Personal Pronouns in Pacŏh
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O. Introduction

The personal pronouns of Pacŏh[1] form a regular system having singular, dual, and plural in all three persons. That certain ones of these pronouns can take affixes (i.e. when used as direct object or possessor) is of particular interest because it has not been reported before in Mon-Khmer languages, to my knowledge.

The purpose of this paper is to present the personal pronoun system of Pacŏh with the meanings of the pronouns and their syntactic usages.

[1.] Pacŏh is a member of the Mon-Khmer language family and is spoken by approximately eight thousand people in Thừa Thiên province of Viet Nam. It may be mutually intelligible with some dialects of Ta-Oi in Laos.

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1. Definition

A personal pronoun in Pacǒh is a nonspecific word which can be used in place of a noun (or name) while retaining the same meaning as the noun. *Cubuat pôc tǒq vĕl Pacǎh* 'Cubuat goes to village Pacǒh', *Do pôc tǒq vĕl ngai* 'He goes to village their'.
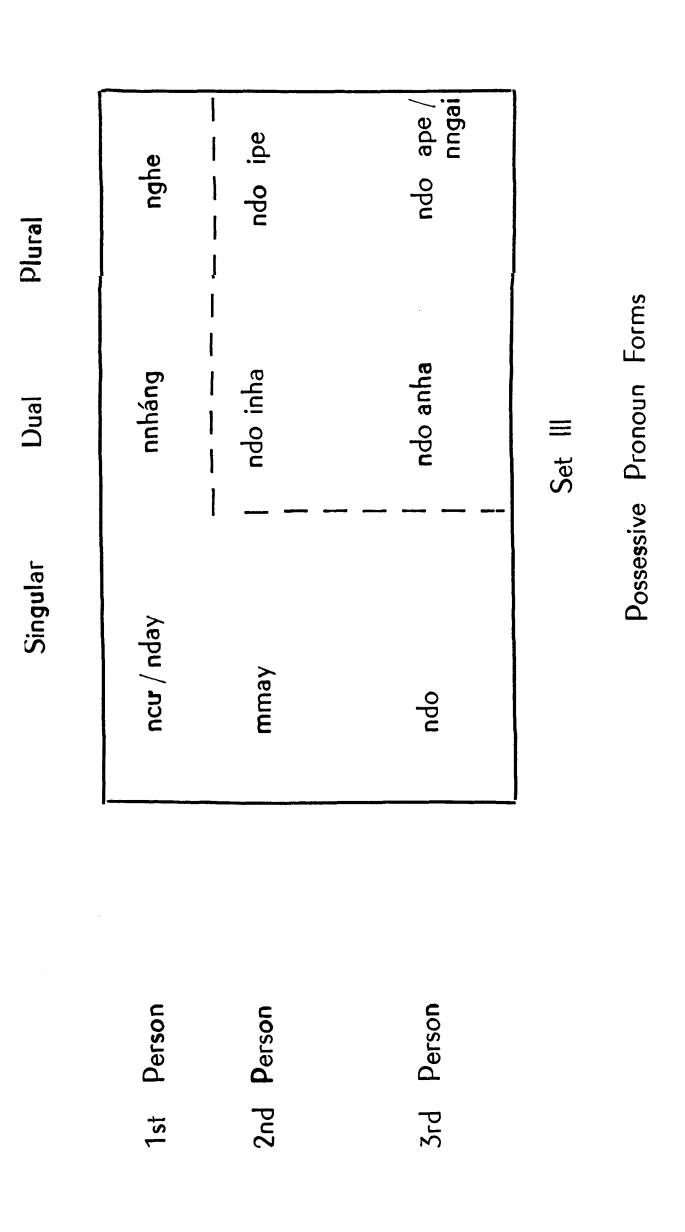
2. Pronoun sets

By arranging the pronouns in a matrix one can see a definite pattern being formed. This becomes especially clear when the three matrices below (Sets I, II, and III) are compared with each other.

