Xùmǐ language
Katia Chirkova

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The Xùmī 旭米 language is spoken by Xùmī Tibetans, an ethnic group of ca. 1,800 people who reside along the banks of the Shuíluò 水洛 river in Mùlì 木里 (Written Tibetan [WT] rmi li) Tibetan Autonomous County in Sichuān Province (see Map 1).

Shuíluò Township is a historically multi-ethnic and multi-lingual area, and Xùmī villages are interspersed with those of other ethnic groups. Their most numerous neighbors include Púmī 普米 people in the lower reaches of the Shuíluò river, and Gāmī 嘎米...
Tibetans in the upper reaches of the Shuīluò river (Muli Gazetteers Compilation Committee 2010: 560, 563-564).

Possibly reflecting the respective influence of the Pûmî and Tibetan languages, Xûmî can be divided into two sub-varieties with restricted mutual intelligibility: (1) that of the Lower and Middle Reaches of the Shuīluò River (hereafter, Lower Xûmî), and (2) that of the Upper Reaches of the Shuīluò River (hereafter, Upper Xûmî). The two varieties differ in their segmental inventories and phonotactic constraints. In addition, the two varieties have loanwords from the two respective neighboring languages. The self-denomination of the group is /ÉPjuhē/ in Lower Xûmî, and /ÉPʃuhi/ in Upper Xûmî. The locally current Chinese character spelling for this autonym is shūhēng 書亨. Xûmî, the official name of the group in the national Mandarin Chinese language, is based on the name given to the group by the Pûmî ethnic majority of Mûlî.

The Xûmî are essentially agriculturalists. They cultivate wheat, barley, buckwheat, corn, millet, rice, and a variety of vegetables. They also practice animal husbandry, forestry, and fruit farming, and they mine placer gold in the Shuīluò river (Weckerle et al. 2005, 2006).

Most Xûmî are multilingual. In addition to their native tongue, they master Southwest Mandarin as well as, either Pûmî (in the lower reaches of Shuīluò river) or Tibetan (in the upper reaches of Shuīluò river). They use their native language as the primary means of oral communication in family and community events. The language does not have its own writing system. Xûmî is traditionally considered mixed, combining elements of various local languages. It is of unusual interest for studies of language change in multilingual communities, and studies into the synchronic and diachronic dynamics of convergence. The language is highly endangered due to the increasing influence of Mandarin and of languages of the more numerous local groups, Pûmî and Tibetan.

Xûmî is currently classified as a member of the putative Qiangic subgroup of the Sino-Tibetan language family (Bradley 1997:36-37, Sün 2001) (see Qiangic languages). An alternative view links Xûmî to Nàxî/Naish languages (see Naxi/Naïsh). The latter view is based on (i) the recent migration history of the group from the areas historically populated by the Nàxî 納西 and Mósuō 摩梭 or Móxiē 摩些 (Dàlî 大理, Nínglàng 寧蒗,
Yǒngnéng 永寧), and (ii) salient typological similarities between Xùmí and Nàixī/Naish languages in lexicon and grammar (such as aspectual marking and existential verbs) (Guō and Hé 1994:8-9, Chirkova 2012).

The language of the Xùmí was first brought to the attention of linguists by Sūn Hóngkǎi 孫宏開 (1983), who labeled it “Shīxīng”, based on his transcription of the autonym of the group as [ʂɿʰɿ]hɿ. This label is generally unknown in the county where the group resides. Instead, the Xùmí refer to their language as /EPʃuŋ hē kẽcɛ/ in the lower reaches, or /EPʃuŋ hē kẽcɛ/ in the upper reaches; both autonyms mean ‘the language of the Shu people.’ The language is little researched, with only two brief outlines to date (Sūn 1983, Huáng and Rénzēng 1991). In addition, Sūn et al. (1991) and Huáng et al. (1992) provide basic vocabulary lists of ca. 1,000 and 1,800 words respectively. More recent work includes Chirkova (2009, a collection of texts, a dictionary, and a grammar in preparation), Chirkova and Michaud (2009), Chirkova and Duoding (2012), Sūn et al. (2013), Chirkova and Chen (2013), Chirkova et al. (2013). The present description focuses on Upper Xùmí for which more data are currently available.

