

# **Schematic approach to evidentiality in Lhagang and Choswateng Khams**

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Journée d'Étude : Typologie des systèmes évidentiels  
Workshop: Typology of evidential systems

# Outline

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- Theoretical background
  - various concepts
  - present framework
- Lhagang Tibetan
  - Copulative and existential verbs
  - Application to the verb suffixes and auxiliaries
- Choswateng Tibetan
  - Copulative and existential verbs
  - Application to the verb suffixes and auxiliaries
- Conclusion

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# **Theoretical background**

# Evidential categories in general linguistics

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- Evidential categories in general linguistics according to Aikhenvald (2018):<sup>(1)</sup>
  - visual
  - sensory
  - inference
  - assumption
  - reported
  - quotative

(1) Aikhenvald, A. Y. 2018. Evidentiality: The framework. In *The Oxford handbook of evidentiality*.

# Evidential-related categories in general linguistics

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- However, that view excludes so-called egophoricity<sup>(1)</sup>.
- Distinguishing evidentiality from egophoricity might be useful from the general linguistic perspective.
- Grammars of Tibetic languages deal with evidentiality in the way above<sup>(2, 3)</sup>.
- Possibility of a system combining evidentiality with egophoricity.

(1) Floyd, S., E. Norcliffe & L. San Roque. 2018. *Egophoricity*. John Benjamins.

(2) Shao, M. 2018. *Hexi zoulang binwei Zangyu Dongnahu yanjiu*. Zhongshan Daxue Chubanshe.

(3) Ebihara, Sh. 2019. *Amudo-Tibetogo bunpoo*. Hituzi Syobo.

# Evidential-epistemic category of Tibetic languages

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- Evidential category of Tibetic languages:
  - access + source<sup>(1)</sup> :
    - access: egophoric-factual/statemental-sensory-inferential
    - source: reportative-quotative
  - evidential-epistemic complex (E-E system)<sup>(2)</sup>

(1) Tournadre, N. & R. LaPolla. 2014. Towards a new approach to evidentiality: Issues and directions for research. *Linguistics of the Tibeto-Burman Area* 37(2): 240-263.

(2) Tournadre, N. 2017. A typological sketch of evidential/epistemic categories in the Tibetic languages. In *Evidential systems in Tibetan languages*, 95-129.

# Schematic approach

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- Schematic or paradigmatic description to the ‘access-type’ evidential system.
  - whether the given evidential system can be tabularised.
  - questionnaire-based description of the framework<sup>(1)</sup>.
- Model description: Oisel (2017) on Lhasa Tibetan<sup>(2)</sup>.
  - Only for copulative and existential verbs: Suzuki et al. (2021) on Lhagang, Lithang, Choswateng (Khams), Bragkhoglung (Cone), and Mabzhi (Amdo)<sup>(3)</sup>.

(1) Tournadre, N. et al. 2018. EESTAC questionnaire. Manuscript.

(2) Oisel, G. 2017. Re-evaluation of the evidential system of Lhasa Tibetan and its atypical functions. *Himalayan Linguistics* 19(2): 90-128.

(3) Suzuki, H., Sonam Wangmo & Tsering Samdrup. 2021. A contrastive approach to the evidential system in Tibetic languages: Examining five varieties from Khams and Amdo. *Gengo Kenkyu* 159: 69-101.

