

MORE ON SEDANG ETHNODIALECTS

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0. INTRODUCTION

Five Sedang ethnodialects were discovered in 1966 and subsequently analyzed and reported by this author.¹ More recent field work has uncovered many more such Sedang ethnodialects and has revealed the misidentification of one of the ethnodialects previously reported. The purpose of this paper is to analyze and identify the Sedang ethnodialects discovered to date.

The ethnodialect terminology used by the Sedang consists of the word *rotéang*² 'Sedang, montagnard' modified in the basic Central Sedang form, by the word *kolai* 'what' or *ti lai* 'how, why'. As these latter two words are variously pronounced in the different Sedang villages and areas as well as in neighboring language areas, so the Sedang mimic the peculiar pronunciation and thus isolate one or more phonological idiosyncrasies of each area. Seventeen distinctions have been found to date as listed below.

1. *rotéang koleq*
2. *rotéang kolèi*
3. *rotéang kikle*
4. *rotéang koklai*
5. *rotéang kokli yau*
6. *rotéang kokli*
7. *rotéang kia kinklèi*
8. *rotéang kiaq kli*
9. *rotéang ti lai*
10. *rotéang ti lài*
11. *rotéang ti lòi*
12. *rotéang tea lèi*
13. *rotéang chu lì* (sometimes *li*)
14. *rotéang chu lèi*
15. *rotéang chu laiq*
16. *rotéang nam lai*
17. *rotéang kōqnân*

In the analysis below the various phonological features will be identified by the author using linguistic data gathered before the ethnodialect data was available. These dialect areas include compasspoint divisions of Central Sedang (CenSdg) and Greater Sedang (GrSdg), Kon Hring Sedang, DakSut Sedang, and neighboring languages. See Map 1.

The modifier which varies for each ethnodialect consists of two parts: the principal diagnostic word and the supplementary diagnostic word. See the accompanying chart of Sedang ethnodialect terminology parts and phonological units.

1. THE PRINCIPAL DIAGNOSTIC WORD

The principal diagnostic word 'what' and 'why, how' may consist of two syllables, a preliminary syllable and a main syllable. The synonymous term for dialect #17 is discussed in Section 1.3 below.