	Singular	Dual	Plural
1st Person	cɨ / day	nháng	he
2nd Person	may	inha	ipe
3rd Person	do	anha	ape / ngai

Set I
Regular Pronoun Forms

	Singular	Dual	Plural
1st Person	acur / aday	anháng	ahe
2nd Person	amay	ado inha	ado ipe
3rd Person	ado	ado anha	ado ape / angai

Set II

Indirect Object Pronoun Forms

	Singular	Dual	Plural
1st Person	ncư / nday	nnháng	nghe
2nd Person	mmay	ndo inha	ndo ipe
3rd Person	ndo	ndo anha	ndo ape / nngai

Set III

Possessive Pronoun Forms

Note the regularity of the forms appearing within the block structure of the matrices (rows : 2nd and 3rd person ; columns : dual and plural). These forms show similarity in internal structure as well as external function. These four pronouns (omitting *ngai*) in Sets II and III do not take affixes directly but are preceded by the morpheme *do* [2] whick takes the prefix in each case.

It may be observed that the pronouns in the matrices which can take prefixes have not reached the two-syllable phonological limit on word length in Pacŏh, while those which canot take prefixes have reached the limit.

An L pattern is formed in the matrices by the upper row (lst person) and the left column (singular). This implies that there is some sort of ranking whereby the forms which appear in the L pattern outrank those which appear in the block pattern. [3] Checking through text material has revealed a ranking of frequency in that the forms in the L Pattern occur much more frequently than those in the block pattern. While the forms in the block pattern show regularity of internal

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2. I am leaving for future treatment any speculation regarding possible relationship between the third person singular pronoun *do* 'his' and the morpheme *do* which, in its affixed form, precedes pronouns.

3. Pike, Kenneth L. «Matrix Permutation and Conflation» (To appear in I.J.A.L.).

structure, the forms of the L pattern show marked irregularity. There is, however, a similarity in external function, as each of the forms in the L pattern can take the prefixes in Sets II and III.

Though the alternate third person plural form *ngai* oc-curs in the block pattern it has no features which would group it with the other four forms occurring there. *Ngai* seems to belong with the forms of the L pattern in that it takes the prefixes in Sets II and III and occurs frequently in speech and text. It seems possible that this apparent conflict between systems may be the result of Pacŏh pronouns going through some sort of transitional period.

3. Description of pronouns

3. 1. Pronoun forms in the matrices

(1) *Cư* 'I' (first person singular) *Cư pôc alứng may* 'I go with you'. *Cư* has an allomorph *day* which is used when one quotes another person's use of *cư*. *Do tông acư*, «*Day pôc alứng may*» 'He said to me, «I' ll go with you»'.

(2) *May* 'you' (second person singular) *May pôc tốq dứng* 'You go to the house'

(3) *Do* 'he, she, it' (third person singular) *Do pôc tốq dứng* 'He (she or it) goes to the house'. When *do* is used to refer to a person it can only be singular. However, in referring to

the plural of animals or things (where *ngai* 'they' or *ape* 'they' cannot be used), *do* occurs with a pluralizer such as *ngéq* 'all', *ê* 'many', *clứng* 'many'. *Ngéq do lúh* 'They (animals) ran away'. *Amâh ngéq do ân cuxo ?* 'What those things that (are) red ?'

Do has a bound allomorph *u-* which only occurs in the subject slot and is affixed to one-syllable verbs. It seems that *do* and *u-* can be used interchangeably when acting as subject. *Do pôc tốq mmo ? Uchǎ tốq dúng* 'He went where ? He returned to the house'. When referring to animals or things *u-* can be pluralized like *do*. *Ngép ulúh* 'All they (animals) ran away', *Ê lư ulú* 'many very they (animals) ran away'.

(4) *Nháng* 'we (two)' (first person dual)
Nháng pôc tốq dúng 'We (two) go to the house'

(5) *Inha* 'you (two)' (second person dual)
Inha pôc tốq dúng 'You (two) go to the house'

(6) *Anha* 'those two' (third person dual)
Anha pôc tốq dúng 'Those two go to the house'

(7) *He* 'we' (first person plural) *He pôc tốq dúng* 'We go to the house'

(8) *Ipe* 'you' (second person plural) *Ipe pôc tốq dúng* 'You (all) go to the house'

(9) *Ape* 'they' (third person plural specific)

Ape pôc tốq dúng 'They go to the house'. *Ape* is used in situations where both the speaker and the hearer understand who is being referred to.

