value <-rO>, e.g. *zu-ru* ‘in order to eat’, *se-ro* ‘in order to die’, *seng thu-ru gai-ge* ‘I am going off to chop wood’, *tiru bi-ru* ‘in order to give money, in order to pay’.

The supine is not only the form of verbal complements of verbs of motion. The supine is also the form of verbal complements of the Bumthang verbs *tshuk-mala* ‘to be able’ and *'nyam-mala* ‘to feel like doing something’, e.g. *ngat churma thong-ngo me-tshuk-sa* ‘I can’t drink the beer’, *gai-do 'nyam-da* ‘I feel like going’.

4.10. Imperative

The imperative is formed through affixation of the suffix <-lae>, in allegro speech pronounced as <-lä>, e.g. *mrü-lae!* ‘squeeze it out, scratch it out!’, *throi-lae!* ‘weed, extirpate!’, *thor-lae!* ‘pluck, pick!’, *pron-lae!* ‘crash [a dinner party]!’, The verb *gai-mala* ‘to go’ has the stem <ga> in the imperative, e.g. *ga-lae!* ‘go away!’. The negative imperative is formed through affixation of the negative prefix <ma->, e.g. *ma-mrü-lae!* ‘don’t squeeze it out!’, *ma-tshü-lae!* ‘don’t look for it!’, *ma-ga-lae!* ‘don’t go!’, *mento ma-thor-lae!* ‘don’t pick the flowers!’, *mento ma-throi-lae!* ‘don’t uproot the flowers!’, *ma-se!* ‘don’t die!’.

Verb stems ending in /t/ drop this final before the imperative suffix, e.g. *ma-mra-lae!* ‘don’t scratch!’ < *mrat-mala* ‘scratch’, *saro nyi-lae!* ‘sit down!’ (cf. Ch. ‘zuò xià!’) < *nyit-mala* ‘sit’, *do-lä!* ‘go to sleep!’, < *dot-mala* ‘sleep’, *su-lae!* ‘kill!’ < *sut-mala* ‘kill’. After verb stems in final /ng/, /k/ or /p/, the imperative ending is realized as the allomorph <-ae> and the verb stem finals /k/ and /p/ become voiced /g/ and /b/, e.g. *ma-yang-ae!* ‘don’t stand up!’, *tiru yanga chong-ae!* ‘get out five ngütram’ (Bhutanese currency unit), *ma-pog-ae!* ‘don’t beat!’ < *pok-mala* ‘hit, beat’, *tub-ae!* ‘cut it!’ < *tup-mala* ‘cut’. After the verb stem final <-m>, the imperative ending has the allomorph <-mae>, e.g. *karyu ma-throm-mae!* ‘don’t break the porcelain cup!’, *bri ma-num-mae!* ‘don’t sniff at it!’ (whereby *bri* ‘smell’ is the obligatory complement of the verb *num-mala* ‘to smell’ if there is no other overt complement).

Soft open stem verbs with either the stem vowel /i/ or /u/ form their imperatives through the apophonic rule whereby /i/ goes to /e/ and /u/ goes to /ö/, e.g. *nga-do ma-be!* ‘give it to me!’ < *bi-mala* ‘give’, *zö!* ‘eat!’ < *zu-mala* ‘eat’, *ma-jö!* ‘don’t fuck!’ < *ju-mala* ‘fuck’, *thö!* ‘chop!’ < *thu-mala* ‘chop’. The verbs *ra-mala* ‘come’ and *’o-mala* ‘bring’ have irregular imperative forms, viz. *hrai!* ‘come!’, *ma-hrai!* ‘don’t come’, *’wai!* ‘bring!’, *ma-’wai!* ‘don’t bring!’.

4.11. Gerund

The ending of the gerund is <-se>, and in Chunmat <-si ~ -zi>. This suffix is attached to a verb which expresses an event or situation which obtains simultaneously or immediately prior to the situation denoted by the main verb (cf. Dz. <-di> (written: -ste ~ -te ~ -de), Nep. <-era>), e.g. *mai hram-se gai-e* ‘after they had destroyed the house,

they left', *shrai-da*, *shrai-se gai-da* 'it's overflowing, it's overflowing and getting away', *cucu shrop-se ma-nyi-lä!* 'don't just sit their masturbating!'. The verb *zat-mala* 'complete, finish' governs the gerund, e.g. *yigu dri-se zas* 'I've finished writing, I'm done with writing'. The verb *got-mala* 'must', however, takes the bare stem of a verb as its complement, e.g. *zhego zus*, *dan dot got-sa* '[we] have eaten the food, now [we] must go to sleep'.

It is not clear whether there any etymological relationship exists between the Bumthang gerund suffix <-se> and the Bumthang experienced past tense suffix <-s>. 'Ole Mönpa is an archaic East Bodish language spoken in the Black Mountains, in which intransitive verbs have retained person and number agreement with the subject, and transitive verbs with both subject and object. The Black Mountain gerund ending also shows limited person agreement, differentiating a first person gerund <-ga> and a non-first person gerund <-sa>. The Bumthang gerund in <-se>, which is evidently cognate with the Black Mountain non-first person gerund in <-sa>, appears to be the form which prevailed when person and number agreement was lost in the Old Bumthang verb.