2. Description of the language

2.1. Phonology

2.1.1. Consonants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bilabial</th>
<th>Alveolar</th>
<th>Retroflex</th>
<th>Alveopalatal</th>
<th>Velar</th>
<th>Uvular</th>
<th>Glottal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plosive</strong></td>
<td>p pʰ b</td>
<td>t tʰ d</td>
<td></td>
<td>k kʰ g</td>
<td></td>
<td>q qʰ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affricate</strong></td>
<td>ts tsʰ dz</td>
<td>tɿ tɿʰ dz</td>
<td></td>
<td>tɿ tɿʰ dz</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nasal</strong></td>
<td>ñ m</td>
<td>ŋ ñ</td>
<td></td>
<td>ŋ ñ</td>
<td>ŋ</td>
<td>ŋ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fricative</strong></td>
<td>s z</td>
<td>ŝ ẑ</td>
<td>ś ẑ</td>
<td>c ẑ</td>
<td>x̂</td>
<td>χ ƙ</td>
<td>h f̃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Approximant</strong></td>
<td>w j</td>
<td>j</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>j</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There is a basic three-way manner distinction in stops and affricates: voiceless unaspirated, voiceless aspirated, and voiced. Velars and uvular stops are in near complementary distribution. Uvular stops are found before non-high vowels, and velar stops are found elsewhere. The two series contrast before /e, ə, ɔ/, e.g. \(\text{l}/21\text{k}\text{h}\text{e}/\text{ˈtax}' vs. \(\text{l}/21\text{q}\text{h}\text{e}/\text{ˈlim}', \(\text{k}\text{h}\text{ə}/\text{ˈfoot'} vs. \(\text{q}\text{h}\text{ə}/\text{ˈfeces'}), \(\text{k}\text{u}/\text{ˈbe able'} vs. \(\text{q}\text{u}/\text{ˈhearth'}, \(\text{n}\text{ʒ}-\text{kə}/\text{ˈwarm oneself'} vs. \(\text{q}\text{ʒ}/\,\text{ˈfate, life'}\).

The retroflexes are in near-complementary distribution with the alveopalatal s: the former occur before the syllabic consonant \(\text{ʒ}/\) and the back vowels \(\text{u, ə, ɔ}/\), whereas the latter are mostly found before front vowels, but also before \(\text{ə, ɔ}/\). The contrast is reinforced by Tibetan loanwords, e.g. \(\text{k}\text{t}\text{s}\text{i}/\text{ˈlegging'} (WT rkang dkris), \(\text{ŋut}\text{ʒ}hi/\,\text{ˈleader'} (WT mgo khrid).

\(/n/\) and \(/ɲ/\) are minimally distinguished before the vowels \(\text{u, ə, ɔ}/\), e.g. \(\text{ŋu-ŋu}/\text{ˈbreast'} vs. \(\text{ŋu-tʂu}/\text{ˈbean curd'}, \(\text{nərə}/\text{ˈtwenty'} vs. \(\text{nəɾə}/\text{ˈshadow’}.\) The contrast is not found before the vowels \(i, e, je, ə\) (where I use the symbol for the alveolopalatal nasal), e.g. \(\text{ŋi}/\text{ˈyou, thou'}, \(\text{nəµ}/\text{ˈsnivel, snot'}, \(\text{nəɻ}/\text{ˈmilk'}, \(\text{nə}/\text{ˈhave a craving, be hungry’}.\) \(/ŋ/\) only co-occurs with \(\text{ə, ɔ}/, \,\text{e.g.}/\text{nəɻ}/\,\text{ˈI, first person pronoun’}, \(\text{ŋu}/\text{ˈto fry (vegetables’}.

Bilabial and alveolar nasals show the correlation voiced-voiceless, as illustrated by the following pairs: \(\text{mjə}/\text{ˈbamboo'}, \(\text{mjə}/\text{ˈmedicine’ (WT sman), \(\text{nəɾə}/\text{ˈtwenty’}, \(\text{nəɻ}/\text{ˈincantation’ (WT sngags?)). Voiceless nasals are infrequent. They mostly occur in loanwords from Tibetan, but they are also attested in the native vocabulary, e.g. \(\text{ŋjetsu}/\text{ˈtail}', \(\text{ŋʒ}/\text{ˈfur, hair’}.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lateral Approximant</th>
<th>ʃ</th>
<th>ɻ</th>
<th>ɻ/</th>
<th>ʃ/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Alveolar and alveolopalatal laterals are minimally distinguished before /u/, e.g. /RP dzi-ulu/ ‘twice as much’, /RP dzi-Au/ ‘be full’. The contrast is not observed before front vowels /i, e, je, æ/ (in which case I use the symbols for alveolopalatal laterals), e.g. /LR 1æ/ ‘hand’, /LR 1æ/ ‘predestined affinity’. Finally, only alveolar laterals are found before /e, ɔ, ə/, e.g. /EP lε ‘hand’, /EP lε ‘tiger’. All laterals show the correlation voiced-voiceless, e.g. /LR l/ ‘stutterer’ vs. /LR l/ ‘soul, spirit’, /HR æ/ ‘correct’ vs. /HR æ/ ‘flavorless’.

