

<i>čon-</i>	'jump'
<i>thuk thuk čonbə</i>	'to palpitate'
<i>piŋ piŋ čonbə</i>	'to beat at the rhythm of a pulse'
<i>phən phən čonbə</i>	'to jump jerkily'
<i>phəraŋ phəraŋ čonbə</i>	'to take jumps in quick succession'
<i>phraŋ phraŋ čonbə</i>	'to jump in a bouncing fashion'
<i>láv-</i>	'soft'
<i>nəp nəp ləwbə</i>	'to be supple'
<i>həw-</i>	'start'
<i>gruŋ gruŋ həwbə</i>	'to be a tumultuous start'
<i>haŋ-</i>	'open'
<i>sət sət haŋbə</i>	'to open in quick succession'
<i>húk-</i>	'eat'
<i>kok kok húkpə</i>	'to put into the mouth in quick succession'
<i>sa-</i>	'hot'
<i>phoŋ phoŋ sabə</i>	'to get so hot that steam appears'
<i>lumbuumbu sabə</i>	'to be lukewarm'
<i>sít-</i>	'blow'
<i>liri liri súpə</i>	'for the wind to blow softly'

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Chapter 9

Functional and pragmatic aspects

This chapter describes the encoding of epistemic modality and pragmatics by the formal categories covered in Chapters 3–7, concentrating on how the force of direct speech acts are attenuated through particular lexical or affixal morphology and through indirect speech acts. I also discuss how the formal categories discussed in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 are used to encode evidentiality.

9.1 Indirect speech acts

In chapter 5, I showed how sentence types are signalled in Meithei and I described what speech acts these sentence types perform. The default mapping between a sentence type and the speech act it conveys can be utilized through unconventional mappings to modify the communicative force of a particular sentence. In many cases it is culturally more appropriate to use an indirect speech act or in some other way attenuate the force of a direct speech act.

9.1.1 Commanding

The force of a command issued through the use of *-u* 'imperative' and *-nu* 'prohibitive' can be attenuated either through particular words or affixes or through the use of interrogative or supplicative sentences.

9.1.1.1 Attenuating commands with words or affixes

A command can take the shape of a request through the use of the words *čanbidúnə* 'please', *thəwǰánbidúnə* 'kindly', or *nínsibidúnə* 'affectionately' (Ch. Yashawanta Singh 1984 and B. Premavati Devi 1988).

- (1) a. *čanbidúnə* *isiŋ ədu* *thəkpiyu*
 čan -pi -túnə isiŋ ə -tu thək -pi -u
 let -REC -ING water ATT -ddet drink -REC -IMP
 please water that please drink
 'Please drink the water!'

- b. *thəwʃánbidúnə* *əynə*
 thəw -ján⁹⁹ -pi -túnə əy -nə
 duty -let -REC -ING I -CNTR
 kindly I
- háyʃəribəsi* *yábiyu*
 háy -čə -li -pəsi yá -pi -u
 say -SELF -PROG -DCOMP agree -REC -IMP
 saying that for yourself please accept
 'Kindly accept my request!'

- c. *núʃsibidúnə* *layrik əsi*
 níŋ -si -pi -túnə layrik ə -si
 desire -PDET -REC -ING book ATT -pdet
 please book this
- əyónədə* *píbiro*
 əy -ŋón -tə pí -pi -lə -o
 I -to -LOC give -REC -INT -SOLCT
 to me won't you please give
 'Please give this book to me!'

The force of a command can also be reduced by placing an easily attainable upper limit to the task that the addressee will have to perform in order to fulfill the conditions of the imperative. This limit is indicated by use of *khərə* 'some' as in (1d) or *əmuktə* 'just once' as in (1e).

- (1) d. *Tombəgi* *nabə* *khərə* *həŋbiru*
 Tomba -ki na -pə khərə həŋ -pi -lu -u
 Tomba -GEN sick -NOM some ask -REC -ADIR-IMP
 Tomba's to be sick some please go and ask
 'Please go and inquire about Tomba's illness.'

- e. *nəhákne* *Tombədə* *əygi*
 nə -hák -nə Tombə -tə əy -ki
 2P -here -CNTR Tomba -LOC I -GEN
 you to Tomba my
- pəysadugi* *mərəmdə*
 pəysa -tu -ki mə -lém -tə

- əmuktə* *núʃsínkho*
 ə -muk -tə níŋ -sín -khi -o
 ATT -once -LOC desire -wise -STILL -SOLCT
 once again inform
 'Please (just do this and) inform Tomba about my money.'

When the two adverbs are used in conjunction the task is made to seem easier still.

- (1) f. *əygi* *wá* *əse* *khərə*
 əy -ki wá ə -si khərə
 I -GEN word ATT -pdet some
 my word this some

- əmuktə* *tábīyu*
 ə -muk -tə tá -pi -u
 ATT -once -LOC listen -REC -IMP
 once again please listen
 'Please listen to me!'

The force of a command can also be reduced with suffixes that urge the hearer to do some action for the sake of the speaker, for the hearer's own sake, or because the doing of the action is the right thing to do. These are *-pi* 'V for someone other than self' as in (1g); *-čə* 'reflexive', which urges the hearer to perform the relevant action for his/her own sake as in (1h,i); and *-həw* 'inceptive' which indicates an objective evaluation that it would be beneficial for V to be performed as in (1j,k).

- (1) g. *thəkpírənu*
 thək -pi -lə -nu
 drink -REC -PRO -PROBH
 'Please don't smoke!'

- h. *thúnə* *hənləkčəw*
 thú -nə hən -lək -čə -u
 quick -ADV return -DISTAL -SELF -IMP
 quickly return
 '...please return soon.'