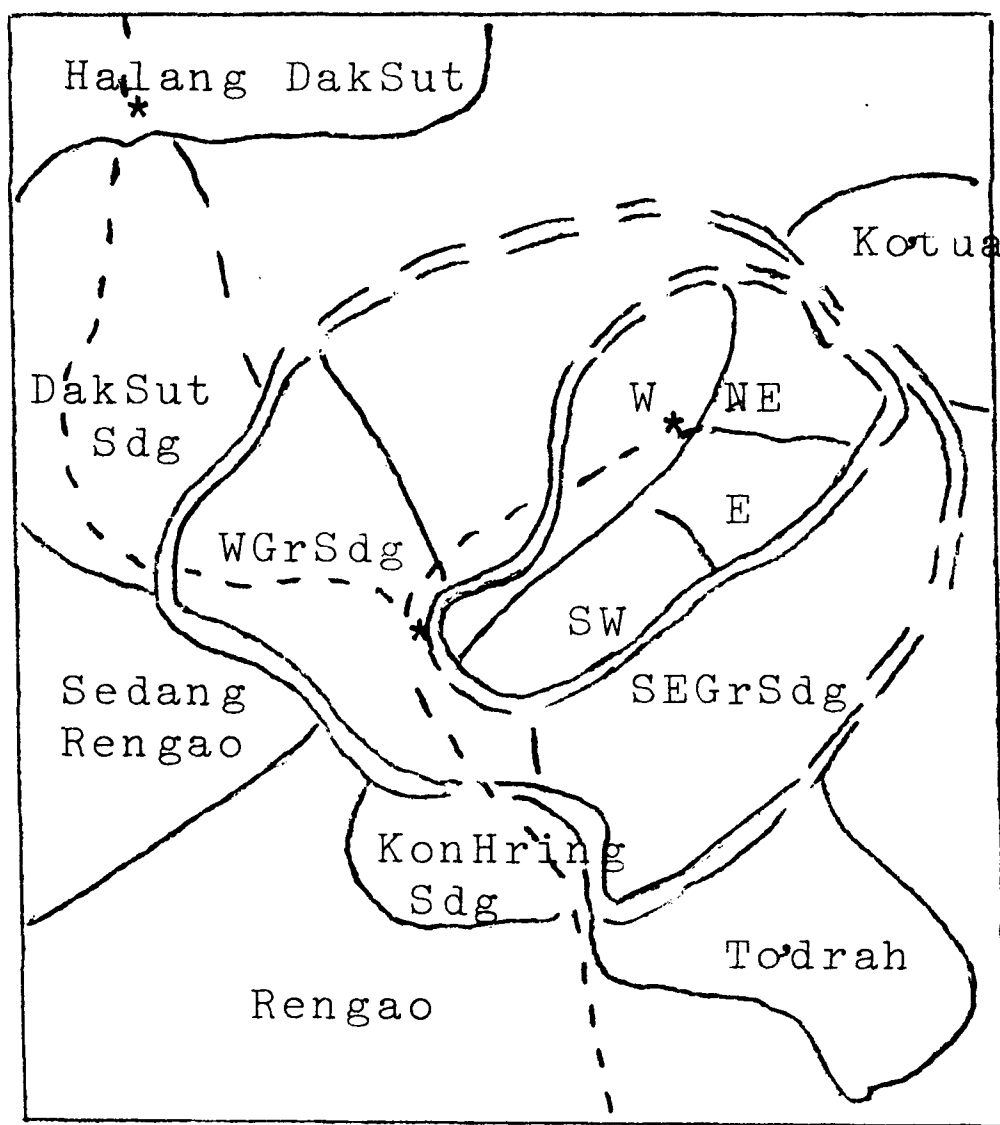
1.1. THE PRELIMINARY SYLLABLE

(a) The unstressed presyllable *kɔ̄-* occurs in the terms for dialects numbered 1, 2, 4, to 6 above. Because of the reduplicative consonant pattern sometimes the vowel is *i*; thus *ki* occurs in dialects 3 and 7. Though the presyllable helps to distinguish *kɔ̄lai* 'what', for example, from *lai* 'which' or *ti lai* 'how, why' of dialects 9-16, it is low in the diagnostic value of identifying Sedang dialects. Furthermore this presyllable is frequently omitted in speech, cancelling any function it otherwise might have in distinguishing dialects.

The occurrence of *kɔ̄-* in the term for dialect 17 is coincidental, inasmuch as that form *kɔ̄qnân* is a synonym and not phonologically related to any of the others.

(b) The semantic shift from *ki klai* and *kɔ̄klai* 'what' to *ti lai* 'how, why' is also utilized for ethnodialect descriptions. Note that the question marker *lai* is retained. (In CenSdg *lai* alone means 'which'; also note *u lai* 'where', *to lai* 'how many'.) Four such forms are employed in the Sedang ethnodialect terminology.

(b-1) *ti* distinguishes two or three NGrSed areas, dialects 9 to 11, excepting only the northern portion of NGrSdg. Dialect 9, *ti lai*, is presumed to overlap extensively with dialect 4, *kɔ̄lai*, both distinctively CenSdg terms. The former, as a dialect designation, predominates to the north of the latter.



Map 1. Sedang, dialect areas

Inner circle is Central Sedang; outer circle is Greater Sedang. The three stars represent, from left to right, DakSut, DakTo, and Toumorong.

(b-2) *tea*, undoubtedly phonologically related to *ti* (and not to CenSdg *tea* 'water'), distinguishes only dialect 12, the northern portion of NGrSdg.

(b-3) *chu* distinguishes dialects 13 to 15, three WGrSdg areas.

(b-4) *nam* distinguishes only dialect 16, the Sedang-Rengao--that portion of the Rengao language area contiguous to the Sedang in the southwest and which resembles Sedang in many respects.