The syllabic consonant /ʑ/ may occur with a zero-initial (e.g. /RP k-u-1/ ‘be in debt’), and after alveolar sibilants and retroflexes (/ts, ts, dz, s, z, ts, s, z/). In the latter case, /ʑ/ is realized as a syllabic fricative that is homorganic to the preceding consonant onset, e.g. /HR ts/ [HR ts] ‘use’, /HR ts/ [HR ts] ‘cut with scissors’, /HR dz/ [HR dz] ‘wheat’, /RP mes/ [RP mes] ‘tomorrow’, /RP mes/ [RP mes] ‘cat’, /HR ts/ [HR ts] ‘sell’, /HR β/ [HR β] ‘fishing net’, /LR z/ [LR z] ‘sleep’. Fricative vowels are also found in Mandarin Chinese, as well as in many languages of Southwest China, such as Northern Ngwi (or Nuosu) (Lî and Mă 1983:36) or Lisu (Bradley 2003:224). In these languages, syllabic fricatives are often analyzed as allophones of high vowels: the apical vowels [/i] and [/y] as allophones of /i/ in Chinese, and as allophones of /i/ or /y/ in Nuosu and Lisu. Conversely, in Xùmî, the syllabic consonant /ʑ/ contrasts with high vowels (/i, u/), as in /HR ts/ ‘lock’, /HR ts/ ‘use’, /HR ts/ ‘pluck (facial hair)’. For this reason, it is here analyzed as a separate phoneme.

The approximant /w/ occurs in the second position in consonant clusters, where it may be realized as secondary labialization of the first position consonant. It occurs after alveolars, alveolpalatals, retroflexes, velars, uvulars, and /ȕ/, and it may be followed by

Upper Xùmí has five voiced compound initials beginning with a homorganic nasal (/mb, nd, ŋg, ndz, ŋdʒ/). Prenasalization is contrastive, as illustrated with the following minimal pairs: /LRdze/ ‘exist (at a fixed location)’ vs. /LRndze/ ‘board for pressing things together’, /RPle-ŋe/ ‘obstruct, block’ vs. /RPle-ŋe/ ‘be scorched’. /ŋ/ is the most frequent cluster. Prenasalized clusters can occur in word-initial and word-medial position. In word-initial position, prenasalized clusters mostly occur in Tibetan loanwords (with WT nasal prefixes m- and ’-, e.g. /EPŋutė/ ‘surrender’, WT mgo btags), but they are also attested in Xùmí native vocabulary, e.g. /LRŋg/ ‘hide (oneself); scorch’. Word-internally, prenasalized clusters mostly result from a resyllabification process, whereby the original nasal coda becomes part of the following onset syllable. This type of cluster is restricted to loanwords from Tibetan and Mandarin, where the initial syllable has or had a nasal coda, e.g. /EPtŋdz3/ ‘thousand’ (WT stong phrag), /RPtẽndʒĩ/ ‘scissors’ (Mandarin jiǎnzi 剪子).

2.1.2. Vowels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Front</th>
<th>Central</th>
<th>Back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oral</td>
<td>Nasal</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>ñi</td>
<td>ù</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close-mid</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>õ</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(i) /zũ/ occur only with /j/
(ii) /o/ has many different realizations, including (a) [o] after alveolars (e.g. /lRtɔ/ [lRtɔ] ‘build’), (b) [ɔu] after alveopalatals (e.g. /hRcɔ/ [lRcɔu] ‘meat’), as well as sporadically, also (c) [ʏ] (e.g. /hRtsɔ/ [hRtsʏ] ‘crown of a head’) (see Chirkova et al. 2013 for detailed discussion).

2.1.3. Syllable

The syllabic structure is (N)(C)(G)VT, where N is nasal, C is consonant, G is glide (-w-), V is vowel, T is tone, and parentheses indicate optional constituents. Most syllables have CVT structure. For example:

VT /RPẽ = zũ/ ‘do you have?’

CVT /hRũũ/ ‘know’, /hRdzũ/ ‘enemy’ (WT dgra)

CGVT /hRswũũ/ ‘whet (a knife)’

NCVT /lRŋũũ/ ‘be similar’ (WT ‘dra)
2.1.4. Tone and stress

Xùmî has two contrastive tones that occur on monosyllabic words: (i) low rising (e.g. /³Rje/ ‘vegetable oil’, /³Rle/ ‘rope bridge’), and (ii) high rising (e.g. /⁴Rje/ ‘buy’, /⁴Rle/ ‘tiger’). Content morphemes are lexically specified for tone, whereas affixes are toneless.

In the five-scale pitch system developed by Yuen Ren Chao (1930), these tones may be annotated as 35 for the low rising tone and 45 for the high rising tone. Chao’s system has, however, not been adopted for the present description, given that non-contrastive variation abounds in the actual realization of the two lexical tones. In particular, the pitch level of the rising peak may vary in the low rising tone. The high rising tone, on the other hand, may be realized with a continued falling after the abrupt f0 rising in the initial part of the syllable, giving the perception of a falling tone.

In lexical words longer than one syllable, three tonal patterns are observed:

(i) Equal-Prominence pattern (EP): There is no salient rise or fall over any of the syllables, and the two syllables have high-level pitch contours throughout. This pattern is mostly attested in monomorphemic words and in loanwords, e.g. /³Pmemi/ ‘soldier’ (WT *dmag mi*).

