



What is Pínghuà? — *Some typological features of Nánníng Pínghuà*

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Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region *in Southern China*



Sinitic languages:

- Yue
- SW Mandarin
- Hakka
- Pinghua
- Xiang
- S Min

Non-Sinitic languages:

- N Zhuang
- S Zhuang etc.

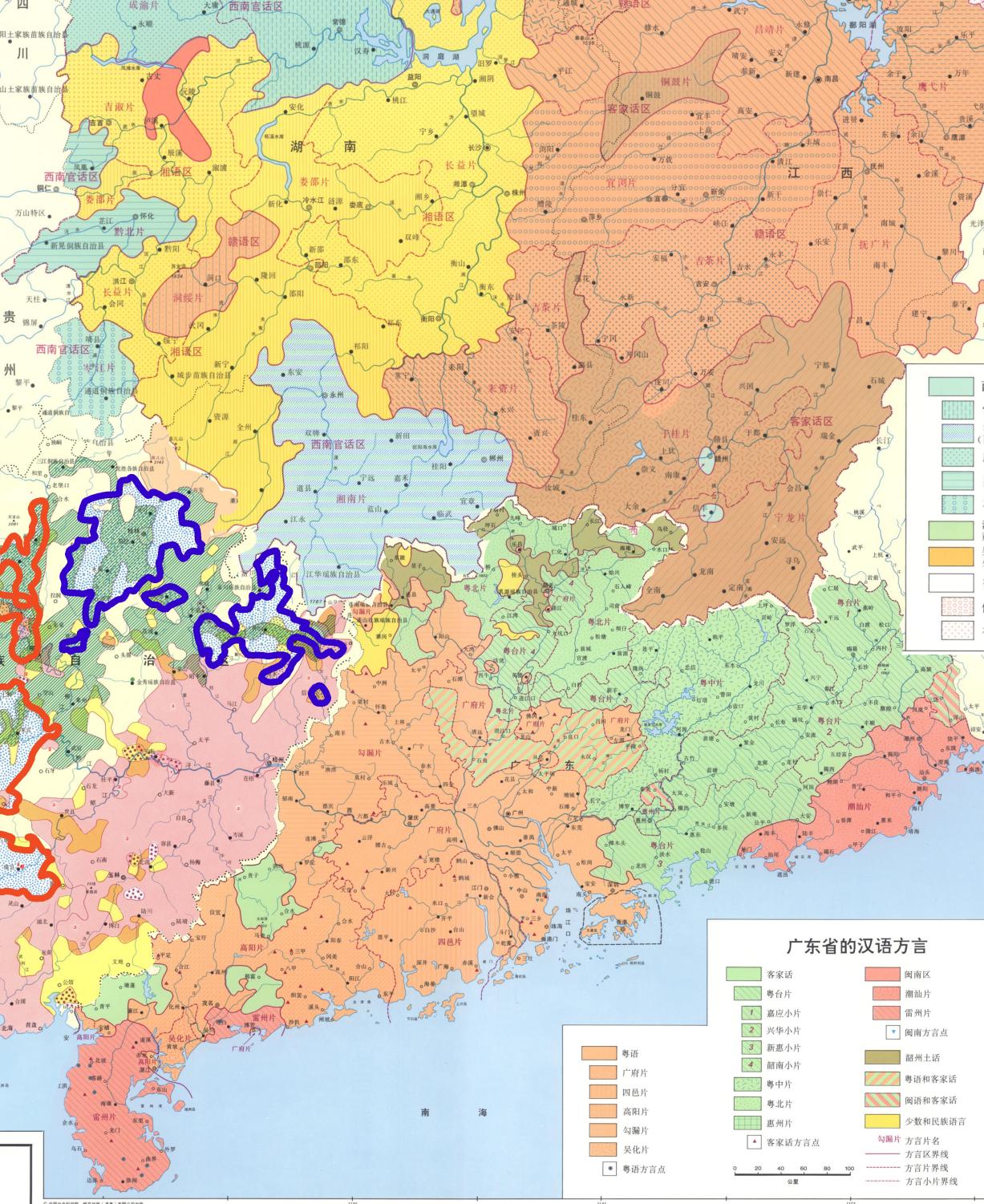
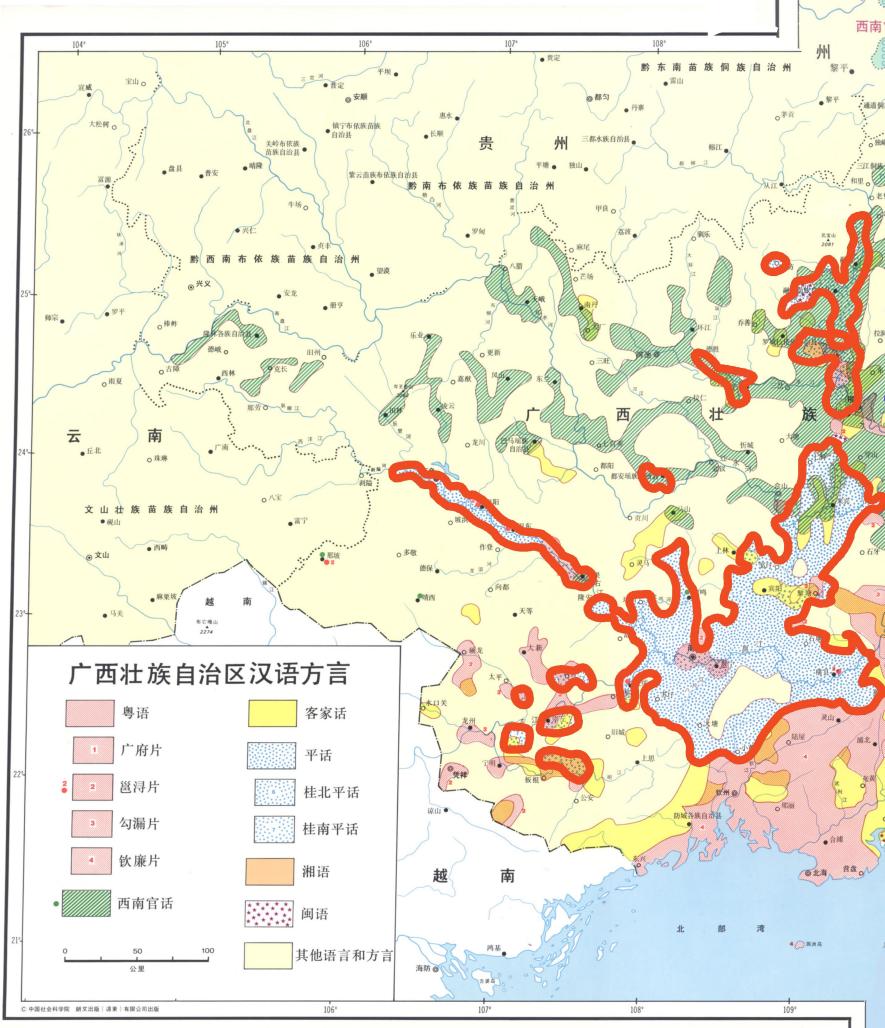
Sinitic Languages (“Chinese Dialects”)



