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The Kháng Language of Vietnam in Comparison to Ksingmul (Xinh-mun)

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ABSTRACT

This paper compares two minority languages from northern Vietnam about which very little is known. The aim here is preliminary documentation of some of the very basic features. The Kháng data are based on my own field study and those from Ksingmul and Bumang are taken from sources which are in Russian and Chinese respectively. I have included a relatively rich lexical sample of Kháng and compared items to Ksingmul, Bumang, and other relevant languages. The paper closes with a plot of the tone trajectories of Kháng.

1 Introduction and background

Vietnam is a multilingual, multiethnic country with 53 minority nationalities as well as the Kinh (Vietnamese) majority (cf. Jerold Edmondson and Kenneth Gregerson (2007)).[1] Minority ethnicities make up about ten percent of an overall population of eighty-six million (2008 est. by www.airninja.com). The linguistic families resident in Vietnam are: MON-KHMER (Vietnamese, Mường, Khmu (Km), Ksingmul (Ks), Kháng (Kh), Bahnaric languages, and many others), TAI and KADAI (Tày, Black Thái and White Thái, and perhaps twenty more), SINO-TIBETAN (Chinese of various types, and several Tibeto-Burman languages), and AUSTRONESIAN (Cham and many in the southern Highlands).[2]

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[2]In Vietnam the large SW Tai groups are called Thái in Vietnamese to distinguish them from the large Central Tai groups, which are referred to as Tày and Nùng and who live to the north and east of the Red River.

The linguistic features of these families differ in many ways, but differences of word structure are diagnostic in most cases. For Mon-Khmer languages, word shapes have (or had) a sequence format of weak-syllable (with reduction of vocalic and prosodic features) + strong-syllable (with maximum vowel and prosody differences), which James Matisoff (1973) called *sesquisyllabic*, as if the family preferred a unit of a syllable-and-a-half. A good example of sesquisyllabicism is the ethnonym of the Khmu people, which differs across different varieties and styles of this large ethnicity. A common form is /km̀.mú?/, or phonetically [kə̀m.mú?] ~ [kàm.mú?] ~ [kɨ̀m.mú?] (cf. Jan-Olaf Svantesson (1989) as well as Svantesson and Karlsson (2004)). Svantesson and Karlsson report that Northern Khmu possesses about one hundred different possible minor syllables, e.g., /pn p pl pr t tm tn t tl tr c cm cn c cl cr k km kn kl kr …/. Vocabulary in Tai languages is mostly monosyllabic. Clusters with second element /l r/ are assumed but are now rapidly disappearing. Chinese was once monosyllabic but has become disyllabic today; it does not allow clusters; and finally, Austronesian languages are polysyllabic in word shape. As will be shown below, the Tai Branch has had considerable influence on Kháng, some influence on Ksingmul, and less on Khmu. Indeed, the contact situation between Khmuic and Tai languages has been intense for the last thousand years or so.

Among the Tai Branch, the languages with which the Kháng and Ksingmul have had extensive contact are Black Thái and White Thái. According to Fang Kuei Li (1977), the Black Thái and White Thái languages belong to the Southwestern Tai Subbranch. These people are large in population (1.1 million) and are comparatively recent immigrants (AD 1100 from China) to northwest Vietnam, where the indigenous Kháng and Ksingmul had once been settled. Such SW Tai languages all have five or six tone categories, possess long vowels in open syllables, and have long or short syllables (including reflexes of proto-diphthongs /ia ɯa ua/) in closed syllables, i.e., those ending in /-p –t –k –m –n –ŋ –w –j/ (cf. Michel Ferlus (2008)). Also see Li (1977) for information about the Tai proto-tone categories *A, *B, *C, *DS, and *DL.

This paper is devoted to exemplifying the main linguistic features of Kháng and comparing them to Ksingmul. We will also give some initial evidence regarding the origin of tonality in Kháng and present preliminary findings that both of these are members of the Khmuic Subbranch, though a detailed study of tonality and affiliation cannot be attempted here. This statement of the lexical features of the Kháng of Vietnam does not as yet permit firm conclusions without the study of more Kháng locations and speakers. An important point of comparison to my study is that of Dao Jie (2006, 2007), who has recently reported on the Bumang (Bm), a group that is descended of 19th century Kháng immigrants from Vietnam now residing in Jinping County just over the international frontier in China.[3]

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[3] I am indebted to Prof. Eugene Chan 陳西林 of Hong Kong who informed me of Professor Dao Jie 刀洁 of Yunnan University of Nationalities, Kunming and of her work on the *Bumang* 布芒 of Jinping County 金平县 Mianla Xiazhai and Mianla Shangzhai 勐拉地区曼仗下寨和曼仗上寨两个村子. Though this group is officially regarded as Tai, they speak a variety of Kháng.

The Kháng language is spoken in NW Vietnam, mostly along the course of the Black River (Sồng Đà) in and around Thuận Châu, Quỳnh Nhai, and Mường La Districts of Sơn La Province as well as in and around Phong Thổ, Mường Lay, Mường Tè, Tuần Giáo, and Than Uyên Districts of Lai Châu Province. They had an official population of 10,272 in 1999. In Vietnam the Kháng people are treated as a distinct ethnicity but are related to the Ksingmul (Xinh-Mul/Mun), who live just south of Điện Biên and elsewhere along the course of the Black River (cf. maps 1a-d and Pram et al. (1990)).

The field study for this paper was undertaken in 1996 with consultant help of Mr. Hoàng Văn É of Bản Ná Lai village, Than Uyên District (cf. map 1c).[4] In this and adjacent areas of Vietnam's Black River we saw many Khmu as well as White Thái and Black Thái settlements. For that reason, our speaker and the Kháng and Ksingmul languages and cultures generally have experienced much influence from SW Tai peoples in regard to native dress, cultural values, and linguistic features. Specifically, the clothing of the Bumang, Kháng, and Ksingmul women are identical to those of Black Thái and White Thái women (long black skirt with a long sleeved blouse and eight silver buttons from navel to neckline). In regard to language, Kháng and Ksingmul use mostly White/Black Thái numerals, e.g., *hok⁴⁴* 'six', *tɕɛt²⁴ʔ* 'seven', *kʋu¹²* 'nine', as well some distinctive SW Tai higher numerals, *sau⁵¹* 'twenty' and *hɔi²¹* 'hundred' that are not found in Central and Northern Tai varieties. They also use some Tai animal names, *ʔbu.poi⁴⁴* for the barking deer (*Muntiacus muntjak*) and *ʔbu.piŋ⁴⁴* for the wet leech (*Rhyncobdellida*). There are also a few examples of Tai loans for body parts, metals (gold, silver, iron, and copper), meat, tree, cave, etc. (cf. below for details). But the Kháng and Ksingmul were not always under the influence of powerful Thái neighbors.

