



Nominal suprafixed and diminutive suffixes in Yuè and Pínghuà Chinese

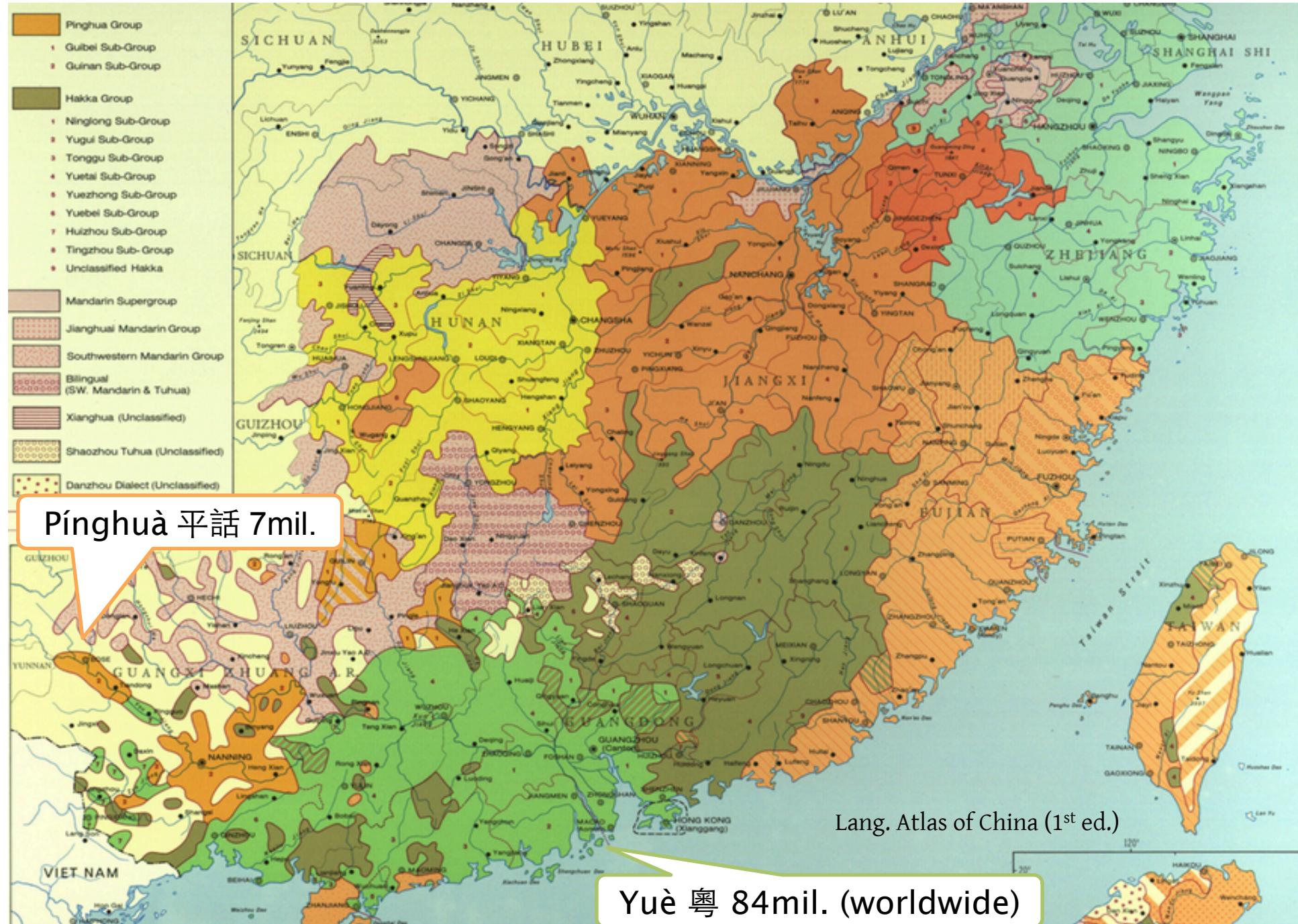
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Nominal suprafix

- Suprasegmental affix (tones in this case)
- The word becomes or remains a Noun

e.g. Standard Cantonese

刷 $ts^h at^3$ ‘brush (v.)’ (regular reflex of Mid. Chi. 刷 $srwæt^D$)

刷牙 $ts^h at^3 \eta a^{21}$ ‘brush teeth’

(Asian phonetic pitch numbering: 5 highest, 1 lowest)

刷 $ts^h at^3 > 35$ ‘brush (n.)’

牙刷 $\eta a^{21} ts^h at^3 > 35$ ‘toothbrush’

(different from 牙擦 $\eta a^{21} ts^h at^3$ ‘cocky’)

刷頭 $ts^h at^3 > 35 t^h e u^{21}$ ‘[tooth]brush head’

Nominal suprafix

- In this case: Derivational morphological process
(e.g. not-predictable, word class may change)
- a.k.a. “Changed tones”
變音 binyam / binjam / bin3jam1 biànyīn
- Not tone sandhi
(largely predictable / automatic,
mainly determined by the phonological environment)

Nominal suprafix

Diminutive suffix → nominal suprafix

(e.g. Mài Yún 麦耘 (1995), Chen Zhongmin (1999), Zhōu Liètíng 周烈婷 (2002), Kao Wan-yu 高婉瑜 (2007), Kwok Bit-chee 郭必之 (2016))

e.g.:

noun^{Tone X} -DIM^{Tone Y}

→ noun^{Tone X} -DIM^{Tone Y} → noun^{Tone XY}

(→ noun^{Tone Y (or Tone Z)})

diminutive meaning may be extended, and lost, along the way

modern **Standard Cantonese:**

Six tonemes: /55/ /35/ /33/ /21/ /13/ /22/

(Asian phonetic pitch numbering: 5 highest, 1 lowest)

	*A	*B	*C	*D, L	*D, S
*voiceless	55~53 ^x	35	33	3	5
*voiced	21	13	22	2	

^x: Traditionally, Upper A is 53, while 55 is a suprafix

e.g. 釘 $t\epsilon\eta^{53}$ ‘to nail’ versus 釘 $t\epsilon\eta^{55}$ ‘nail (n.)’