# Target language

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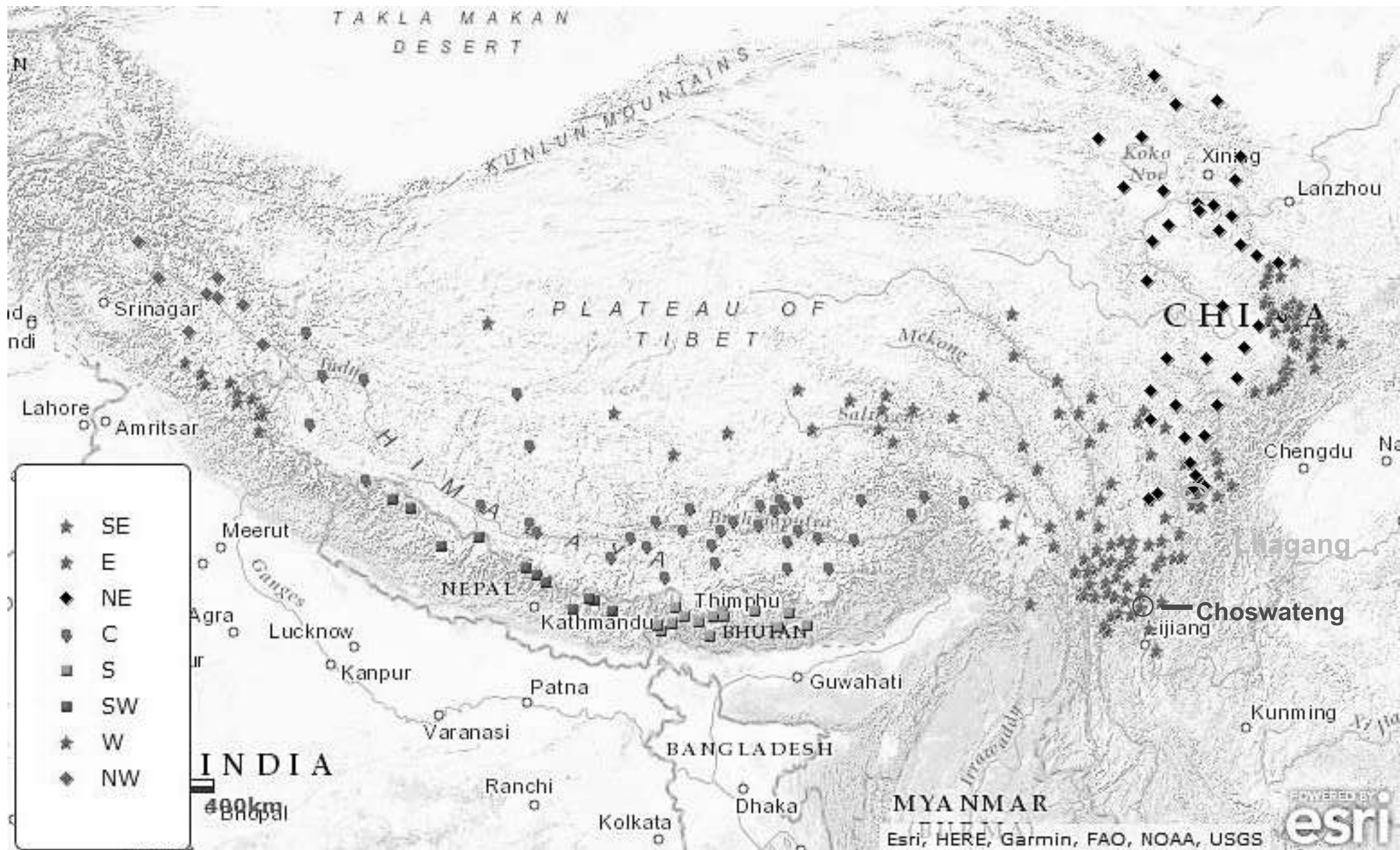
- Lhagang Tibetan
  - South-eastern (SE) section<sup>(1)</sup> > Minyag Rabgang group > northern subgroup<sup>(2)</sup>
- Spoken in the western part of Sichuan Province, China, corresponding to the eastern edge of the Tibetosphere
  
- Choswateng Tibetan
  - South-eastern (SE) section<sup>(1)</sup> > Sems-kyi-nyila group > rGyalthang subgroup<sup>(3)</sup>
- Spoken in the north-western part of Yunnan Province, China, corresponding to the south-eastern corner of the Tibetosphere

(1) Tournadre, N. 2014. The Tibetic languages and their classification. In *Trans-Himalayan linguistics: Historical and descriptive linguistics of the Himalayan area*, 105-129.

(2) Suzuki, H. & Sonam Wangmo. 2015. Quelques remarques linguistiques sur le tibétain de Lhagang. *Revue d'études tibétaines* 32, 153-175.

(3) Suzuki, H. 2018. *100 Linguistic Maps of the Swadesh Word List of Tibetic Languages from Yunnan*. ILCAA.