(ii) Left-Prominent pattern (LP): The high f0 peak is realized before the end of the first syllable, where the pitch starts to fall already and continues to fall in the second syllable, e.g. /³Pmeje/ ‘fire tongs’.

(iii) Right-Prominent pattern, RP: The high f0 peak is realized within the last syllable, e.g. /⁴Rmeji/ ‘mani pile’ (WT *ma ni*, pile of stones with the Mani Mantra of Avalokiteshvara).

Xùmî generally conforms to the areal characteristics of the languages of Southwest China, in which the prosodic pattern of the leftmost root determines in many cases the tonal melody of the whole compound domain (see Evans 2009 for an overview and
If the tone of the leftmost monosyllabic root is high rising, the resulting compound in many cases has the left-prominent pattern, e.g. /LP$tje-b$/ ‘clay pot’ (from /HP$tje/ ‘earth’, /LP$b$/ ‘pot’). Conversely, if the tone of the leftmost monosyllabic root is rising, the resulting tonal melody is in most cases right prominent, e.g. /RP$rw3-b$/ ‘copper pot’ (from /LP$rw3/ ‘copper’, /LP$b$/ ‘pot’). The surface tone realization of toneless affixes depends on the tone of the preceding (host) lexical word (similar to tone sandhi in compounds).

2.1.6. Phonotactics

Xùmì has a set of partially automatic and partially idiosyncratic lenition rules, which transform some (mostly aspirated) initial stops and affricates into spirants. This happens when these initials appear intervocally, both in words (e.g. in verbs with directional prefixes) and across word boundaries (e.g. in VO or N-Cl compounds):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$b &gt; w$</td>
<td>/LP$bj\tilde{e}$/ ‘leaf’ &gt; /RP$s\tilde{\i}je$/ ‘tree leaves’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$ph &gt; hw$</td>
<td>/HR$p\tilde{hi}$/ ‘weave’ &gt; /RP$\tilde{h}w$/ ‘weave a plait’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$dz &gt; z$</td>
<td>/HR$dz\tilde{u}$/ ‘sit; live’ &gt; /RP$mj\tilde{e}-z\tilde{u}$/ ‘sit down’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$t\tilde{e} &gt; \tilde{e}$</td>
<td>/LR$t\tilde{c}\tilde{h}i$/ ‘drink’ &gt; /EP$t\tilde{c}e\tilde{i}$/ ‘drink tea’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$dz &gt; z$</td>
<td>/LR$dz\tilde{w}e$/ ‘hit’ &gt; /LR$h\tilde{h}i z\tilde{w}e$/ ‘hit a man’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$k &gt; x$</td>
<td>/LR$k\tilde{u}$/ ‘want’ &gt; /EP$mu = xu$/ ‘not want’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$q &gt; \chi$</td>
<td>/HR$q\tilde{ho}$/ ‘bowl’ &gt; /RP$dzi-\chi\tilde{o}$/ ‘one bowl’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2. Lexicon
Xùmì is phonologically monosyllabic with a tendency towards disyllabicity in its lexicon. Monosyllables are of two types: (i) roots (free and bound), and (ii) affixes. Monomorphemic words are for the most part monosyllabic, e.g. /³Rtʃ/ ‘earth’, /³Rtʃi/ ‘drink’. Upper Xûmì has numerous Tibetan loanwords, including some in its basic vocabulary, e.g. /³Pʰtʃep/ ‘head’ (WT thod pa).

Xùmì major open word classes include nouns and verbs. Adjectives are formally a subset of verbs (intransitive stative verbs). Closed word classes include pronouns, numerals, classifiers and measure words, auxiliaries, question and negation particles, conjunctions, interjections, and discourse particles.

2.3. Morphology

Xùmì is an agglutinative language with little inflexional morphology. The major word-formation processes include affixation, compounding, and reduplication. The majority of affixes are derivational.

Nominal prefixes and suffixes are restricted to animate nouns and include: (i) the fully lexicalized vocative prefix /e/- in kinship terms, e.g. /³P-ezi/ ‘older sister’; (ii) two gender suffixes: (a) feminine /mi/, e.g. /³Pmez-mi/ ‘female cat’; (b) male /pʰe/, e.g. /³Pmez-pʰe/ ‘male cat’; (iii) diminutive suffix /zɔ/, e.g. /³Pmez-zɔ/ ‘kitten’.

Verbal prefixes include: (i) five directional prefixes: /dzi/- ‘upward’, /mjɛ/- ‘downward’, /kʰu/- ‘inward’, /bu/- ‘outward’, and /çi/- ‘to’; (ii) two aspectual prefixes: the perfective prefix /lɛ/- and the delimitative prefix /dzi/-.

Adjectival prefixes include two intensifying prefixes: (i) /mz/-, added to a single stem, e.g. /³Pmz-zɔ/ ‘(very) tall’; (ii) /e/-, added to a reduplicated stem, e.g. /³P-e-tʃje/ ‘(very) hot’.