By now 53 is a free variation of 55 for most speakers

modern **Standard Cantonese**:

Suprafixes: /35/ (very common), /55/ (rarer), /21/ (restricted)

Independent word: 妹 *mui*^{22 > 35} ‘younger sister’

我個妹

*ŋɔ*¹³ *kɔ*³³ *mui*^{22 > 35}

(1SG CLF y.sis) ‘my younger sister’

姊妹 *tsi*³⁵ *mui*^{22 > 35}

(o.sis y.sis) ‘sisters’

Standard Cantonese:

(Bound) root

妹 *mui²²* ‘younger sister’ (< Mid. Chi. 妹 *mwoj^C*)

妹夫

mui²² fu⁵⁵

(y.sis husband) ‘younger sister’s husband’

兄弟姊妹

hin⁵⁵ tei²² tsi³⁵ mui²²

(o.bro y.bro o.sis y.sis) ‘siblings’

Standard Cantonese:

-妹 -*mui*^{22 > 55} ‘girl’

坡妹

*pɔ*⁵⁵-*mui*^{22 > 55}

(pore-girl)

‘Singaporean girl’

聾妹

*lʊŋ*²¹-*mui*^{22 > 55}

(deaf-girl)

‘deaf girl’

妹仔 *mui*^{22 > 55}-*tseɪ*³⁵

(girl-DIM)

‘(female) servant’

Standard Cantonese:

21, very limited

Some kin-like terms:

小妹妹
siu³⁵ mui²² > 21 mui²² > 35
(small y.sis y.sis)
'little girl'

妹妹仔
mui²² > 21 mui²² > 55 -tsai³⁵
(y.sis y.sis-DIM)
'(naïve) young lady'

(Kin-like nicknames of 80s/90s HK celebrities:)

梅姐
mui²¹ > 55 -tsε³⁵ > 21
(Mui -o.sis)
'Anita Mui'

達哥
tat³ -kɔ⁵⁵ > 21
(Tat -o.bro)
'Ng Man Tat'

哥哥
kɔ⁵⁵ > 21 kɔ⁵⁵
(o.bro o.bro)
'Leslie Cheung'

Some place names:

南灣
nam²¹ wan⁵⁵ > 21
(south bay)
'Praia Grande' (Macau)

銅鑼灣
tʰvŋ²¹ lɔ²¹ wan⁵⁵ (> 21)
(bronze gong bay)
'Causeway Bay' (Hong Kong)

Standard Cantonese:

Unpredictability

門 *mun²¹* ‘door’

大門 *tai²² mun²¹* ‘big door’

前門 *ts^hin²¹ mun^{21 > 35}* ‘front door’

後門 *heu²² mun^{21 > 35}* ‘back door’

屯門 *t^hyn²¹ mun²¹* ‘Tuen Mun’ (town in western HK)

澳門 *ou³³ mun^{21 > 35}* ‘Macau’

(pronounced *ou³³ mun²¹* or *ou³³ mun^{21 > 35}* in Macau itself)

Standard Cantonese:

Usually at the end of a word/morpheme, but e.g.

楊箕 *jœŋ²¹ > ³⁵kei⁵⁵* (suburb of Canton)

Sometimes the original tone is not generally known

碌柚 *luk⁵jeu^{?>35}* ‘pomelo’

柚子 *jeu^{?>35}tsi³⁵* ‘yuja / yuzu (/ pomelo)’

(Mid. Chi. 柚 *yuw^C*)

Diminutives / diminutive-like suffixes in Yuè dialects

Kao Wan-yu 高婉瑜 (2007), Kwok Bit-chee 郭必之 (2016)

-子 $-tsi^B$ ('child')

-仔 $-tsVj^B$ ('child')

-兒 $-nye^A$ ('male child', later 'child')

-子 $-tsi^B$ no obvious geographical pattern

-仔 $-tsVj^B$ newer Cantonese / eastern form

(due to Cantonese, found to some degree throughout Yuè / Pínghuà)

-兒 $-nye^A$ older form, still common in the west

-子 -*tsi^B* ('child')

Mandarin: the use of 子 -*zi* is very common, e.g.

筷子 *kuài-zi* 'chopsticks'

鴨子 *yā-zi* 'duck'

被子 *bèi-zi* 'quilt'

腦子 *nǎo-zi* 'brain' (colloquial)

(子 -*zi*: usually a "noun marker", i.e. it adds no meaning to a noun stem)

Cantonese: the use of 子 *tsi³⁵* is limited

筷子 *fai³³-tsi³⁵* 'chopsticks'

鴨 *ap^{3 > 35}* 'duck'

被 *p^hei¹³* 'quilt'

腦 *nou¹³* 'brain'

-子 -*tsi^{iB}* ('child')

More common in some Yuè dialects,

e.g. Liánjiāng 廉江 (Zhān 詹 et al. 2002: 404–405)

蕉子 *tsiu⁵⁵-tsi³⁵* 'banana'

馬蹄子 *ma¹³t^hei¹¹-tsi³⁵* 'water chestnut'

Cf. Cantonese

蕉 *tsiu⁵⁵* 'banana'

馬蹄 *ma¹³t^hei^{21 > 35}* 'water chestnut' (馬蹄 *ma¹³t^hei²¹* 'horse hoof')

-仔 -*tsVj^B* ('child')

Probably an old dialectal form of 子 *tsi^B*

Commonly written 仔 (MC *tsi^A* or *tsjij^B*)

Often claimed to be etymologically 憲 (MC *sre(j)^A*)

Can be reconstructed as *tsej^B* or *tsej^B* from Yuè & Pínghuà forms

Cantonese *tsei³⁵*

In isolation: 'son'

As a suffix: all-purpose diminutive suffix

雀 *tsæk³ > 35* 'bird' > 雀仔 *tsæk³-tsei³⁵* 'little bird'

被 *p^hei¹³* 'quilt' > 被仔 *p^hei¹³-tsei³⁵* 'little quilt'

-兒 -nye^A ('male child' > 'child')

Cantonese

Noun root 兒 *ji²¹* (Lower tone A),

e.g. 兒童 *ji²¹ tʰvŋ²¹* 'child' (literary expression)

As a suffix (in high level suprafix *ji⁵⁵*) only in fossilised forms

乞兒 *het⁵ ji²¹ > ⁵⁵* (beg-DIM) 'beggar'

捉兒人 *tsuk⁵-ji²¹ > ⁵⁵jen²¹ > ⁵⁵* (catch-DIM person) 'hide and seek'

貓兒 *mau⁵⁵ ji²¹ > ⁵⁵* (cat-DIM) 'cat(?) / kitten(?)'