1.2. THE MAIN SYLLABLE

The main syllable *klai* occurs in some form in the names for all dialects except 17 where a synonymous word is used to identify the Kotua language group, eastern neighbors to the Sedang.

(a) The initial consonant *k* occurs in dialects 3-8 as part of an initial consonant cluster *kl*. As part of the basic CenSdg *kɔklai*, this identifies Cen- and GrSdg, DakSut Sedang and Todrah.

(b) The only element of the main syllable which remains constant throughout all Sedang dialect areas is the *l*, in dialects 1, 2, 9 to 16, the *l* is the sole initial main syllable consonant. In dialects 1 and 2 it is preceded by the presyllable *kɔ-*, which combination identifies the NECenSdg. In dialects 9 to 16, the *l* is preceded by *ti*, *tea*, etc. forms with the resultant 'why, how' gloss. These combinations identify N- and WGrSdg and the Sedang-Rengao, who are contiguous with the WGrSdg.

(c) The main syllable vowel, typical of Viet Nam languages, is the least stable part of the word. In this case it is seen to shift from *ê* and *e* to *a* and *o*. The *ê* and *o* are both found in widely scattered areas and are nondiagnostic. The *a* is restricted to Gr- and CenSdg and Sedang-Rengao. The *o* occurs only in dialect II, a north-east area of NGrSdg.

(d) The second most constant unit of the main syllable is the final semi-vowel *i*, lacking in only dialects 1 and 3 which are non-contiguous area of NECenSdg and SWCenSdg respectively.³

(e) Final glottal stop, *q*,⁴ occurs in the terms for the two widely separated dialects 1 and 15.⁵

(f) In contrast to the normally clear Lax Register

Pre-position	Principal diagnostic word	Post-position	No. villages	Dialect areas
kia q	k l a/e/é/o i q ' / ' ,	yau		
1.	kɔ		6	(E) } NECenSdg
2.	kɔ		17	(W) }
3.	ki		1	SWCenSdg
* 4.	kɔ		25	Gr- & CenSdg
5.	kɔ	yau	0	DakSut Sdg
6.	kɔ		12	(S) } Tɔdrah
7.	ki		1	(Cent) }
8.	kia q		13	(NW) }
* 9.	ti		-	(S) } NGRsdg
10.	ti	,	3	(Cent) }
11.	ti	,	1	(NE) }
12.	tea	,	1	(N) }
13.	chu	(')	6	(N) } WGRsdg
14.	chu	?	1	KonHring Sdg }
15.	chu		2	(Cent) }
16.	nam		8	Sedang-Rengao
17.	kɔ		2	Kotua

Sedang ethnodialect terminology parts and phonological units.
 (Asterisks indicate principal Sedang dialects. Numbers indicate number of village portions presently associated with each dialect. Parentheses are used to indicate portions

vowels of Sedang (unmarked), as in *koklai*, breathy vowels (̤) occur in the terms for dialects 10-12, sometimes dialect 13. This phenomenon thereby identifies NGrSdg and the northern part of WGrSdg⁶. Perhaps related to this is an unusual Vietnamese *hoi* tone-like intonation given to the term for dialect 14 apparently identifying Kon Hring Sedang.

1.3. SYNONYMOUS FORMS

A synonymous form is used to distinguish an area in which the principal focus words *koklai* or *ti lai* do not occur. The only instance of this is the word *koqnân* 'what' identifying the Kotua language. The Kotua area is contiguous to the Sedang on the east and Sedang people presently converge at Mang Buk, a provincial border outpost.⁷

2. SUPPLEMENTARY DIAGNOSTIC WORDS

Supplementary diagnostic words, used in conjunction with the principal diagnostic word, enable finer distinctions to be made between dialects. The Supplementary diagnostic words occur both before and after the focus word.

