

# The Grammar of Southern Pinghua

– ‘biased’ diffusion in a complex contact situation

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*ERC SINOTYPE project –  
École des hautes études en science sociales*

25<sup>th</sup> September 2010

Syntax of the World’s Languages IV, Lyon



Nanning  
南寧

Pinghua  
平話

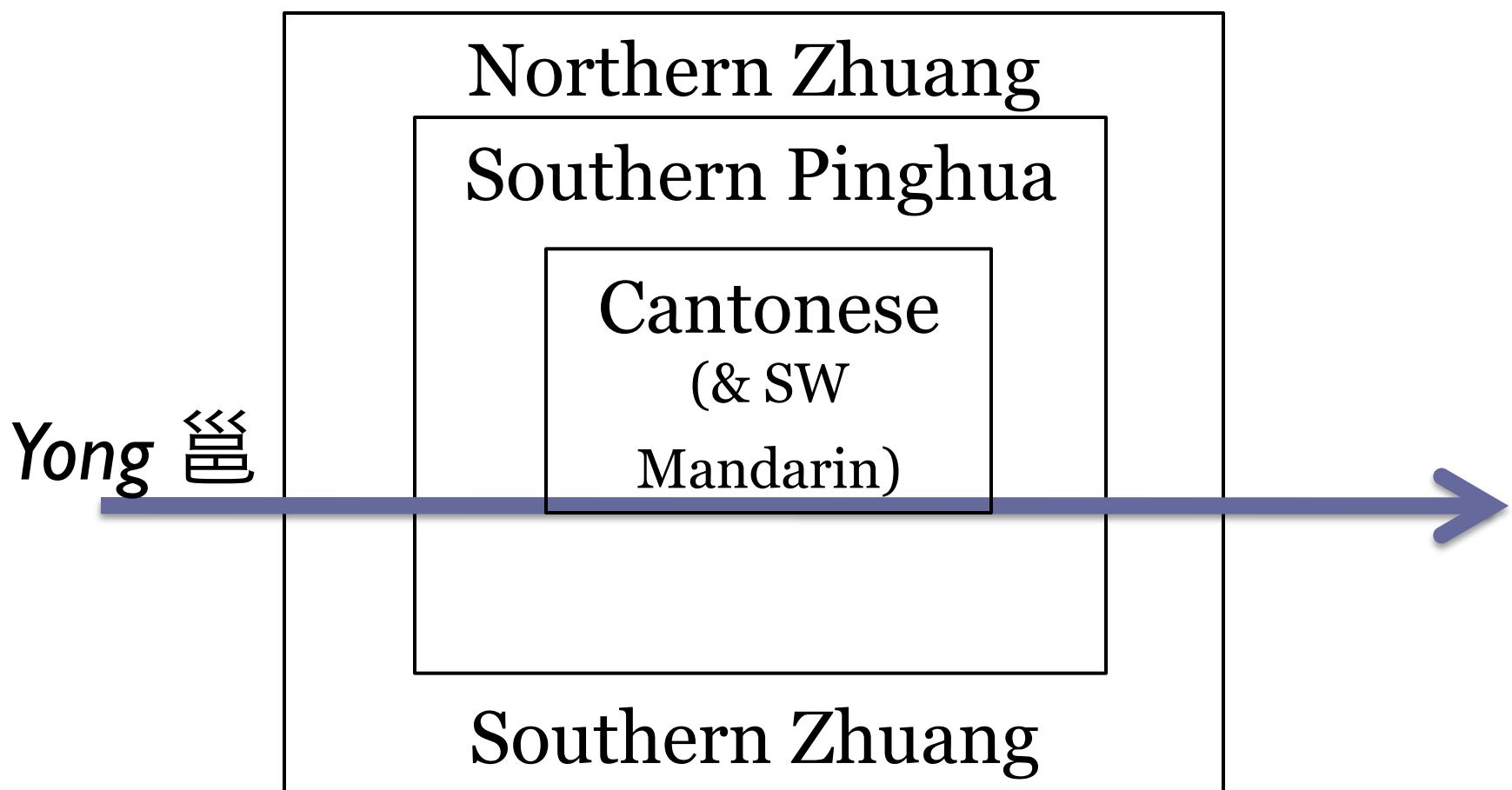
Yue (Cantonese)  
粵語

(Lang atlas of China)