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**Lhagang Tibetan**

# Evidential-epistemic category of Lhagang Tibetan

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- The framework of the access-type evidential-epistemic category is:  
egophoric, statemental, sensory, sensory inferential, logical inferential  
(see Table 1)
- The framework common to all the verbs<sup>(1)</sup>
  - independent stems for copulative and existential verbs
  - auxiliaries/suffixes for lexical verbs

(1) Suzuki, H., Sonam Wangmo & Tsering Samdrup. 2021. A contrastive approach to the evidential system in Tibetic languages: Examining five varieties from Khams and Amdo. *Gengo Kenkyu* 159, 69-101.

# Table 1: Copulative and existential verb forms

verb type	egophoric	statement	sensory	sensory inferential	logical inferential
copulative	'ji:	're?		'ji:-s <sup>h</sup> a re? 'ji:- <sup>fi</sup> dʒu re?	'ji:-lə re?
existential	'jo?	^jo?-re?	^ji:-tu	'jo?-s <sup>h</sup> a re? 'jo?- <sup>fi</sup> dʒu re?	'jo?-lə re?

- copulative statement(al) = sensory.
- morphology of the existential sensory /ji:-tu/ is derived from /jo?/+tu/, not /ji:/+tu/; no surface form /jo?-tu/ in the everyday conversations.

# Morphology of copulative and existential verbs

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- Independent stems
    - Copulative egophoric : LT yin
    - Copulative statemental : LT red
    - Existential egophoric : LT yod
  - Compounds, e.g.
    - Copulative sensory inferential : LT yin sa red / yin rgyu red
    - Copulative logical inferential : LT yin le red
- Difference of 'relators' or 'nominalisers'

\* LT transliteration is in red.

**Table 2: TAME-E paradigm – provisional framework**

TA	egophoric	statement	sensory	sensory inferential	logical inferential
nonperfect	V-lə ji: V-li:	V-lə re?		V-s <sup>h</sup> a re?	
future	V- <sup>fi</sup> go	V- <sup>fi</sup> go re?	V- <sup>fi</sup> go <sup>h</sup> sã-ɕə	'ji:-tu	V- <sup>fi</sup> go-s <sup>h</sup> a re?
continuant	V-jo?	V-jo? re?	V-ji:-tu	V-jo?-s <sup>h</sup> a re?	
progressive	V-ɕə jo?	V-ɕə jo? re?	V-ɕə ji:-tu	V-ɕə jo?-s <sup>h</sup> a re?	
habitual		V-re?			
aorist	V-zə ji:	V-zə re?		V-zə 'ji:-s <sup>h</sup> a re?	V-jo?-s <sup>h</sup> a re?
perfect		V-k <sup>h</sup> e:	V-t <sup>h</sup> e:		

## Issues: overall

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- The framework of the E-E system works in all the verb categories, but not entirely applicable to suffixes for lexical verbs.
- This observation is due to an insufficient analysis of the TA system:
  - future vs nonperfect: prospective or nonpast?
  - continuant vs perfect: resultative?
- Two forms in egophoric nonperfect
- Morphological interaction between copulative/existential and suffixes

# Issues: future, nonperfect, and inferential

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- The same morphology: copulative logical inferential and nonperfect statemental
  - /-lə re?/
  - how can we give a factual statement on the future? is it always inferential?
  - e.g. 'He will do it': is this a factual expression?
- The egophoric counterpart /-lə ji:/ -- /-li:/ + /-<sup>h</sup>go/
  - egophoric nonperfect is potential < 'access to personal knowledge'
  - egophoric future is rather egophoric intentional future: using LT dgos 'need'
  - LT dgos sa red is future logical inferential: others' intention caught based on a logical thinking process?



## Issues: continuant and perfect

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- The definition of perfect: presenting a result of an action done
- Perfect in Table 2 includes only two evidential categories: statemental, sensory
- Continuant series is similar to the morphology of perfect (e.g. Lhasa<sup>(1)</sup>)
- We should distinguish the types of lexical verbs: controllable, noncontrollable, endopathic, stative, etc.