(Lang atlas of China 1986)

Pinghua
平話

Yue (e.g. Cantonese)
粵語



Sinitic Languages ("Chinese Dialects")



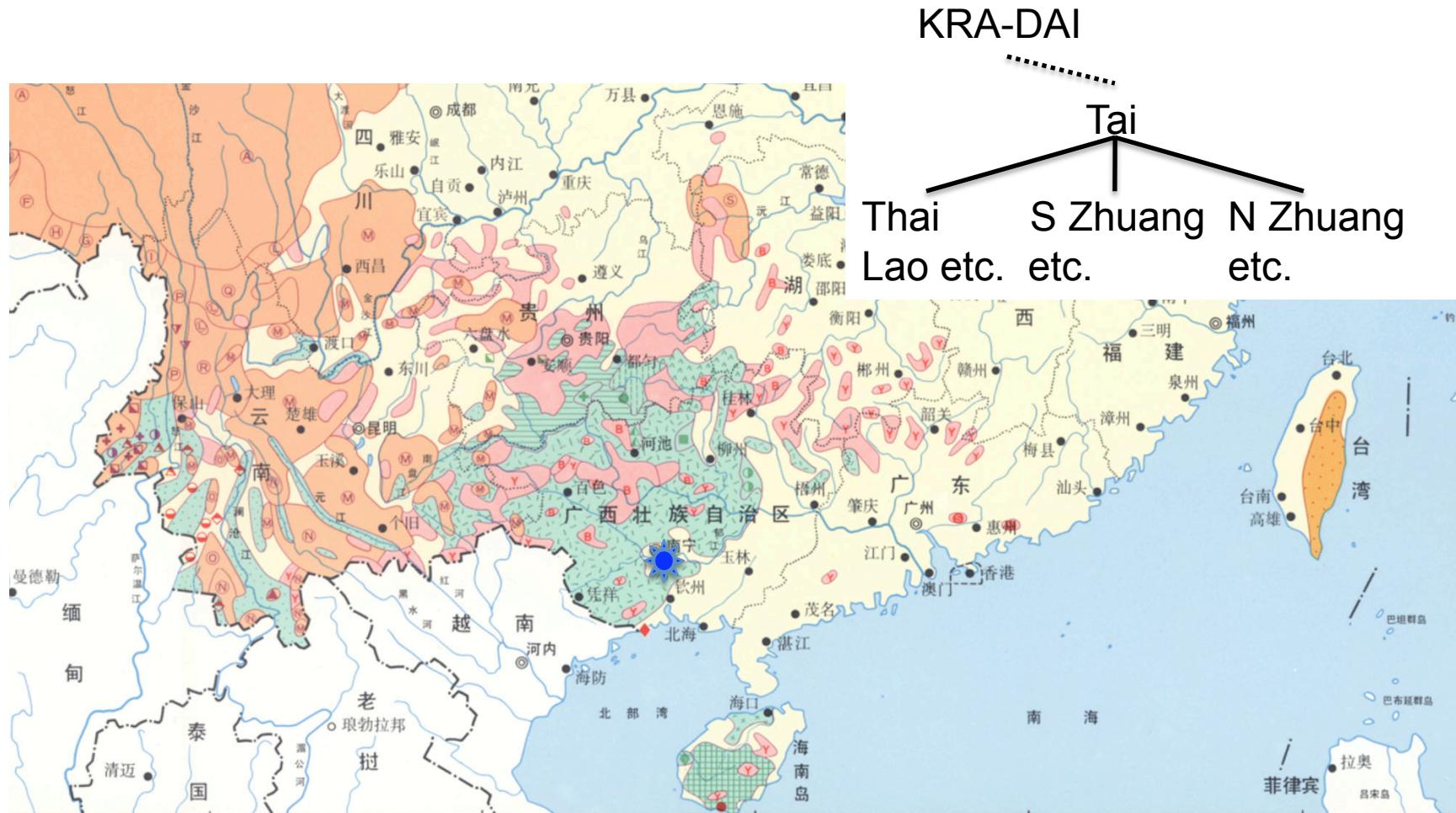
Nanning
南寧

Pinghua