4.12. Adhortative

The adhortative ending is <-kya>, e.g. *tup-kya* 'let's cut it', *pron-kya* 'let's crash [their dinner]', *sham-kya* 'let's set out [the wares] for display', *dot-kya* 'let's go to sleep', *zu-kya* 'let's eat', *yat bu-kya* 'let's work', *'ngon throi-kya* 'let' uproot the grass', *thong-kya* 'let's drink', *gai-kya* 'let's go', *tshü-kya* 'let's look for it', *mu-kya* 'let's do it'. The adhortative may be used with respect to a second person subject in questions, where it has the connotation of polite encouragement, e.g. *'mui-se ma-zat-pai cala-gampo mai-do na. wet got-kya? 'ngüi-kya?* [sell-ger. not-finish-part. stuff-col. house-in be. you need-adh.? buy-adh.?] 'The things which have not been sold off yet are still in the house. Mightn't you need them? won't you buy them?'

4.13. Optative

The optative ending is <-ga>. As this ending is homophonous with the interrogative suffix, intonation serves a disambiguating function, e.g. *yat bu-ga!* 'may [he/you/etc.] work!', *mu-ga!* 'may [he/you/etc.] do it!', *zu-ga!* 'may [he/you/etc.] eat!', *dot-ga!* 'may [he/you/etc.] sleep!', *pron-ga!* 'may [you/they/etc.] crash [their dinner]!', *tshü-ga!* 'may [he/you/etc.] look for it'. In certain Bumthang locolects, the opta-

tive ending has the form <-(n)ja>, whereby the full allomorph <-nja> occurs after open stem verbs, e.g. *yat bu-nja!* ‘may [he/you/etc.] work!’, *mu-nja!* ‘may [he/you/etc.] do it!’, *zu-nja!* ‘may [he/you/etc.] eat!’, *tshü-nja!* ‘may [he/you/etc.] look for it!’. The allomorph <-ja> occurs after a closed stem verb, e.g. *pron-ja!* ‘may [you/they/etc.] crash [their dinner]!’. Verb stems ending in /-t/ lose this final before the optative ending in lococets where the optative suffix is <-(n)ja>, e.g. *do-ja* ‘may [he/you/etc.] sleep!’. The optative can be used with respect to a subject in all three persons. The optative is only attested in the first person in the questions intended to solicit the approval of the person addressed, *ngat gai-ga* ‘shall I go now?’.

4.14. Aspectivizers <thung> and <thro>

The term ‘aspectivizer’ denotes an auxiliary which expresses an *Aktionsart*, adding a dimension of meaning to the meaning of the main verb. Bumthang probably has more aspectivizers than just <thun> and <thro>. These aspectivizers do not exhibit similar morphological behaviour. The data available at present are too limited to draw any conclusions in the regard.

The Bumthang aspectivizer <thung> adds a dative of relinquitive meaning to a verb in the past. When the auxiliary <thung> is affixed to a soft stem verb, the allomorph <-t> of the experienced past tense is retained, e.g. *charo-le nga-do bi-t-thung* ‘hy friend has handed it over to me’, *khi bi-t-thung-ba* ‘he gave it away’, *yat bu-t-thung* ‘has he dipened with the task?’ (Nep. *kām gari diyo*), *zama zu-t-thung* ‘has he finished off the rice’.

The aspectivizer <thro> expresses the inexorability of a situation or process. The auxiliary <thro> is often used in conjunction with a past participle, e.g. *cala-tshai khi-le khorwai thro* ‘he is the one who took away the stuff’. The English translation conveys the the meaning of the Bumthang syntax in the utterance. The use of <thro> conveys the sense of ‘it just happens to be the case that he is the one who took the stuff away, and there’s nothing we can do about it’. In the sentence *jep-pai thro ware!* ‘we enjoyed it!’, the auxiliary <thro> connotes that the enjoyment was long-lasting. The emotive word *ware* at the end of the clause expresses a meaning similar to that of Dzongkha *'mare* (sma-re), which might be succinctly described as conveying an air of authority on the part of the speaker. The use of the auxiliary <thro> in the utterance *nyitpai thro* ‘he just kept on sitting there’ conveys the idea that the subject is immovable, inert or lethargic.

The auxiliary <thro> may also be attached directly to the stem of a verb instead of the present tense ending, e.g. *ngat cho-rang nyit thro* 'I'm staying here!'. The aspectivizer <thro> can be used as a main verb in the meaning 'persist, continue to', in which case it takes all the regular endings of a main verb and itself takes a gerund as its complement, e.g. *zu-se thro-na, rang ses* '[the pig] just kept on eating, it died just like that'. The latter utterance pertains to the practice of feeding a hemp porridge to pigs in Bhutan. This porridge renders pigs docile and lazy, making them easier to keep track of and prone to fattening. This porridge is not fed to pigs who are ripe for the slaughter, but to growing pigs. The amount of *Cannabis indica* is gradually increased, but it can happen that a pig dies of an overdose if moderation is not observed in the initial stages. The sentence *zu-se thro wen* 'I am going to keep on eating it' can, for example, be said to a person who is entertaining the idea of eating an apple which the speaker has already started eating and temporarily put aside.

4.15. Hearsay evidential

A hearsay evidential is a grammatical particle which indicates that the intelligence expressed in an utterance is neither the product of the speaker's own observations, nor information the accuracy of which the speaker has been able to ascertain. A hearsay evidential expresses that the content of the utterance represents intelligence obtained from a third party, which the speaker has come to know from hearsay, or an assertion made by the subject of the sentence itself.

Bumthang distinguishes between an interrogative hearsay evidential <shu> and an non-interrogative or indicative form <re>, *khit nyit-ge shu* 'does he say (do they say/is it said) that he is going to stay?', *khit nyit-ge re* 'he says (they say/it is said) that he is going to stay'. It is remarkable that the non-interrogative Bumthang hearsay evidential is formally similar to its Nepali counterpart *re*, e.g. *U hāmīsaṅga khān-daina re* 'he says (they say/it is said) that he won't be eating with us'.