- i. *nəŋnə lakpədə čák čárakčəw*
 nəŋ -nə lak -pə -tə čák čá -lək -čə -u
 you -CNTR come -NOM -LOC rice eat -DISTAL -SELF -IMP
 you upon coming food eat
 'Eat before you come (or you won't feel good).'

- j. *nəŋ əsida layhəw*
 nəŋ ə -si -tə lay -həw -u
 you ATT -pdet -LOC be -START -IMP
 you here sleep
 'You sleep here (that will be best).'

- k. *tačawnə phəhəwge*
 tačaw -nə phə -həw -ke
 elder brother -CNTR good -START -OPT
 by elder brother to want it to be good

kánnəhəwge

kánnə -həw -ke
 use -START -OPT
 to want to be useful

'Elder brother, you want it to be good, you want to make it useful.'

9.1.1.2 Attenuating the force of commands through indirect speech

Declarative, interrogative, solictive and supplicative sentences can be used to issue a command or request. A suggestion for some course of action may be expressed in a declarative sentence as in (2a).

- (2) a. *nəŋ məphám ədudə*
 nəŋ mə -phám ə -tu -tə
 you NM -place ATT -ddet -LOC
 you place that
- čətpə pháy*
 čət -pə phə -í
 go -NOM good -NHYP
 to go is good
 'You had better give this shirt to Tomba.'

The force of a command can be softened by framing it indirectly in the form of a solictive as in (2b). Additional weakening of imperative force can be accomplished with *-pi* 'action done for others' as in (2c).

- (2) b. *phámmo*
 phám -lə -o
 sit -INT -SOLCT
 '(Won't you) go ahead and sit!'

- c. *oza oza leŋbiro*
 oja oja leŋ -pi -lə -o
 teacher teacher go ahead -REC -INT -SOLCT
 'Teacher, teacher, won't you go ahead and go!'

Expressing a command with *-u* 'imperative' or an interrogative with *-o* 'solictive' are functionally distinct.¹⁰⁰ An imperative is used to command a stranger or someone of the same age as the speaker, while an interrogative with *-o* 'solictive' is used for commands to younger familiars or between familiars that have an intimate or well-established relationship (husband to wife, son to mother, student to teacher). The interrogative with *-o* 'solictive' is an unacceptable form for a command to a stranger (Ch. Yashawanta Singh 1984: 224).

Such conventional appropriateness guidelines can be utilized creatively by a speaker to negotiate the social distance he/she would like to place between himself/herself and the hearer. For example in (2d), the speaker uses both an *-u* 'imperative' and *-o* 'solictive' with the same addressee, establishing first a distant relationship and then moving to a more intimate one.

- (2) d. *yeŋbiyune məkha laykaygi*
 yeŋ -pi -u -ne mə -kha lay -kay -ki
 see -REC -IMP -SI NM -south be -roost -GEN
 please look southern our neighborhood

Pebəmgi Ibotombinə
 Pebəm -ki Ibotombi -nə
 Pebəm -GEN Ibotombi -CNTR
 family Pebam Ibotombi of

<i>təwribəse</i>		<i>yeŋbiyo</i>	
təw -li -pəsi	yeŋ -pi -o		
do -PROG -DCOMP	see -REC -SOLCT		
what is doing	please see, will you		
'...see what that Ibotombi Pebam from the south side of our neighborhood is doing, please look at that.'			

When an imperative is used unconventionally between familiars, the sentence has a sarcastic interpretation (Ch. Yashawanta Singh 1984: 224).

(2) e. <i>habiyu</i>	<i>habiyu</i>
ha -pi -u	ha -pi -u
have -REC -IMP	have -REC -IMP
'Please have it, please have it.'	

There are certain situations where a choice of ways to issue a command do not exist. When one is asked permission to V, for example, the appropriate way to give permission is to use an *-o* 'solicative'.¹⁰¹

(2) f. Request:	<i>čátge</i>	Response: <i>čátlo</i>
	čát -ke	čát -lə -o
	go -OPT	go -INT -SOLCT
	'I'd like to go.'	'Why not go!'

Interrogatives express commands by asking whether the addressee wants to perform a required action as in (2g,h), what the intent of the addressee is about the action that needs to be performed as in (2i), and what the best course to follow would be as in (2j).

(2) g. <i>phurit əsi</i>	<i>Tombadə</i>	<i>pigerá</i>
phurit ə -si	Tomba -tə pí -ke háy -pə -lə	
shirt ATT -pdet	Tomba -LOC give -OPT say -NOM -INT	
shirt this	to Tomba do you want to give	
'Will you give this shirt to Tomba?' (Literally: 'Do you say you want to give...')		

h. <i>nəŋ isáy ədu</i>	<i>səku</i>
nəŋ isáy ə -tu	sək -u
you song ATT -ddet	sing -IMP
you song that	sing

<i>səkkerá</i>	
sək -ke háy -pə -lə	
sing -OPT say -NOM -INT	
do you want to sing	
'Sing that song, will you?'	

i. <i>fijól əmə</i>	<i>hóngadəra</i>
phi -čón ə -mə	hón -kə -tə -lə
cloth -weave ATT -one	change -POT -NES -INT
dress one	will you change
'Will you (kindly) change into another dress?'	

j. <i>phičól əmə</i>	<i>hónbənə</i>
phi -čón ə -mə	hón -pə -nə
cloth -long ATT -one	change -NOM -INST
dress one	for changing

<i>phəgadəra</i>	
phə -kə -tə -lə	
good -POT -NES -INT	
will it be good	
'Wouldn't it be better to change into another dress?'	

A supplicative is used to urge the listener to join in some action with the speaker; therefore, when it is used to issue a command, the speaker is implying that both the speaker and hearer will be performing the action. This indirect method of issuing a request helps the hearer save face since he/she does not have to follow a command but is invited to participate in an action. Ch. Yashawanta Singh (1984: 281) illustrates that the request can be made extremely polite by suggesting that the invitation is issued by the hearer as in (2k).