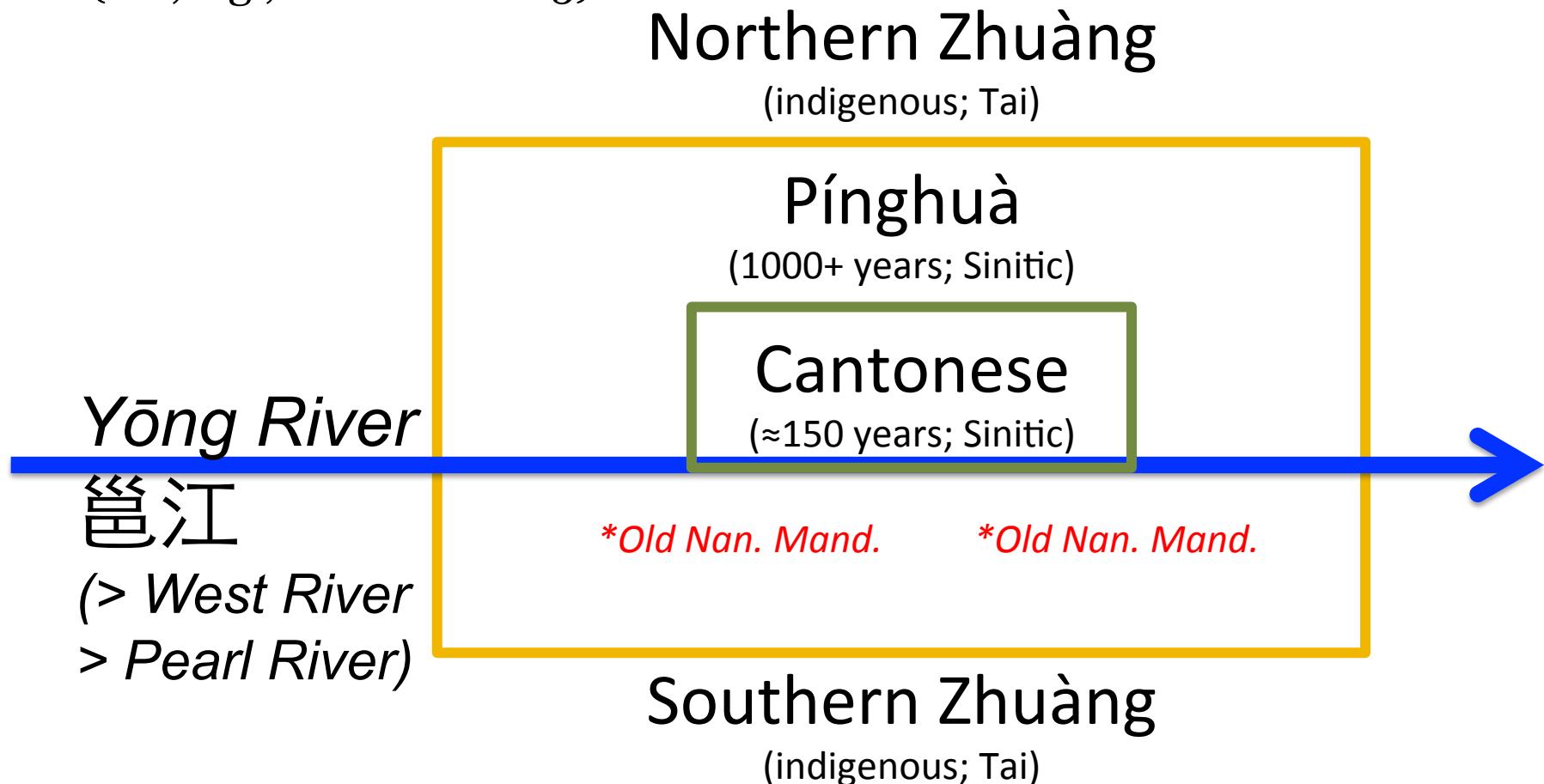
(c.f. nursery rhyme: 排排坐，食粉粄，貓兒擔凳畀姑婆坐，坐爛個屁股唔好賴我

c.f. idiom: 老狗嫩貓兒，食死有人知)

-nye Very common in western Yuè dialects

In 南寧 Nánníng, schematically

(see, e.g., de Sousa 2015):



(*Old Nánníng Mandarin 邕州官話 (less than 500 years), used to dominate the city centre but now moribund there)

Nánníng Cantoneses (Lín Yì 林亦 & Qín Fèngyú 覃凤余 2008: 14)
 6 tonemes: /55/ /35/ /33/ /21/ /24/ /22/

	*A	*B	*C	*D, L	*D, S
*voiceless	55	35	33	3	5
*voiced	21	24	22	2	

Nánníng Wèizìlù Pínghuà
 7 tonemes: /53/ /33/ /35/ /55/ /21/ /13/ /22/

	*A	*B	*C	*D
*voiceless	+ asp	53	33	35
	- asp			55
*voiced	*son	21	13	22
	*obs			23

(Irregular D: 5)

Old Nánníng Mandarin
 4 tonemes: /35/ /31/ /54/ /13/

	*A	*B	*C	*D
*voiceless	35	54	13	31
*voiced	31			

(Irregular D: 5, 2)

Nánníng Cantonese

子 -*tʃi*³⁵: similar to Standard Cantonese 子 -*tsi*³⁵

Not used much; usually a “noun marker”

仔 -*tʃei*³⁵: similar to Standard Cantonese 仔 -*tsəi*³⁵

All-purpose diminutive suffix

兒 -*ji*^{21 > 55}: similar to Standard Cantonese 兒 -*ji*^{21 > 55}

Fossilised in some words

e.g. 乞兒 *het⁵ji^{21 > 55}* (beg-DIM) ‘beggar’

Nánníng Cantonese

Suprafixes: 35, 55 (,21); used much less often than Standard Cantonese
some examples (including **counterexamples**):

Nánníng Cantonese	Standard Cantonese
枱 <i>tʰɔi²¹</i> ‘table’	枱 <i>tʰɔi²¹ > 35</i> ‘table’
枱布 <i>tʰɔi²¹ pu³³</i> ‘table cloth’	枱布 <i>tʰɔi²¹ > 35 pou³³</i> ‘table cloth’
阿妹 <i>a³³-mui²² > 35</i> (NAME-y.sis) ‘younger sister’	阿妹 <i>a³³-mui²² > 35</i> (NAME-y.sis) ‘younger sister’
細妹 <i>ʈɛi³³ mui²²</i> (small y.sis) ‘youngest sister’	細妹 <i>sɛi³³ mui²² > 35</i> (small y.sis) ‘youngest sister’
妹仔 <i>mui²² > 55-tʃɛi³⁵</i> (y.sis-DIM) ‘female servant’	妹仔 <i>mui²² > 55-tʃɛi³⁵</i> (y.sis-DIM) ‘female servant’
畀面 <i>pi³⁵ min²² > 35</i> ‘give face’	畀面 <i>pei³⁵ min²² > 35</i> ‘give face’
面子 <i>min²² > 35-tʃi³⁵</i> (face-NOUN)	面子 <i>min²²-tsi³⁵</i> (face-NOUN)
堡壘 <i>pou³⁵ lui²⁴ > 55</i> ‘fortress’	堡壘 <i>pou³⁵ ley¹³</i> ‘fortress’