The origins of these ethnicities are still somewhat nebulous, but genetic studies (cf. Reddy et al. 2007) support the claim that the Khasi-khumic group arose in Meghalaya State, India, about 25k-40k year BP (before the present). Genetic mutations of the Khasi-Khmu DNA showed about twenty-five percent new haplogroups (M48, M49, M50, M31c and M33b), which has not been reported so far from any of the Northeast Indian groups except Garo, a Tibeto-Burman language. Garo, a Tibeto-Burman speaking group which has M48 and M33b with a combined frequency of about seven percent. Thus, from the composition of both the mtDNA (mitochondrial, maternally inherited) and Y chromosome (found only in males, paternally inherited) haplogroups in the Austro-Asiatic Khasi, as a whole, suggests a distinct origin and a separate migration from the Tibeto-Burman groups of this region. If this view is correct and if Kháng and Ksingmul are, indeed, Khmuic languages, then Kháng and Ksingmul are descended from those Khasi-Khmuic (Khs-Km) clades who trekked from NE India, across Myanmar, Thailand, and Laos to northern Vietnam. Map 2, from Kumar et al. (2007), shows a possible scenario. But to understand their

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[4]In map 1(c) Than Uyên District belongs to Lào Cai Province, where it was located until the recent change in provincial boundaries. Than Uyên is now a part of Lai Châu Province.

current situation we need to return to NW Vietnam and the history of the Black Thái and White Thái in NW Vietnam.

> Maps 1: (a) Provinces of northern Vietnam, (b) Lai Châu, (c) Lào Cai, and (d) Sơn La, showing approximate locations in 1b, 1c, & 1d of the Kháng (purple) and Ksingmul (Xinh-mun) populations (red), according to *Các dân tộc ít người ở Việt Nam* (1978).
> Maps from http://www.angelfire.com/co/hongnam/vnmap.html

(a) Provinces of northern Vietnam

(b) Lai Châu

(c) Lào Cai

(d) Sơn La

Map 2: present-day distribution of Austro-Asiatic groups and the schematic representation of the routes of migration of the different Austro-Asiatic linguistic subgroups of India (modified from van Driem 2001)
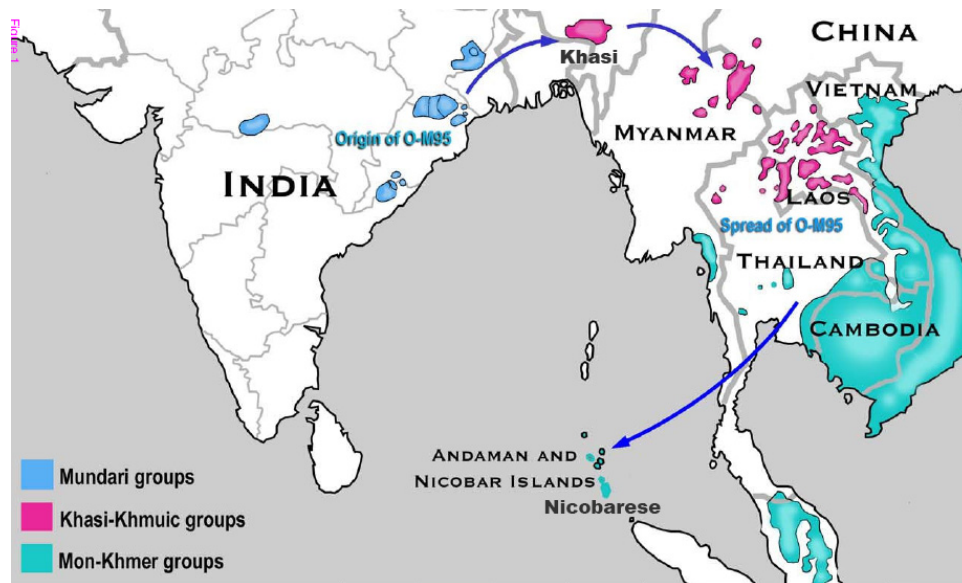
According to *Các dân tộc ít người ở Việt Nam* (1978:145–146) and Căm Trọng (1978:15–18, 1992) the Thái precursors were settled along the Sino-Vietnamese border.[5] During the reign of Lý Thái Tổ (AD 1010) it was reported that in NW Vietnam there were two states called Đăng and Lâm Tây; other materials from AD 1067 mention the groups by name, Ngưu Hống and Ai Lao. The first of these, Ngưu Hống, is identified in later sources as denoting a Thái ethnicity. From such old chronicles it is presumed that by the eleventh or twelfth century Thái pioneers had entered Vietnam. In the thirteenth century they settled along the Sông Đà (Black River), fragmenting the authochthonous people and language groups including the Khmu, Ksingmul, Kháng, Mảng, and La Ha into scattered settlements. The Thái advanced west-to-east in each of the following centuries: in the Trần Dynasty (AD 1225-1400) they reached Thuận Châu (cf. map 1d); by the fifteenth century, Mộc Châu (cf. map 1d); by the nineteenth century they were as far east as Tuyên Quang Province (cf. map 1a).

In those early times, the Tai people groups had the custom of calling neighboring ethnicities, especially Mon-Khmer groups, by the terms *Kha* or *Xá* usually accompanied by another descriptor (cf. Frank Proschan (1996)). Georges Condominas says of it:

> This word (*cha'* in White Tay language) is the origin of *xá* in Vietnamese, which like its equivalent *kha* in Lao and Siamese languages… can be either translated as 'slave' or 'mountain tribe,' according to the context. (1990:53)

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[5]They are described in the Hanshu Zhang Qian Chapter 漢書張騫 as farming wet paddies, using hydrological management of water resources with great skill, decorating their bodies with tattoos, cutting their hair short, and living in stilted houses. They were called 滇越 *Dianyue*.