(1) Oisel, G. 2017. Re-evaluation of the evidential system of Lhasa Tibetan and its atypical functions. *Himalayan Linguistics* 19(2): 90-128.

## Issues: morphological interaction

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- Morphological interaction between copulative/existential and suffixes.
  - copulative verb forms: nonperfect, aorist.
  - existential verb forms: continuant, progressive.
- This feature is pervasive in Tibetic languages (at least spoken in China).
- Ambiguous distinction between the two inferentials of suffixes (Table 2).
  - the use of LT *sa* for both the categories; no distinction of *sa* and *le*.
  - this distinction developed later and mainly applied to CPV and EXV?

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# Choswateng Tibetan

# Evidential-epistemic category of Choswateng Tibetan

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- The framework of the access-type evidential-epistemic category is:  
egophoric, statemental, visual sensory, nonvisual sensory, inferential  
(Table 3)
- Two *sensory* categories: *visual sensory* and *nonvisual sensory*
  - corresponding to Aikhenvald's *visual* and *sensory*, respectively
- The framework common to all the verbs<sup>(1)</sup>
  - independent stems for copulative and existential verbs
  - auxiliaries/suffixes for lexical verbs

(1) Suzuki, H., Sonam Wangmo & Tsering Samdrup. 2021. A contrastive approach to the evidential system in Tibetic languages: Examining five varieties from Khams and Amdo. *Gengo Kenkyu* 159, 69-101.

# Table 3: Copulative and existential verb forms

verb type	egophoric	statemental	visual sensory	nonvisual sensory	inferential
copulative	ʼzẽ	ʼreʼ	^zẽ-nõ	ʼcaʼ	^zẽ-loʼ
	ʼjĩ	ʼʔa mbo		^zẽ-caʼ	^zẽ-pa ʔa
					ʼzẽ- <sup>n</sup> doʼ
					¬ʔa jĩ ze: nõ
					ʼzẽ- <sup>n</sup> da ʔa nõ
					^zẽ-ʔa jĩ sũj
					ʼzẽ-ʔa <sup>n</sup> doʼ sũj
existential nonanimate	^juʼ	^juʼ reʼ	¬nõ	¬nõ	^juʼ-loʼ
					^juʼ-pa ʔa
					ʼjuʼ- <sup>n</sup> doʼ
					ʼjuʼ- <sup>n</sup> da ʔa nõ
					^juʼ-ʔa jĩ sũj
					ʼjuʼ-ʔa <sup>n</sup> doʼ sũj
existential animate	ʼ <sup>n</sup> doʼ	ʼ <sup>n</sup> doʼ-reʼ	(V-nõ)	(V-nõ)	ʼ <sup>n</sup> doʼ-loʼ
	ʼ <sup>n</sup> doʼ- <sup>h</sup> tɕi				ʼ <sup>n</sup> doʼ-pa ʔa
					ʼ <sup>n</sup> doʼ- <sup>n</sup> doʼ
					ʼ <sup>n</sup> doʼ- <sup>n</sup> da ʔa nõ
					ʼ <sup>n</sup> doʼ-ʔa jĩ sũj
					ʼ <sup>n</sup> doʼ-ʔa <sup>n</sup> doʼ sũj

# Morphology of copulative and existential verbs (1)

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- Independent stems
  - Copulative egophoric : LT yin (zin\*)
  - Copulative statemental : LT red, a 'bo
  - Copulative nonvisual sensory : LT grag
  - Existential nonanimate egophoric : LT yod
  - Existential nonanimate sensory : LT snang
  - Existential animate egophoric : LT 'dug

\* zin is not in LT. I assume that it is a variant of yin.

## Morphology of copulative and existential verbs (2)

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- Compounds, e.g.
  - Copulative visual sensory : LT zin snang
  - Copulative nonvisual sensory : LT zin grag
  - Copulative inferential : LT zin log / pa a / 'dug, etc.
  - Existential nonanimate statemental : LT yod red

## TAME-E paradigm – ongoing description

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- | part of forms   | Nonperfect       | Progressive     | Perfect        |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| - egophoric     | : -zi yin        | -sdad yod       | -yod           |
| - statemental   | : -zi red        | -sdad yod red   | -yod red       |
| - visual SEN    | : -snang         | -sdad snang     | -thal          |
| - nonvisual SEN | : -grag          | -sdad grag      | -yod grag      |
| - inferential   | : -zin 'dug etc. | -sdad 'dug etc. | -yod 'dug etc. |
- More categories are recognised: aorist, habitual, etc.