Nánníng Pínghuà

Nán. Cantonese 子 -*tʃi*³⁵: limited use, similar to Standard Cantonese

Nán. Pínghuà 子 -*tʃi*³³: very common,
perhaps more common than Mandarin -zi

Nánníng Pínghuà	Nánníng Cantonese	Standard Cantonese
毫子 <i>hau</i> ²¹ - <i>tʃi</i> ³³ ‘0.1 Yuán’	毫子 <i>hu</i> ²¹ - <i>tʃi</i> ³⁵ ‘0.1 Yuán’	毫子 <i>hou</i> ²¹ - <i>tsi</i> ³⁵ ‘0.1 Yuán’
鉗子 <i>kem</i> ²¹ - <i>tʃi</i> ³³ ‘pliers’	鉗 <i>kʰem</i> ²¹ ‘pliers’	鉗 <i>kʰim</i> ²¹ > ³⁵ ‘pliers’
星子 <i>ʈən</i> ⁵³ - <i>tʃi</i> ³³ ‘star’	星 <i>ʈeŋ</i> ⁵⁵ ‘star’	星 <i>siŋ</i> ⁵⁵ ‘star’
蕉子 <i>tʃiu</i> ⁵³ - <i>tʃi</i> ³³ ‘banana’	蕉 <i>tʃiu</i> ⁵⁵ ‘banana’	蕉 <i>tsiu</i> ⁵⁵ ‘banana’
○子 <i>puk</i> ² - <i>tʃi</i> ³³ ‘pomelo’ (< N. Zhuàng <i>lwg</i> -bug)	○○ <i>puk</i> ⁵ <i>luk</i> ⁵ ‘pomelo’	○柚 <i>lok</i> ⁵ - <i>jəu</i> ²² > ³⁵ ‘pomelo’

Nánníng Pínghuà

Dimunitives:

兒 *-ŋi²¹*

兒 *-ŋi²¹ > ⁵³*

仔 *-tʃai³³* (< newer Cantonese loan)

Not widely used

the suffix used is lexically determined

(one could always use an adjective 細 *tvi⁵⁵* ‘small’ instead)

Nánníng Pínghuà

e.g.:

	兒 -ŋi ²¹	兒 -ŋi ^{21 > 53}	仔 -tʃai ³³
雞 <i>kəi⁵³</i> ‘fowl’	✓		✓
狗 <i>kəu³³</i> ‘dog’	✓	(✓)	(✓)
羊 <i>jəŋ²¹</i> ‘goat’	✓		
豬 <i>tʃəi⁵³</i> ‘pig’			✓
車 <i>tʃʰəɛ⁵³</i> ‘car’	✓	✓	✓
刀 <i>tau⁵³</i> ‘knife’	✓		✓
燈 <i>teŋ⁵³</i> ‘lamp’		✓	✓
屋 <i>ʊk³</i> ‘house’		✓	
鑊 <i>tʃʰəŋ⁵³</i> ‘wok’		✓	
碗 <i>uŋ³³</i> ‘bowl’			✓

Nánníng Pínghuà

Suprafixes: infrequent

53, mostly in the suffix 兒 $-ni^{21} > 53$

Cantonese-like examples (Cantonese has 55 suprafix for these):

文 $mən^{21} > 53$ ‘Yuán’, 米 $məi^{13} > 53$ ‘metre’, 荷蘭 $hə^{21}lan^{21} > 53$ ‘Holland’

Other examples:

歌詞 $ka^{53} tʃi^{21} > 53$ ‘love song lyrics’ (vs. 歌詞 $kə^{53} tʃi^{21}$ ‘song lyrics’)

(ka^{53} is a genre of songs)

大娘 $tai^{22}-nəŋ^{21} > 53$ (big-lady) ‘paternal grandfather’s senior wife’

細娘 $təi^{55}-nəŋ^{21} > 53$ (small-lady) ‘paternal grandfather’s junior wife’

(vs. 阿娘 $a^{55}-nəŋ^{21}$ (NAME-lady) ‘paternal grandmother’)

老娘 $lau^{13}-nəŋ^{21} > 53$ (old-lady) ‘mother’

Nánníng Pínghuà

Non-53 suprafixes:

姨娘 *həi²¹-nəŋ²¹* (^{> 55}) ‘mother’s younger sister’

雀 *tʃɛk^{3 > 5}* ‘bird’

雀兒 *tʃɛk^{3 > 5}-ni²¹* ‘little bird’

(vs. 孔雀 *kʰʊŋ³³ tʃʰɛk³* ‘peacock’

(Old Nánníng Mandarin 雀 *tsʰo³¹* ‘bird’, Standard Mandarin 雀 *què*
Nánníng Cantonese 雀 *tʃʰœk³*, Standard Cantonese 雀 *tsœk^{3 > 35}*; MC *tsjak^D*))

爺爺 *jɛ²¹ jɛ^{21 > 35}* ‘paternal grandfather’ (< Cantonese)

奶奶 *nai^{13 > 55} nai^{13 > 55}* ‘paternal grandmother’ (< Mandarin)

(Modern) Sinitic languages:
Morphologically “isolating”
Very few affixes, mostly etymologically transparent
(Sagart 2004)

Affixes are mostly entire syllables
(Ansaldi, Bisang & Szeto 2018)

However, sub-syllabic affixes, e.g.:
verbal sub-syllabic affixes in Northern Sinitic
(Lamarre 2015, Acordia 2015)
verbal and pronominal sub-syllabic affixes in Sinitic
(Chappell forthcoming)

Cantonese:
verbal suprafixedes

(Kwok Bit-chee 郭必之 2009)

nominal suprafixedes

(Maurice Wong 1982; Alan Yu 2007)

(amongst many others)

Diminutives and suprafixedes in Yuè in general:

Zhōu Liètíng 周烈婷 (2002:154–171)

Kao Wan-yu 高婉瑜 (2007)