(2) k. <i>fijól əmə</i>	<i>hónkhisirá</i>
phi -čón ə -mə	hón -khi -si háy -pə -lə
cloth -long ATT -one	change -STILL -SUP say -NOM -INT
dress one	shall we change
'Would you kindly change into another dress? (Literally: 'Are you saying that we should change into another dress?')	

9.1.2 Requesting permission

A polite and respectful way to ask for permission is with *-ke* 'optative' which expresses the desire of the speaker to perform some action as in (3a). The request is extra polite with *-čə* 'V for the sake of self' as in (3b). A less idiomatic but acceptable way of asking for permission is to make the optative clause a subordinate clause as in (3c).

- (3) a. *əy apəl čáge*
 I apəl čá -ke
 I apple eat -OPT
 'May I eat this apple?' (Literally: 'I intend/wish to eat this apple.')
- b. *čətčəge*
 čət -čə -ke
 go -SELF -OPT
 'May I go?' (Literally: 'I wish for myself to go.')
- c. *əy učéksi pháge yágadra*
 əy učék -si phá -ke yá -kə -tə -lə
 I bird -PDET catch -OPT agree -POT -NES -INT
 I this bird want to catch will you agree
 'May I catch this bird?' (Literally: 'I intend to catch this bird, do you agree?')

9.1.3 Warning

In the default case, warnings and admonishments are issued through imperative or prohibitive constructions. A warning may also be given through a permissive where a speaker knows that a state is undesirable but feigns indifference as to whether or not it is attained (N. Nonigopal Singh 1987: 84). Examples such as (4a,b) can be used as a kind of warning, translating roughly as 'Just let V happen, see if I care'.

- (4) a. *sasənu*
 sa -sənu
 hot -PERMIT
 'Let him suffer from the heat!'
- b. *má padəsənu*
 má pa -tə -sənu
 he read -NEG -PERMIT
 he don't let him read
 'Let him not read (see if I care)!'

9.1.4 Persuading

Exhortations can be expressed through causative constructions; for example, in (5a) someone (2nd person) can be urged to allow the speaker to perform an action. The person who is to perform the action may be a third party as in (5b).

- (5) a. *əybu thábák ədu təwhəllu*
 əy -pu thábák ə -tu təw -həl -u
 I -PAT work ATT -ddet do -CAUS -IMP
 I work that cause to do
 'Let me do the work.' (Literally: 'Cause me to do the work.')
- b. *phámhəngənu*
 phém -hən -kə -nu
 sit -CAUS -POT -PROBH
 'Don't let him sit!'

9.1.5 Blessing or cursing

Blessings or curses can be expressed through imperatives as in (6a,b) or with the solictive as in (6c).

- (6) a. *pátlu*
 pát -u
 ulcer -IMP
 'May you suffer from scabies!'
- b. *nuṇṇayyu*
 nuṇṇay -u
 happy -IMP
 'Be happy!'
- c. *khállo*
 khón -o
 wise -SOLCT
 'Be wise!'

Similarly when *-sənu* 'permissive' is used with stative verbs, the speaker is urging the listener to allow the state referred to in the verb to be attained. Thus, permissives are used to issue blessings as in (6d,e).

- (6) d. *má nuṇṇaysənu*
 má nuṇṇay -sənu
 he happy -PERMIT
 he let be happy
 'May he be happy!' (Literally: 'Let him be happy!')

- e. *ishornə nənbu thəwʃán píbə óysənnu*
 ishor -nə nən -pu thəw -čán pí -pə óy -sənu
 god -CNTR you -PAT duty -let give -NOM be -PERMIT
 god you kindness to give may it be
 'May god bless you!'

9.1.6 Indirect questions

Questions can be posed through the interjection *-ha* 'please repeat that' as in (7a). See also section 7.3.4 for a discussion of the enclitic *-ye* 'confirmative' which can also be used to solicit information.

- (7) a. Tomba: *ɲəsi*
 ɲə -si
 day -PDET
 this day
 'Today.'
- Tombi: *ha*
 ha
 intj
 what's that
 'What's that?'
- Tomba: *ɲəsi* *púnj* *baro*
 ɲə -si *púnj* *baro*
 day -PDET time twelve
 this day hour twelve
 'Today at twelve o'clock.'

The quotative *háybə* along with rising intonation can solicit information. In (7b), the speaker (the character, Son) asks a participant in the conversation to restate in clearer terms what he/she has just implied: namely, that the police have arrived to arrest Nimay. With this use of the quotative, the speaker indicates a certain amount of skepticism or uncertainty about the questioned proposition.

- (7) b. *Nimay phába lakʔibá*
 Nimay phá -pə lak -li háy -pə
 Nimay arrest -NOM come -PROG say -NOM
 Nimay to arrest coming
 'You mean to say, they've come to arrest Nimay?'

9.2 Evidentiality

Evidentiality -- the identification of the source of information (Bybee 1985: 184) -- is encoded in disparate formal categories in Meithei. As noted by Willett (1988: 51), "there are only a few languages in the world where evidentiality is represented by a distinct grammatical category; rather its meaning is usually coded as part of the modal system of a language with overlap into certain areas of tense and aspect." In Meithei evidential values are signalled through derivational verb morphology (in particular the indirect evidence, aspect and direction markers, see section 7.1); the class of enclitics called attitude markers (see section 7.3); the complementation system (such as the choice of nominalizer or complementizing quotative, see sections 6.1 and 6.2); and the type of question construction used (see section 5.6).

9.2.1 Evidentiality in the complementation system

In choosing a particular nominalizing or complement-constructing device to use in a given utterance, the speaker must consider the evidential value placed on the subordinated proposition, since particular nominalizers, complementizers and quotatives convey distinct evidential values.

