Recognising the parallelism between the conjugation of a verb such as √lug ‘pour’ (pres. ldug, past blugs, fut. blug, imp. lhugs ‘pour’ and a verb such as √kru ‘wash’ (hkrud, bkrus, bkru, khrus), Li Fang-Kuei suggests deriving the present stem ldug from a reconstruction ∗h. lug (1933: 149). In this sub-case of Conrady’s law, the change of ∗hl to ld- may be analyzed into the following changes: ∗hl > ∗hdl > ∗hld > ld (cf. Conrady 1896: 59, Li 1933: 149, Hill 2011: 446–447, Hill 2013: 193–195). This sound change obscures the synchronic relationship between verb forms beginning with ld- and other present formations, and the resultant synchronic opacity gives rise to analogical forms (e.g. the alternate present blug). Consequently, the dictionaries present a certain level of confusion about the paradigms of lateral initial verbs.

In many cases enough of the traditional lexicographical sources present enough of the etymologically correct stems for the pattern to emerge despite the noise. For example, a root √lad ‘give to drink’ on the model of hkrud, bkrus, bkru, khrus ‘wash’, should have the stems ∗ldud (< ∗huld), ∗blud, ∗blud, ∗lud. Hill (2010: 159) presents the following paradigm for this verb on the basis of nine lexicographical sources; the digit following each stem is the number of lexica which report that form.

Pres. ldud (5), blud (4), lhud (1)
Past. bldud (1), blud (6), ldud (1)
Fut. ldud (3), blud (5)
Imp. ldud (3), blud (5), lhud (1)

Majority rule yields the paradigm ldud, blud, blud, blud, nearly what morphology predicts. The imperative lhud given in one source most closely matches the predicted ∗lud; although majority rule in some cases yields the right answer, is not a reliable method. In other cases the traditional lexicographical sources unanimously divide a verb into two, where morphological analysis suggests that the stems originally belong to a single paradigm. Thus, the dictionaries offer ldad, bldad, bldad, ldod ‘chew’ and blad, blad, blad, blod ‘chew’ as distinct verbs, where the morphology suggests the single verb ldad, blad, blad, ∗lod ‘chew’.  

The voiceless imperatives lhugs (from √lug ‘pour’) and lhud from (√lad ‘give to drink’) in place of predicted *lug and *lad, commends the devoicing of laterals in the imperative to further study. This phenomenon is perhaps to be compared with voice alternating verbs of the type hgens, bkan, dgan, khan ‘fill’ (cf. Hill 2014). However, the formation of the future of voice alternating verbs with g- rather than b- weighs against this comparison.
The paradigms suggested by morphology are hypotheses; only in two cases have textual attestations confirmed the validity of such hypotheses.\footnote{A similar correction to the paradigm of one rhotic initial verb is also available. The verb ‘to write’ has the traditional paradigm: *h. bri, bris, bri, bris*, but the etymological paradigm is: *h. dri, bris, bri, ris* (cf. Hill 2005). Relying on the type of analysis offered here for ‘give to drink’, ‘chew’, and ‘understand’ Jacques posits four paradigms for verbs with rhotic initials, without philological confirmation: *h. drid, brid, brid,* *rid ‘deceive’, h. drud, brus, bru,* *rus ‘dig’, h. dreg, breg, breg,* *regs ‘shave’, h. drad, brad, brad,* *rod ‘scratch’* (cf. Jacques 2010).}

Traditional paradigm: *klog, bklags, bklag, klogs* *(lhogs)*
Correct paradigm: *klog, blags, klag, lhogs* *(cf. de Jong 1973, Hahn 1999)*

Traditional paradigm: *klub, bklubs, bklub, klubs*

Attestations from Old Tibetan and the Kanjur allow \(\sqrt{\text{lan}}\) ‘reply’ with the paradigm \(\text{ldon, blan, glan, lon}\), to be added as a third member to the list of lateral initial verbs for which philological attestations confirm the expected morphological stems against the analysis of the dictionaries.

The dictionaries give \(\text{ldon}\) ‘return, answer, reply’ as an invariant verb (Hill 2010: 160); they also give a verb with the confused paradigm pres. \(\text{glan/glon}\), past \(\text{glan, fut. glan/glon, imp. glan/glon}\) ‘patch, answer’ (Hill 2010: 39–40). Morphological analysis suggests that these stems are better arranged into one verb \(\text{ldon, blan, glan, lon}\) ‘answer’; appropriate attestations of all four stems are not difficult to find.\footnote{As Jäschke points out these verbs ‘answer’ are cognate to the noun \(\text{lan}\) ‘an answer’ (1881: 292, 543), guaranteeing that the root has a vowel ‘a’ and not a vowel ‘o’. The verb ‘answer’ often appears in a \textit{figura etymologica} ‘answer an answer’ with this noun.}

Examples (1) and (2) show \(\text{ldon}\) attested as a present stem.