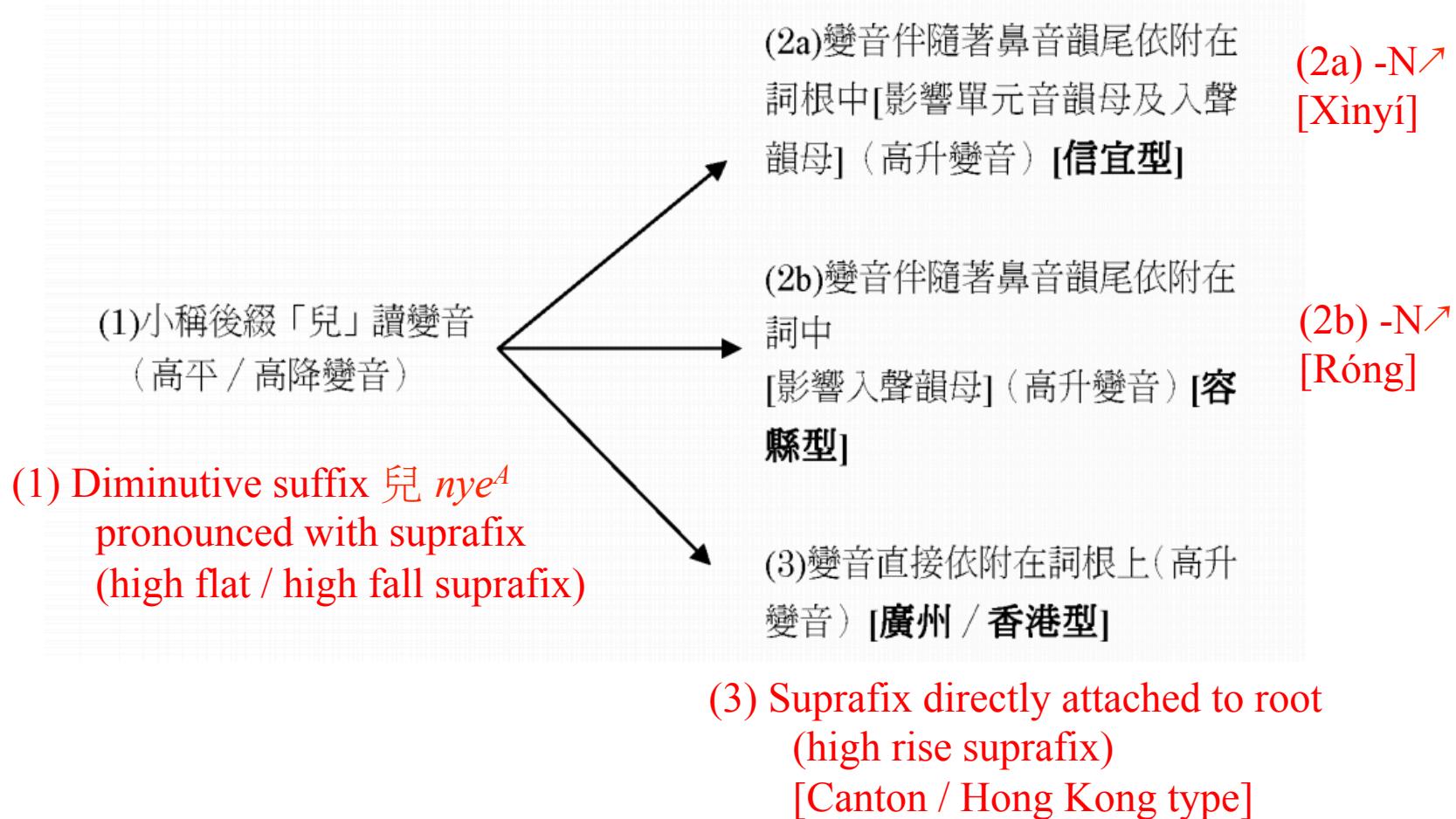
Chén Xiǎoyàn 陈小燕 (2007: 267–275)

Shào Huìjūn 邵慧君 & Gān Yū'ēn 甘于恩 (2007a,b)

Kwok Bit-chee 郭必之 (2016)

Nominal suprafix and diminutives

Kwok Bit-chee 郭必之 on Yuè dialects (2016: 306)



Nominal suprafix and diminutives

Looking at Pínghuà (and some western Yuè dialects):

(0) Diminutive suffix 兒 *nye⁴*
in its original Lower tone A

(1) 小稱後綴「兒」讀變音
(高平 / 高降變音)

(1) Diminutive suffix 兒 *nye⁴*
pronounced with suprafix
(high flat / high fall suprafix)

(2a) 變音伴隨著鼻音韻尾依附在
詞根中 [影響單元音韻母及入聲
韻母] (高升變音) [信宜型]

(2b) 變音伴隨著鼻音韻尾依附在
詞中 [影響入聲韻母] (高升變音) [容
縣型]

(3) 變音直接依附在詞根上 (高升
變音) [廣州 / 香港型]

(3) Suprafix directly attached to root
(high rise suprafix)
[Canton / Hong Kong type]