Thus, from that time the Ksingmul have been called *Xá Puộc*, perhaps a derivative form of White Thái *Pộ* or Black Thái *Pụa* meaning 'people'. The autonym of this group is *Ksing-mul* 'people of the mountains'. The Kháng of differing locations have differing names. Their autonyms are *Mơ Kháng, Mkhang, Ma-háng,* or *Mơ Háng,* often with an added *Ái, Hốc, Béng* or *Cọi*.[6] As for exonyms, the Kháng in Thuận-châu are called *Xá Khao* or White Kha (to distinguish them from the *Black Kha* or Khơ Mú). In Chiềng-Ởn they are called *Xá Dón* (*Dón* is also used for the White Thái). In Mường La District on the Nậm Mu River in Sơn La Province, they are called the *Xá Tú Lăng* 'Nose-drinking Kha' for their custom of imbibing alcohol through the nares (cf. *Các dân tộc ít người ở Việt Nam* (1978:108, 118)) and Nghiêm Vạn Đặng et al. (1972:168–169). The Khmu of Thuận-châu call them *Kháng Pụa.*

2 The languages

Little on the language of the Kháng has appeared in print to date, aside from work in Chinese on Bumang by Dao Jie (2006, 2007). In this paper I will compare Kháng and Bumang to Ksingmul and Khmu. Kháng possesses word structure that shows only vestiges of the original sesquisyllabic pattern. It has also little left of the original morphological system, the syllable codas have simplified considerably, and six tones have developed trajectories that can be described as: High, Mid, Low-Rising, Mid-Rising, High-Falling, and Low-Falling. These features of the phonology contrast with those of the more preservative Ksingmul (though in the Peiros database there are some Ksingmul forms with tone marking) and all the more so with the archaisms of Khmu.

According to Đặng et al. (1972:254ff), there are major types of Ksingmul, called *Ksingmul Nghệt* (from Nà Nghệt Village, Xiêng Khọ District, Sầm Nưa Province, Laos), *Ksingmul Dạ* (from Chiềng On Village, Yên Châu District, Sơn La Province, Vietnam), and *Ksingmul Đồng*. Of these three, Ksingmul Ngệt retains the most sesquisyllabic structures, the most infixes, and many more word forms shared in common with Khmu (cf. Pram et al. (1990:13)). Ksingmul data in Pram et al. (1990) is of the Ksingmul Dạ type and was elicited from four speakers (two men; two women; 21-44 years of age). Pram et al. (1990:17) report the following set of initials of the main syllable /p t tɕ k ʔ ʔb ʔd ɦ (pʰ hʰ kʰ) s h v z ʒ~ʥ m n ɲ ŋ l/. Kháng has a similar inventory, though aspirates are rare. In regard to the codas of strong syllables, there are great differences between Ksingmul and Kháng (cf. §3 for more data on this feature).

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[6] It is noteworthy that there are about 200 speakers in China's Jinping County, who call themselves [bu²⁴ maŋ²⁴], in Chinese *Bumang* 布芒 and they speak a language that differs only a little from my Kháng data. They are called locally 曼仗 or *Màn Zhàng Dǎi*, and make up the smallest of the four Daic people groups of Jinping County. The Dai term *màn zhàng* means 'Elephant Village'. It is said 165 years ago they escaped servitude among the White Thái of the Mường Lay area, Lai Châu Province, Vietnam.

2.1 Sesquisyllabic word structure

Many lexical items in my data set appear only in monosyllabic forms. Still, one productive set of sesquisyllabic vocabulary are animal names in which the classifier with reduced vowel occurs, though there may originally have been sesquisyllabic word forms for the head nouns without classifier (1):

(1) a. ʔbu.mot^{33} 'ant' (<Tai mot^{D2S}, Ks səlmoːc)
    b. ʔbu.ɲɛp^{33} 'bat' (Ks^{7} ɲeːp)
    c. ʔbu.sɔn^{44} 'bear' (Bm sɔn^{55}, PKhm hual Ks suːl)
    d. ʔbu.tɕim^{24ʔ} 'bird' (PKhmu *siːm, Km^{8} síːm; Ks keːm)
    e. ʔbu.hak^{33} 'buffalo' (Km traːk, təhraːk, Khs shynreh)
    f. ʔbu.miu^{24ʔ} 'cat'
    g. ʔbu.na^{33} 'centipede' (PKhmu *ʔiːp, Ks təkat)
    h. ʔbu.ku^{44} 'cow' (Bm ku^{55})
    i. ʔbu.lak^{24}/ka.ʔak^{24} 'crow'(Km klʔaːk, Ks ʔáːk)
    j. ʔbu.sak^{21} 'sambar deer' (PKhmu *jak, Km təjɑːk, Ks kəzaːk)
    k. ʔbu.poi^{33} 'muntjac' ProtoKhmuic *puas)
    l. ʔbu.tɕua^{44} 'dog' (PKhmuic *sɔ, Khs ksew, Ks tɕoː; Km sɔ́ʔ)
    m. ʔbu.kap^{33} 'duck' (Ks kaːp)
    n. ʔbu.ka^{44} 'fish' (Ks kaː; Km káʔ)
    o. ʔbu.nak^{33} 'otter' (<Tai naak^{DL})
    p. ʔbu.ʔbɔ^{33} 'pangolin'
    q. ʔbu.ʔɛk^{33} 'pig' (Bm ɛk^{24})
    r. ʔbu.huai^{51}'tiger' (Bm huɔi^{51}, PKhmu *waːj, Km rəwaːj)
    s. saŋ.ʔo^{44} 'bumblebee'
    t. saŋ.kiu^{51}'dragonfly' (Bm ʔbu^{21}xet^{24})
    u. ʔbu.piŋ^{44}'wet leech' (Ks pliːn)
    v. ha^{33} 'rat' (PKhm *keneʔ, Bm ha^{55}, Ks khəneː)
    w. ze^{24ʔ}'chicken' (Bm jia^{33}, Ks ʔeːl)
    x. ze^{24ʔ} pa^{33} 'rooster' (Bm jia^{33}, Ks ʔeːl phu)
    y. ze^{24ʔ}pan^{44} 'hen' (Ks ʔeːl meː)
    z. ʔdak^{24ʔ} 'frog' (Ks kədɯk)
    aa. ma^{24ʔ} 'snake' (Bm ma^{33}, PKhmuic *mar, Ks mal)
    bb. kot^{33} 'shrimp' (Ks kuːk-kuk)
    cc. mɛŋ.kieŋ^{24ʔ} 'a fly'
    dd. ma.vɯŋ^{51} 'mosquito'
    ee. tɕe^{44} 'louse' (PKhmu *seʔ, Km seʔ, Ks tɕeːj)
    ff. ma.tit^{33} 'flea'
    gg. pa^{24ʔ} 'male animal'
    hh. mɛ^{24ʔ} 'female animal'
    ii. pɯm^{44} 'dry leech' (PKhmu *pə-lɯam)
    jj. tɕim^{24ʔ}ʔbo^{44} 'owl' (Bm tsim^{24} bu^{55})

There are also some names of natural phenomenon with sesquisyllabic word structure but many of these are also monosyllables. Some items in Kháng are also not clear cognates with corresponding etyma in related languages; e.g., *kam^{51}* 'gold', *ŋuən^{51}* 'silver' and *tɔŋ^{51}* 'copper' resemble Chinese by way of Tai. So, for example, 'gold' in the Khmu etymology is given as *riːl, exemplified by Vietnam Khmu *sriːl*; 'silver' is *muːl, as in Vietnamese Khmu as *kmuːl*, and 'copper' as *laːt as in Vietnam Khmu *laːt*. The etymon for 'moon' is also listed in the Khmu etymology database with a separate etymon for Kháng 'moon' *khieŋ^{35}*, in which the /kʰ/ has been influenced by the North Vietnamese pronunciation of this sound as [x-], here palatalized to [ç-] (etymology unknown). Other examples needing deeper study are: star, sky, salt,

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^{7}Ksingmul data taken from Pram et al. (1990).