(10) *Ngai* 'they' (third person plural nonspecific) *Ngai pôc tốq dúng* 'They go to the house'. *Ngai* can be used whether the identity of the referent is known or not. *Ngai* can only be used of persons, never of animals. Although *Ngai* is usually plural in number it can sometimes be singular nonspecific, *ngai ncốh* 'person or persons there'.

With the exception of *cư* 'I' and *ngai* 'they', all the pronouns listed above can refer to an animal or have an animal included in their number. *Ape* 'they' can be used to refer to animals only after the specific animal has been named in the text. When a dual or plural pronoun refers to persons and an animal it is preferable to state the animal specifically. *Nhàng acho pôc* 'we dog go' (I and the dog go), *Inha acho pôc* 'You two (including dog) go', *He acho pôc* 'We (including dog) go'.

3. 2. Additional pronoun forms

(1) *Mâh* 'your' is a morpheme which alternates with *may* as a possessive when following a kinship term. *Mâh* cannot take affixes and cannot occur in any other slot in the phrase or clause. *Ndo Ixai mâh* 'Belongs to brother

your', *Nháng icán mâh tông amay* 'We mother yours say to you'.

(2) *Ngâh* is a pronoun which is nonspecific as to person or number. It is a convenient means of referring back to a given subject in text or conversation without using the name or the more specific pronoun form. *Năm ihôm Cubuat chŏ dáng néh ngâh yóa táq bai* 'If you see Cubuat return place this you tell work lesson'. In this illustration the subject is the hearer, as shown by the situational context of a direct address.

Ngâh has a bound allomorph *i-* (cf. *ihôm* in the sentence above) which can occur with all one-syllable verbs. Like *ngâh* it can only fill the subject slot and refers back to a noun, either in text or context. *ngâh* can be substituted for *i-* in all places where *i-* is found to occur. *I-* can only be affixed to one-syllable verbs whereas *ngâh* can occur with all verbs.

(3) *Tŏ* seems to mean 'oneself' somewhat like 'mình' in Vietnamese. In text material we have found *tŏ* being used in the following ways: Parents instructing their children seem to use *tŏ* meaning 'we inclusive'; A man giving a message to his wife used *tŏ* to mean 'you'; A young man sending a message to his friends used *tŏ* to mean 'one does something...' (like 'one of us').

Tŏ can have all the syntactic uses that the pronouns

in Sets I, II, and III can have. However, unlike the other one-syllable pronouns in the matrices, *tŏ* cannot take prefixes. Instead, when *tŏ* is used as indirect object or possessive, the prefixes of Sets II and III are bound to the morpheme *do* and precede *tŏ*. *Ngai tông ado tŏ* 'They say to us', *Nnéh ndo tŏ* 'This is mine (ours)'.

3. 3. Expansions Pronouns may be expanded in the following ways :

(1) Number + Classifier + Pronoun. *bar náq nháng* 'two persons we'. The person classifier *náq* seems to be the only classifier which can be used in this construction with pronouns.

He pôc 'We-pl. go'

Pai náq he pôc 'We three go'

(2) General Pluralizer ± Intensifier + Pronoun. General pluralizers are words such as *ngéq* 'all', *ê* 'many'. The optional intensifier is *lư* 'completely, very'.

Ipe pôc 'You-pl. go'

Ngéq ipe pôc 'You all go'

Do lúh 'They (animals) ran away'

Ngéq do lúh 'They all ran away'

Ngéq lư do lúh 'Absolutely all of them ran away'

Ê lư ngai pôc 'Very many of them went'

(3) Pronoun + Modifier. The modifier slot may be filled by a descriptive word, phrase, or clause.