Xûmì inflexional morphological changes are attested primarily in the derivation of irregular stems of some high frequency verbs and the formation of causatives.
A limited number of Xùmī high frequency verbs use ablaut to form the imperative stem, whereby the original vowel of the verbal root changes to /u/, e.g. /LRdz3/ ‘eat’ vs. /LRdu/ ‘eat!’.

A few verbal roots mark causativization by consonant alternation. These causative verbs contain plain voiceless initials, e.g. /RPlep-xu/ ‘cause to break’; whereas the corresponding non-causatives contain voiced ones, e.g. /RPlep-yu/ ‘break, be broken’.

Finally, the verbs ‘go’ and ‘come’ have three stems each, combining suppletive verb forms with verb stem derivation through ablaut.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>‘go’</th>
<th>‘come’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>non-past</td>
<td>LRbi</td>
<td>LRl3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past</td>
<td>LRxe</td>
<td>LRtcʰu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imperative</td>
<td>LRxu</td>
<td>LRʌu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reduplication is mostly attested on verbal roots. It is partially productive and partially lexically idiosyncratic. Reduplication expresses: (i) reciprocity, e.g. /RPqe-qə/ ‘help (each other)’, (ii) (with dynamic verbs) iteration, e.g. /RPcw3-cw3/ ‘stir’, or (iii) (with adjectives) intensification, e.g. /RPgw3-gw3/ ‘(very) round’.

2.4. Noun phrase

Nouns in Xùmī can modify other nouns directly (appearing immediately before the modified noun, e.g. /RPdzibu-wu LRz5/ ‘prince, king’s son’) or in a genitive phrase (pre-head, with or without the genitive enclitic /ji/, e.g. /RPdzibu-wu = ji LRz5/ ‘the son of the king’). Direct modification is more lexicalized semantically. The maximum structure of a
noun phrase in Xùmī is as follows (with non-compatible elements listed on separate lines):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEM</th>
<th>GEN phrase / REL clause</th>
<th>N+ADJ</th>
<th>NUM+CLF</th>
<th>PL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

For example, /\textit{HR} xb /\textit{RP} bu-ts\textit{Ś} /\textit{RP} bě-ts\textit{Ś} /\textit{HR} xb/ this/head-thing/neck-thing/this ‘these pieces of jewellery’, /\textit{HR} t\textit{i} /\textit{LP} miz\textit{e} /\textit{RP} t\textit{i}=ji /\textit{RP} bu-ts\textit{Ś} /\textit{RP} bě-ts\textit{Ś}/ that/girl/that=GEN/head-thing/neck-thing ‘the pieces of jewellery of that girl’, /\textit{RP} η3-wu /\textit{RP} zw3-ku=ji /\textit{HR} q\textit{Ś}/ we-CLT/four-item=GEN/life ‘the life of the four of us’.

Xùmī nouns are unspecified for number. The optional plural marker /\textit{mezi}/ may be used to emphasize plurality. /\textit{mezi}/ may be added to any countable noun regardless of animacy, e.g. /\textit{LP} h\textit{ī}=\textit{mezi}/ ‘people’, /\textit{EP} ts\textit{Ś}=\textit{mezi}/ ‘things’.

The definiteness and indefiniteness of the noun in Xùmī is mostly signaled by word order and contextual clues. In addition, the demonstrative pronoun /\textit{HR} t\textit{ī}/ ‘that’ and the numeral /\textit{LP} dz\textit{ī}/ ‘one’ may serve as optional definite or indefinite markers, respectively.

Xùmī has four locative adpositions: /\textit{nū}/ ‘on, up’, /\textit{nɔ}/ ‘inside’ (WT nang?), /kɔ/ ‘at’, and /lɔ/ ‘at, on, in’ (WT la?). The adpositions /\textit{nū}/ and /\textit{nɔ}/ signal the positioning of the entity in question on or inside a location, e.g. /\textit{EP} ji-zwje=\textit{nū}/ ‘at the side of the field’; /\textit{EP} dzitjěk\textit{hɔ}=\textit{nɔ}/ ‘in the world’. /kɔ/ indicates attainment of a location, e.g. /\textit{RP} t\textit{u}-wu=\textit{kɔ}/ ‘[arrived] at their place’. /lɔ/ signals a general locative meaning, e.g. /\textit{HR} dz\textit{ū}=lɔ/ ‘in the mountains’.
2.4.1. Pronouns