Chapter Five Kinship Terms

The Bumthang system of kinship terminology is described here on the basis of the Chutö dialect.

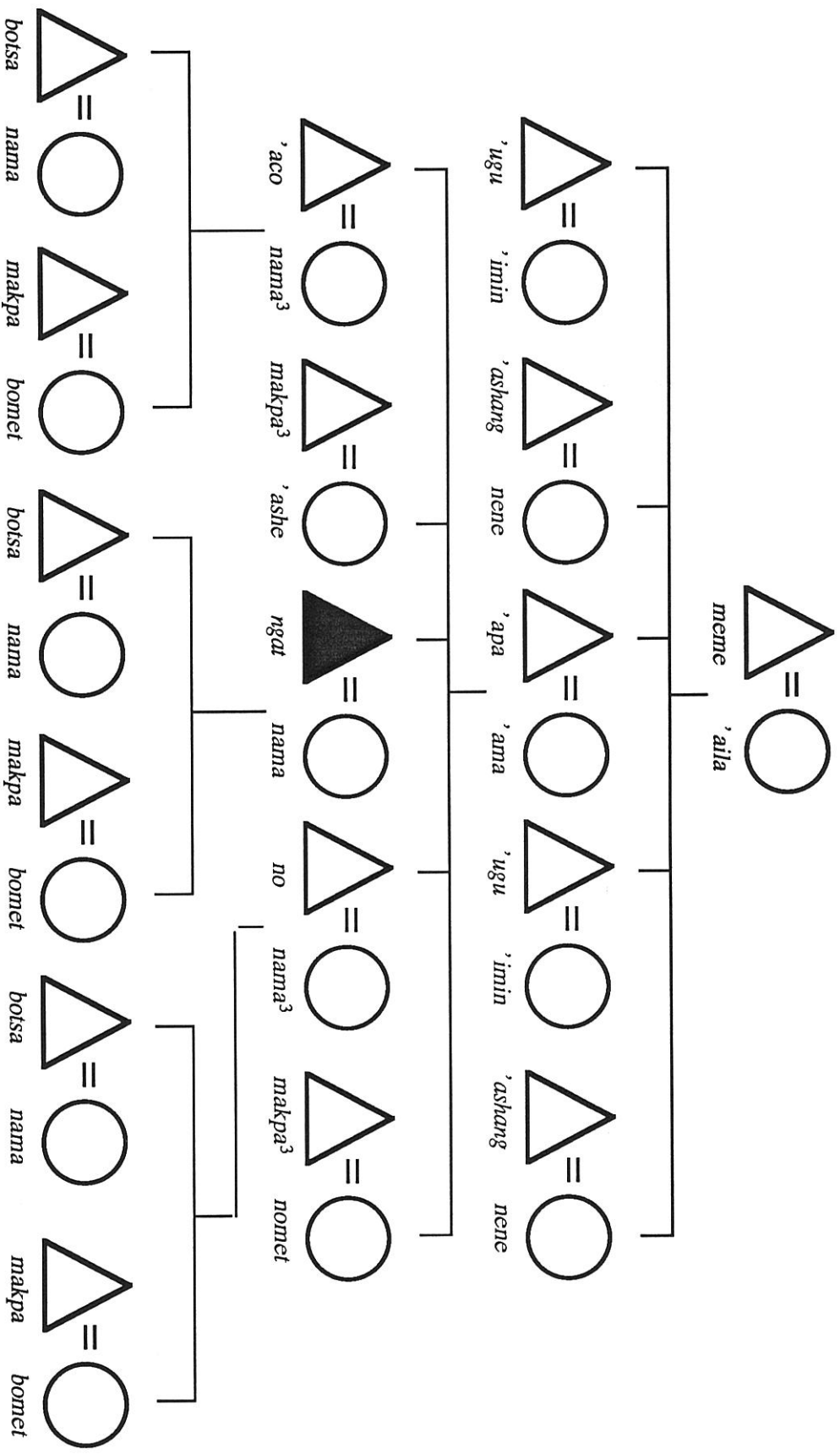
The word for 'father' is '*apa*', and 'mother' is '*ama*'. 'Grandfather' is *meme* (Chunmat: *mimi*), and 'grandmother' is '*aila*' (Chunmat: *aya*). 'Grandson' is *dibu*, and 'granddaughter' is *dimet*. For uncles and aunts, a terminologically distinguishing criterion is whether the sex of the referent is the same as or different from the sex of the connecting relative, in this case the parent. Father's brothers and their wives are respectively designated by the terms '*ugu*' (Chunmat: '*ugo*') and '*imin*'. Similarly, mother's sisters and their husbands are respectively designated by the terms '*imin*' and '*ugu*'. Different terms are used to designate uncles and aunts whose sex is not the same as that of the connecting relative, i.e. the parent. Father's sisters and their husbands are respectively designated by the terms *nene* (Chunmat: *nini*) and '*ashang*', and mother's brothers and their wives are respectively designated by the terms '*ashang*' and *nene*.