平話

Yue (e.g. Cantonese)
粵語

(Lang atlas of China 1986)

Non-Sinitic languages

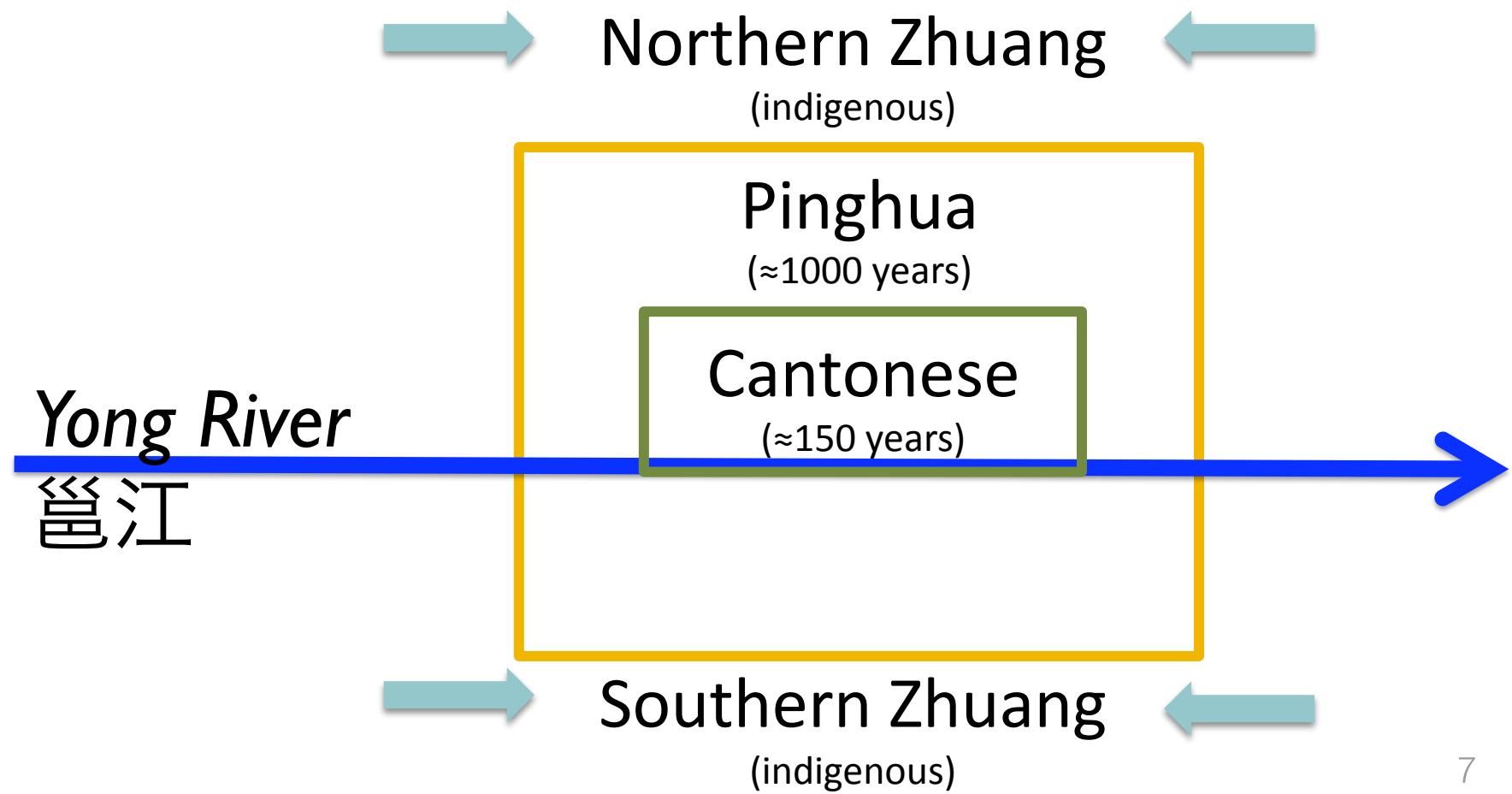


Nanning
南寧

Kra-Dai languages
(e.g. N/S Zhuang)