^{8}Khmu data taken from Premsrirat (1993) and Khmu etymology compiled by Ilya Peiros in http://starling.rinet.ru/cgi-bin/response.cgi?root=config&morpho=0&basename=\data\aas\kmuet&first=21 Tai data from Li (1977) and Wang (1984).

(2) a. sa.kɔn⁵¹'star' (Bm lɔ²¹ŋăi⁵¹kɔn⁵¹, Km srmen)   b. sa.ʔu³³ 'sky' (Bm sa³³ u³³, Ks kətuːl)
     c. ma.çieŋ³³ 'moon' (PKhmu *kiʔ,   d. tie⁴⁴ 'earth' (PKhmu *teʔ, Bm tie⁵⁵, Ks
        Bm ŋai⁵⁵ sɛ⁵⁵ Kh khieŋ³⁵, Ks blah, ki³³)   məɲ, Ks pəteʔ, Khs pyrthei)
     e. ko⁴⁴ 'forest' (Bm luŋ⁵⁵ ko³³, Ks koh)   f. sai⁵¹ 'sand' (Ks saːij)
     g. ŋən⁴⁴ /ɲuo 'fire' (Bm ŋăn⁵⁵, Ks həŋoːŋ)   h. ʔbua²⁴ʔ 'ashes' (PKhmu *bɔh, Ks ʔəboh)
     i. lik⁴⁴ 'iron' (Bm lɯk²¹< Tai, Ks ket)   j. tɔŋ⁵¹ 'copper' (Bm tɔŋ⁵¹< Tai, Ks ʔbliːw)
     k. kam⁵¹ 'gold' (Bm kăm⁵¹<Tai, Ks thoːŋ)   l. ŋɯn⁵¹ 'silver' (Bm ŋɯn⁵¹, Ks ŋon< Tai)
     m. ʔɔm²⁴ʔ 'water' (Bm ɔm²⁴, PKhmu *ʔom)   n. me³³ ʔɔm²⁴ʔ 'river' (Bm mɛ²⁴)
     o. mok³³ 'cloud' (Ks moːk)   p. çu.tə³³ 'thunder' (PKhmu*kɨr, həN, Km ŋhkɨr)
     q. nan.la³³ 'lightning' (PKhmu *laːr Ks laːl)   r. hua²⁴ʔ 'wind' (Bm hua²¹, PKhmu *rəːj, həN-)
     s. ŋai.ŋi⁴⁴ 'sun' (Bm ŋai⁵⁵ ŋi⁵⁵, Ks kəlŋe)   t. ŋi⁴⁴ 'sunshine'
     u. lien²⁴ʔ 'salt' (Bm lɛn²⁴, Ks leːl)   v. tham²⁴ʔ 'cave' (Bm ŋɯp²¹)

2.2 Clusters

The Khmu language has a large inventory of clustered initial consonants. Premsrirat (1993:23–24) documents cluster types $C_1 C_2$, where C_2 can be [h r l] for the initials [p t c k], and for [k] C_2 can be [w] as well. Ksingmul ranks second in preserving clusters and Ksingmul Nghệt has them more than other places studied so far. Clusters often result when the vowel of weak first syllable, usually [ə] is syncopied. Kháng has the fewest cluster combinations. There is evidence that Kháng once had a more developed set of clusters [pl kl bl], though most of these have simplified to unclustered [p k b]. In some places, such as Chiềng Bôm Village (CB) of Thuận-châu District original clusters are still preserved (cf. (Đặng et al. 1972:162–164)); Bumang also has no clusters:

(3) a. k(l)ia⁴⁴ 'rain' (Bm kea⁵⁵, PKhmu *maʔ, Ks ʔəmĩə)
    b. klək 'squirrel' (PKhmu *rɔːk, Km phrɔːk, Ks phəloːk)
    c. k(l)ak²¹ 'head' (Bm kak²¹, Ks ʔəluː)
    d. (k)mie⁴⁴ 'sugarcane', (Km kəlmeʔ, Ks ʔəmiː)
    e. p(l)e⁴⁴ 'fruit' (Bm pɛ⁵⁵, PKhmu *leʔ, Kh pleʔ)
    f. blom 'pickled fish'

2.3 Vietnamese influence

Northern Vietnam has undergone a change from [j] to [z] and this feature seems to have diffused to many of the minority languages as well, as in *zak⁴⁴* 'feces' (Bm jɛk²¹, Ks ʔak, Km ʔiək). There are quite a number of examples in which Kháng shows the Vietnamese influenced [z-], whereas Bumang of Jinping, China shows the original [j-].

2.4 Tai Borrowings

2.4.1 Lexical borrowings

The level of borrowing has only marginally impacted the core vocabulary. Some examples are:

(4) a. nɯa²⁴ʔ 'meat' (Bm nuua²⁴ < Tai, Ks ksoŋ)   b. pi⁴⁴ 'year' (pi < Tai, Ks həwaːŋ)
    c. ʔban²⁴ʔ 'village' (Bm ban²⁴ < Tai)   d. mai²¹ 'tree' (Bm lăm⁵¹, PTai *mwai^{C2})
    e. kun⁴⁴ 'person' (Bm kɔn⁵¹ < Tai)

2.4.2 Original [r] -> [h]

There are a few lexical items that may have been influenced by Tai languages. While more study is necessary, this change is a characteristic feature of Tai languages of this area, e.g., 'dry field' in Central Thai *raai^{A2}* vs. *haai^{A2}* in Black Thái and White Thái. Notice that this change has also impacted Ksingmul somewhat as well.