Ape pôc 'They went'

Ape caket pôc 'They (the little ones) went'

Ngai ncǎnh pôc 'They (the men) went'

Do ân hôi papĕnh pôc 'He (who shoots well) went'

Ngai ân pôc páq pôc 'They (who go picking) went'

(4) Pronoun + Specific Referent. *Nhǎng icán mâh tông* 'we-2 mother your say' 'Your mother and I say'. *He cha, he a-i, he a-em cư cha lư xay* 'we eat we mother we younger-siblings my eat very full' 'I and my mother and younger brothers and sisters eat well'.

This construction is most often used with 1st person dual or plural pronouns, and specifies more precisely the individuals being referred to by the pronouns. The '1' of the 1st person pronouns is understood to be already specified, so only the names of the other persons need to be added. *Nhǎng tông* 'We-2 say' (1 and someone else), *Nhǎng Cubuat tông* 'Cubuat and I say'.

3. 4. Pronoun with Subject Referent. Subject Referent + Juncture or Tense Marker + Subject Pronoun. The effect of this construction is somewhat like that of

the expansions discussed above. When the Subject of a sentence is a pronoun, it is possible to specify, by means of a noun or pronoun before the sentence, the particular person or item to which the pronoun refers. This preposed specification we call a Subject Referent, as the pronoun in the Subject slot appears to be the main subject of the sentence. When the Subject Referent is a noun, any pronoun can occur in the Subject slot. Juncture generally consists of a slight hesitation; tense markers are words like *acân* 'future', *yôl* 'still', *kilâng* 'immediate past', *cumĕq* 'immediate future'.

Ngai pôc 'They go'

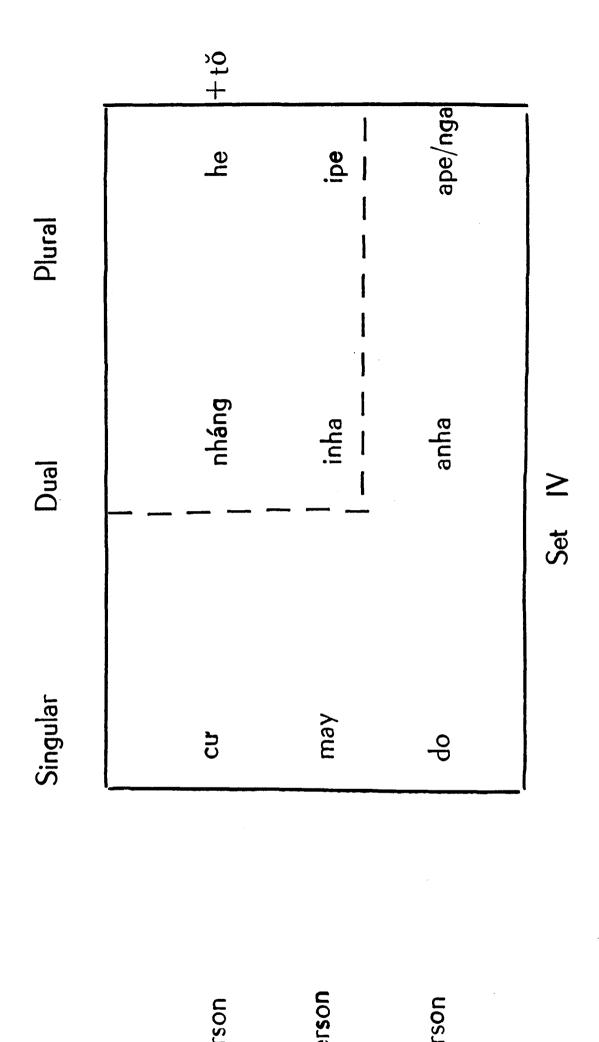*A-ám anhi, ngai pôc* 'fathers uncles, they go' **They** (fathers and uncles) *go*

A-ám anhi acân ngai pôc 'fathers uncles will they go' **They** (fathers and uncles) *will go*

When both the Subject Referent and the Subject are pronouns there is always a tense marker; the Subject Referent pronoun can be only *nhâng, he, tǒ, inha,* or *ipe,* and the Subject pronoun must be either *ngâh* or *i-.*

Ngâh pôc 'Someone goes'

Nhâng acân ngâh pôc 'Someone (us) will go'

It is interesting to note that when arranged in a matrix (Set IV) the pronouns which can occur in the Subject Referent slot also form a block structure, but not the same as the L and block structures in Sets I, II, and III.