**(Kra-Dai: the family
formerly known as Tai-Kadai)*

In 南寧 Nanning, schematically:



Nanning 南寧 — capital of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

南寧白話 Nanning Cantonese:

- Spoken primarily in the city centre of Nanning;
- First brought in by immigrants from the Pearl River Delta around the Opium Wars (mid 19th century). More Cantonese people came to Nanning from the Pearl River Delta during subsequent wars.

南寧平話 Nanning Pinghua

- Spoken primarily in suburbs and nearby rural areas;
- Associated with military personal from Shandong (including parts of modern day Henan) during the 1053 war by 宋 *Sòng* against the 儂志高 *Nungz Ciqgau* (*Nóng Zhīgāo*) regime.

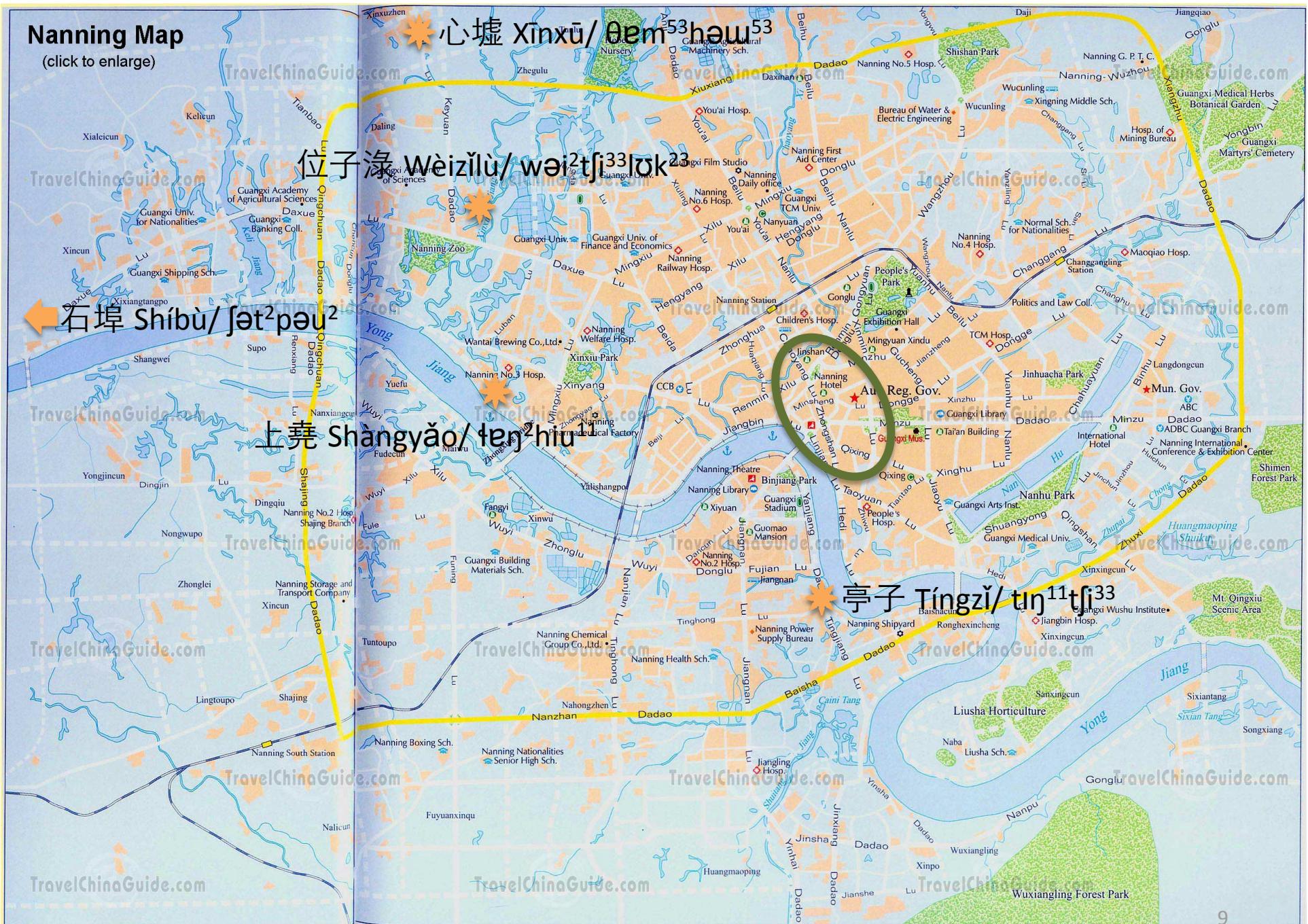
Other languages in the area:

- Indigenous Northern Zhuang and Southern Zhuang (Tai languages) in rural area and towns further away;

邕州官話 Old Nanning Mandarin (SW Mandarin, speakers >70 yo, Ming dynst officials

Nanning Map

(click to enlarge)



Phonology

Syllable structure: $(C)V(C)^\top$

Onsets:

	Labial	Coronal	Dorsal	Glottal
Plosive	p	t	k	k^w
	p^h	t^h	k^h	k^{wh}
Affricate		$tʃ$	$tʃ^w$	
		$tʃ^h$	$tʃ^{wh}$	
Fricative	f			h
Lat. Frictv.		t		
Lat. Approx.		l		
Nasal	m	n	n	η
Approximant			j	w

Phonology

Vowel phonemes:

i

u m

e

ɛ

ɔ

a

ɑ

Codas:

-p -t -k -m -n -ŋ -j -w

Phonology

Rimes:

	/a-/	/æ-/	/i-/	/u-/	/ɛ-/	/ɔ-/	/ə-/	/ɯ-/
/-ɒ/	a		i	u	ɛ	ɔ	ə	ɯ
/-ɒ/	ap	dæ	ip		ɛp			
/-m/	am	mæ	im		ɛm			
/-t/	at	et	it	ut	ɛt	tɔ	ət	
/-n/	an	ən	in	ən	ɛn	ən	ən	
/-k/	ak	æk	ɪk	ɔk	ɛk			
/-ŋ/	aŋ	ʌŋ	ɪŋ	ɔŋ	ɛŋ			
/-j/	ai	ia	iu	iŋ		iç	əi	
/-w/	au	əu	uɪ		əu		əu	

Phonology

Tones:

In sonorant-ending syllables			In obstruent-ending syllables		
陰平	Upper Level	53	變入	Irregular Entering	5
陰上	Upper Rising	33	陰入	Upper Entering	3
全陰去	Upper Departing A	55			
次陰去	Upper Departing B	25			

陽平	Lower Level	11	次陽入	Lower Entering B	23
陽上	Lower Rising	13	全陽入	Lower Entering A	2
陽去	Lower Departing	22			

'Give'-constructions

Benefactive/ Malefactive Constructions

Passive and Causative Constructions

Negators

'Future'

Nanning Pinghua ‘give’

həi²⁵ (usually written as 系)

(in other accents of Nanning Pinghua:
e.g. həw²⁵, həi⁵⁵)

Zhuang loan, or at least Zhuang-influenced:

Northern Zhuang *hawj* /hau⁵⁵/ ‘give’
(Proto-Tai *haw^C* ‘give’)

Nanning Pinghua Double Object Construction

VERB IO DO {VERB PERSON THING}

(*like Mandarin*)

你 系 佢 一 萬 文 錢
ni¹³ hei²⁵ kai¹³ vt³ man²² mən⁵³ tʃin¹¹
2SG give 3SG one 10⁴ yuan money

佢 都 有 變更 主意 個。
kai⁵³ tu⁵³ mi¹³ kai³³pin⁵⁵ tʃəi³³əi⁵⁵ ka⁵⁵
3SG even NEG change idea ASST

‘Even if you give him/her ten thousand yuan, s/he will not change his/her mind.’

Cantonese ‘give’-type ditransitive verbs: VERB DO IO {GIVE THING PERSON}

Nanning Cantonese (畀 *pi*³⁵ ~ 紿 *kei*⁵⁵ ‘give’)

吆 佢 紿 條 繩 我
*eu*⁵⁵ *kʰy*²⁴ *kei*⁵⁵ *tʰiu*²¹ *seŋ*²¹ *ŋɔ*²⁴
call 3SG give CL rope 1SG

佢 都 有 應。
*kʰy*²⁴ *tu*⁵⁵ *mu*²⁴ *jeŋ*³³
3SG even NEG reply

‘I told him/her to give me the rope, but s/he did not reply.’
(Lin & Qin 2008: 351)

Nanning Pinghua Dative Construction

(more commonly used than double OBJ construction for physical transfer)

VERB DO DAT IO {VERB THING ‘to’ PERSON}

我 系 了 份 原稿 系 出版社,
ŋa¹³ hei²⁵ la³³ fen²² win¹¹kau³³ hei²⁵ tʃət³pan³³lɛ¹³,
1SG give PFV CLF original:draft DAT publish:group
'I gave the draft to the publisher.'

男 個 遞 一 隻 氣球 系 女 個。
nam¹¹ kə⁵⁵ təi²² et³ tʃət³ həi²⁵kəu¹¹ hei²⁵ nəi¹³ kə⁵⁵.
male MOD hand_over one CLF air:ball DAT female MOD
'The man handed the balloon to the woman.'