 (5) a. hɯŋ⁵¹ 'teeth' (Bm həŋ⁵¹, Km ráːŋ hraːŋ, Ks həzəŋ)
     b. hiəŋ⁵¹ 'intestine' (Bm hɛŋ⁵¹, Km ríəŋ, Ks ɣəŋ)
     c. haŋ⁴⁴ 'dry' (hăŋ⁵⁵, PKhmu *roːɲ, Km sroːɲ)
     d. hie⁵¹ 'ginger' (Km rwéʔ)
     e. huai⁵¹ 'tiger' (Bm huɔi⁵¹, Km rwaːj, Ks həwaːj)

There is also evidence of the change [pʰ-] -> [f-] in SW Tai languages of this area. It is reinforced by the same rule in Vietnamese. In Kháng this change affects some of the native Khmuic vocabulary, as for example, in the case of *faŋ⁵¹* 'thigh', which in Ksingmul is *kəpaːn* and also Kháng fai²⁴ʔ 'cloth', Bumang phai²⁴ 'cotton'.

(6) Humans and Body Parts
    a. kɔn⁵¹ 'body' (Bm kɔn⁵¹)   b. mɛ²⁴ʔ 'woman' (Bm mɛ²⁴)
    c. ʔdɔŋ⁴⁴ k(l)ak²¹ 'hair of the head' (Km glo)   d. loŋ.ŋai⁴⁴ 'eye' (Bm ŋai⁵⁵, Ks mat)
    e. muih³³ 'nose' (Bm muih³³, Km mu, Ks moh)   f. ʔdɔŋ⁴⁴mum⁴⁴ 'beard' (Bm mum⁵⁵)
    g. ʔdɔŋ⁴⁴ 'egg' (Ks kloŋ, Km kdoŋ)   h. k(l)ɔ²⁴ʔ/zɯŋ⁴⁴(CB) 'foot', Km kan,
    i. kun⁴⁴ 'buttocks' (Bm moŋ⁵⁵)   j. ŋai⁴⁴ 'face' (Bm ŋai⁵⁵, Ks mat)
    k. sap⁴⁴ 'elbow'   l. tɔk³³ 'ear' (Bm tɔ²¹, Ks həltoːl)
    m. kavɯŋ⁴⁴ 'chin' (Bm bɔŋ⁵⁵ vəŋ⁵⁵, Ks ʔəwaːn)   n. tak³³ 'tongue' (Bm tak²¹, Ks həltaːk)
    o. lieŋ⁴⁴ 'shoulder' (Bm ŋăm³³ dɛŋ⁵⁵)   p. na.ʔɯk⁴⁴ 'chest, breast' (Ks kəʔok)
    q. məŋ.se⁴⁴ 'back' (Bm ɯŋ⁵⁵ pɛp²¹)   r. pui³³ 'navel' (Bm pɯi³³, Ks luːj)
    s. k(l)uom⁴⁴ 'liver' (Bm kɔm⁵⁵, Ks təloːm)   t. pɔt²⁴ʔ 'lungs' (Ks pleː)
    u. ʔəŋ⁴⁴ 'bone' (Bm kɔŋ²¹ săp²¹, Km sɯɤŋ, Ks laŋ) v. ʔəŋ⁴⁴ fɯk⁵¹ 'rib' (Km thrɯak)
    w. nəm²⁴ʔ 'blood' (Bm nəm²⁴, Ks miom)   x. ʔda²⁴ʔ 'gallbladder' (Bm da²⁴)
    y. ʔɔm.ŋai⁴⁴ 'tears' (Bm ɔm²⁴ ŋai⁵⁵)   z. ʔɔm.num²⁴ʔ 'urine' (Bm num²⁴, PKhmu
                                                          *nuːm, Ks kəltuːt Km ʔɔm.nuːm)

    aa. koi⁴⁴ 'horn' (Bm koi⁴⁴, Ks kəlgan)   bb. ta⁵¹ 'tail' (PKhmu *taʔ, Ks həltaː)

cc. fan⁵¹ 'thigh' (Ks kəpaːn)

dd. le⁴⁴ 'husband' (Bm pa²⁴li⁵⁵, Ks ʔəliː)

ee. kən⁴⁴ 'wife' (Bm mɛ²⁴kăn⁵⁵)

ff. su³³se⁴⁴ 'child' (CB kuon)

gg. tɕəu⁴⁴ 'grandchild' (Bm sɛm⁵⁵)

hh. ʔda³³ti⁴⁴ 'hand' (Bm ti⁵⁵)

ii. kun³³ kən⁴⁴ (Ks kɔɔn khoon) 'daughter'

jj. ʔu²⁴ʔ 'father' (Bm măm⁵⁵)

kk. ʔdi⁵¹ 'father's older brother'

ll. ʔbɔ²⁴ʔ 'father's younger brother'

mm. za³³ 'father's mother'

nn. nai²⁴ʔ 'mother's mother'

oo. mɛ²⁴ʔ 'mother' (Bm mɛ²⁴)

pp. ʔi⁵¹ 'sister older' (Bm ai²⁴)

qq. ʔoi³³ kən⁴⁴ 'sister younger' (Bm mɛ²⁴oi⁵⁵)

rr. ʔai⁵¹ 'brother older' (Bm ai²⁴ dɯŋ⁵⁵)

ss. ʔoi³³ kun⁴⁴ 'brother younger'(Bm pa²⁴oi⁵⁵)

tt. ʔɔm.ʔdum⁴⁴ 'pus' (Bm dum⁵⁵)

uu. nɯŋ⁴⁴ 'skin' (Bm nɯŋ⁵⁵)

(7) Space and Time

a. tuŋ⁵¹ 'above'

b. ʔboŋ⁴⁴ 'below'

b. ʔbəŋ.nɔŋ⁴⁴ 'inside'

c. ʔbəŋ.ʔdo²⁴ʔ 'outside'

e. ʔbəŋ.ve⁴⁴ 'left' (Ks luoŋ wi)

f. ʔbəŋ.tam⁴⁴ 'right' (luoŋ meːŋ)

g. mɯ²¹ 'day' (Bm mə²¹, Ks mɯ)

h. mɯ⁵¹ ŋɛ³³ 'yesterday' (Ks mɯ kik)

i. mɯ⁵¹ mɯp⁴⁴ 'tomorrow' (Ks mɯ gɯm)

j. laŋ³³ mom⁵¹ 'last year' (Ks həwaːŋ mom)

k. pi⁴⁴ laŋ³³ he⁴⁴ 'this year'

l. laŋ³³ mia²⁴ʔ 'new/next year' (Ks pi náː)