9.2.1.1 Lexical nominalizers

As described in section 6.1.1, a phrase or clause may be nominalized by a lexical nominalizer like *-jat* 'type' which indicates that an action or state has occurred or come into being on the basis of some indirect evidence. For example in (8a) the speaker sees that some object is battered and from this draws the most probable conclusion that it was beaten. Similarly in (8b), the speaker professes to have at first been unaware about the writing of the letter in question but has now become aware of it (through someone else's report of the letter to him).

- (8) a. *məsi* *phúrəbəjatni*
 mə -si phú -lábə -jat -ni
 NM -pdet beat -HAVING -TYPE -COP
 this is a type of having been beaten
 'It looks like it might have been beaten.'

- b. *mədəy* *əy əhənnə*
 mə -tu -təgi əy ə -hən -nə
 NM -ddet -ABL I ATT -first -CNTR
 then I old man

məhóndə *Johndə* *čithi*
 mə -hón -tə John -tə čithi
 3P -to -LOC John -LOC letter
 to him to John letter

irəmjatne *əyse* *pieyčdi*
 i -ləm -jat -ne əy -si pieyčdi
 write -EVD -TYPE -SI I -PDET Ph.D.
 wrote my Ph.D.
 'Then, it seems that the old man wrote a letter to John for my Ph.D.
 under his supervision.'

The nominalizer *-jat* may also be used with the *-lə* 'interrogative' to indicate that it would be contrary to the speaker's expectation if the proposition in the nominalized phrase actually occurred. If the proposition has already come into being, the speaker expresses surprise at this occurrence.

- (8) c. *má* *həraŋ* *skul*
 má *həraŋ* *skul*
 he yesterday school
 he yesterday school

čətpəjatlə
 čət -pə -jat -lə
 go -NOM -TYPE -INT
 'Could it be that he went to school yesterday?!'

9.2.1.2 The evidential value of nominalized clauses

Speakers make functionally determined choices between using a verb with finite inflection or a nominalized phrase with copula *-ni* as the main predication of the clause. In (9a,b), for example, where a nominalized clause is made into a copulative sentence, the speaker indicates knowledge about the truth of a proposition; but in (9c), which has a finite verb, the assertion does not imply the truth of the proposition with the same force.

- (9) a. *əynə* *phi* *ədu* *ləŋthok?əbəni*
 əy -nə phi ə -tu ləŋ -thok -lábə -ni
 I -CNTR cloth ATT -ddet throw -OUT -HAVING -COP
 I that cloth have thrown out
 '(It is that) I have thrown out that cloth.'

- b. *má* *həyhák* *tumməkəni*
 má *həyhák* *tum* -lək -pə -ni
 he wait -here sleep -DISTAL -NOM -COP
 he up to now was sleeping
 '(I could swear that) up to now he was here sleeping.'

- c. *əynə* *phi* *ədu*
 əy -nə phi ə -tu
 I -CNTR cloth ATT -ddet
 I cloth that

ləŋthokhre
 ləŋ -thok -khi -lə -e
 throw -OUT -STILL -PERF -ASRT
 have thrown out
 'I threw out that cloth.'

The nominalizer *-pə* may be used to head a complement when the speaker has some knowledge supporting the truth of the complement. Consequently, this complementizer is not found with verbs such as 'believe' or 'think'.

The knowledge supporting the truth of the proposition may be based on sensory evidence as in (9d), predictable habitual activity as in (9e,f) or a generally known fact as in (9g).

- (9) d. *mána* *lāybákta* *pukhám*
 má -nə ləy -pák -tə pu -khém
 he -CNTR land -broad -LOC carry -obstruct
 he on the floor plate

thám̐ba *úy*
 thám -pə ú -í
 place -NOM see -NHYP
 placing see

'(I) see him placing the plates on the floor.'

- e. *Ramnə* *Tombibu* *thoybə* *pamde*
 Ram -nə Tombi -pu thoy -pə pam -tə -e
 Ram -CNTR Tombi -PAT first -NOM like -NEG -ASRT
 Ram Tombi to win does not want
 'Ram doesn't like the fact that Tombi won.'

- f. *mána* *ten* *kappə* *háy*
 má -nə ten kap -pə həy -í
 he -CNTR arrow shoot -NOM proficient -NHYP
 he arrow shooting is proficient
 'He knows how to shoot an arrow.'

- g. *səngom* *thákpə* *pháy*
 sən -khom thák -pə phá -í
 cow -udder drink -NOM good -NHYP
 milk to drink good
 'To drink milk is good.'

Determiner complementizers are used when the proposition in the complement is an undisputed fact in the discourse. *-pəsi* is used if the event described in the complement either takes place in the immediate past, is to take place in the immediate future, or is a permanent condition.

- (9) h. *Tombəbu* *kasidəgi*
 Tombə -pu ka -si -təgi
 Tomba -PAT room -PDET -ABL
 Tomba from this room

čáthənkhibəsi *əynəni*
 čət -hən -khi -pəsi əy -nə -ni
 go -CAUS -STILL -DCOMP I -CNTR -COP
 that caused to go it is I

'I am the one that caused Tomba to leave the room. (We are now sitting in the room, and Tomba has recently left.)'

If the event described takes place in the remote past or describes a single occurrence of an event, then *-pədu* is used.

- (9) i. *Tombəbu* *kadudəgi* *čáthənkhibədu*
 Tomba -pu ka -tu -təgi čət -hən -khi -pədu
 Tomba -PAT room -DDET -ABL go -CAUS -STILL -DCOMP
 Tomba from the room that caused to go

əynəni
 əy -nə -ni
 I -CNTR -COP
 it is I

'I am the one that caused Tomba to leave the room (in the past).'