(Dative construction more commonly used than double OBJ construction in general in the region, e.g.:)

Northern Zhuang

de naeuz yaek soengq song bonj saw hawj gou.
3SG say want gift two CL book DAT 1SG
‘S/he said that s/he wants to give two books to me.’ (Wei & Qin 2006: 225)

Nanning Pinghua Benefactive/ Malefactive Constructions

VERB ____ [BEN/MAL_{GIVE} ____]

Benefactive:

你 乖 我 就 親 一 嘴 系 你。
nəi¹³ kʷai⁵³ ɿa¹³ tʃəu²² tʃʰen⁵³ et³ tʃui³³ hei²⁵ nəi¹³
2SG obedient 1SG then kiss one CLF:lip BEN 2SG
'If you are obedient, I will kiss you.'

Nanning Pinghua Benefactive/ Malefactive Constructions

VERB ____ [BEN/MAL_{GIVE} ____]

Malefactive:

你 咪 惹 我 噗!
*nəi*¹³ *mei*⁵⁵ *jɛ*¹³ *ŋa*¹³ *wɔ*²⁵!
2SG NEG;IMP provoke 1sg WARNING

我 生氣 就 山 一 巴 掌 系 你。
*ŋa*¹³ *tɛŋ*⁵³ *həi*²⁵ *tʃəu*²² *kʰəm*³³ *et*³ *pa*⁵³ *tʃɛŋ*³³ *hei*²⁵ *nəi*¹³
1SG angry then slap one CLF palm MAL 2SG

‘Do not provoke me! If I get angry I will slap you in the face.’

VERB ____ [BEN/MAL_{GIVE} ____]

Jingxi Southern Zhuang

- (1) *kin¹ kau³ kwai⁵ ne:u²,*
 consume rice fast er
ji³t^he:m¹ ηo⁵ tui⁵ na:η¹ hɔ:i³ ni⁵
 awhile 1SG wash body BEN 2SG
‘Eat up. Later on I will bathe you.’ (Qin 2011: 91)
- (2) *te¹ na⁵ kən²,*
 3SG scold people
ni⁵ ta:p⁷ te:t⁷ ma:t⁷ ne:u² hɔ:i¹ te¹.
 2SG hit palm CL one MAL 3SG
‘If s/he scolds someone, you slap him/her.’ (Qin 2011: 92)

Nanning Pinghua, Nanning Cantonese, Zhuang:

VERB _____ [BEN/MAL_{GIVE} _____]

(Most Sinitic languages disprefer having many post-verbal constituents)

VERB _____ _____

Standard Mandarin:

[BEN/MAL_{GIVE} _____] VERB _____

VERB _____ _____

Standard Cantonese for, e.g., ‘kiss’, ‘slap’, ‘kick’:

VERB _____ _____

Nanning Pinghua ‘give’ Passive and Causative Constructions

PASS_{GIVE} AGENT VERB ()

CAUS_{GIVE} CAUSEE VERB ()

我 昨日 系 佢 踢 一 脚。
ŋa¹³ tʃi²²net²³ hei²⁵ kəi¹³ tʰət³ et³ kek³.

1SG yesterday 3SG kick one VCL_{leg}

a. Passive: ‘Yesterday I was kicked once by him/her.’

b. Causative: ‘Yesterday I let him/her kick (e.g. me) once.’

Nanning Pinghua ‘give’ Passive and Causative Constructions

PASS_{GIVE} AGENT VERB ()

CAUS_{GIVE} CAUSEE VERB ()

你 敲 門 耿 大 聲
*nəi*¹³ *hau*⁵³ *mun*¹¹ *kəŋ*³³ *tai*²² *tən*⁵³
2SG knock door DEM big noise
'You knocked the door so loudly,'

是 有 是 系 佢 恨 呀?
*ti*²² *mi*¹³ *li*²² *hei*²⁵ *kəi*¹³ *hen*²² *a*⁵⁵?
be NEG be 3SG angry Q

- a. Passive: 'are you hated by him/her?'
- b. Causative: 'are you [trying to] make him/her angry?'