Personal pronouns in Xùmī distinguish singular, dual, and plural number in all persons. Dual forms may be optionally followed by the expression /RPŋ3-ku/ ‘two [items]’, e.g. /EPŋi = dzʒ(EPŋ3-ku)/ ‘the two of you’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>singular</th>
<th>dual</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>exclusive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First person</td>
<td>HRŋ3</td>
<td>RPʒ-dʒʒ</td>
<td>EPŋ3-ŋɛ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demonstrative pronouns are /LRxe/ ‘this’ and /HRtʒi/ ‘that’. /LRxe/ is used in the position before and after the noun it modifies, e.g. /LRxe HRŋi LRxe/ ‘this man’. /HRtʒi/ may appear after the modified noun, e.g. /EPŋʒi tʒi/ ‘that man, the man’, or before and after the modified noun, e.g. /EPŋʒi hʒi tʒi/ ‘that man’. Plural forms are formed with the suffix /ŋɛ/, i.e. /EPŋe-ŋɛ/ ‘these’, /EPŋʒ3-ŋɛ/ ‘those’. Reflexive pronouns distinguish between the first person form /HRŋʒ/ and the third person form /LRŋʒ/. The main interrogative pronouns include: /HRŋi/ ‘who’, /HRtʒi/ ‘what’ (WT chi), /EPtʒi-ŋɛ/ ‘why’, /LRzi/ ‘which’, /LRxe/ ‘where’, and /RPŋʒʒ/ ‘when’.

2.4.2. Numerals

Xùmī has a decimal counting system, with numerals for 10, /LPŋe-ku/; 100, /HRŋʒ/ (WT brgya); and 1,000, /EPtŋdʒʒ/ (WT stong phrag).
Cardinal numerals distinguish between the free form /LRdzĩ/ ‘one’, which can stand alone and need not co-occur with a classifier, and bound forms for the numerals 2 through 10, which need to co-occur with a classifier (in counting, with the general classifier /ku/ ‘item’). Ordinal numbers are formed by adding the form /RPtētse/ to cardinal numbers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Xùmĩ</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Xùmĩ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>one</td>
<td>LRdzĩ</td>
<td>first</td>
<td>RPtētse LRdzĩ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two</td>
<td>RPn3-ku</td>
<td>second</td>
<td>RPtētse RPn3-ku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>three</td>
<td>LPse-ku</td>
<td>third</td>
<td>RPtētsi LPse-ku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>four</td>
<td>RPzw3-ku</td>
<td>fourth</td>
<td>RPtētse RPzw3-ku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>five</td>
<td>EPfĩs-ku</td>
<td>fifth</td>
<td>RPtētse EPfĩs-ku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>six</td>
<td>Epčho-ku</td>
<td>sixth</td>
<td>RPtētse Epčho-ku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seven</td>
<td>EPse-ku</td>
<td>seventh</td>
<td>RPtētse EPse-ku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eight</td>
<td>EPci-ku</td>
<td>eighth</td>
<td>RPtētse EPci-ku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nine</td>
<td>RPgw3-ku</td>
<td>ninth</td>
<td>RPtētse RPgw3-ku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ten</td>
<td>LPqe-ku</td>
<td>tenth</td>
<td>RPtētsi LPqe-ku</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Xùmĩ has a multiplicative-additive number system. For example, the numeral ‘53’, /EPfĩs-qe LPse-ku/, is formed by multiplying ten by five and then adding three. Numbers above one hundred are formed with the intrusive conjunction /ni/ ‘and’ between the hundred and the adjoined number, e.g. /RPdzĩ-ɕ3 ni LRdzĩ/ ‘one hundred and one’. Numeral
formation is by and large regular. Exceptional numerals include /\textit{q}b-t\texttextit{s}/ ‘eleven’, and
/\textit{ne}\texttextit{re}/ ‘twenty’.

2.4.3. Classifiers and measure words

Numerals combine with classifiers to form numeral phrases, which follow the noun they
modify. Xùmù has two sortal classifiers: (i) the general classifier /\textit{ku}/ ‘item’, e.g. /\textit{mu}
\textit{gw}-\textit{ku}/ ‘nine forests’; and (ii) the classifier for elongated objects /\textit{\textit{a}}/ ‘strip’, e.g.
/\textit{q}h\textit{wu} \textit{\textit{ni}-\textit{\textit{a}}}/ ‘two sticks’. The inventory of measure words (free forms which lend
themselves to classifier use) is richer, and can be further subdivided into measure-, container-, group-classifiers, and repeaters, i.e. classifiers that have the same form as the
noun they modify, e.g. /\textit{\textit{h}}\textit{\textit{zi}} \textit{\textit{\textit{h}}}/ ‘one meal’.

2.5. Verb phrase

Verbs in Xùmì can be preceded by adverbial expressions and can be followed by
auxiliaries expressing aspect, mood, and modality.