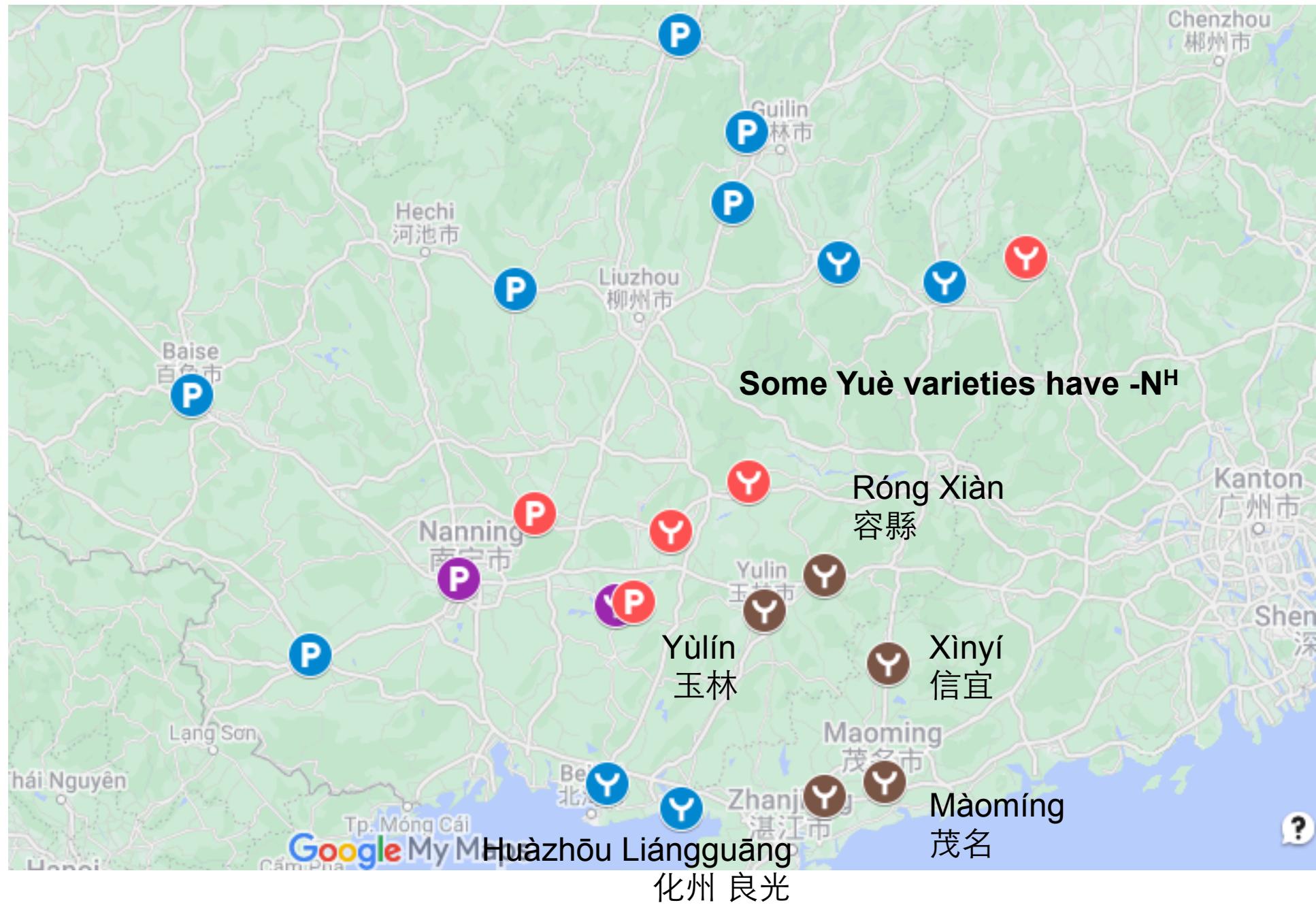


**Examples of Pínghuà dialects with a
兒 *nye^A* diminutive suffix
in Lower tone A (the expected reflex)
(The norm amongst Pínghuà varieties)**









-N^H (nasal suffix in high tone) > -H

Huàzhōu Liángguāng 化州良光 Yuè (Kwok Bit-chee 郭必之 2016)

Usually a separate syllable -N^H

手兒 (*seu³⁵-ŋ²³>*) *seu³⁵-ŋ⁵³* (hand-DIM) ‘finger’

銀兒 (*ŋen²³-ŋ²³>*) *ŋen²¹-ŋ⁵³* (silver-DIM) ‘coin’

乞兒 (*hak⁵-ŋ²³>*) *hak⁵-ŋ⁵³* (beg-DIM) ‘beggar’

腳兒 (*kiɛk³-ŋ²³>*) *kiɛŋ³⁵-ŋ⁵³* (leg-DIM) ‘leg’

正下兒 *tseŋ³³ ha²¹-ŋ²³>* *tseŋ³³ han³⁵* ‘a while’

鵝 *ŋɔ²³>* *ŋɔ⁵³* ‘goose’

販子 *fan³³-dei³⁵* (sell-DIM) ‘hawker, peddler’ (子 -*dei³⁵*: inspired by Hakka)

煙仔 *jin⁵³-dei³⁵* (tobacco-DIM) ‘cigarette’ (仔 -*dei³⁵*: inspired by Cantonese)

-N^H (nasal suffix in high tone) > -H

Màomíng 茂名 Yuè (Shào Huìjūn 邵慧君 & Gān Yū'ēn 甘于恩 2007b)

-ni⁵⁵ or (N)↗ [↗: rise to very high, often falsetto]

豬兒 tʃi⁵⁵-ni⁵⁵ / tʃin↗ (pig-DIM) ‘piglet’

勺兒 ſiak²²-ni⁵⁵ / ſiaŋ↗ (spoon-DIM) ‘spoon’

印兒 jən³³-ni⁵⁵ / jən↗ (mark-DIM) ‘ink stamp’

雞兒 kəi⁵⁵-ni⁵⁵ / kəi↗ (fowl-DIM) ‘chick’

-N^H (nasal suffix in high tone) > -H

Xìnyí 信宜 Yuè (Zhān Bóhuì 詹伯慧 et al. 2002: 204)

primarily (N) \nearrow [\nearrow : rise to very high, often falsetto]

魚 jy^{13} ‘fish’ > $jyn \nearrow$ ‘little fish’

亞叔 $a^{33} sok^{55}$ (dad.y.bro) ‘uncle’ > $a^{33} soj \nearrow$ ‘little uncle’

狗 $kəu^{24}$ ‘dog’ > $kəu \nearrow$ ‘little dog’

豬 $tʃy^{53}$ ‘pig’ (Shào Huìjūn 邵慧君 & Gān Yū’ēn 甘于恩 2007b)

豬 $tʃyn \nearrow$ (pig\DIM) ‘little pig’

豬兒 $tʃy^{53}-ni^{53}$ (pig-DIM) ‘newborn piglet’

豬兒 $tʃy^{53}-nin \nearrow$ (pig-DIM\DIM)

Róng County 容縣 Yuè (Zhōu Zǔyáo 周祖瑤 1987)

鋼筆 $koy^{22} pet^5$ > $koy^{22} pen^{35}$ (steel pen) ‘fountain pen’

豬 tsy^{55} ‘pig’ > tsy^{35} ‘little pig’

Yùlín 玉林 Yuè (Zhōu Liètíng 周列婷 2002)

six tonemes: 55 33 52 32 24 11 || 4 3 2 1

with suprafex: 44 35 35 34 34 34 || 44 35 34 34

(In the examples below: tone changes in the first syllable is tone sandhi,
tone changes in the second syllable is diminutive suprafex)

侄兒 $tsat^{22} > {}^{11}ni^{32}$ ‘brother’s son’ (兒 ni^{32} in citation tone (Lower tone A))

阿侄 $a^{33} tsat^{22} > a^{33} tsan^{34}$ ‘brother’s son’