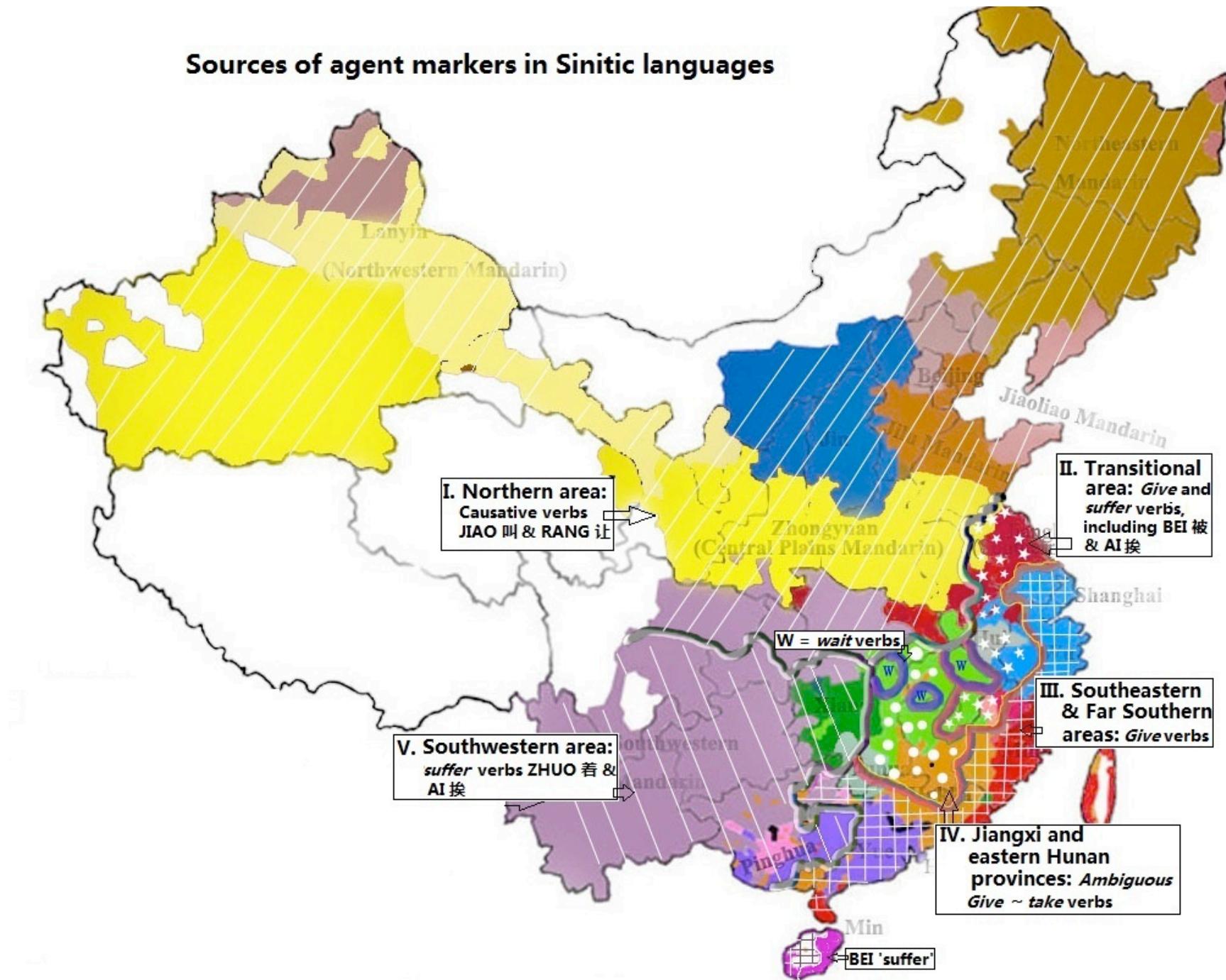
Nanning Pinghua ‘suffer’ Passive Constructions

PASS_{SUFFER} (AGENT) VERB (____)

(‘suffer’ passive more common than ‘give’ passive)

個 條 路 揪 (水) 沖爛 啦。
kə⁵⁵ tiu¹¹ lɔ²² ɿai¹¹ (lui³³) tʃʰɔŋ⁵³+lan²² la³³.
DEM CL road PASS water flush+torn PRF
‘The road has been washed away (by water)’

Sources of agent markers in Sinitic languages



(Chappell forthcoming; map by Wú Jiànmíng)

Negators

Mandarin:

non-perfective NEG ≠ perfective NEG = existence NEG

Mandarin

明天 我 不 去
míngtiān wǒ bù qù
tomorrow 1SG NEG go (non-perfective: 不 *bù*)

昨天 我 没有 去
zuótiān wǒ méiyǒu qù
yesterday 1SG NEG go (perfective: 没(有) *méi (yǒu)*)

他 没有 孩子
tā méiyǒu háizi
3SG NEG:exist child (existence: 没(有) *méi (yǒu)*)

Negators

Standard Cantonese:

non-perfective NEG ≠ perfective NEG = existence NEG

Standard Cantonese

聽日 我 唔 去 。
tʰɪŋ⁵⁵jet² *ŋɔ¹³* *m¹¹* *həy³³*
tomorrow 1SG NEG go (non-perfective: 唔 *m¹¹*)

琴日 我 有 去 。
kʰəm¹¹jet² *ŋɔ¹³* *mou¹³* *həy³³*
yesterday 1SG NEG go (perfective: 有 *mou¹³*)

佢 有 仔女 。
kʰəy¹³ *mou¹³* *tsəi²⁵nəy²⁵*
3SG NEG:exist child (existence: 有 *mou¹³*, not **m¹¹jaŋ¹³* or **mou¹³jaŋ¹³*)

Negators

Nanning Pinghua (and Nanning Cantonese):

non-perfective NEG = perfective NEG = existence NEG

Nanning Pinghua

明日 我 冇 去。
mən¹¹ŋət²³ *ŋa¹³* *mi¹³* *həi²⁵*
tomorrow 1SG NEG go (non-perfective: 冇 *mi¹³*)

自日 我 冇 去。
tʃi²²ŋət²³ *ŋa¹³* *mi¹³* *həi²⁵*
yesterday 1SG NEG go (perfective: 冇 *mi¹³*)