The kin relationship to the offspring of '*ugu*' and '*imin*', the parallel cousins, is felt to be closer than the relationship with the offspring of *nene* and '*ashang*', the cross cousins. Parallel cousins are terminologically equivalent to one's own siblings and are designated, depending on their relative age as compared with that of the speaker, by the sibling terms '*aco*' 'elder brother', *no* 'younger brother', '*ashe*' 'elder sister' and *nomet* 'younger sister'. Cross cousins are, by contrast, called *pun* 'son of father's sisters or of mother's brother' and *puringmo* 'daughter of father's sister and mother's brother'. It is forbidden to marry a parallel cousin, just as it is forbidden to marry one's own sibling. However, a cross cousin represents a preferable choice of spouse in Bumthang, as it does throughout central Bhutan (Kurtöp, Khengpa, Gongdukpa). Cross cousin marriage is not practised in western Bhutan by the 'Ngalong population. In the list of Bumthang kinship terms collected by Imaeda and Pommaret (1990), cross cousins and parallel cousins are not terminologically differentiated. The terms they recorded also exhibit formal differences with the terms presented here.

In accordance with the division into parallel and cross cousins, brother's offspring are for a male speaker terminologically equivalent to his own offspring, and the same applies to sister's offspring in the

case of a female speaker. The terms for one's own offspring are *botsa* 'son' (Chunmat: *boza*), and *bomet* 'daughter', and '*onga* 'child'. A male speaker refers to his sister's children and their spouses by the terms *tsau* (male) and *tsamet* (female), and a female speaker uses these terms to refer to her brother's offspring and their spouses. The Bumthang terms *tsau* and *tsamet* are evidently related to the Dzongkha terms *tshao* (written: tshabo) and *tsham* (written: tshamo), but the Bumthang term *tsamet* contains the same indigenous suffix <-met> as in Bumthang *dimet* 'graddaughter', *nomet* 'younger sister' and *bomet* 'daughter'. The kinship diagrams illustrate the kinship system for a male Bumthang speaker. The kinship system for a female Bumthang speaker can be easily derived on the basis of the description provided here.

A man calls his wife *namo* (Chogor: *nesa*), and a woman calls her husband *makpa*. Daughters-in-law and the wives of parallel nephews are called *nama*, and sons-in-law and the husbands of parallel nieces are also referred to as *makpa*. A speaker may also refer to his or her sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law respectively as *nama* and *makpa* when these people live under a single roof with the speaker. If this is not the case, it is more usual to use descriptive circumlocutions like '*ajole namo* 'elder brother's wife'.



Kinship Diagram I
 brother's offspring and paternal relatives
 (male speaker)

3 However, see explanation in text.

Glossary

The alphabetical order of this glossary in Bumthang Roman baically follows the alphabetical order of Roman Dzongkha.

a	g	'm	p	ts
'a	h	n	ph	tsh
ä	hr	'n	r	u
'ä	hy	ng	'r	'u
b	i	'ng	s	w
c	'i	ny	sh	'w
ch	j	'ny	shr	y
d	k	o	t	'y
dz	kh	'o	th	z
e	l	ö	thr	zh
'e	m	'ö	tr	zhr

Entries followed by an asterisk between parentheses (*) have only been recorded in their Tang dialect forms. Entries immediately followed by a dash (—) have been recorded for all four major Bumthang dialects, whereby a deviant form in any of these dialects is given separate mention. Polysyllabic verb stems are hyphenated before the root, which corresponds to the lat syllable of the verb stem, in order to indicate the position at which prefixes are attached to the verb. Verbs are listed in their future infinitiva form in <-mala>.

ar — n., phlegm, slime.

auya — n., jackal, *Canis aureus*; Dz. âd'ôm (ḥa-dom, wa-dom).

'aco — n., elder brother.

'adoro — adv., how.

'ai — pro., who.

'aila — n., grandmother [Chunmat: aya]

'aji — pro., who (erg.); whose (gen.).

'ama — n., mother.

'angdar — n., [*Eng. underwear*] underwear; cf. *dorma*.

'angi — adv., whence, where from.

'ao — adv., where.

'apa — n., father.

- 'arba — adv., when.
 'ashang — n., 1) mother's brother; 2) father's sister' husband.
 'ashe — n., elder sister.
 'adzing — n., belt with which a woman fastens her *kirat*.
 baspa — n., nest hair, peavh fuzz; cf. *po*.
 be — v., imperative of *bi-mala*.
 beng (*) n., smegma; cf. Dz. bj'eng.
 bi-mala — v., give.
 binma — n., calf [dialectally: *gapsa*].
 blakbloga — adj., messy, spilt (said of fluids or of handwriting).
 blaktang — n., spilt fluid, goo, sticky mass, viscous slime.
 ble, blä — num., four.
 bleng — num., one (used of filled vessels or receptacles); Dz. g'ang;
 cf. *gwa*.
 bodok — n., long ceremonial scarf, usually white; cf. Dz. kapni (bkab-
 nas).
 boi, boile — pro., they (erg.).
 bomet — n., 1) daughter; 2) girl.
 bong — n., length, size.
 bot — pro., they, them.
 botsa — n., 1) son; 2) boy; [Chunmat: *boza*].
 brak — n., cliuff; cf. Dz. bj'â (byag); Tib. brag.
 bran-mala — v., recognize, know.
 brangdo — n., chest.
 branma — n., Tatory buckwheat, *Fagopyrum tataricum*; Dz. bj'ô (writ-
 ten: byoḥo), Nep. *tīte phāpar*.
 brat-mala — v., scratch, claw.
 bre — n., female yak; cf. Tib. ḥbri-mo.
 bri num-mala — v., smell, sniff at something.
 bugang — n., fontanelle.
 cala — n., wares, stuff.
 cingdum — n., trousers, or long breeches extending to just over the
 knees; cf. *dorma*.
 cingku (*) adj., small.
 cok — n., shit, faeces.
 cok-mala — v., defaecate, shit.
 comen — n., dimple [Tang: comet].
 comet sungsung (*) adv., in such a way that one's dimples become
 visible; e.g. *comet sungsung gat-da* 'he smiled so that you could see
 his dimples'.