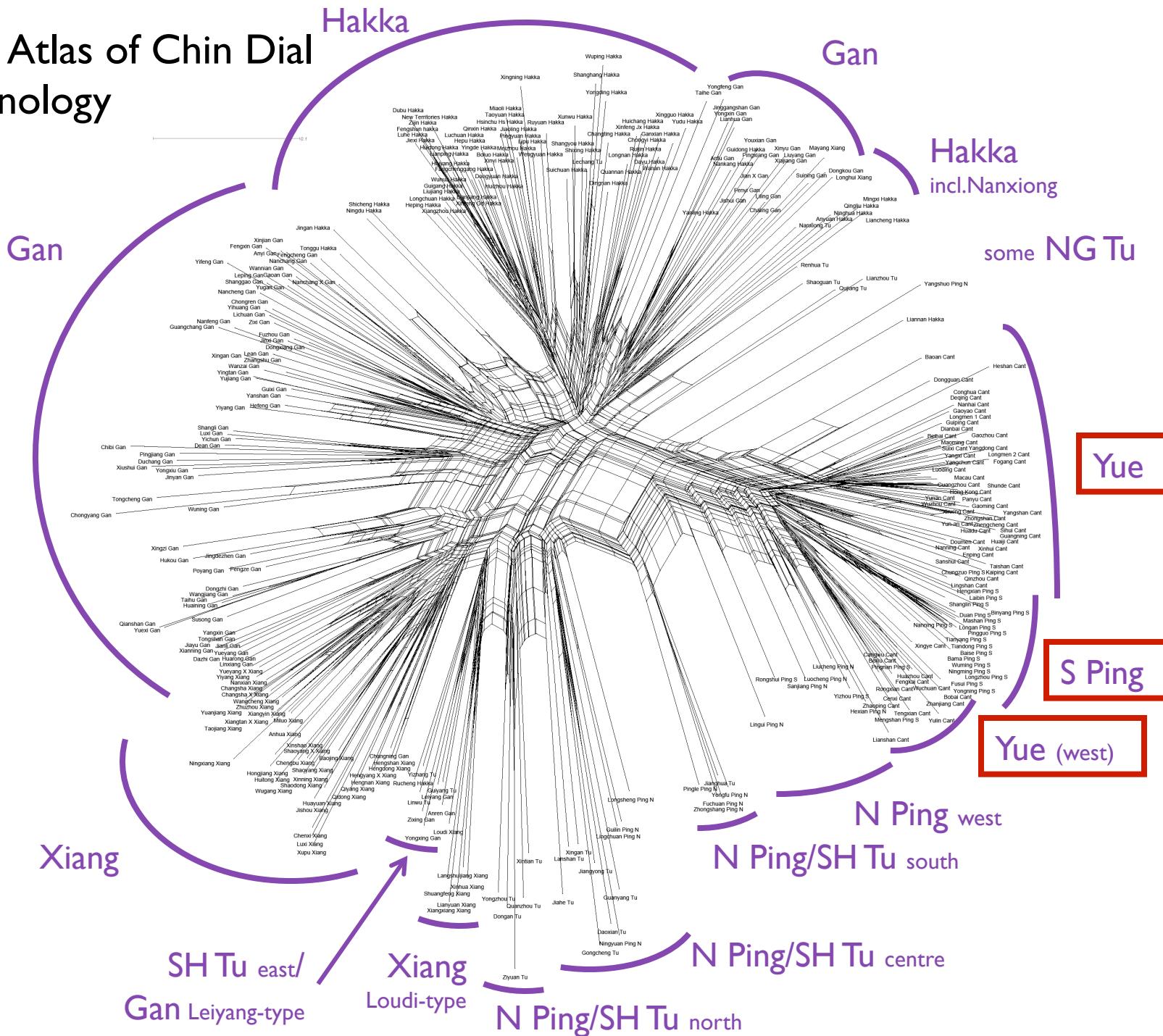


Tai-Kadai  
languages

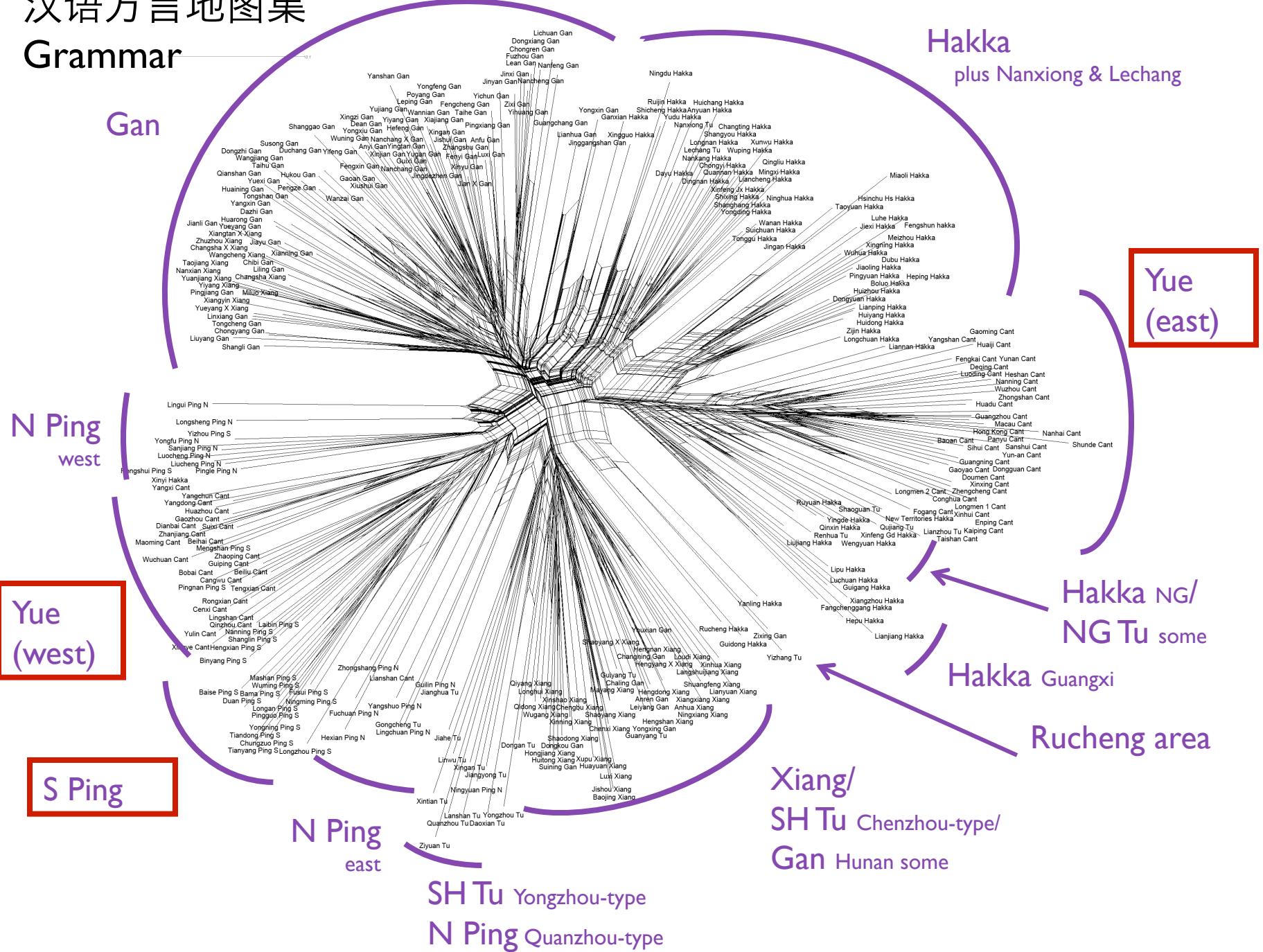
In 南寧 Nanning:



# Ling Atlas of Chin Dial Phonology



# 汉语方言地图集 Grammar



p	t		k	$k^w$
$p^h$	$t^h$		$k^h$	$k^{wh}$
m	n		$\eta$	$\eta$
f				
	$t\int$			
	$t\int^h$			
	l		j	w
	ʃ			

(Most Yue and S. Pinghua dialects: /s/ ≠ /t/; Yaotou Pinghua only has /t/ and Standard Cantonese only has /s/ or /ʃ/.)

- Example of Southern Pinghua phonology:
  - 壽頭/窯頭 Yáotóu, 南寧 Nánníng RIMES

a		e	i	u	ɛ	c
ai	iɑ	ie		ui		iç
au	ua	ue	iu		eu	
ap	da		ip			
am	wa		im			
at	ta	ət	it	ut	?	tç
an	na	ən	in	un	ɛn	nc
ak	ka		ɪk	ʊk	ɛk	
aj	ɿa		ɪɿ	ʊɿ	ɛɿ	

(Standard Cantonese does not have /ə/, but it has /œ/ [œ/ə], /y/, and syllabic /m/ and /ŋ/.)

- Example of Southern Pinghua phonology:
  - 埙頭/窯頭 Yáotóu, 南寧 Nánníng TONES

	*Level	*Rising	*Departing	*Entering
*voiceless onset	52	33	55 / 25	3
*voiced onset	11	13	22	(5)

usually:  
25/ {h/C<sup>h</sup>}

23/ sonorant onset

usually:  
loanwords,  
ideophones

*(Different from a few Pinghua dialects, all Yue dialects, and most Tai-Kadai languages where an entering tone/ tone D is split based on vowel length.)*

- Some lexical differences between Nanning Pinghua and Cantonese:

	<b>Nanning Pinghua</b>	<b>cf. Cantonese</b>
(Mandarin-like:)		
'be'	是 $\text{ti}^{22}$	係 $\text{həi}^{22}/ \text{hai}^2$
'eat'	喫 $\text{hət}^{33}$	食 $\text{sɪk}^{22}/ \text{sik}^6$
'look'	看 $\text{han}^{25}$	睇 $\text{tʰəi}^{25}/ \text{tai}^2$
'nose'	鼻 $\text{pət}^{22}$	鼻 $\text{pei}^{22}/ \text{pei}^6$
completive	了 $\text{liu}^{13}$	咗 $\text{tsɔ}^{25}/ \text{zo}^2$
passive	捱 $\text{ŋai}^{11}$	畀 $\text{pei}^{25}/ \text{bei}^2$
(Tai-Kadai:)		
'give'	許 $\text{həi}^{25}$	畀 $\text{pei}^{25}/ \text{bei}^2$
'some'	色 $\text{tək}^3$	幾 $\text{kei}^{25}/ \text{kei}^2$
'cold'	勻 $\text{jən}^{53}$	凍 $\text{tʂəŋ}^{33}/ \text{tung}^3$

# Grammar of Southern Pinghua

Basics:

Topic–Comment:

1. 個 個 人 錢 多  
 kə<sup>55</sup> kə<sup>55</sup> jən<sup>11</sup> tʃin<sup>11</sup> tɔ<sup>53</sup>  
 DEM CL person money many  
 ‘That person has lots of money.’  
*lit.* ‘As for that person, money is plenty.’