According to the number of arguments, verbs can be divided into intransitive and
transitive. While Xùmì verbs are not morphologically marked for transitivity, some
correlation is observed between case markers and transitive and intransitive constructions
(see below). Xùmì has a subclass of copular verbs that occur with nominals. It consists of
(i) the positive, semantically neutral copular /\textit{\textit{\textit{h}}}\textit{\textit{\textit{h}}}/ (see examples 5 and 6), and (ii) the
emphatic copular /\textit{\textit{w}}\textit{\textit{\textit{h}}}/ ‘be definitely the case that’ (see example 1). Xùmì also has a
subclass of existential or locative verbs that categorize the S/O argument in terms of its
inherent properties (such as animacy or form) as well as its orientation or stance in space.
It includes:
(i) /¹Rji/: denoting the existence, location or possession of animate beings

(ii) /¹Rdzō/: denoting the existence or possession of inanimate beings

(iii) /¹Rhw3/: denoting containment

(iv) /¹Rdze/: denoting the position of an entity attached to some location.

2.5.1. Adverbial expressions

Time and place adverbs are placed freely in the sentence (see example 5). Manner adverbs are derivable from adjectives by adding the verb /¹Rb3/ ‘make’ and the adverbial marker /se/, e.g. /¹Rs³b3 ¹Rb3 = se ¹Rp³jē/ ‘precipitously escape’.

2.5.2. Tense and aspect

Xùmì has grammaticalized absolute tense, with a past/non-past contrast reflected in past/non-past stems of some high frequency verbs and in a past/non-past distinction in patient nominalizers.

The following main aspectual distinctions are marked via prefixes and auxiliaries:

(i) /lę-/: perfective aspect, e.g. /³Rpłę-dz3/ ‘have eaten’

(ii) /dʒi-/: delimitative aspect, e.g. /³Rpджi-fillna = dů/ ‘have a look!’

(iii) /s雅黑/: perfect aspect, e.g. /³Rpłę-dz3 = s雅黑/ ‘have eaten’

(iv) /tsb雅黑/ (WT tshar): terminative or telic aspect, e.g. /³Rdz3 = tshb雅黑 = s雅黑/ ‘have finished eating’

(v) /dz3/: experiential aspect, e.g. /³Rdz3 = dz3/ ‘have once eaten’

(vi) /ji/: progressive aspect (with dynamic verbs), e.g. /³Rdz3 = jǐ/ ‘be eating’
(vii) /dżō/: durative aspect (with stative verbs), e.g. /LRzdē = dżō/ ‘[e.g. firewood] be in a pile’

Adjectives only co-occur with the perfect and durative auxiliaries.

2.5.3. Mood and modality

The inventory of mood and modality markers includes:

(i) /g3/, which is predominantly used with agentive (volitional) subjects to signal events that are certain to take place, e.g. /LRdz3 = g3/ ‘will eat’

(ii) /iē/, which is typically used to signal prospective situations, e.g. /LRni = iē /

HRcweed = li = ni5/ ‘[they] thought they would light a fire’

(iii) /tčē/, which is used to signal contexts in which the speaker’s discovery of the reported situation is recent, and consequently expresses surprise, unexpectedness, and new information, e.g. /HRxu LRze = tčē/ ‘to my surprise, it began to rain’

(iv) /u5/: the irrealis mood auxiliary, representing the irrealis mood in the following contexts:

(a) counterfactual conditionals, e.g.

(1) HRn3 HRhī LRwē = u5 zu z̄, HRtho LRb3 = g3 LRdżō.

HRn3 HRhī LRwē = u5 zu z̄ HRtho LRb3 = g3 LRdżō

1 person EMPH.COP=IRR if TOP way.out make=VOL exist

‘If I were a human being, I would have known what to do.’

(b) polite requests, e.g. /RPmjē-zu = u5/ ‘please sit down’
(c) the optative mood, which combines the irrealis auxiliary /ŋɔ/ with the auxiliary /jɛ/,
e.g. /HR xu t^h^3 = LR zɛ = ŋɔ = jɛ/ ‘I wish it would not rain’.

2.5.4. Comparative construction

The comparative construction has the following structure:

standard + marker (/bɔzu/ or /sɪɛ/) + predicate

For example:

(2) HRŋ3 HRt^h^i = bɔzu RPm3-ŋ3 = ji.

HRŋ3 HRt^h^i = bɔzu RPm3-ŋ3 = ji.

1 3=CMPR INT-tall=PRG
‘I am taller than he is.’

2.6. Syntax

Syntax operates predominantly through word order and the use of nominal markers and
verbal auxiliaries. A clause in Xùmì must have a verb phrase, whereas noun phrases are
optional. The basic word order is S – IndO – DirO – V, e.g.:

(3) RP-e-ju RPŋ3 = sJ RPbuxu LRdzi = jɛ LRkɛ = ji.

RP-e-ju RPŋ3 = sJ RPbuxu LRdzi = jɛ LRkɛ = ji.

VOC-older.brother 1=ANM.PNT flower one=strip give=PRG
‘The older brother is giving me a flower.’
Encoding of the semantic roles of agent and patient is governed in Xùmí by their respective ranking on the empathy hierarchy (Silverstein 1976; speaker > hearer > non-participant > non-human animate > inanimate).