雀兒 $ta^{33}-ni^{55}$ (bird-DIM) (兒 ni^{55} in a high tone (Upper tone A))

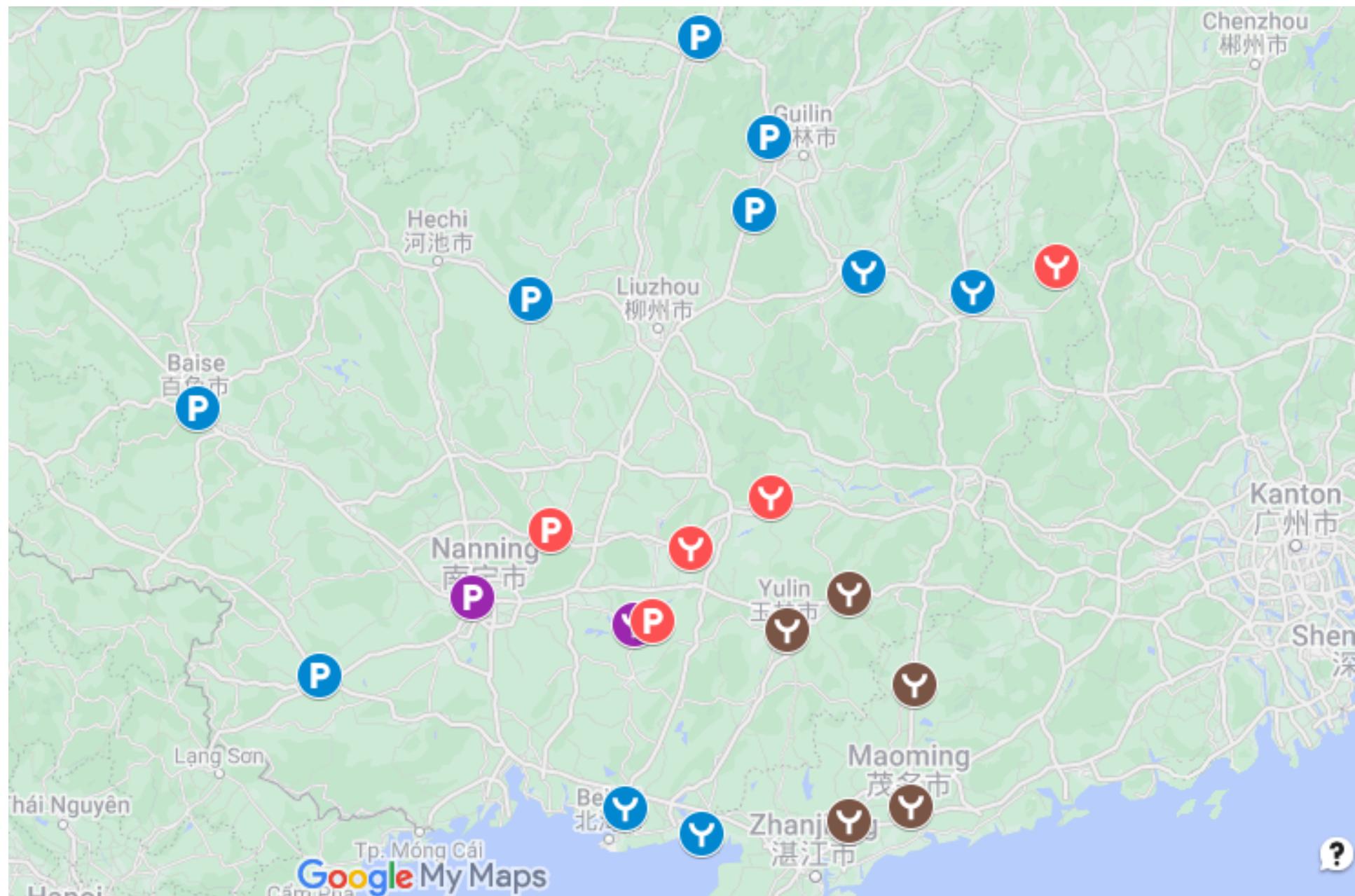
雞兒 $kai^{55}-ni^{55} > kai^{33} ni^{44}$ (fowl-DIM) (兒 ni^{44} in suprafixed Upper tone A)

羊兒 $ja^{32}-ni^{55} > ja^{11}-ni^{44}$ (goat-DIM)

年頭 $nin^{55} > {}^{52}tau^{32}$ (year head) ‘beginning of year’

年尾 $nin^{55} > {}^{33}mi^{33}$ (year tail) ‘end of year’

明年 $məŋ^{32} nin^{55} > məŋ^{11} nin^{44}$ ‘next year’





Ch'an Chan Sene (1900)

quoted by Kwok Bit-chee (2009)

Cantonese tones in 1900

	*A	*B	*C	*D, L	*D, S
*voiceless	53	45	4	4	5
*voiced	31	34	3	3	

and (verbal / nominal) suprafixes

	*A	*B	*C	*D, L	*D, S
*voiceless	5	45-5	4-5	4-5	5-5
*voiced	31-5	3-5	3-5	3-5	

i.e. basically a floating 5 attached after the citation tone

Ch'an Chan Sene (1900)

quoted by Kwok Bit-chee (2009)

On tone 31-5:

[...] has a distinct fall and a long rise, in fact being the most prolonged of any of the rising tones, and much emphasis is thrown into the voice on its recovery from the fall, increasing in its volume as it rises into a good crescendo and dying away at the end again. (Ch'an 1900: 211-212)

Ball (1888)

Six citation tonemes,
plus two suprafixed *that were different from the citation tones*

“Third Rising Tone”:

this Rising Tone is a longer tone than the other two Rising Tones,
banning lower and ascending higher than either of them (1888: xxxi)

	U.B	L.B	*
	$tsz35$	$ts^h z13$	$ts^h z315$

26.	子似柿	$^c tsz$	$^c ts'z$	$^c ts'z^*$	A son, similar, persimmon.
27.	搵尹韻	$^c wan$	$^c wan$	$^c wan^*$	To look for, correct, rhyme.

	$wen35$	$wen13$	$wen315$
	U.B	L.B	*

Ball (1888): xxxiii

The underlying tone of a 15 syllable can be any tone other than 53 (Upper tone A) (?)
The old 15 is now pronounced as 35

Ball (1888)

Upper A ^o
 *ʃi*53 *ʃi*55 Lower A
 *ʃi*21

8. 戸詩匙 *čshí* ^o*shí* *ʂhi* A corpse, a hymn, a spoon.