## Issues: overall

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- The framework of the E-E system works in all the verb categories.
- Interaction between copulative/existential and suffixes.
- ‘Suppletive’ forms.
- Expansion from suffixes to copulative/existential.
- Notes on endopathic verbs

## Issues: use of CPV and EXV in suffixes

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- Interaction between copulative/existential and suffixes.
  - Derivation from CPV: nonperfect (, aorist)
  - Derivation from EXV: progressive, perfect, etc.
- Visual sensory takes the existential verb stem snang even in nonperfect (using the CPV categories), not zin snang.
- Existential nonanimate forms mainly appear as suffixes, and the animate counterpart only appears as a part of inferential forms.

## Issues: suppletive forms

- Look at the copulative series:

verb type	egophoric	statemental	visual sensory	nonvisual sensory	inferential
copulative	'zẽ <small>zin</small> 'jĩ <small>yin</small>	'reʔ <small>red</small> 'ʔa <sup>m</sup> bo	^zẽ-nõ <small>zin°snang</small>	'caʔ <small>grag</small> ^zẽ-caʔ <small>zin brag</small>	^zẽ-loʔ <small>zin log</small> ^zẽ-pa ʔa <small>zin pa a</small>

- Nonvisual sensory: brag or zin brag.
  - Suppletive form or derivation?
  - Both appear in Choswateng, but only zin brag in other rGyalthang varieties.
- Cf. in TAME-E suffixes: visual sensory perfect thal; no other compound forms.

## Issues: expansion from suffixes to CPV and EXV

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- The case of nonvisual sensory: *grag* or *zin grag*.
- *grag* functions as nonperfect nonvisual sensory suffix (-*grag*).
- This suggests a development from *zin-grag* to *grag* (degrammaticalisation)
- The same process has not happened in visual sensory.
  - because *snang* is reserved for an existential sensory stem?
  - but it is used as a visual sensory nonperfect suffix alone.
  - < (de)grammaticalisation process?

## Issues: notes for endopathic verbs

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- Suffixes and auxiliaries of endopathic verbs (be hungry, thirsty, hot, cold, etc.)
- Many Tibetic languages (including Lhagang) take the sensory series to describe the speaker's situation.
- Choswateng uses the nonvisual sensory series, not the visual sensory series
  - e.g. Itogs-grag ([I] am hungry); \*Itogs-snang, \*Itogs-zi yin are not acceptable
  - Itogs-grag-grag ([He] is hungry): be hungry-nonvisual sensory-hearsay  
(endopathic verbs for others are always marked with 'source-type' evidentials)

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# Conclusion

# Schematic approach to 'access-type' evidentials

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- All types of verbs take the single framework of the 'access-type' evidentials.
- It is not an issue of using independent stems in given categories.
- The prominence of specific evidential stems does not influence the paradigm.
  - copulative: egophoric vs factual / existential: egophoric vs sensory.
  - lexical verbs: perfect sensory, etc.
  - all the independent stems are simply members within the paradigm.
- Lexical derivation patterns (compounds) should be described in details, since there is a great variation depending on varieties.

# Framework and its patterns

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- Lhagang Tibetan has a simple framework of the ‘access-type’ evidentials.
  - egophoric, statemental, sensory, sensory inferential, logical inferential
  - copulative, existential, lexical verbs
- Choswateng Tibetan has a complicated framework.
  - egophoric, statemental, visual sensory, nonvisual sensory, inferential
  - copulative, existential nonanimate, existential animate, lexical verbs
- The framework itself is thus not unique to the entire Tibetic languages.
  - Describing a grammar, we should note how a given framework is.



Merci pour votre attention !  
Thank you for the attention!

འཇུག་པོ་ལྟོ་