(8) Descriptions

a. hai²¹ 'bad' (Ks ʔuəj)

b. mia²⁴ʔ 'new' (Bm mia²⁴, Ks həmeː)

c. kua²⁴ʔ 'old' (Bm. kua²⁴)

d. ɕia²⁴ʔ 'sweet' (Bm sia²⁴, Ks pəseː)

e. ʔba²⁴ʔ 'sour' (Bm ba²⁴, Ks kəwak)

f. tɕaŋ⁴⁴ 'bitter' (Bm tsăŋ⁴⁴, Ks tsuŋ)

g. tɕə²⁴ʔ 'insipid' (Ks ʔbaːm)

h. kin⁵¹ 'salty' (Bm zɛ²⁴, Ks ʔbeh)

i. hɔm²⁴ʔ 'fragrant' (Bm hɔm²⁴ < Tai *hɔɔmᴬ¹)

j. ʔda¹² 'black' (Bm da¹², Ks ʔok)

k. ʔbuk⁴⁴ 'white' (Ks lɯək)

l. ʔɛ³³ 'yellow' (Bm ʔɛ³³, Ks lɯəŋ < Tai)

m. sɔ²⁴ʔ 'red' (Bm ɕɔ²⁴, Ks kəʔet)

n. ʔdɯŋ⁴⁴ 'big' (Bm dɯŋ⁵⁵)

o. zau⁵¹ 'high, tall' (Bm jau⁵¹, Ks kəzoːŋ)

p. ki³³ 'low' (Ks tiəp)

q. zan⁴⁴ 'lightweight' (Bm jan³³, Ks həlzaːl)

r. tam⁴⁴ 'heavy' (Bm tăm⁵⁵)

s. ʔem²⁴ʔ 'early'

t. ʔaŋ⁴⁴ 'cold'

u. zin⁵¹ 'dark'

v. haŋ⁴⁴ 'dry'

w. zɯ²⁴ʔ 'far' (Bm jɯ²⁴)

x. məi⁴⁴ 'fat'

y. ʔam⁴⁴ 'good'

z. kap³³ 'narrow, tight' (Bm kɛp²¹)

aa. ʔbot³³ 'near'

bb. so²⁴ʔ 'raw'

cc. zum⁴⁴ 'sharp'

dd. tɕap⁴⁴ 'sticky'

ee. ʔdap³³ 'hot' (Bm un²⁴)

ff. kui²¹ 'smelly' (Ks poːt)

(9) Material culture

a. ɲa⁴⁴ 'house' (Bm ɲa⁵⁵, Ks zioŋ)

b. ʔboŋ.tɕɛn²⁴ʔ 'bowl' (Ks ʔdoːj)

c. tɔŋ⁵¹ 'bracelet' (Bm dăm⁵⁵ tɔŋ⁵¹)

d. fai²⁴ʔ 'cloth' (Bm phai²⁴ 'cotton')

e. hap²⁴ʔ 'carrying pole' (< Tai)

f. kun⁴⁴ 'skirt'

g. tu²⁴ʔ 'chopsticks'

h. ha¹² 'alcoholic beverage'

(10) Food and Plants

a. kɔ.zum⁴⁴ 'glutinous rice' (Bm kɔ⁵¹jum⁵⁵ Ks kəloŋ)

b. nɯa²⁴ʔ 'meat' (< Tai, Ks ksoŋ)

c. ʔdat⁴⁴ 'grass' (Bm băt²⁴, Ks gɯk)

d. kɛŋ⁴⁴ 'cogongrass' (Bm kəŋ⁵⁵, Ks ŋeːl)

e. za⁴⁴ 'medicine' (Bm ja⁴⁴)

f. la⁴⁴ 'leaf' (Bm na⁵⁵ Ks ʔbɯːu)

g. məi⁵¹ 'tree' (< Tai, Ks kəʔuoŋ)

h. nun³³ 'cotton' (Bm phai²⁴, Ks ɲɯəŋ)

i. ʔba³³ 'bamboo' (Bm va³³)

j. thua²⁴ʔ 'bean' (Bm thua²⁴)

m. pe³³ ʔə²⁴ʔ 'pumpkin' (Ks ʔbiəbăk ʔɯ)

n. hau⁵⁵ʔbɔn²⁴ʔ/kuai(CB) 'taro' (Bm hɔ⁵⁵)

o. kam.hok⁴⁴ 'rice chaff inedible'

p. tɔŋ⁵¹ ke⁵¹ 'moss'

q. pe³³ xɯa⁴⁴ 'eggplant'

r. ʔbak⁴⁴ 'flower' (Bm ba²⁴)

s. xa²⁴ʔ 'galangal' (<Tai)   t. hie⁵¹ 'ginger'
u. pe³³ kien³³ 'melon'   v. hɔm²⁴ʔ 'onion'
w. ʔdɔŋ.wɔ⁴⁴ 'rice spike'   x. kɛŋ²⁴ʔ 'soup'
y. tɕa²¹ 'thorn' (Bm tsa³³)   z. məi⁵¹ 'tree'
aa. lɔŋ⁴⁴ 'greens'

(11) Pronouns

a. ʔda⁴⁴ 'I' (Bm da⁵⁵, Ks ʔaɲ)   b. mi⁴⁴ 'you sg.' (Bm mi⁴⁴, Ks mih)
c. mə.ke⁴⁴ 'you pl.' (Ks lok kɯh)   d. zia⁴⁴ 'we incl.' (Ks zii)
e. nɔ²⁴ʔ 'we excl.' (Bm nɔ²⁴, Ks ʔée)   f. ke⁴⁴ 'he, she, it' (Bm ki⁵⁵, Ks ʔɯn)
g. kɔn⁵¹ 'they' (Bm ki⁵⁵)

(12) Numerals

a. lo²⁴ʔ '1'(Bm lu²⁴; Ks met)   b. ʔbɯa²⁴ʔ '2' (Bm bɯa²⁴; Ks sɔɔŋ)
c. fia²⁴ʔ '3' (Bm pia²⁴; Ks saam)   d. fɔn⁴⁴ '4' (Bm pɔn⁵⁵; Ks sii)
e. ha³³ '5' (Bm səŋ⁵⁵; Ks haa)   f. hok⁴⁴ '6' (Bm hok²⁴; Ks hok)
g. tɕet⁴⁴ '7' (Bm tset²⁴; Ks tɕɛt)   h. pɛt²⁴ '8' (Bm pɛt²⁴; Ks pɛɛt)
i. kəu²⁴ʔ '9' (Bm kău¹²; Ks kaw)   j. sip⁴⁴ '10' (Bm sip²⁴; Ks sip)
k. sip⁴⁴ sɔŋ⁴⁴ '12' (Bm sip²⁴sɔŋ⁵⁵ Ks sip sɔɔŋ) l. sau⁵¹ '20' (Bm sau⁵¹; Ks saw)
m. lo²⁴ʔ fiɔi⁵¹ '100' (Ks met fiooj)   n. lo²⁴ʔ pan⁵¹ '1000' (Bm lu²⁴ păn⁵¹, Ks met phan)