	Singular	Dual	Plural
1st Person	cǔ	nháng	he (+ tŏ)
2nd Person	may	inha	ipe
3rd Person	do	anha	ape/nga

Set IV

4. Syntactic usage

(1) Subject of the verb (Pronoun Set I, *ngâh, i -, u-, tŏ*). *Cubuat pôc tŏ́q dúng* 'Cubuat goes to the house', *Do pôc tŏ́q dúng* 'He goes to the house', *Upôc tŏ́q dúng* 'He goes to the house'.

(2) Direct object of the verb (Set I, *tŏ*). *Culáh púh Cubuat* 'Culáh hit Cubuat', *Culáh púh do* 'Culáh hit him'.

(3) Indirect Object of the verb (Set II, *tŏ*). The prefix *a-* is a preposition meaning 'to' or 'for' and occurs affixed either directly to the pronoun (Set II, L pattern) or to the morpheme *do* which precedes the pronoun (Set II, block pattern and *tŏ*). *Culáh tông amay* 'Culáh says to you', *Culah tông ado inha* 'I say to you-two', *Ngai tông ado tŏ* 'They say to us (inclusive)'.

(4) Object of the preposition (Set I, *tŏ*). *Acay pôc tŏ́q he* 'Child go to us', *May pŏ́c alứng cư* 'You go with me'.

(5) Subject of a noun or of an adjective complement (Set I, *tŏ*). *Cư ticuai* 'I person', *He clứng* 'we many', *Tŏ clứng* 'we (inclusive) many', *Inha nday vĕl, cư nday vĕl* 'You-two different village, I different village'.

(6) Possessor of another noun (Set I, *tŏ, mâh*). *A-ám a-i Cubuat* 'father mother Cubuat', *A-ám a-i do* 'father mother his'.

(7) Head of possession construction (Set III, *tŏ*). *Do tông*, « *Mmay put hơn nday* » ' He said, « Yours is bigger than mine.»' The difference between this way of expressing possession and that in 4. 6 is similar to the English difference between 'my' and 'mine'.

The prefix *n-* (n - ng - m -) which is affixed either to the pronoun (Set III, L pattern) or to the morpheme *do* (Set III, block pattern) is a bound allomorph of the morpheme *ân*. Allomorphs of the morpheme *ân* occur both as free forms and bound, and function as a connective meaning 'who' or 'that which'.

In a possessive pronoun form, *ân* replaces the noun which is being possessed and the personal pronoun replaces the name of the possessor noun. The entire construction fills a single slot in a clause and indicates possession.

(8). Replacer of conjunction *mŏi* 'and' (Set I, block structure). Four pronouns can act as conjunctions, replacing *mŏi* 'and', when pronouns or nouns are connected in a series: (1) *Inha* 'you-two' can only be used to connect *may* 'you' and one other person. *May mŏi Cubuat* 'you and Cubuat', *May inha Cubuat* 'you and Cubuat'. (2) *Anha* 'those two' is used to connect two persons or two groups of persons or one person and one group. *Cư anha Cubuat* 'I and Cubuat', *Culáh anha Cubuat* 'Culáh and Cubuat', *Ticuai Vĕl Arâm anha ticuai Vĕl Tallây* 'peo-

ple Village Arâm and people village Tallây', *He anha Cu-buat* 'we and Cubuat'. (3) *Ipe* 'you (plural)' is used to connect three or more persons, as in the construction *may ipe Culáh ipe Cubuat* 'you and Culáh and Cubuat'. (4) *Ape* 'they' (specific) is used to connect three persons, or one person and a group of more than two persons. *Cubuat ape Culáh ape Achúl* 'Cubuat and Culáh and Achúl', *Culáh ape he* 'Culáh and we'.

It has been pointed out that the four pronouns in the block structure of Set I are the only ones which can act as conjunctions. It is interesting to note that in these types of conjunction constructions only the five pronouns in the L pattern and *ngai* can act as subjects (i. e. *cư (day)*, *may*, *do*, *nháng*, *he*, and *ngai*).