佢 冇 有 細蚊仔。
kəi¹³ *mi¹³* *jəu¹³* *tʂi⁵⁵mən⁵³tʂai³³*
3SG NEG exist child (existence: 冇 *mi¹³* + 有 *jəu¹¹* ‘exist’)

Negators

Zhuang:

non-perfective NEG = perfective NEG = existence NEG

Northern Zhuang

Gou mbouj bae, mwngz gag bae lo.
1SG NEG go 2SG only go HOR
'I'm not going; you go by yourself.' (CGYSD 2005: 803)

Gag mwngz mbouj daeuj.
only 2SG NEG come
'Only you did not come.' (Wei & Qin 2006: 190)

Gou miz haujlai saw, mwngz mbouj miz saek bonj.
1SG exist many book 2SG NEG exist few CL
'I have a lot of books; you don't have any at all.' (CGYSD 2005: 819)

Negators

Nanning Pinghua (and Nanning Cantonese):

non-perfective NEG = perfective NEG = existence NEG
not ≠ ‘not yet’

Nanning Pinghua

我 冇 去。
ŋa¹³ mi¹³ həi²⁵
1SG NEG go

‘I did not/ do not/ will not go.’

我 盟 去。
ŋa¹³ məŋ¹¹ həi²⁵
1SG NEG:yet go

‘I have not gone yet.’

‘Future’

Mandarin:

Posterior aspect 會 *huì* ('will')

Prospective aspect 要 *yào* ('about to')

Mandarin

明天 會 下 雨。
míngtiān huì xià yǔ.
tomorrow descend rain
'It will rain tomorrow.'

天 要 下 雨。
tiān yào xià yǔ.
sky descend rain
'It is about to rain.'

明天 不 會 下 雨。
míngtiān bú huì xià yǔ.
tomorrow NEG descend rain
'It will not rain tomorrow.'

* 天 不 要 下 雨。
* *tiān bú yào xià yǔ.*
sky NEG descend rain

‘Future’

Standard Cantonese: Posterior aspect 會 *wui¹³* ('will')

Standard Cantonese

聽日 會 落 雨。
tʰɪŋ⁵⁵jet² *wui¹³* *lɔk²* *jy¹³*.
tomorrow descend rain
'It will rain tomorrow.'

* 天 要 落 雨。
* *tʰin⁵⁵* *jiu³³* *lɔk²* *jy¹³*.
sky descend rain

聽日 唔 會 落 雨。
tʰɪŋ⁵⁵jet² *m¹¹* *wui¹³* *lɔk²* *jy¹³*.
tomorrow NEG descend rain
'It will not rain tomorrow.'

* 天 唔 要 落 雨。
* *tʰin⁵⁵* *jiu³³* *lɔk²* *jy¹³*.
sky NEG descend rain

‘Future’

Nanning Pinghua: Prospective aspect 要 *iu*⁵⁵ ('about to')

Nanning Pinghua

*明日 會 落 雨。
**mən*¹¹ *jnet*²³ *hɔi*²² *lak*²³ *həi*¹³.
tomorrow descend rain

天 要 落 雨。
*tʰin*⁵³ *iu*⁵⁵ *lak*²³ *həi*¹³.
sky descend rain
'It is about to rain.'

*明日 有 會 落 雨。
**mən*¹¹ *jnet*²³ *mi*¹³ *hɔi*²² *lak*²³ *həi*¹³.
tomorrow NEG descend rain

* 天 有 要 落 雨。
* *tʰin*⁵³ *mi*¹³ *iu*⁵⁵ *lak*²³ *həi*¹³.
sky NEG descend rain

Some other interesting grammatical traits

- Gender prefixes for animals in Nanning Pinghua (*Languages in Far Southern China usually use gender suffixes exclusively*);

Some other interesting grammatical traits

- Object marking construction [S OM O V]: rarely used. Nanning Pinghua uses either the Mandarin-sounding 把 *pa*³³ and the Cantonese-sounding 將 *tʃɛŋ*⁵³ as the object marker. (*Both meant ‘hold’ in Classical Chinese.*) ;

Some other interesting grammatical traits

Two commonly-used comparative constructions:

Cantonese-like ‘surpass’ schema

(with 過 *ku*⁵⁵ ‘surpass’)

e.g. [A tall-SURPASS B]

Mandarin-like ‘compare’ schema

(with 比 *pəi*³³ ‘compare’):

e.g. [A COMPARE B tall]

Conclusion

Pinghua:

A Yue-like Sinitic language that exists on a dialect continuum with (non-Cantonese) Yue dialects;

Northern Pinghua is significantly more Mandarinised than Southern Pinghua;

Southern Pinghua received more influence from Mandarin and Zhuang than Yue did.

More studies are needed on the Pinghua and neighbouring Western Yue dialects.

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Acknowledgement

The research leading to these results has received funding from the European Research Council under the European Community's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013): ERC Advanced Grant agreement No. 230388: 'The hybrid syntactic typology of Sinitic languages' (2009-2013).



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