(13) Verbs

a. hɛ⁴⁴ 'accept'   b. ho²¹ 'bark'
c. sum.ʔɔm²⁴ʔ 'bathe' (Ks ʔuːm)   d. ʔak⁴⁴ 'bite' (Ks ʔak)
e. ʔe²⁴ʔ 'burn'   f. sə²¹ 'buy' (Bm sɯ²¹ < Tai)
g. hiu²⁴ʔ 'carry hanging' (< Tai, Ks deel)   h. ʔbɛk²⁴ʔ 'carry on shoulder' (< Tai)
i. ʔum⁴⁴ 'come' (Bm um⁵⁵, Ks ʔoːm)   j. tɛ.tu²⁴ʔ 'cook'
k. koŋ⁴⁴ 'crow (chicken)' (Ks keel)   l. tat⁴⁴ 'cut with scissors'
m. ŋat⁴⁴ 'die' (Bm ŋăt²¹, Ks siən)   n. tu²⁴ʔ 'eat' (Bm tu²⁴, Ks kaː)
o. ti²⁴ʔ 'fall down' (Ks tɕəgəm)   p. tuk.ʔdɛ⁴⁴ 'give' (PKhmu *dɛ)
q. zə¹²ʔ 'go' (Bm zɯ¹², Ks zuu)   r. teu⁵¹ 'hide' (Ks kətɯɯl)
s. tɛm²⁴ʔ 'kill' (Ks pəsoən)   t. mɔn⁴⁴ 'know' (PKhmu *nəːŋ, Ks zuə)
u. pɔk²⁴ʔ 'peel'   v. lak⁴⁴ 'pull' (Bm it²⁴ Ks laak)
w. kɔn³³ vat⁴⁴ 'pull grass'   x. tɕə²⁴ʔ 'remember' (Ks kətsuh)
y. zaŋ²¹ 'rest' (Bm jăŋ⁵¹)   z. ʔum⁴⁴ 'return' (Bm um⁵⁵, Ks ʔoːm)
aa. ɲun⁴⁴ 'sit' (Bm ɲon⁴⁴, Ks kliən)   bb. lɛm²⁴ʔ 'sleep' (Bm lɛm²⁴)
cc. kut²⁴ʔ 'scrape' (Ks loːt)   dd. ʔdai²¹ 'run'
ee. zɛŋ⁴⁴ 'stand' (Bm jɛŋ⁵⁵, Ks tsal)   ff. sɯn⁴⁴ 'vomit' (Bm sən⁵⁵, PKhmu *hɨal, Km hɨal)
gg. pɯa²⁴ʔ 'fly' (PKhmu tɨːr, Bm bɯa²⁴, Ks pal) hh. he.kit⁴⁴ 'forget'
ii. tiək³³ 'lie down'   jj. kiu²⁴ʔ 'mow' (Ks kiəw < Tai)
ll. taŋ⁴⁴ 'roast' (Bm saŋ⁵⁵, Ks zɯŋ)   mm. ku⁵¹ 'wait' (Bm ku⁵¹, PKhmu *kɔʔ, Km kɔʔ)

3 Kháng/Bumang syllables and tone

Kháng has word structure that is very similar to Tai languages. Syllable codas must be taken from the set /-i -u -m -n -ŋ -p -t -k/. Ksingmul includes these as well as /-l -h/, e.g., *lul* 'thunder', *laːl* 'lightning' and *koh* 'forest'.

Kháng possesses clusters in initial word initial position in some places /kl-/, but no longer in the speech of my consultant. Ksingmul demonstrates a much richer collection of clusters, i.e., /bl- kl- kʰl- kn- kʰɲ- ks- ʔmb- tʰl-/ as in *bluəŋ* 'rainbow', *bleːl* 'hail', *kloː* 'muscle', *kʰlioŋ* 'tripod', *kəsap kneː* 'bicep' (possibly from *kʰəneː* 'rat'),[9] *kʰɲoːn* 'square-shaped basket', *ksiŋ* 'person', *ʔmbuəp* 'loofah gourd', and *tʰlum* 'hoe'.

The Kháng language has developed six tones. In Kháng the low tones 21 and 12 appear to be somewhat rarer than in Bumang. Those syllables with the 24ʔ tone category are considerably shortened in duration by the glottal closure. Significantly, Tai loan words in the C1 tone category are assigned to the 24ʔ tone category in Kháng and those in the C2 category to the 21. The C category in Tai language is associated in many places with a slow glottal closure at the end of these tone shapes.

Figure 1 presents Kháng tone trajectories. As can be seen in this plot of *ti⁵¹* 'tail' at 46 semitones and falls to 38 semitones; *pur⁴⁴* 'navel' traces a level course at 42 semitones; *ti²⁴ʔ* 'banana' in the compound *pɛ⁴⁴ti²⁴ʔ* may have been elevated by the preceding 44 tone and rises here from 41 semitones to nearly 44 semitones; *tɔ³³* 'ear' has nearly level course at 40 semitones; *mei²¹* 'tree' (Tai loan) starts at 41 semitones and falls to 34 semitones (I have included only the vocal part of the syllable to better match the other members of this paradigm); and finally, *ha¹²* 'alcohol', which begins at 38 semitones and rises to 39 semitones. This plot was made by compositing three repetitions of each of the lexical items that eliminated idiosyncratic and retain common data points over the syllable. All syllables used are long or diphthongal. Note the shorter duration of the 24ʔ shapes.