2.1. PREPOSITIONED SUPPLEMENTARY DIAGNOSTIC WORD

kia and *kiaq* 'ghost' are used in the terms for dialects 7 and 8 to identify portions of the Todrah language group. The final glottal stop in *kiaq*, dialect 8, identifies the northwest portion of the Todrah, whereas its absence in *kia*, dialect 7, identifies the central portion of the Todrah. Dialect 7 is thereby more distinctly contrasted with dialect 2: *kia kikliêi* versus *kolêi*. Dialect 8 is thereby more distinctly contrasted with dialect 6: *kiaq kli* versus *kokli*.

In CenSdg this word occurs as *kia* but is not needed to distinguish the various CenSdg dialects.

2.2. POSTPOSITIONED SUPPLEMENTARY DIAGNOSTIC WORD

yau 'no more' is used in the term for dialect 5 to identify DakSut Sedang. This dialect is thereby distinctly contrasted with dialects 6 and 8: *kokli yau* versus *kokli* and *kiaq kli*.

In CenSdg this word occurs as *seô*.⁸

3. CONCLUSION

The above 17 Sedang ethnodialects are located on Map 2.

The Sedang ethnodialect terminology indicates the awareness of the Sedang to linguistic differences among themselves and validates the numerous Sedang dialect areas established independently using linguistic data. It also emphasizes the only slightly exaggerated Sedang truism: *polê ê topui ti ê* 'every village speaks differently.'

FOOTNOTES

1. "Sedang ethnodialects", *Anthropological Linguistics* 11:5:143-47 (May 1969).
2. The orthography used in this paper is basically equivalent to the Vietnamese *quốc-ngữ* with the following exceptions: ˊ indicates Sedang laryngealized tense register, ˋ indicates a breathy lax register vowel which is atypical of Sedang. *q* represents glottal stop.
3. The author's "Sedang dialects", an M.A. thesis, University of North Dakota (a revision of "Sedang dialects", *Bulletin de la Société des Etudes Indochinoises* 42:195-255 (1967)). The vowel and semi-vowel shifts notes here correspond to Rule 16, Map 15: "CenSdg *aí* and *e* become *êi* and *i* in the border and surrounding languages."
4. This infrequent glottal stop is explained in 'Sedang dialects' footnote 16: "(4) for CenSdg second register (clear) open syllable: ... (b) If some border area has a breathy vowel, then the other border languages may or may not have *-q*."
5. *kɔleq*, for dialect 1, was previously misidentified by this author as Hrêi. Though the Hrêi word *leq* 'what' closely resembles this, it is questionable that the Sedang would be familiar with Hrêi speech inasmuch as the two groups are noncontiguous. The subsequent meeting of *kɔleq* speakers by the author at Mang Buk (refugees from Mang Buk first introduced this terminology to me) has clarified this matter. The *kɔleq* dialect may be further characterized as having no discernable vowel register contrast, initial *y* instead of CenSdg *s*, and retention of all final stops and *h* where CenSdg loses them (i.e. in Proto-North-Bahnaric Tense Register syllables), and various vocabulary differences.
6. Though not recognized as occurring in the Sedang language area, this phenomenon was described in 'Sedang dialects' as Rule 24: "Where the border languages have an open syllable with either register, CenSdg always has an open syllable with either register (not necessarily the same)... except that for a border breathy vowel CenSdg never has a laryngealized vowel."
7. See 'Eastern North Bahnaric: Cua and Kɔtua', elsewhere in this volume.
8. There are three unrelated phonological shifts involved

in the derivation of *seō'* from *yau* (the latter more closely resembles the historical form of the word).

(1) There is the main syllable initial consonant shift: non-Sedang *y* becomes *s* in CenSdg ('Sedang dialects' Rule 9, Map 9). The other two shifts pertain to the main syllable back-glided vowel.

(2) The main vowels of CenSdg back glides are lower in the west and south; i.e. CenSdg *i* and *ê* are *ê* and *a* respectively, in the west and south (Rule 17, Map 16).

(3) The three-point glides (*Vou*) of Sedang-Rengao are realized in all other areas by two-point glides in which one of the latter two points is lost: *Vu* in the southern area, *Vo* throughout CenSdg and GrSdg, except that *Va* (a central glide) occurs in a few CenSdg villages (Rule 18, Maps 17 and 19).