The agent marker /\dē/ and the animate patient marker /s\j/ signal a highly transitive construction that involves two maximally distinguished, independent participants. /\dē/ marks the volitional and instigating agent, whereas /s\j/ signals a highly individuated patient that is undergoing a change of state as a result of the event denoted by the verb. The two markers are non-obligatory. Rather, the lower the ranking of the agent on the empathy hierarchy, the more obligatory the use of the agent marker /\dē/ becomes, e.g. sentence (4):

(4) \[
\text{RP}_3 = \text{s}\j \text{ HR}\text{džū} \text{ RP}_3 \text{gw3-ku = jē \ RP}_1 \text{ηκ̄e} = \text{ji}.}
\]

I=ANM.PNT mountain nine-item=AGT PFV-obstruct=PRG
‘Nine mountains are blocking my way (literally, me).’

Conversely, the higher the ranking of the patient on the empathy hierarchy, the more obligatory the use of the patient marker /s\j/ becomes, see examples (3), (4) or (6).

When both the agent and the patient are equally ranked, both the agentive and the patient marker are used, as in the following example:

(5) \[
\text{RP}_3 \text{dzi-me}=\text{λē}=\text{λē}, \text{ LP}_\text{hī}=\text{t}^\text{b}i=\text{jē} \text{ LR}\text{ts}^\text{b}u=\text{s}\j \text{ HR}bū \text{ LR}\text{uē}=\text{li = jñ.}}
\]

\[
\text{RP}_3 \text{dzi-me}=\text{λē}=\text{λē}, \text{ LP}_\text{hī}=\text{t}^\text{b}i=\text{jē} \text{ LR}\text{ts}^\text{b}u=\text{s}\j \text{ HR}bū \text{ LR}\text{uē}=\text{li = jñ.}}
\]

\text{one-day}=\text{become}=\text{become} \text{ person}=\text{that}=\text{AGT} \text{ ghost}=\text{PNT.ANM} \text{ guest}
\text{ LR}\text{uē}=\text{li = jñ.}}
\]

call=NMLZ.PNT=COP
‘One day, the man invited the ghost to his place.’
An additional patient and comitative marker is /wu/, which indicates patients that are indefinite and do not undergo a change of state, as in example (6):

(6) RPɛμu = ič: “HRji RPŋ = wu HRdʒ zu, HRŋ RPŋ = sɪ EPmje-ū LRtci = ɡ3,”

HRp3 = li = ɲ3.

RPɛmu = ič: “HRji RPŋ = wu HRdʒ zu, HRŋ
moon=AGT 2 1=COM fight if 1

2=PNT.ANM downward-swallow do=VOL speak=NMLZ.PNT=COP
‘The moon said: “If you fight with me, I will swallow you.” ’

2.6.2. Question formation

Yes/no questions are formed with the question particle /v/, prefixed to the sentence-final verb or auxiliary, e.g.:

(7) HRtʃi LRdʒ = tsʃe = v = sɪ?

HRtʃi LRdʒ = tsʃe = v = sɪ?
that eat=finish=Q=PRF
‘Has he finished eating?’

The interrogative word remains in the position of the questioned NP, e.g. /EPŋi çū/ ‘Who came?’.

2.6.3. Negation
Negation has two forms: (i) /tʰe/ for imperatives and optatives, e.g. /e²tʰe = dz³/ ‘do not eat!’, and (ii) /mu/ for all other verb forms, e.g. /e²mu = xu/ ‘not want’. Both prefix to the verb stem, or affix between the directional, aspectual or tentative prefix and the verb stem.

2.6.4. Complex sentences

Clauses may be nominalized with the genitive marker or patient nominalizers to function as subjects or as complements to complement-taking verbs. Patient nominalizers differentiate between (i) the past patient nominalizer /li/, which signals events that took place before the time of utterance, as in examples (5) and (6); and (ii) the future or purpose patient nominalizer /g³/, which signals situations that are to take place after the time of utterance, e.g. /e²dz³ = g³/ ‘things to eat, edibles’.

The most commonly used conjunctions in coordinate non-embedded subordinate constructions include /ni/ ‘and’, /e²se/ ‘after, then’, and /zu/ ‘if’.

Relative clause constructions can be subdivided into:

(i) headed relative clauses that take as the nominal head either (a) the agentive nominalizer /h³hi/ ‘person’, e.g. /e²mje-z³wje = xi = hi/ ‘the one who let you fall [into the water]’, or (b) the locative nominalizer /t³j/ ‘place’, e.g. /e²gu-fu = t³j/ ‘place to herd animals’.

(ii) headless relative clauses, which may be followed by the demonstrative pronouns or the topic marker /z³j/

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Abbreviations

Abbreviations follow the Leipzig Glossing Rules. Additional abbreviations include: - = morpheme boundary within a lexical word; = = clitic boundary; AGT = agentive; ANM = animate; CLT = collective; EMPH = emphatic; PNT = patient; VOL = volition.

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