‘Default’ word order: S (adverbial) V O:

2. 你 自日 去 了 哪的?  
 nəi<sup>13</sup> tʃi<sup>22</sup>jet<sup>23</sup> həi<sup>25</sup> liu<sup>13</sup> na<sup>33</sup>tik<sup>5</sup>  
 2SG yesterday go PFV where  
 ‘Where did you go yesterday?’

SVO, but usually MODIFIER N

3. [佢 老弟 欠 我] 個 一 大 單 錢  
 kəi<sup>13</sup> lau<sup>13</sup>təi<sup>13</sup> him<sup>25</sup> ɿa<sup>13</sup> kə<sup>55</sup> et<sup>3</sup> tai<sup>22</sup> tan<sup>53</sup> tʃin<sup>11</sup>  
 3SG 1.brother owe 1SG LIG one big CL money  
 ‘the big sum of money that his/her little brother owe me’

Poor in inflection, rich in derivation, e.g.:

Nanning Pinghua:

4. ? ? 傕  
 k<sup>w</sup>hə<sup>11</sup>la<sup>55</sup>-lau<sup>25</sup>  
 ONMTP-bloke  
 ‘Mandarin-speaking man’

5. 扣子  
 k<sup>h</sup>əu<sup>25</sup>-tʃi<sup>33</sup>  
 fasten-NMLZ  
 ‘button’

# Differences with Cantonese

Gender(-related) affixes:

6.

Nanning Pinghua Northern Zhuang Cantonese

‘cock’	公雞 <u>kʊŋ</u> <sup>53</sup> kəi <sup>53</sup>	kai <sup>35</sup> <u>pau</u> <sup>42</sup> / gaeq <u>baeux</u>	雞 <u>公</u> kəi <sup>55</sup> <u>kʊŋ</u> <sup>55</sup> / gai1 <u>gung</u> 1
‘hen’	母雞 <u>mu</u> <sup>13</sup> kəi <sup>53</sup>	kai <sup>35</sup> <u>me</u> <sup>33</sup> / gaeq <u>meh</u>	雞 <u>乸</u> kəi <sup>55</sup> <u>na</u> <sup>35</sup> / gai1 <u>naa</u> 2
‘pre-ovulating hen/ pullet’	項雞 <u>han</u> <sup>22</sup> kəi <sup>53</sup>	kai <sup>35</sup> <u>ha:n</u> <sup>33</sup> / gaeq <u>hangh</u>	雞 <u>項</u> kəi <sup>55</sup> <u>hɔŋ</u> <sup>35</sup> / gai1 <u>hong</u> 2

Noun marker 子 tʃi<sup>33</sup>

- |                                     |                                     |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 7. 孝子                               | 瓜子                                  |
| hau <sup>25</sup> tʃi <sup>33</sup> | kʷa <sup>53</sup> tʃi <sup>33</sup> |
| filial son                          | melon child                         |
| ‘filial son’                        | ‘seed’                              |

8.	車子 tʂʰɛ <sup>53</sup> -tʂɿ <sup>33</sup> car-NM 'car'	果子 ku <sup>33</sup> -tʂɿ <sup>33</sup> fruit-NM 'fruit'	蕉子 tʂiu <sup>53</sup> -tʂɿ <sup>33</sup> banana-NM 'banana'
	蝦子 ha <sup>53</sup> -tʂɿ <sup>33</sup> shrimp-NM 'shrimp'	星子 lən <sup>53</sup> -tʂɿ <sup>33</sup> star-NM 'star'	薄子 pʊk <sup>2</sup> -tʂɿ <sup>33</sup> grapefruit-NM 'grapefruit'
	鬍子 hu <sup>11</sup> -tʂɿ <sup>33</sup> beard-NM 'beard'	椅子 əi <sup>33</sup> -tʂɿ <sup>33</sup> chair-NM 'chair'	窗子 tʂʰanŋ <sup>53</sup> -tʂɿ <sup>33</sup> window-NM window
	亭子 tən <sup>11</sup> -tʂɿ <sup>33</sup> pavilion-NM 'pavilion'	骰子 ɻək <sup>3</sup> -tʂɿ <sup>33</sup> dice-NM 'dice'	

- |     |  |  |
|-----|--|--|
| 9.  | 卵子<br>lun <sup>13</sup> -tʃi <sup>33</sup><br>egg-NM<br>'testicle'     | 救化子<br>keu <sup>55</sup> wa <sup>55</sup> -tʃi <sup>33</sup><br>salvation-NM<br>'beggar' |
| 10. | 扣子<br>kʰəu <sup>25</sup> -tʃi <sup>33</sup><br>fasten-NMLZ<br>'button' | 鑿子<br>tʃak <sup>2</sup> -tʃi <sup>33</sup><br>chisel-NMLZ<br>'chisel'                    |

(Noun markers are much less prevalent in Cantonese; Cantonese have a lot more monosyllabic nouns.)

Pre-verbal [CL N]:

Northern Zhuang:

11. **duz mbaj** gyaep      **duz gyau**      (idiom)  
 CL    **butterfly** chase.away    CL    spider  
 ‘Butterfly chases spider.’ (implies: *ra dai* (seek death))

Cantonese:

12. 哟      果      一      紅      就      摘      得      嘲  
**di1**      **gwo2** jat1 hung4 zau6 zaak6 dak1 laak3  
 CL:MASS **fruit** once red then pick can CRRNT.RLVNCE:FINAL  
 ‘The fruits can be picked once they become red.’