- j. *ŋəraŋ* *isiŋ* *takhibədu*
 ŋəraŋ isiŋ ta -khi -pədu
 yesterday water fall -STILL -DCOMP
 yesterday water that would fall

əynə *khəŋŋi*
 əy -nə khəŋ -í
 I -CNTR know -NHYP
 I know

'I know the water was turned on yesterday.'

Since a complement headed by *-pəsi* or *-pədu* indicates an undisputed fact, these complementizers do not occur with verbs that express potentially unrealized states or events (verbs such as 'think and believe'), or verbs that indicate an uncertainty of outcome (verbs such as 'wants to, would like it if'). Thus (9k) is ungrammatical.

- (9) k. **nupidunə* *ŋádu*
 nu -pi -tu -nə *ŋá* -tu
 person -female -DDET -CNTR fish -DDET
 that woman that fish

phábasi *pammí*
phá -pəsi *pam* -í
 catch -DCOMP like -NHYP
 that catching wants
 'The woman wants to catch fish.'

9.2.1.3 The distribution of the complementizers

The distribution of the four complementizers *háybə*, *háybasi*, *háybədu*, and *háyənə* can be determined by taking into consideration how much evidence the speaker has for the proposition expressed in the complement and the tense of the main clause. Each complementizer is used with some unique combination of these two values.

The quotative complementizer *háybasi* is used when the speaker is certain about the truth of the proposition as in (10a).

- (10) a. *məháknə* *thoyre*
 mə -há-k -nə *thoy* -lə -e
 3P -here -CNTR first -PERF -ASRT
 she had won

háybasi *Tombinə* *khəŋŋí*
háy -pəsi *Tombi* -nə *khəŋ* -í
 say -DCOMP *Tombi* -CNTR know -NHYP
 that *Tombi* knew
 'Tombi knew that she had won.'

When used in the future tense, *háybasi* indicates that the proposition in the complement will certainly come into being; for example, in (10b) the speaker conveys his/her certainty about the outcome of the elections.

- (10) b. *botsi* *mánə* *kakhigədra*
 bot -si *má* -nə *ka* -khi -kə -tə -lə
 vote -PDET he -CNTR gain -STILL -POT -NES -INT

- háybasi* *əy kí*
háy -pəsi *əy* *kí* -í
 say -DCOMP I fear -NHYP
 that I fear
 'I am afraid (because) he is certain to be winner of the elections.'

háybasi can be opposed to *háyənə*, which is used when a speaker is not sure about the truth of a proposition as in (10c).

- (10) c. *šuti* *mənuŋdə* *Dilidə*
 čhuti *mə* -nuŋ -tə *Dili* -tə
 holiday NM -in -LOC *Delhi* -LOC
 holiday during *Delhi*

čətpəse *əphəbə* *wákhəlŋi*
čət -pəsi *ə* -phə -pə *wá* -khəlŋ -ni
 go -DCOMP ATT -good -NOM word -think -COP
 that going good idea is

háyənə *Tombənə* *yárammí*
háy -nə *Tomba* -nə *yá* -ləm -í
 say -INST *Tomba* -CNTR agree -EVD -NHYP
 that *Tomba* agrees

'Tomba thinks that it is a good idea to go to Delhi for the holidays.'

In the future tense, the use of *háyənə* indicates that the proposition in the complement might come into being, but the speaker has no evidence to show that it certainly will, as in (10d,e). For this reason *háyənə* can be found to occur with verbs that describe the attitude of the speaker towards the subordinated proposition (e.g. verbs such as 'believe, think, and doubt') and it is never used with verbs of knowledge or acquisition of knowledge (e.g. 'know', 'discover'). This explains a further fact about the distribution of *háyənə*: it is the quotative-complementizer that is used with verbs of saying where the speaker reports the words of someone else but cannot be sure of their truth value, as in (10f,g).

- (10) d. *nón* *čugəni* *háyənə* *əynə* *tházáy*
 nón *ču* -kə -ni *háy* -nə *əy* -nə *tházə* -í
 rain fall -POT -COP say -INST I -CNTR believe-NHYP
 rain will fall that I believe
 'I believe that it will rain.'

e. <i>botsi</i>	<i>mána</i>	<i>kakhigædra</i>				
bot -si	má -nə	ka -khi -kə -tə -lə				
vote -PDET	he -CNTR	rise -STILL -POT -NES -INT				
this vote	he	will win				

háynə əy kɪ
háynə əy ki -í
 say -INST I fear -NHYP
 that I fear
 'I am afraid that he (might just) be the winner of the elections.'

f. <i>Tombəna</i>	<i>Tombi</i>	<i>čátikhre</i>				
Tombə -nə	Tombi	čát -khi -lə -e				
Tombə -CNTR	Tombi	go -STILL -PERF -ASRT				
Tomba	Tombi	has gone				

háynə/háybəsi *háyrəmmi*
háynə háy -ləm -í
 say -INST say -EVD -NHYP
 that said
 'Tomba said (to me, the speaker) that Tombi left.'

g. <i>Tombəbu</i>	<i>həyeŋ</i>	<i>phúgəni</i>				
Tomba -pu	həyeŋ	phú -kə -ni				
Tomba -PAT	tomorrow	beat -POT -COP				
Tomba	tomorrow	will beat				

háynə/háybəsi háy
háynə háy -í
 say -INST say -NHYP
 that said
 'It is said that Tomba will be beaten tomorrow.'

As seen in (10f), *háybəsi* cannot be used since the proposition involves hearsay. In (10g), *háybəsi* is marginally acceptable if the event of beating is indisputably going to take place but in (10f,g) *háynə* is the most appropriate complementizer.

The use of *háybə* indicates that the speaker has some evidence (not necessarily visual) about the truth of the proposition expressed in the complement. Its use is restricted to verbs such as 'know' and 'see' and it never occurs with propositional attitude verbs such as 'believe' and 'think'. Note that *háynə* cannot be used in (10h), since *háynə* can only occur with propositional attitude

verbs. (Thus, if the complement in (10h) occurred with *khəlli* 'thinks, feels', *háynə* could be the complementizer.)