- cong — n., 1) anus, arse; 2) loins; *cong-na ju-kya* 'let's commit sodomy'.
- congmek — n., anus [dialectal: coksimek]
- cucu — n., penis; esp. the penis of a man after having attained puberty but before fathering a child; cf. *miling, kaga, tempali*.
- cucui phailang (*) n., glans penis, literally: penis forehead; cf. *gang*.
- cucui shrop (*) n., [< shrop-mala, q.v.] foreskin, literally: penis sheath.
- chan — n., difference.
- charjat, cherjat — num., eighteen.
- charo — n., friend; cf. Dz. châro (cha-rogs); cf. *tosang*.
- chänga, chä'nga — num., fifteen.
- che — num., ten.
- cheble, cheblä — num., fourteen.
- cher'nyit, cher'nyis — num., seventeen.
- chetpu (*) adj., big.
- chewa — n., fangs of a snake; cf. *dongkwa, kwa*.
- chi — n., lip.
- chimbo — n., liver.
- chit — pro., see *khit*.
- cho — adv., here.
- chong-mala — v., produce, take out, show; cf. *tun-mala*.
- chödodogo, chedogo — num., nineteen.
- chöegrok, chegrok — num., sixteen.
- chubak — n., Bhutanese male garb (Dz. g'ô, written: bgo < Oudtib. gos) [Chogor: chuba].
- churma — n., native beer; cf. Dz. chang.
- chusum — num., thirteen.
- chwa'nyit, chowa'nyis — num., twelve.
- chwaret, choware — num., eleven.
- dakhu — n., sperm.
- dangma — adv., yesterday ['Ura: dema].
- dema — adv., see *dangma*.
- denca (*) n., a slap (with the hand).
- dibu — n., grandson.
- dimet — n., granddaughter.
- dogo — num., nine.
- dongkwa — n., [< kwa 'tooth'] fangs of a mammal; cf. *chewa*.
- dorma — n., short pants, underpants [cf. Tib. dor-ma 'trousers']; cf. 'angdar, cingdum.
- dot-mala — v., sleep.

- döba (*) n., male gayal; Dz. yang-gu.
 döbam (*) n., female gayal; Dz. yang-gum.
 dri-mala — v., write.
 dumang — n., goitre.
 dungshing rotpa — n., vertebrae [Chunmat: dungshing rosa].
 dungshing — n., spinal column.
 dusum (*) adv., today.
 gai-mala — v., go.
 gajolewang — n., armpit.
 gajolewangpo — n., armpit hair.
 gami — n., fire.
 gamlang — n., chin [Chunmat en Tang: gam].
 gampo — col.postp., altogether, all (often left untranslated); cf. Dz. <-chachap>.
 gamtha — n., beard [Chunmat: gamtshang, Tang: gamchang].
 gang — n., glans penis.
 ganji-khenjang — n., [< Hindi *ganjī* 'singlet, t-shirt' + Bum. *khenjang* 'hemd'] singlet, t-shirt.
 gapsa — see *binma*.
 gapsawang — n., fossa poplitea.
 gatpo (*) n., old man.
 gä-mala — v., see *gai-mala*.
 glap-mala (*) v. [Tang], hit, strike, beat; cf. *pok-mala*.
 gon — pro., the other one, that; cf. Dz. zhenmi.
 got-mala — v., must, need, require.
 grang-mala — v., count.
 gran-mala — v., compete.
 grangka — n., counting.
 grekpo — n., yeti, de abominable snowman; Dz. 'migö (mi-rgod); cf. *mirgula*.
 grok — num., six.
 grumangti — n., elbow [Tang: grumang].
 gungmu (*) n., middle finger; cf. *pramang bonpo*.
 guyung — n., head.
 gwa — num., two (used of filled vessels or receptacles); cf. *bleng*.
 gwi — n., hip.
 hrak-mala — v., see *khvak-mala*.
 hrang-mala — v., see *khvang-mala*.
 hrai — v., imperative of *ra-mala*.
 hrak-hrok — adv., confused, mixed up.
 hram-mala — v., destroy, demolish.

- hyawang — n., lamasery; cf. Dz. lha-khang.
in — pro., see *yin*.
'imin — n., 1) mother's sister; 2) father's brother's wife
jai — postp., on top of, atop, above.
jappar — n., cup of tea.
jat — num., eight.
jawa — n., moustche.
jep-mala — v., enjoy.
jigpala (*) adj., enormous, huge.
joma — n., intestines, abdomen.
ju — n., 1) breast, tit, teat; 2) milk.
ju-mala — v., [an etymological relationship with *ju* 'breast' cannot be excluded, although this seems improbable] fuck.
ka — n., snow.
kaga — n., penis of a boy before reaching puberty; cf. *cucu*.
kai — n., back.
kak — n., blood.
kakcan — adj., good.
kan — n., palate.
kangbut — n., bladder.
kangdung — n., thigh.
karyu (*) n., [< Tib. dkar-yol] porcelain cup.
kat (*) n., language.
ketpa — n., waist.
ki (*) n., potato, tuber.
kili — n., the little finger, pinkie [Chunmat: kilik].
kirat — n., Bhutanese female garb (Dz. kira, written: dkyis-ras) [Chogor: chuba]; cf. *kisang*.
kisang — n., doek of kleed om iets of iemand in te wikkelen, cf. *kirat*.
klatpa — n., brain.
konye — adj., next, following.
kra — n., hair on scalp [Tang: 'ra].
kran-mala — v., miss someone, yearn, long for.
krong — n., village.
kut-mala — v., put, place.
kwa — n., tooth; cf. *chewa*, *dongkwa*, *phupkwa*, *surkwa*.
kwi — n., round woven bamboo mat to underset pots and pans.
kha — n., mouth, language; cf. *kat*.
kha-go-mala — v., understand, grasp; cf. Dz. hag'oni.
khae — num., one score (twenty).
khaechenthek — num., eight thousand.