In Southern Pinghua, common in post-verbal positions:

13. 系 本 書 系 我  
hei<sup>25</sup> pən<sup>33</sup> t̥ei<sup>53</sup> hei<sup>25</sup> ɿa<sup>13</sup>  
give CL book give 1SG  
'Give the book to me.'

Pre-verbal position [CL N] is ungrammatical.

14. \*(個)隻 仔 好 才  
ə<sup>55</sup> tʃət<sup>3</sup> tʃai<sup>33</sup> hau<sup>33</sup> tiu<sup>53</sup>  
DEM CL boy very clever  
'The boy is very clever.'

Ligature 個kə<sup>55</sup>

Nanning Pinghua:

15. 我 個 衫 爛 嘥  
 ɿa<sup>24</sup> kə<sup>55</sup> lam<sup>53</sup> lan<sup>22</sup> la<sup>33</sup>  
 1SG LIG clothes torn ASP  
 ‘My clothes are torn.’

Cantonese:

17. 我 件 衫  
 ngo<sup>5</sup> kin<sup>6</sup>saam<sup>1</sup>  
 1SG CL clothes  
 ‘My clothes’

Standard Mandarin:

16. 我 的 衣服  
 wǒ de yīfu  
 1SG LIG clothes  
 ‘My clothes’

18. 我 本 書  
 ngo<sup>5</sup> bun<sup>2</sup> syu<sup>1</sup>  
 1SG CL book  
 ‘My book’

Northern Zhuang:

19. bonj saw gou  
 CL book 1SG  
 ‘My book’

‘first’ [ ]<sub>VP</sub>:

Nanning Pinghua:

20. 我 先 [行]<sub>VP</sub>  
*ŋa<sup>24</sup>* *lin<sup>53</sup>* *haŋ<sup>11</sup>*  
 1SG first go  
 ‘I (shall) go first.’

Standard Mandarin:

21. 我 先 [走]<sub>VP</sub>  
*wǒ* *xiān zǒu*  
 1SG first go  
 ‘I (shall) go first.’

[ ]<sub>VP</sub> ‘first’:

Cantonese:

22. 我 [行]<sub>VP</sub> 先  
*ngo<sup>5</sup>* *haang<sup>4</sup>* *sin<sup>1</sup>*  
 1SG go first  
 ‘I (shall) go first.’

Northern Zhuang:

23. mwngz [bae]<sub>VP</sub> gonq  
 2SG go first  
 ‘You go first.’

V ACQUIRE (e.g. Sybesma 2008)

ACQUIRE V = can V

Cantonese:

24. 食 得  
sik<sup>6</sup> dak<sup>1</sup>  
eat can  
'can eat/ edible'

Nanning Pinghua:

26. 得 飲  
tək<sup>3</sup> nəm<sup>33</sup>  
can drink  
'can drink'

Northern Zhuang:

25. bae ndaej  
go can  
'can go'

(c.f. Standard Mandarin:

27. 可以 喝  
kéyǐ hē  
can drink  
'can drink')

X ‘many’ = too X

Northern Zhuang:

28. aen neix bit \_\_\_\_\_ lai  
CL this spicy.hot many  
'This is too spicy hot.'

Nanning Cantonese:

29. 飽 多 唔 食 嘰  
beu2 do1 m4 sik6 laa3  
full many NEG eat CRRNT.RLVNCE  
'I am too full I will not eat it anymore.'

‘too’ X:

Nanning Pinghua:

30. 太 飽 有 噥 嘲  
<sup>t<sup>hai</sup>25</sup> bau<sup>25</sup> mi<sup>13</sup> h<sup>et</sup><sup>3</sup> la<sup>33</sup>  
 too full NEG eat CRRNT.RLVNCE  
 ‘I am too full I will not eat it anymore.’

Standard Cantonese:

31. 太 飽 吡 食 嘲  
 tai3 bau2 m4 sik6 laa3  
 too full NEG eat CRRNT.RLVNCE  
 ‘I am too full I will not eat it anymore.’

Standard Mandarin:

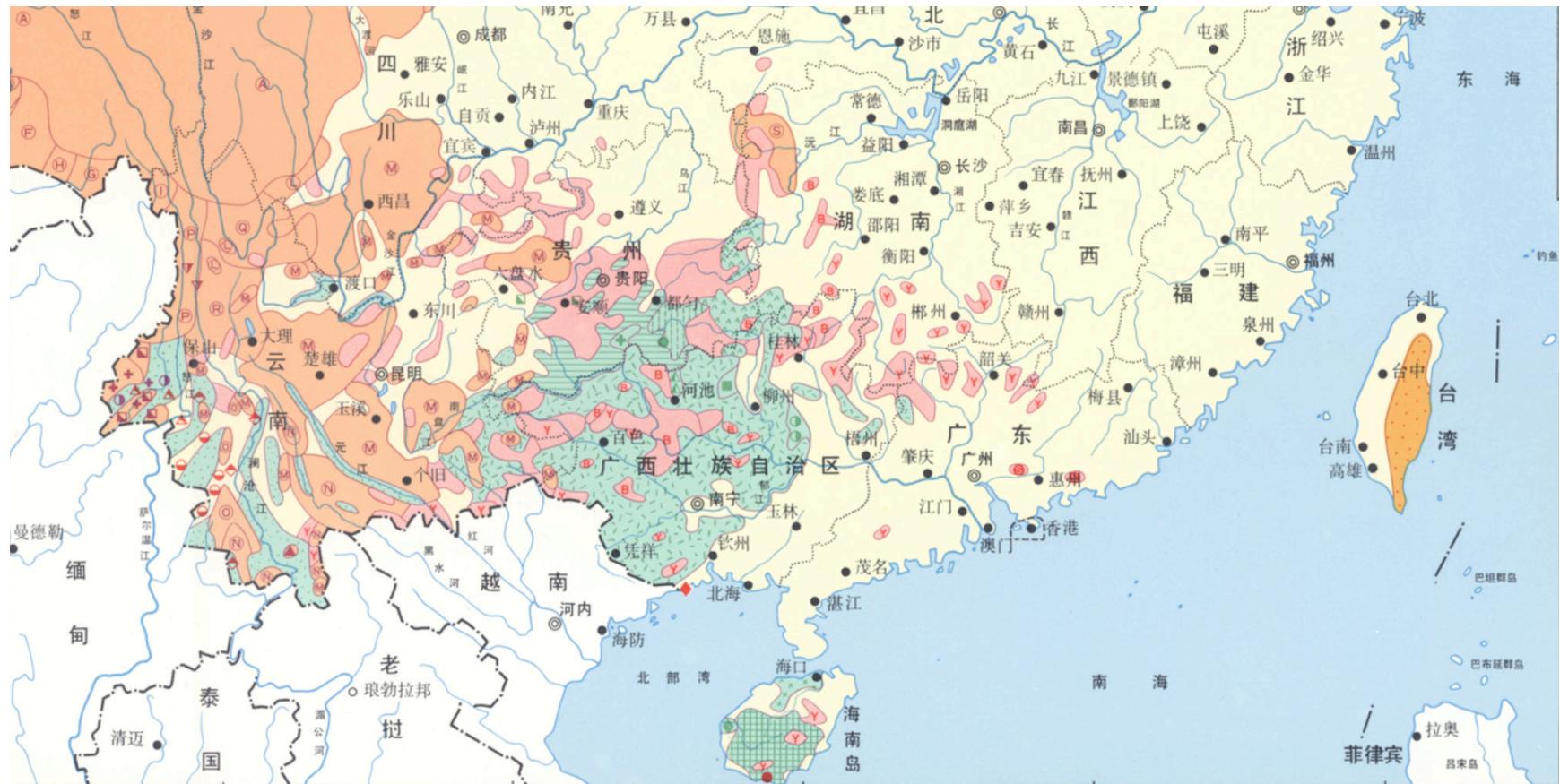
32. 我 太 飽 了  
 wǒ tài bǎo le  
 1SG too full CRRNT.RLVNCE  
 ‘I am too full.’



Pinghua  
平話

Yue (Cantonese)  
粵語

(Lang atlas of China)



Tai-Kadai  
languages

# Genetics

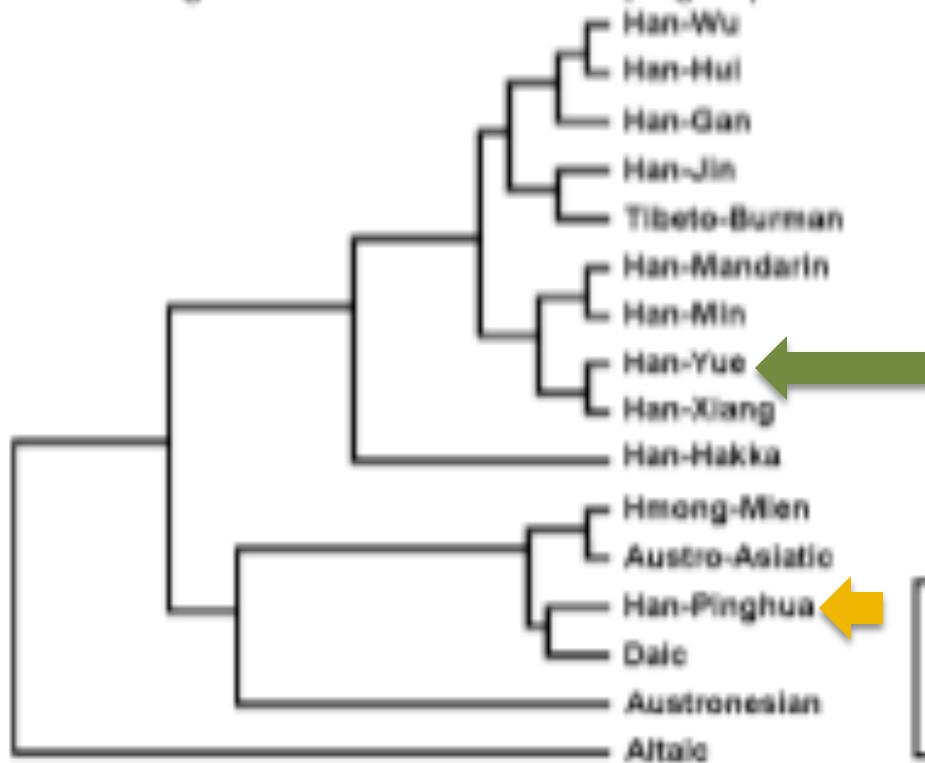
- Wen et al. 2004 ‘admixture coefficient’:

Population	Y Chromosome		mtDNA	
	$M_{BE}$ ( $\pm$ s.e.m)	$M_{RH}$	$M_{BE}$ ( $\pm$ s.e.m)	$M_{RH}$
Guangdong1	0.677 $\pm$ 0.121	0.669	0.149 $\pm$ 0.181	0.068
Guangdong2	ND	ND	0.298 $\pm$ 0.247	0.312
Guangxi	0.543 $\pm$ 0.174	0.608	0.451 $\pm$ 0.263	0.249
Southern Han Average	0.819	0.819	0.560	0.500

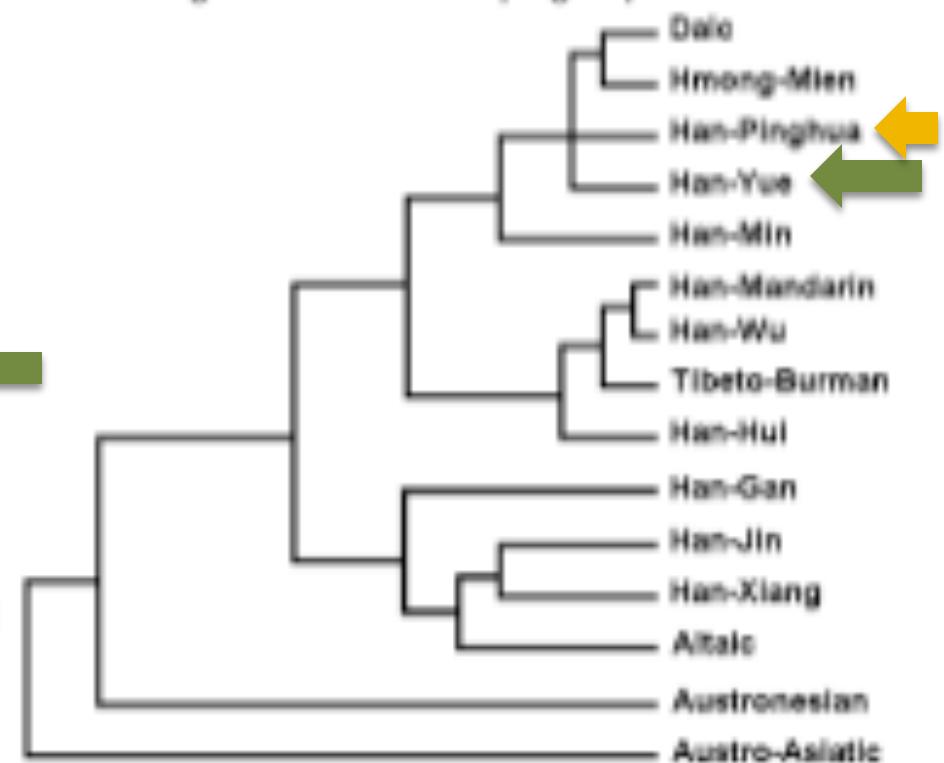
( $M$  = proportion of northern Han contribution)

- Gan, Pan et al. 2008 dendrogram clustering of Han Chinese branches and other East Asian phyla:

**A Dendrogram of Y chromosome haplogroups**



**B Dendrogram of mtDNA haplogroups**



Note: 'Han-Pinghua' = Northern Pinghua

# Conclusions

- Southern Pinghua is in contact with Zhuang, Yue (Cantonese) and SW Mandarin;
- (My hypothesis:) Pinghua represents a mix of Western Yue and an earlier stage of Northern Chinese;
- Due to social restrictions, ('Core') Southern Pinghua has largely retained Northern Chinese-like syntactic patterns, and resisted assimilation by Zhuang (in comparison with Cantonese).

# Bibliography

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- Sybesma, Rint P.E. 2008. Zhuang: A Tai language with some Sinitic characteristics – Postverbal ‘can’ in Zhuang, Cantonese, Vietnamese and Lao. In Muysken, Pieter. (ed.). *From Linguistic Areas to Areal Linguistics*: 221-274. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
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# Acknowledgements

- My Southern Pinghua consultants.



- *Research funded by the European Research Council under the European Community's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) / ERC grant agreement n° 230388.*

# Similarities with Cantonese

Nanning Pinghua *surpass* construction:

1. 我 高 過 你  
 ɳa<sup>24</sup> kau<sup>53</sup> ku<sup>55</sup> nəi<sup>13</sup>  
 1SG tall SURPASS you  
 ‘I am taller than you.’

Cantonese *surpass* construction:

1. 我 高 過 你  
 ngo<sup>5</sup> gou<sup>2</sup> gwo<sup>3</sup> nei<sup>5</sup>  
 1SG tall SURPASS you  
 ‘I am taller than you.’