(10) h. <i>Raninə</i>	<i>Tombidə</i>	<i>layrik</i>	<i>píbəsi</i>			
Rani -nə	Tombi -tə	layrik	pí	-pəsi		
Rani -CNTR	Tombi -LOC	book	give	-DCOMP		
Rani	Tombi	book	that giving			

Johnnə *phátte* *háybə/háynə* *khəŋŋi*
 John -nə phá -tə -e háy -pə khəŋ -í
 John -CNTR good -NEG -ASRT say -NOM know -NHYP
 John is not good that know
 'John knows that it is not good that Rani gave the book to Tombi.'

i. <i>má thónj mərumdə</i>	<i>lotli</i>					
má thónj mə -lum -tə	lot -li					
he door NM -behind -LOC	hide -PROG					
he door behind	hiding					

háybə əy khəŋŋi
háybə əy khəŋ -í
 say -NOM I know -NHYP
 that I know
 'I know that he is hiding behind the door.'

j. <i>əy čak</i>	<i>čágəni</i>	<i>háybə</i>	<i>má khəŋŋi</i>			
əy čak	čá -kə -ni	háy -pə	má khəŋ -í			
I rice eat -POT -COP	that -NOM	he	know -NHYP			
I food will eat	that	he	knows			

'He knows that I will eat.'

The quotative complementizer *háybədu* is used when the speaker has first-hand evidence of the truth of the subordinated proposition. When using it to refer to a past event, the speaker implies he/she is an eyewitness to that event.

(10) k. <i>əhəldunə</i>	<i>yén</i>	<i>húráli</i>				
ə -həl -tu -nə	yén	húrán	-li			
ATT -old -DDET -CNTR	chicken	steal	-PROG			
that old man	chicken	stealing				

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<i>háybədu</i> /*háybə/*háynə	<i>əynə</i>	<i>úy</i>	
háy -pədu	I -nə	ú	-í
say -DCOMP	I -CNTR	see	-NHYP
that	I	saw	

'I saw the old man stealing the chicken.'

When *háybədu* is used, the hearer can assume that the speaker has irrefutable facts to support the truth of the subordinated proposition. The speaker may use this expected interpretation to convince the hearer of a particular forecast for the future, by indicating that he/she has adequate facts to make such a forecast. This is limited to cases where it is clear to the speaker that his/her interlocutors may not agree with this assessment of future events and the speaker must make an extra effort to convince his/her interlocutors of the forecast being made. See (10l) where the speaker is trying to convince his skeptical family that a book he would like to publish will have a market.

(10) l. <i>layriktugi</i>	<i>məgun</i>	<i>yeŋniŋəkpa</i>	
layrik -tu	-ki	mə -kun	yeŋ -niŋ -lək -pə
book -DDET	-GEN	NM -quality	see -wish -DISTAL -NOM
of the book	quality	wishing to see	

<i>háybədu</i>	<i>məsána</i>	<i>labəne</i>	
háy -pədu	mə -sá -nə	ta -pə -ne	
say -DCOMP	3P -body -RECIP	fall -NOM -SI	
that	by itself	will fall, right?	

'The book will sell since students will want to see the quality of the book.'

Since with the use of *háybədu* the speaker is indicating a degree of knowledge about the subordinated proposition that the hearer is not privy to, *háybədu* cannot be used with present tense when the speaker and hearer have access to the same event. This point is illustrated in (10m). Where the tense of the main verb is *kawthorəmmi* (past perfect) or *kawthokʔi* (nonhypothetical past), the complement gets a past reading and *háybədu* may be used as the complementizer. If the main verb were *kawthokʔi* (progressive), *háybədu* could not be used.

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(10) m. <i>Tombəna</i>	<i>Tombina</i>	<i>mábu</i>	<i>ŋayhəwri</i>	
Tombə -nə	Tombi -nə	má -pu	ŋay -həw -li	
Tombə -CNTR	Tombi -CNTR	he -PAT	wait -START -PROG	
Tombə	Tombi	(for) him	begun waiting	

<i>háybədu</i>	<i>kawthorəmmi</i>	
háy -pədu	kaw -thok -ləm -í	
say -DCOMP	forget -OUT -EVD -NHYP	
that	forgot completely	

'Tombə forgot that Tombi had been waiting for him.'

Only one quotative complementizer is possible per sentence, except with verbs of saying and reporting, where each complementizer indicates that the speaker is one additional step removed from the actual reporting of some event. This is illustrated in (10n) where Tombə is reported as stating that Tombi has gone. There is an implication that Tombə has witnessed Tombi's departure. This is in keeping with the earlier description of *háynə* as occurring only with complements for which the speaker has no direct perceptual evidence, since the speaker hasn't seen Tombi leave but only heard about the departure from someone else.

(10) n. <i>Tombəna</i>	<i>Tombi</i>	<i>čátkhre</i>	
Tombə -nə	Tombi	čát -khi -lə -e	
Tombə -CNTR	Tombi	go -STILL -PERF -ASRT	
Tombə	Tombi	has gone	

<i>háynə</i>	<i>háyrəmmi</i>	
háy -nə	háy -ləm -í	
say -INST	say -EVD -NHYP	
that	has said	

'Tombə said that Tombi went.'

If the reporting is removed a step further from the source of the original report, one more level of embedding is added. For example, in (10o) Tombə sees Tombi leaving, reports the fact of Tombi's departure to a friend, who in turn reports Tombə's statement to the speaker, who is now reporting the departure to the hearer.