19. 貲資祠 *tsz* ^o*tsz* *t'z* Wealth, postage,⁸ spring sacrifice.

*tsz*53 *tsz*55 *ts^hz*21
U.A ^o L.A

Ball (1888): xxxiii

The underlying tone of 55 has to be 53 (Upper tone A)
Nowadays 53 has merged into 55 for the vast majority of speakers

Ch'an Chan Sene (1900)

quoted by Kwok Bit-chee (2009)

With the verbal -5 suprafix, -5 alternates with certain markers, e.g.

End of 19th century Cantonese:

坐倒處 $tʃɔ^{34} tou^{45}ʃy^{44}$ (sit DUR place) ‘sitting’

坐處 $tʃɔ^{34} > ^{35}ʃy^{44}$ (sit\ DUR place) ‘sitting’ (Ch'an 1900: 216)

With nominal -5 suprafix

There is no written records of what the suprafix is a contraction of (?)

So where did the floating ⑤ suprafix (on nouns) come from?



There is no written record (?) of what the nominal suprafixes were contractions of

If Cantonese nominal suprafices came from diminutives:

兒 *nye^A*?

(e.g. Mài Yún 麦耘 (1990), Zhōu Liètíng 周烈婷 (2002: 154–171), Chén Xiǎoyàn 陈小燕 (2007: 267–275) Kwok Bit-chee 郭必之 (2016))

1. 兒 *nye^A* as diminutive and source of suprafix in western Yuè dialects
2. The (very few) fossilised cases of 兒 *-ji⁵⁵* in modern Cantonese

However,

1. There is no *a priori* reason why eastern Yuè dialects must have followed the same path as the western Yuè dialects
2. The range of nouns with a suprafix in Standard Cantonese does not overlap much with that with a *-nye* suffix in western Yuè dialects

(Shào Huìjūn 邵慧君 & Gān Yū'ēn 甘于恩 2007b)

If nominal suprafices came from diminutives:

仔 *tsVj^B* diminutive?

Kwok Bit-chee 郭必之 (2016): unlikely

Although the rising tone of Cantonese 仔 *tsei*³⁵ does coincide with the high rising suprafice in Cantonese, most Yuè dialects have 仔 *tsVj^B* in a rising tone, but their suprafices are mostly high level or high falling.

However,

1. There is no *a priori* reason why western Yuè dialects must have the same path as the eastern Yuè dialects
2. Kwok (2016: 307) gives three examples alternations of the high rising suprafice and the suffix *tsei*³⁵: ('k.o. snack', 'bird', 'measles')

35 香港粵語有這樣的同源異型詞：「角」[kok33-35] 和「角仔」[kok33 tʃei35]（一種粵式油炸食物）、「雀」[tʃæk33-35] 和「雀仔」[tʃæk33 tʃei35]（小鳥）、「麻」[ma21-35] 和「麻仔」[ma21 tʃei35]（麻疹）。「角」、「雀」和「麻」的高升變音很可能源自小稱後綴「仔」的省略。

If nominal suprafixes came from diminutives:

子 *tsi^B* diminutive?

e.g. Maurice Wong (1982), quoted by Alan Yu (2007: 202)

- (12) min²² tsi³⁵ ~ min³⁵ ‘face, honour’
k^hei²¹ tsi³⁵ ~ k^hei³⁵ ‘a chess piece’
jet² tsi³⁵ ~ jet³⁵ ‘(special) day’

However:

min²²-tsi³⁵, k^hei²¹-tsi³⁵, jet²-tsi³⁵

are most probably Mandarin loans
(and there are very few such pairs)

Conclusion

Along the Pínghuà–Yuè dialect continuum:

- the dominant diminutives (from west to east) are:
兒 nye^L – 兒 nye^H (– N^H) – 仔 $tsVj^H$
- nominal suprafixed are the most developed towards the eastern end (e.g. Standard Cantonese)
- the Standard Cantonese nominal suprafixed came from
兒 $-nye^H$ and/or 仔 $-tsVj^H$ suffix?



Things to be done

e.g.

Better look at the diminutive suffixes in Cantonese in and before the 19th century;

Closer look at the low suprafixed in Szeyap (e.g. Taishanese)

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Differences in the use of suprafixes amongst Cantonese varieties

Became Cantonese majority in the 1940s

Macau (Zhān Bóhuì 詹伯慧 et al. 2002: 201–202)

Nánníng (Lì Mínghuì 利明慧 2008)

Nánníng Canto. Older Macau Canto. Hong Kong Canto.
e.g. my mother

繩 ‘string’	<i>ʃey</i> ²¹	<i>sij</i> ²¹	<i>siŋ</i> ^{21 > 35}
帽 ‘hat’	<i>mu</i> ²²	<i>mou</i> ²²	<i>mou</i> ^{22 > 35}
鉗 ‘pliers’	<i>k^hɛm</i> ²¹	<i>k^him</i> ²¹	<i>k^him</i> ^{21 > 35}
碟 ‘plate’	<i>tip</i> ²	<i>tip</i> ²	<i>tip</i> ^{2 > 35}
枱 ‘table’	<i>t^hɔi</i> ²¹	<i>t^hɔi</i> ^{21 (> 35)}	<i>t^hɔi</i> ^{21 > 35}
枱布 ‘table cloth’	<i>t^hɔi</i> ²¹ <i>pu</i> ³³	<i>t^hɔi</i> ²¹ <i>pou</i> ³³	<i>t^hɔi</i> ^{21 > 35} <i>pou</i> ³³
澳門 ‘Macau’	<i>u</i> ³³ <i>mun</i> ²¹	<i>ou</i> ³³ <i>mun</i> ^{21 (> 35)}	<i>ou</i> ³³ <i>mun</i> ^{21 > 35}
乞兒 ‘beggar’	<i>het</i> ⁵ - <i>ji</i> ^{21 > 55}	<i>het</i> ⁵ - <i>ji</i> ^{21 > 55} 乞兒 <i>het</i> ⁵ - <i>ji</i> ²¹ - <i>tsai</i> ³⁵ 乞兒仔	<i>het</i> ⁵ - <i>ji</i> ^{21 > 55}

Differences in the use of suprafixed amongst Cantonese varieties

More research is needed, e.g. looking more clearly into the use of suprafixed in old Cantonese documents

Question:

1. Is Macau / Nánníng conservative, and the use of suprafixed became more prolific in Canton / Hong Kong?

Or

2. Was Canton already very prolific with suprafixed, and Macau / Nánníng “regressed” due to second language influence as Macau / Nánníng became Cantonised?