- khaesum — num., sixty.
 khaethek — num., twenty.
 khaezon — num., forty.
 khaido — n., kidneys.
 khakso — adv., up, straight up, upright.
 khan-mala — v., know.
 khangma — adj., long.
 kharkharma — adj., white.
 khawa — n., chicken, hen.
 khawate — n. [< khawa 'hen' + ?te 'egg'], egg, chicken egg
 khawate khrangma — n. [literally 'egg-pit'], yolk.
 khenjang — n., shirt; Dz. khenja (khyen-ja)
 kher-mala — v., cook, build, prepare.
 khi, khile — pro., he, she (erg.).
 khit — pro., he, him, she, her.
 khor-mala — v., take away.
 khrak-mala — v., arrive, have been somewhere [Chunmat: hrak-mala].
 khrang (*) n., pit.
 khrang-mala — v., climb [Chunmat: hrang-mala].
 khrangkhrang — n., crane (bird).
 khratpa (*) n., the gayal, wild Himalayan ox; Dz. ba-men.
 khro-mala — v., bathe.
 khrong-mala — v., germinate, sprout, sprout up, shoot up.
 khur — n., cheek.
 khurba — n., heavy Tatar buckwheat flatbread; Dz. bj'ô g'i khulep
 (written: byoḥo gyi khu-leb).
 khü — n., see *khwi*.
 khwe — n., water.
 khwethor — n., rapids, surf, turbulent water.
 khwi, khü — n., dog.
 khwit (*) adj., too big, oversize.
 lajan — n., white cuffs to be worn with the *chubak*; Dz. lâge (lag-
 rgyan).
 langma — n., buttocks.
 lap-mala — v., say, tell [note: low tone in contrast to Dz. 'lapni].
 litpa — n., clitoris.
 lok — adv., back.
 lok-mala — v., return, come back.
 lusa — n., body [Chunmat: lusa, dialectal: lutpa].
 'li — n., tongue.
 'lijungmet — n., uvula.

- 'lithakpa — n., frenulum linguae.
 'long — n., wind, breeze.
 mai — n., house.
 makpa — n., 1) husband; 2) son-in-law, grandson-in-law
 matki — n., male sarong (Nep. luṅṅī).
 mek — n., eye.
 mekbo (*) n., pupil of the eye [Chunmat, Chogor: cha].
 mekkharti — 1) n., white of the eye; 2) adv., with the white of one's
 eyes, e.g. *mekkharti tat-da* 'he looked at him with the whites of his
 eyes'.
 mekpakpa — n., eyelid (literally 'eye-skin').
 mekpuli — n., tear.
 meme — n., grandfather [Chunmat: mimi].
 Meng (*) n., 'Ngalong, the Dzongkha speaking population of western
 Bhutan.
 meng — n., name.
 Mengkat (*) n., Dzongkha, the national language of Bhutan, native to
 western Bhutan.
 mento — n., flower.
 mewa — n., small mole or birthmark.
 mi — n., person, man (note: low tone in contrast to Dz. 'mi).
 miling — n., penis of a man who has fathered a child; cf. *cucu*.
 min — v., not to be (used to establish identity of referent).
 minbotsa — n., woman [Chunmat: membaza]
 mirgula — n., rhesus monkey; cf. *grekpo, raksha*.
 mlak-mala — v., soil something or part of one's body in something
 sticky, syrupy or slimy.
 mlakmloga — adj., sticky, syrupy, slimy.
 mor — n., vagina of an old woman, large vagina; cf. *pepe*.
 mos — n., pubic hair; Dz. hung.
 mrat — n., paddy, standing rice; Maleis: padi.
 mrat-mala — v., scratch.
 mrü-mala — v., scratch, etch, squeeze out, scratch out.
 mu-mala — v., do.
 mukduma (*) n., fist, cf. *pare*.
 mut — v., not to be (in the existential, locational and attributive
 senses).
 'mingma — n., eyebrow.
 'mran — n., sebum, blackhead.
 'mrat — n., flour to thicken soup with.
 'mui-mala — v., sell.

- na — loc.postp., in, at, on.
 na — v., be (in the existential, locative or attributive senses).
 na — n., ear.
 namo, nama — n., 1) wife [Chogor: nesa]; 2) daughter-in-law, grand-
 daughter-in-law.
 nang — postp., inside, within.
 nanmun — adv., the day after tomorrow.
 nat — n., illness, disease.
 natpa — n., ear waz [Chunmat: naskap]
 neng — conj., and, with.
 nene — n., 1) father's sister; 2) mother's brother's wife; [Chunmat:
 nini].
 nengma — n., heart.
 ning — conj., see *neng*.
 no — n., younger brother.
 nomet — n., younger sister.
 nu — n., breast, tit, teat.
 'naima — n., wool yarn.
 'namse — n., pimple.
 'nap — n., snot.
 'naphang — n., nose.
 'naphangmek — n., [literally 'nose-eye'] nostril.
 'ne — n., gums.
 ngartong — n., shin.
 ngat — pro., I, me.
 ngei — pro., we (erg.).
 ngadza — n., morning.
 ngai — pro., I (erg.).
 ngam-mala — v., taste good, be delicious.
 nget — pro., we, us.
 ngui — pro., see *ngai*.
 ngur — n., face.
 'ngon — n., grass, weeds.
 'ngüi-mala — v., buy.
 nya — n., muscle.
 nya — n., fish.
 nyamgong — n., thigh.
 nyishu — num., four hundred.
 nyit-mala — v., sit, stay, remain.
 'nyakpa — n., earlobe.
 'nyam-mala — v., feel like doing or having something.