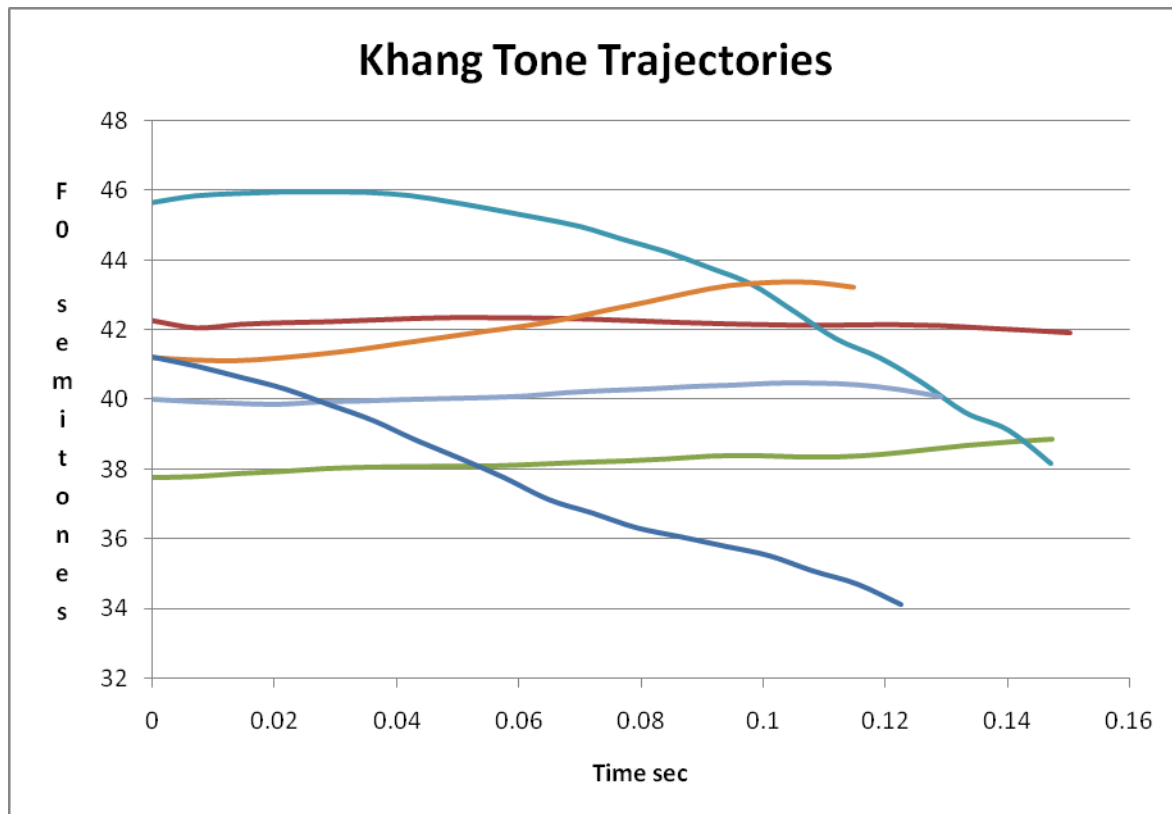[9]Cf. English muscle from L. musculus 'a muscle', lit. 'little mouse'.

Figure 1: Khang tone trajectories

Since Kháng has a system of six tones, one wonders where they may have come from, since this number equals that in the language of the national majority. Vietnamese also has six tones. On the basis of comparative evidence Vietnamese is thought to have become tonal from the pitch-altering effects of consonants at the beginnings and endings of syllables in an earlier stage of the language. Andre Haudricourt (1954) solved the riddle of how this took place. He divided the six tones of N. Vietnamese into a three-by-two matrix. He assumed there were two distinct changes in the historical development of tone in Vietnamese. He reasoned that the small raising/lowering influence of final consonants had caused the end of the syllable to go up in pitch or descend in pitch. Stop consonants such as /p t k ʔ/ cause a rise, whereas other consonants such as /s h/ cause a fall. If there was no final consonant and only an open syllable, then the pitch remained more or less in the middle range. At a later time the initial consonants impacted a system with three new tonal contrasts. If the initial consonant was voiceless, then it either raised the overall pitch of the syllable; if the initial consonant was voiced, then it lowered the overall pitch of the syllable. It is this second process that Svantesson (1989) and Svantesson and Karlsson (2004) found to engender high or low tones in some types of Khmu in Thailand. The question is whether consonant-induced *tonogenesis,* as is found in the history of Thai Khmu, is also evidenced in Kháng/Bumang as determined from the reconstructed form found in Peiros' Etymological Database of Khmu.

In (14) I compare Kháng with Ksingmul, Khmu, and the reconstructed parent language:

(14)   Gloss   Kháng/Bumang   Ksingmul   Khmu   PKhmu

	Gloss	Kháng/Bumang	Ksingmul	Khmu	PKhmu
a.	fish	ka⁴⁴	ka:	káʔ	*kaʔ
b.	dog	tɕua⁴⁴	tɕo:	sɔ́ʔ	*sɔʔ
c.	fruit	ple⁴⁴	ple:	pleʔ	*p-leʔ
d.	louse	tɕe⁴⁴	tɕe:j	seʔ	*seʔ
e.	rain	k(l)ia⁴⁴	ʔəmïə	kəmaʔ	*kə-maʔ
f.	earth	tie⁴⁴	kəte	pəteʔ	*pə-teʔ
g.	leaf	la⁴⁴	na	hlaʔ	*hə-laʔ
h.	husband	le⁴⁴	kəli:	gliʔ	*g-leʔ
i.	sugarcane	(k)mie⁴⁴	ʔəmi:	kəlmeʔ	---
j.	liver	k(l)uom	təlo:m	tlɔ:m	*təlɔ:m
k.	bear	sɔn⁴⁴	su:l	hual	*hual
l.	four	fɔn⁴⁴/pɔn⁵⁵	---		*puan
m.	leech, dry	pɯm⁴⁴	plo:m	plɯəm	*pə-lɯam
n.	bone	ʔəŋ⁴⁴	laŋ	cəʔa:ŋ	*cə-ʔa:ŋ-

As this list demonstrates, many items originally ending with /-ʔ/ in the parent language are manifested with tone 44. Examples (14) j-n show that other sonorant codas also show 44 tone values. Members of (14) appear to begin with voiceless consonants and these contrast to some degree with the tonal category 24ʔ, which may include items originally with voiced initials. At this point, however, other factors come into play. There does not seem at this juncture to be a pattern among the remaining tones. So for the moment we must say we have a few leads but no solid account of the tonogenesis of Kháng.

4 Comparison of Kháng, Bumang, Ksingmul, and Khmu

The Khmuic etymological database by Peiros, which contain example data from Cuang, Kabit, Khmu, Ksingmul, a few Kháng examples, and Mrabri, allows us to make some initial comparisons. It appears that the lexical support for Kháng and Bumang belonging to Khmuic is strong. The etyma *mar 'snake', cf. Kháng/Bumang *ma²⁴ʔ* and Ksingmul mal as well as *hual 'bear', cf. Kháng *sɔn⁴⁴*/Bumang *sɔn⁵⁵*; Ksingmul *su:l*; and Khmu *hual* are not found in other members of the Austro-Asiatic family. There are many other etyma—blood, bone, urine, egg, crow (n), fruit, tongue, horn, bird, dog, buffalo, tiger, louse, dry, and that liver can be closely related to Khmuic. In some cases their etyma may also related to other subgroupings. So, for the moment, we will need to wait until we have more data before the pathway is clearer.

5 Conclusion

While only little of the internal secrets of Kháng have been revealed thus far, it does seem clear that it is a language that shares much in common with Ksingmul and less, but still unmistakable, connections with Khmu.

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