Standard Mandarin *compare* construction:

1. 我 比 你 高  
 wǒ bǐ nǐ gāo  
 1SG COMPARE you tall  
 ‘I (shall) go first.’

# Demonstratives

- ▶ 個 (k)e<sup>55</sup>
- ▶ 二 ni<sup>22</sup> CONTRASTIVE DISTAL (rarely used)
- ▶ must be followed by a classifier

1. 個 \* (隻) (雞兒) 是 我 個  
     kə<sup>55</sup> \*(tʃət<sup>3</sup>) (kei<sup>53</sup> ni<sup>11</sup>) li<sup>22</sup> ɲa<sup>13</sup> kə<sup>55</sup>  
     DEM CL       chicken   be 1SG LIG  
     二 \* (隻) 有 是 我 個  
     ni<sup>22</sup> \*(tʃət<sup>3</sup>) mi<sup>13</sup> li<sup>22</sup> ɲa<sup>13</sup> kə<sup>55</sup>  
     DEM CL       NEG be 1SG LIG  
     ‘This (chicken) is mine, that is not mine.’

- ▶ Even when 個 kə<sup>55</sup> is not overtly used, the distal 二 ni<sup>22</sup> still convey a sense of contrast.

1. 我 愛 二 隻 狗兒  
     ɲa<sup>13</sup> ai<sup>55</sup> ni<sup>22</sup> tʃət<sup>3</sup> kəu<sup>33</sup> ni<sup>11</sup>  
     1SG like DEM CL puppy  
     ‘I like **that** puppy.’

# Demonstratives

- 耳 kəŋ<sup>33</sup> ‘like this/ like that’ or ‘so’:

1. 就 是 耳  
tʃəu<sup>22</sup> i<sup>22</sup> kəŋ<sup>33</sup>  
then be like.so  
'It is like so.'

2. 你 耳 做 有 那門 根據 ?  
nəi<sup>13</sup> kəŋ<sup>33</sup> tʃɔ<sup>55</sup> jəu<sup>13</sup> na<sup>33</sup> mun<sup>11</sup> kən<sup>53</sup> kəi<sup>55</sup>  
2SG like.so do exist what basis  
'What basis do you have for doing it like this?'

# Classifiers

## ► Most common: 隻 $tʃət^3$

1. 佢 有 兩 隻 仔, 一 隻 女  
 kəi<sup>13</sup> jəu<sup>13</sup> ləŋ<sup>13</sup> tʃət<sup>3</sup> tʃai<sup>33</sup>, et<sup>3</sup> tʃət<sup>3</sup> nəi<sup>13</sup>  
 3SG have two CL son one CL daughter  
 ‘S/he has two sons and one daughter.’

2. 佢 去過 好多 隻 國家  
 kəi<sup>13</sup> həi<sup>25</sup>-kə<sup>55</sup> hau<sup>33</sup>tu<sup>53</sup> tʃət<sup>3</sup> kək<sup>3</sup>ka<sup>53</sup>  
 3SG go-EXPR many CL country  
 ‘S/he has been to many countries.’

- 個 kə<sup>55</sup>, 間 kan<sup>53</sup>, 件 kin<sup>22</sup>, 張 tʃεŋ<sup>53</sup>, 條 tiu<sup>11</sup>, 本 pən<sup>33</sup>, 睨 tuk<sup>2</sup>, 封 fun<sup>53</sup>,兜 təu<sup>53</sup>, 把 pa<sup>55</sup>, 轆 luk<sup>5</sup>, 支 ?, 塊 wai<sup>55</sup>...
- 回 wəi<sup>11</sup>, 次 tʃʰi<sup>25</sup>, 場 tʃεŋ<sup>11</sup>, 斤 kən<sup>53</sup>, 瓶 pən<sup>11</sup>, 碗 un<sup>33</sup>, 班 pan<sup>53</sup>, 對toi<sup>55</sup>...

# Classifiers

- Mass classifier: 的 tik<sup>5</sup>

1. 個 的 水 匀扎扎  
kə<sup>55</sup> tik<sup>5</sup> lui<sup>33</sup> jən<sup>53</sup>-tʃat<sup>5</sup>tʃat<sup>5</sup>  
DEM CL:MASS water cold-IDEO  
'The water is cold.'

2. 一 的 婦女 生 細仔仔  
ət<sup>3</sup> tik<sup>5</sup> fu<sup>22</sup>nəi<sup>13</sup> ləi<sup>53</sup> tʃai<sup>53</sup>nəm<sup>53</sup>tʃai<sup>33</sup>  
one CL:MASS woman give.birth child  
'Some women give birth to babies.'

# Personal pronouns

- 

	SINGULAR	PLURAL
1 <sup>ST</sup> EXCL	我 $\text{ŋa}^{13}$	我隊 $\text{ŋa}^{13} \text{tɔi}^{22}$
1 <sup>ST</sup> INCL		伝隊 $\text{wən}^{11} \text{tɔi}^{22}$
2 <sup>ND</sup>	你 $\text{nəi}^{13}$	你隊 $\text{nəi}^{13} \text{tɔi}^{22}$
3 <sup>RD</sup>	佢 $\text{kəi}^{13}$	佢隊 $\text{kəi}^{13} \text{tɔi}^{22}$