- 'nyiphang — n., tail.
 'nyit, 'nyis — num., seven.
 'nyor-'nyor — n., sexual union.
 omtsho-khenjang — n., [< Dz. omtsho + Bum. khenjang 'shirt'] cardigan, pullover.
 otomang — n., front of the neck.
 'o-mala — v., bring.
 'onga — n., child.
 pak, pakpa — n., skin; *pak shrop-na*, *gang plik-na* 'the [fore]skin has been retracted, [your] glans penis has been exposed'; cf. *cucui shrop*.
 pare (*) n., a held up hand, the hollow of the hand; cf. *mukduma*.
 pare-gang (*) num., a handful.
 pat — n., leech; cf. Dz. pêp (padpa).
 patmong — n., knee.
 pepe — n., vagina; cf. *mor*.
 pethe — adj., baald.
 plak-mala — v., scream, make noise.
 plakta — n., screamin, hollering, noise, racket.
 plik-mala — v., be peeled, be uncovered, be lid bare.
 po — n., body hair.
 po — n., snake, serpent.
 pok-mala — n., strike, hit, beat.
 pongma — n., shoulder.
 pra, priu — n., rhesus monkey; cf. *raksha*.
 pramang — n., 1) fingers, toes; 2) index finger.
 pramang bonpo — n., middle finger [Tang: gungmu].
 prat-mala — v., fight.
 priu — see *pra*.
 pron-mala — v., crash a party, dinner or prayer service in the hope of being able to partake thereof.
 pun — n., male cross-cousin, i.e. son of father's sister or of mother's brother.
 puringmo — n., female cross-cousin, i.e. daughter of father's sister or of mother's brother..
 pha-mala — v., happen, be done.
 phai — n., forehead [Tang: phailang].
 phan-mala — v., cure an illness (loc.), recover from an illness (tel.).
 phecong — n., bag, sack.
 phoja — n., man.
 phor-mala — v., fondle, feel; cf. *tok-mala*.

- phrat-mala — v., come into conflict, be at loggerheads.
 phupkwa — n., [< kwa 'tand'] molars.
 ra — n., goat.
 ra-mala — v., come.
 raksha — n., golden langur; cf. *mirgula*; *grekpo*, *priu*.
 rang (before the genitive suffix: ra) — pro., self, own; adv. by itself,
 of it own accord.
 rantsam — n., hairline [dialectal: krantsam].
 rantsam thonmo — n. + adj., receding hairline.
 rato — n., root.
 re — adv., hearsay evidential in non-interrogative sentences.
 ri — n., hill, mountain.
 rotpa — n., bone [Chunmat: rosa].
 ruk — n., curry.
 ruk-mala — v., put away, clean up.
 'ra — n., hair on scalp.
 'rat — n., bamboo fibre for weaving traditional Bhutanese bowls.
 'rewa — n., tool for removing ears of wheat from the stalks.
 'ri — n., start, beginning.
 'rok — n., river.
 'ronman — n., thread [Chunmat: 'rotman].
 'rotpa — n., appendix.
 sar, saro (*) adv., down.
 se-mala — v., die, pass away.
 seng — n., woord, tree.
 sengma — n., urine.
 sima — n., nails (on digit).
 sinla — n., ring finger [Tang: sinlak].
 sirsirma — adj., yellow.
 sotro (*) adj., with crooked teeth.
 sum — num., three.
 sunla — 1) n., night; 2) adv., at night.
 surkwa — n., [< kwa 'tand'] canine teeth.
 sut-mala — v., kill, slaughter.
 sham-mala — v., set the table, display wares.
 shar — n., east.
 shekpa — n., scrotum [Chunmat: shekpat].
 shekpa khrangma — n., [letterlijk 'balzak-pit'] testicles [Chunmat:
 shekpat khrangma, Tang: shekpai khrang].
 shindi — adj., red.
 sho'long — n., strong wind.

- shu — adv., hearsay evidential in interrogative sentences.
 shra — n., meat.
 shrai — n., drool, drivel.
 shrai-mala — v., overflow.
 shraima — n., harrow without teeth.
 shram — n., shoes; cf. Dz. lham.
 shrambrat — n., sash for fastening traditional shoes at the top.
 shrap — n., veranda.
 shrä, shrai — n., drool, drivel.
 shrokseng — n., junipers; Dz. shupashing, Lat. Juniperus.
 shrop-mala — v., be retracted [of foreskin]; clasp or hold something cylindrical in shape; shinny, climb by shinnying.
 shropse — adv., gerund of *shrop-mala*.
 shrordo — n., extra chore performed in addition to the main task assigned in order to show devotion to one's boss (cf. Dz. zhor-kha).
 shrung-mala — v., shake everything into place (e.g. articles in a bag); heave whilst sobbing.
 shrup — n., sheath.
 takpa thatsa — n., nape of the neck, lower part of the neck near the shoulders.
 takpa — n., back of the neck.
 tarpa — n., whey; Dz. d'âu (darwa).
 tarshing — n., prayer flag.
 tawa lem — n., upper surface of the foot.
 tawa phop — n., instep of the foot.
 tawanang — n., sole.
 tegolong — n., ankle.
 tempali — n., 1) penis of an old man; cf. *cucu*; 2) wooden penis used as a talisman suspended from the eaves of the house to ward off evil spirits.
 tep — n., rib.
 tingma — n., heel.
 tiru — n., money, Ngütram (the Bhutanese currency unit); Dz. tiru.
 tiwit — n., navel.
 to — n., nipple
 tok-mala — v., fondle, fiddle with something; cf. *phor-mala*.
 toktemet — n., cheekbones.
 tor-mala — v., sow.
 tosang — n., friend; cf. *charo*; Dz. totsha (lto-tshañ).
 tottong — n., white collar worn in conjunction with a *chubak* (Dz. tögo) [Chogor: totdung].

