

## How does clusivity disappear? Some insights from South-Central Trans-Himalayan

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Clusivity is phylogenetically stable: in those phylogenetic groups where we can reconstruct clusivity, the daughter languages are likely to inherit the opposition (Nichols 1995; 2003; Wichmann and Holman 2009). There is also evidence that clusivity is likely to spread areally (Jacobsen 1980). Nonetheless, clusivity may also disappear – but how? We know that a language may lose clusivity as either the inclusive merges with the exclusive, or the other way around (Bates 2018).

The current study offers a historical microtypological approach that zooms in on this question in one branch of the Trans-Himalayan (Sino-Tibetan) language family: South-Central (SC; “Kuki-Chin”). Eight (out of 34) languages have lost clusivity entirely in all person paradigms, and they have done so in a remarkable variety of ways. Table 1 shows that (i) 3 languages have lost all inclusive forms entirely, with no trace remaining. In one further language (ii), the inclusive became the new 1PL.

What I want to focus on are the other languages, where inclusive forms (more specifically the bound indexes) undergo different shifts: to 1SG (iii) or 2SG (iv); to specifically first person object markers (v); and perhaps even to reflexive marking (vi), although this remains speculative.

	Changes	Attested in
(i)	INCL entirely lost	Aimol (NW), Pangkhua (C), Sentshang (M)
(ii)	INCL > 1PL (EXCL limited to SG)	Ranglong (NW)
(iii)	INCL > 1SG	Mara (M)
(iv)	INCL > 2SG	Mizo (C)
(v)	INCL > 1 OBJ	Falam Chin (C)
(vi)	?INCL > REFL	Hakha Lai (C)

Table 1. Changes in South-Central languages (subgroup in parentheses)

Results from comparative research show that for (iii)-(v), we find parallel cases of shifts attested in languages that do display clusivity while employing innovative forms. This suggests that shifting the inclusive to a new function such as these does not trigger the loss of clusivity.

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