- (10) o. *Tombəna* *Tombi* *čátkhre*
 Tombə -nə Tombi čát -khi -lə -e
 Tomba -CNTR Tombi go -STILL -PERF -ASRT
 Tomba Tombi has gone

háynə *háyrəmmi* *háyye*
 háy -nə háy -ləm -i háy -ye
 say -INST say -EVD -NHYP say -CONFM
 that said have been told that
 'Tomba told (someone to tell me) to say that Tombi went.'

There are certain types of discourse, such as political campaign speeches, where the speaker wants the audience to accept propositions as fact. This is accomplished by subordinating clauses with a quotative complementizer, which allows the speaker to give credit and responsibility about the truth of a statement to an outside authority other than the self. It is easier to imagine this outside authority, rather than the speaker, presenting unbiased information. Thus, the pragmatic function of the quotative is determined on the basis of the type of discourse it is used in. On the one hand, in personal interactions or in traditional narratives, the speaker-narrator can use the quotative to distance herself/himself from a statement to show that the truth of the statement is questionable. On the other hand, in discourses that are meant to persuade and convince, the speaker can use the quotative to distance himself/herself from a statement and, without any hint of self-aggrandizement, work to convince the hearer/audience of the validity of that statement.

9.2.1.4 Restrictions on tense and aspect in subordinate clauses

There are restrictions on the subordination of clauses in the assertive future (i.e. *V-kəni*). As seen in examples (11a-d), when *V-kəni* appears in a subordinate clause, the quotative must be used as the subordinator. This restriction is attributable to the inability of the speaker to be totally sure of the occurrence of a future event. The use of the quotative indicates that the speaker can only predict that it will take place.

- (11) a. with a relative clause

**čágəni* must be *čágəni háybə*
 čá -kə -ni -pə čá -kə -ni háy-pə
 eat -POT -COP -NOM eat -POT -COP say-NOM

- b. with a complement

čágənibədu* must be *čágəni* *háybədu*
 čá -kə -ni -pədu čá -kə -ni háy -pədu
 eat -POT -COP -DCOMP eat -POT -COP say -DCOMP
 'that (he) will eat'

- c. with a complement

kolomdu *mána* *páykhəgəni*
 kolom -tu má -nə páy -khi -lə -kə -ni
 pen -DDET he -CNTR hold -STILL -PRO -POT -COP
 that pen he will hold

háybədu *čúmmi*
 háy -pədu čúm -i
 say -DCOMP true -NHYP
 that is true
 'It is true that he is going to hold the pen.'

- d. with adverbial subordination

čágənirəbədi*
 *čá -kə -ni -ləbədi
 eat -POT -COP -IF

must be:

čágəni *háyrəbədi*
 čá -kə -ni háy -lə -pə -ti
 eat -POT -COP say -PRO -NOM -DLMT
 'if (he) will eat'

A second restriction is noted by P. Madhubala Devi (1979: 178), who shows that conditional clauses headed by the sequence *-ləbədi* cannot occur with progressive and perfect aspect. Thus to make a conditional clause of (11e), the quotative must be used as the subordinator as in (11f). Implicit in the meaning of the conditional clause is the fact that the speaker has no evidence about whether or not the proposition in the embedded clause has ever existed. Thus the quotative must be used for subordination.

- (11) e. *má čák čáre/čáræmmi*
má čák čá -lə -e čá -ləm -li
 he rice eat -PERF -ASRT eat -EVD -PROG
 he meal has eaten eating
 'He has eaten/was eating.'

- f. *má čák čáre čáræmmi*
má čák čá -lə -e čá -ləm -li
 he rice eat -PERF -ASRT eat -EVD -PROG
 he meal has eaten eating

- háyræbadi pháy*
há -lə -pə -ti phé -í
 that -PRO -NOM -DLMT good -NHYP
 if that it is good
 'It is good if he has eaten/if he was eating.'

9.2.1.5 Summary

Thus the choice of complementizer is a formal representation of the meanings obtained from the superimposition of tense and evidentiality. The relevant

Table 1. The intersection of tense, evidence and complementation

Complementizer Tense		Meaning/Use
<i>V-pə</i>	present	eyewitness, habitual, generic
<i>V-pəsi</i>	present/future	generally known, existent state
<i>V-pədu</i>	past	generally known
<i>háybədu</i>	past future	eyewitness claim for sufficient evidence to infer future event/state
<i>háybəsi</i>	present future	assert to be true assert will be true
<i>háynə</i>	past/present/future	guess/belief/hearsay
<i>háybə</i>	present	inferential

tense distinctions are past, present and future. The relevant evidential distinctions are: generally known, asserted (known but nature of evidence not explicit), eyewitness, inference, guess/belief and hearsay.

9.2.2 Other evidential markings

In the inflectional morphology, as noted in Chapter 5, declarative sentences formed through the suffixation of the nonhypothetical marker indicate a mild assertion, whereas those formed through the suffixation of an assertive marker indicate a strong assertion. The strong assertion is possible because the speaker has a strong belief in the truth of the proposition being expressed. (See section 5.1 for examples and further discussion.)

Inflectional aspect in questions can indicate what previous knowledge a speaker has about the topic being questioned. In (12a), the speaker has no inkling whether or not the actor of the sentence does or does not chew betel-nut, but in (12b), with use of the perfect marker, the speaker implies that he/she knows that the actor does indulge in the habit of chewing betel-nut, so the question is whether he/she has done so recently.

- (12) a. *məhák kwá čábra*
mə -hák kwá čá -pə -lə
 he -here betel nut eat -NOM -INT
 he betel nut does he eat
 'Does he chew betel-nut?'

- b. *kwá čáræbra*
kwá čá -lə -pə -lə
 betel nut eat -PERF -NOM -INT
 betel nut has he eaten
 'Has (he) already eaten betel-nut?'