1. *mi rtod-ci ˙n dri-ba dris kyi ˙n-thos-kyi-theq-pas lan mi \text{ldon-te/} ci-nas sans-rgyas-kyi ye-shes mion-par rdzogs-par htsa ˙n rya-ba de lta-bur lan \text{ldon-no/}*

   Although they asked questions and did not argue, the Śrāvakas do not reply, they reply (with the question) how to be perfectly liberated in the manifest wisdom of the Buddha (*Saddharmapun. d.ar¯ıka-n¯ama-mah¯ay¯ana-s¯utra* Derge Kanjur vol. 51, page 106a)

2. *Kau-¨si-ka-kyis Lha-hi-bu-zla-ba ḩdi-¨nid-la dris-¨sig-da ˙n/h. ḩdi-¨nid-kyis khyod-la lan \text{ldon-no/}*

   O Kausi, ask thou this very Devaputracandra and he will answer thee (*Traya st r i m. ´sat-parivarta-n¯ama-mah¯ay¯ana-s¯utra* Derge Kanjur vol. 63: page 141a)

In the first clause of example (1) the negation with \(\text{mi}\) ensures that \(\text{ldon}\) is either present or future; the context precludes a future reading (i.e. ‘to be replied’). In the second clause of example (1) and in example (2) the suffix -no rather than -to precludes the past and the context again weighs against the future.

Examples (3) and (4) show that \(\text{glon}\) is an alternate present stem to the verb ‘answer’.

3. *don de-lta bas-na nas mdo-sde kun-las ˙nah. ḩkhor-du gtogs-pa ni drin-la lan \text{glon-no}*

   For that reason I answer the questions of my disciplines from all the sūtras (*Mahāparinirvāna-mahāsūtra* Derge Kanjur vol. 52, page 128a)
Children are nurtured by their parents and definitely obliged to honour them accordingly, repaying with care for the elderly. Given their birth, they shall have to repay and do what they can. If for example even the children of wild animals and birds repay the kindness of their parents, why speak of the children of humans? (Dialogue of two brothers, PT 1283, ll. 242–245, Imaeda et al. 2007: 169)

In example (3) the suffix -no rather than -to again precludes the past and context weighs against the future. In example (4) no tell-tale syntactic sign assures that glon is a present, but the generic reading weights against the future (cf. Zeisler 2004: 334–337) and the occurrence of glan as a future in the same passage, precludes that glon is the future. If glon is not the past or the future, then it must be the present.

Examples (5) and (6) show blan attested as a past stem.


If with ill will, indolence, or scorn toward those who come to ask about the textual tradition of dharma and the code of conduct newly taught [by] Boddhisattvas, they do not answer the questions of each one, they will fall [into hell]. (Dharmamudrā, Derge Kanjur, vol. 66, page 83a)

(6) de-nas hjam-dpal la-sogs-pahi byain-chub-sens-dpahi tshogs de dag-gis kyan de bžin-du tshigs-su bcad-pa de-ūnd-kyis lan blan-to /

Then, the assembly of Boddhisattvas, Maṅjuśrī etc., answered in verse like that (Mahābhārata-parivarta-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra, Derge Kanjur vol. 63, page 119b)

The use of the negation prefix ma (in example 5) and the use of the suffix -to (in example 6) ensure that blan is a past stem form.

Examples (7) and (8) show glan attested as a future stem.

(7) khyed-kyis lan glan-źiṅ kha gdag-par cī gnaṅ žes

Would you grant that [my parents] be avenged and [their enemies] vanquished? (Rama C, l. 8, cf. de Jong 1989: 97)

(8) skyes-na slar lan glan-źiṅ chi-nus-gyis bya-bahi rigo / /

Given their birth, [children] shall have to repay [their parents] and do what they can. (Dialogue of two brothers, PT 1283, ll. 243–244, Imaeda et al. 2007: 169, cf. example 4)

In example (7) the coordination of glan with the future stem gdag (from the verb ḫdogs, btags, gdag, tshogs ‘vanquish’)4 ensures that glan is itself a future stem. In example (8) the coordination

4Hill (2010: 149) on the basis of slim evidence divides this verb from ḫdogs, btags, gdag, tshogs ‘tie, fasten’, but the two are certainly to be identified etymologically.
of glan with the future bya (from the verb byed, byas, bya, byos ‘do’) ensures that glan is itself a future stem.

Examples (9) and (10) show lon attested as an imperative stem.

(9) tshire-dan-ladan-pa byams-pa gnas-brtan Rab-hbyor hdi skad-du byan-chub sems-dpah sems-dpah chen-po byams-pa hdi don hdi hri lan ldon-no zes zer-na tshire-dan-ladan-pa ma-pham-pa don hdi lan lon-cig!

The venerable beloved monk Subhūti [said] this: “bodhisattva mahāsattva Maitreya, if you say you give answers regarding the intention, then give an answer re the intention, Invincible [Maitreya]!” (Aṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā, Derge Kanjur vol. 33, page 197a)

(10) brtan-po gan-dan gan-dag rma-bo che-chen-pohi mdo ńan-par ḡod-nas lhags-pa de-da bdag-gi rma-bo che bṣrags-pa gsan-nas dri-ba deḥi lan lon-cig!

Whosoever is steadfast, having come to hear the sūtra of the great drum, now, having heard the great beating of my drum, give answers to the questions! (Mahābhūṭihārakaparivarta-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra, Derge Kanjur vol. 63, page 119b)

The imperative suffix -cig suffixed to lon ensures that in both examples 9 and 10 this stem is an imperative.

These textual attestations demonstrate that paradigm of ‘answer’ is ldon ~ glon, blan, glan, lon ‘answer’ as morphological analysis suggests. This case study shows that morphological analysis when confirmed by philological attestations, can bring order to the apparent chaos that the dictionaries sometimes present.

References


Future research may explain the variation between the two forms of the present stem.


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