- tun-mala — v., show, display; cf. *chong-mala*.
 tup-mala — v., cut, slice.
 turtsum (*) n., suctional movement made by the vagina around the penis; cf. Dz. stu-bzum 'ibidem', kha-bzum 'sucking movement of the mouth'.
 thap — n., oven.
 thap-mala — v., argue, dispute, harangue.
 thatsa, cucui thatsa (*) n., corpus spongiosum penis; cf. Dz. thâtsa, written: thag-rtsa.
 thatsa-gatpo (*) n., nerd, literally: 'corpus spongiosum penis old man'; cf. Dz. thâtsa-gêp, written: thag-rtsa rgespa.
 thek — num., one; art., a/an, a certain.
 thep — n., spit, saliva.
 therma (*) adv., the day before yesterday.
 thimang — n., thumb, big toe.
 Thimphuk — n., Thimphu, capital city of Bhutan.
 thomala — n., arm above the elbow [Chunmat, Tang: tho].
 thong-mala — v., drink.
 thor-mala — v., pluck, pick; cf. Dz. câni (bcag-ni).
 thot-mala — v., join, connect, bind.
 thu-mala — n., chop.
 thung-mala — v., see.
 thung-mala — v., 1) commit, execute, perform; 2) dative or relinquitive aspectivizer.
 thripa — n., gall bladder.
 thro — v., aspectivizer meaning 'persist, persevere, continue, be inexorably involved in'.
 throi-mala (*) v., weed, uproot, extirpate; cf. Dz. bâni (hbal-ni).
 throm-mala — v., break, shatter.
 thrung (*) n., rice.
 tsa — n., vein, artery.
 tsamadü — adv., intensely, a lot, much.
 tsamet — n., brother's daughter or the wife of brother's son (for a female speaker); sister's daughter or the wife of sister's son (for a male speaker); cf. Dz. tsham (tshamo).
 tsau — n., brother's son or husband of brother's daughter (for a female speaker); sister's son or husband of sister's daughter (for a male speaker); cf. Dz. tshao (tshabo).
 tsirphat — n., wart.
 tshai — plurl suffix.
 tshakti — n., crown.

- tshuk-mala — v., can, be able to.
 tshü-mala — v., seek, look for, search.
 'ugu — n., 1) father's brother; 2) mother's sister's husband; [Chunmat: 'ugo].
 wagam — n., jaw.
 waktem (*) n., [< Dz. waktêm, written: wag-bteñma] hip movements of a woman during intercourse.
 ware — adv., emotive particle gently demanding the attention of the person addressed and undercoring the speaker's authority; cf. Dz. 'mare (sma-re).
 wen — v., to be (establishing the identity of referent).
 wet — pro., you (sg.).
 wi — pro., you (sg.erg.).
 'wai — v., imperative of 'o-mala.
 ya — interj., grab it!, take it!, here you are!
 yah — interj., watch out!
 yak — n., lower arm from the elbow on down, lower arm and hand.
 yak — n., yak, i.e. male yak; cf. *bre*.
 yakbit (*) n., back of the hand.
 yaknangma — n., palm of the hand, the inner surface of the extended palm and fingers.
 yaktshik — n., wrist.
 yam — n., road, way.
 yampat — adv., tomorrow.
 yampat-nanmun — adv., one of these days, soon.
 yan-mala — v., obey.
 yanga — num., five.
 yang-mala — v., stand, stand up; e.g. *cucu yang-da* 'I have an erection' (literally: 'penis is standing').
 yangchenthek — num., one hundred sixty thousand.
 yat — n., chore, work, task.
 yigu — n., letter; cf. Dz. yig'u.
 yin — pro., you (pl.).
 yinle — pro., you (pl.erg.).
 yo — clause-final interj., hey, y'hear.
 yö — n., rain [Tang: yoi].
 yung-mala — v., get, fetch.
 'ya (*) n., deposit at the bottom of copper pans.
 zama, zam — n., cooked rice.
 zat-mala — v., finish, complete [governs the gerund in <-se>].
 zhimnyae (*) n., cat.

- zon — num., two.
zödem (*) n., tasty, pungent, soft yak cheese with veins of blue and black fungus; Dz. z'öthü, z'ödü (zos-thud).
zu-mala — v., eat.
zhego — n., food.
zhit-mala — v., forget.
zhra — pro., what.
zhrabudze — adv., how much, how many.
zhrap — n., layer of butterfat on top of salted Bhutanese tea.
zhrong — n., worm.
zhror — n., dialect word for *churma* 'native beer'.
zhrurti — n., bamboo species; Dz. changsho (chang-bsho).
zhruwa — n., lungs.

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