Derivational markers may also carry evidential value. Bhat and Ningomba (1986b) note that there is an implication with *-həw* 'inceptive' that the speaker is a witness to the initiation of an action.¹⁰² If the action is to take place in the future, the speaker has access to evidence that allows an accurate prediction of what is to occur in the future.

- (12) c. *núren pahawwí*
 túlen pa -həw -í
 river overflow -START -NHYP
 river began to overflow
 'The river was overflowing (when I was there).'

- d. *məhák yolhawgani*
 mə -hák yon -həw -kə -ni
 3P -here sell -START -POT -COP
 he will start to sell
 '(Under the circumstances I'm sure that) he will sell it.'

Similarly, in (12c) where *-həw* is used, the speaker indicates that he/she knows that Tomba has arrived at the place in question. In (12d), however, the speaker has no prior information about whether Tomba has come or not.

- (12) e. *həwjik Tomba lakʔəmbədu*
 həwjik Tomba lak -ləm -pədu
 now Tomba come -EVD -DCOMP
 now Tomba that coming

úhawbra
 ú -həw -pə -lə
 see -START -NOM -INT
 have seen now

'Did you just see Tomba around here?' (Literally: 'Have you begun to see that coming of Tomba's just now?')

- f. *nəŋ Tomba lakpa úbra*
 nəŋ Tomba lak -pə ú -pə -lə
 you Tomba come -NOM see -NOM -INT
 you Tomba to come did you see
 'Did you see Tomba?'

-lə 'prospective' also has evidential value in that it implies that the speaker can see or has knowledge of the culminating point of an action. For example, in (12g) the speaker bases the statement on knowledge of a specific plan of action.

- (12) g. *numit tarəhədi* *mí loynə*
 numit ta -lə -pə -ti mí loy -nə
 day fall -PRO -NOM -DLMT man all -ADV
 day if it falls man all

tumnəragəni
 tum -nə -lə -kə -ni
 sleep -RECIP -PRO -POT -COP
 will be going to sleep
 'When the sun sets we will all be going to sleep.'

For the same reason, in questions such as (12h) the speaker expects for the theme to be engaged in Ving.

- (12) h. *nəŋ yum čátłədra*
 nəŋ yum čát -lə -tə -lə
 you house go -PRO -NES -INT
 you house should you not be going
 'Aren't you on your way home yet?'

When used with the prohibitive marker, the use of *-lə* indicates that the speaker knows of the possible implementation of a plan and asks that this plan not be carried out.

- (12) i. *čátłənu* j. *háythokʔurənu*
 čát -lə -nu háy -thok -lu -lə -nu
 go -PRO -PROBH say -OUT -ADIR -PRO -PROBH
 'Don't go after all.' 'Don't reveal my secret (after all).'

Finally, the primary purpose of indirect evidence marker *-ləm*, discussed in section 7.1.2, is to indicate the evidential value of a proposition.

9.2.3 Asking questions

When asking a question, the speaker can indicate what answer he/she expects to elicit. For example, when the interrogative marker is suffixed to a noun (as in (13a), it acts like a tag marker: the speaker holds a belief that the proposition in the question is true and asks for confirmation of that belief. However, when suffixed to a verb or a nominalized verb as in (13b) the interrogative

- (13) a. *həyeŋ* *čutla*
 həyeŋ *čuti* -lə
 tomorrow holiday -INT
 tomorrow is it a holiday
 'Is tomorrow a holiday?'

- b. *sémdokʔəbro*
 sém -thok -lə -pə -lə -o
 correct -OUT -PERF -NOM -INT -SOLCT
 'Did they complete the corrections?'

9.2.4 Conclusion

In this section I have shown how the category evidentiality is encoded in various formal categories of Meithei grammar. Table 2 provides a summary of types of evidence indicated and examples of formal marking that encodes these values. The Meithei evidential system consists of a basic distinction between perceptual evidence (seen, heard or felt) and the lack of it. Even though it is a covert category (with no formal location), and is low on the "hierarchy of elicibility" (Silverstein 1979: 234), evidentiality is functionally important in Meithei since native speakers need to take evidentiality into consideration every time a clause is subordinated.

Table 2. Summary of evidential values grammatically indicated in Meithei

Evidence	Meaning	Formal marking
perceptual	eyewitness to an event	<i>háybə</i>
inferable	knowledge gained through observable evidence or intuition	nominalizer <i>-jat</i> ; <i>-ləm</i> 'indirect evidence'
indirect	assuming validity of proposition based on 2nd or 3rd hand	other quotative complementizers
indirect	knowledge found in oral history, culturally shared knowledge	nominalizer <i>-pə</i>

Appendix I Meithei-English glossary

This glossary lists Meithei roots and words that occur in this book as well as minimal pairs useful in the study of Meithei tone. Entries are alphabetized according to the Bengali alphabet. The chart below should be read, line by line, from left to right.

ə	é	a	á	i	í
u	ú	e	é	o	ó
k	kh	g	gh	ʔ	ŋ
č	čh	ʃ	ʃh		
t	th	d	dh	n	
p	ph	b	bh	m	
y	r	l	w		
ś	s	h			

Main entries are roots; secondary entries (indented one tab) are related compounds and stems. Ideophones are listed under the verbs they describe. Proper names are listed in phonetic transcription; their common transliteration on the right, along with indications as to whether it is a masculine or feminine name and the meaning or origin of the name. Place names are also included with commentary if necessary. Borrowed words are followed by [E], [B], [H] or [IA] to indicate borrowing from English, Bengali, Hindi-Urdu or from an Indo-Aryan loan not further specifiable. Dashes between words indicate compound phrases or common collocations. Dashes after a form indicate that it is a bound root. A category label, from the following set, is provided after each entry:

adj.	adjective
adv.	adverb
conj.	conjunction
comp.	complementizer
det.	determiner
ideo.	ideophone
intj.	interjection
n.	noun
pn.	pronoun
quant	quantifier