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Longjia (China) – Language Contexts

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Ethnic Names:	Longjia 龙家, Nongjia 侗家 (exonym); Suŋ ⁵⁵ ŋi ⁵⁵ mpao ³¹ (autonym); Nanjingren 南京人 (autonym of some); Bai 白 (official classification)
Language Family:	Sino-Tibetan, possibly Sinitic
ISO 639-3 Code:	none
Glottolog Code:	long1417
Population:	unknown, altogether 179,500 Bai in Guizhou (2019)
Location:	western Guizhou, China
Status:	no official status, usually classified as Bai minority
Written Form:	no written form, sometimes written with Chinese characters
Vitality rating:	EGIDS 9 or 10, language shift to Southwestern Mandarin (xina1239)

Summary

Longjia 龙家 is a probably extinct Sino-Tibetan language related to Lu(ren) 卢人 and Caijia 蔡家. Caijia is still spoken but the speakers of Longjia and Luren have undergone language shift to Southwestern Mandarin (*xinan guanhua* 西南官话). The classification of the three languages within Sino-Tibetan is still unresolved. The self-designation of the Longjia is *suŋ⁵⁵ŋi⁵⁵mpau³¹*. Some consider themselves ‘Nanjing people’ (南京人) that are said to have been assimilated by the Longjia during Ming dynasty. Most of the Longjia, now classified as Bai minority, are located in Bijie and Anshun in western Guizhou. The language has no written form. The available materials are by and large restricted to data recorded during the 1980s from the variety of Longjia spoken in Pojiao 坡脚 (Dafang, Bijie) with very few materials being available from Huaxi 花溪 (Qianxi, Bijie), Jiangyi 讲义 (Puding, Anshun), and Caiguan 蔡官 (Xixiu, Anshun).

中文摘要

龙家语是汉藏语系中的一种可能已消失的语言，与卢人语和蔡家语有亲缘关系。蔡家语还有使用者，但龙家和卢人发生了语言替换，现使用西南官话。这三种语言在汉藏语系内的归属问题尚未解决。龙家自称 *suŋ⁵⁵ŋi⁵⁵mpau³¹* (松尼保)，其中包括部分据称是明朝时归化为龙家的“南京人”。大部分如今被识别为白族的龙家人居住在贵州西部的毕节和安顺市。该语言无文字。关于龙家语的资料大多是20世纪80年代从毕节市大方县坡脚镇搜集而来，还有少量资料来自毕节市黔西县花溪彝族苗族乡、安顺市普定县讲义寨及安顺市西秀区蔡官镇。

1. Introduction

Longjia 龙家 is a language formerly spoken in the mountainous western part of Guizhou in Southwestern China. During the 20th century, the community has undergone language shift to Southwestern Mandarin (*xinan guanhua* 西南官话) and perhaps some local languages. Longjia appears to be related to Lu(ren) 卢人 and Caijia 蔡家, but their position within Sino-Tibetan is still unclear. Problematically, since the 1980s the Luren have been officially classified as Manchus (e.g., Hölzl 2021), the Caijia as a variety of different peoples, and the Longjia mostly as the Bai minority.

Descriptions of Longjia are limited in number and difficult to access, but the recent discovery of handwritten materials from the 1980s allows a better understanding of the language. This study will not, however, present many details from Longjia itself but rather situate the language in time and space, point out traditional approaches to the speakers, and give an overview of the available data. Typological and historical descriptions of the language will be presented in future studies.

Section 2 gives an overview of the names of the Longjia as used by themselves and by others. Section 3 briefly discusses the genetic affiliation of the language. Section 4 presents a traditional classification of different Longjia groups, and Section 5 shows the number and location of the Longjia in Guizhou. Section 6 sketches the linguistic ecology of western Guizhou. Section 7 gives an overview of the available data. Finally, Section 8 presents some conclusions and avenues for future research.

2. Names

The name *longjia* 龙家, also known as *Long kia* (Neumann 1837: 94), is an exonym of uncertain etymology (see Zhao 2011: 88-109). It is also written *nongjia* 侗家 (Figure 1), which in Guizhou is pronounced with an initial [l-] (e.g., Ming 2007). It has the form *lung giya* in the Manchu version of the 18th-century *Zhigongtu* 职贡图 ‘Illustrations of Tributaries’ (see Section 4). Some consider themselves *nanjing ren* 南京人 ‘people from Nanjing’ who allegedly arrived at the beginning of the Ming dynasty and were assimilated by the Longjia. Their original linguistic identity is unknown but probably included a form of Chinese. The composite names *nanlong* 南龙 and *longnan* 龙南 are sometimes used (GMSWSB 1982: 8, 17).

The self-designation of the Longjia (and Nanjing) in Pojiao (Dafang) is *suŋ⁵⁵ŋi⁵⁵mpau³¹* (Zhang & Ji 1982: 76). The optional last part *mpao³¹* for the designation of people also occurs in *la⁵⁵ŋi⁵⁵mpau³¹* ‘Han’, *mu⁵⁵zu⁵⁵mpau³¹* ‘Miao’, *a⁵⁵mau⁵⁵mpau³¹* ‘Yi’, and *a³³hu⁵⁵mpao³¹* ‘Caijia’. In Jiangyi (Puding), Hsiu (2013) found the self-designations *songnibao* 松尼保 and *xielibao* [-ni-] 谢利保. These show that *song/suŋ⁵⁵* and *xie* [ɛ-] could be attributive elements, perhaps distinguishing different Longjia subgroups.



Figure 1: Postcard of a ‘Long kia Miao’ woman (left) and man from Anshun, early 20th century (originally part of LRDKT, property of the author)

According to the handwritten phonetic transcription in GMSGL, there are the following exonyms: $\text{ʔ}^{\text{a}21/55(?)}$ wu^{33} $\text{p}^{\text{'u}53}$ (*awupu* 阿武普, by the Yi), si^{55} $\text{ŋ}^{\text{hai}33}$ (*siye* 斯业 (?), Miao), kui^{55} tseu^{53} (*guizou* 归走, Caijia), pu^{53} wai^{24} (*buwai* 补外, Gelao), and pu^{53} lun^{31} (*bulong* 补龙, Bouyei). The dialectal basis, etymology, and reliability, especially of the tones, is difficult to ascertain.¹ Luo (2006 [1995]: 134) confirmed the exonym a^{21} vu^{33} ‘Nanjing people’ used by the Yi in Dafang but recorded the last element as $\text{p}^{\text{'u}55}$. The Caijia have a related exonym, transcribed in Chinese as *awuna* 阿武哪 (e.g., GMSWSB 1982: 93).

3. Genetic affiliation

According to the original investigation conducted in the 1980s (GMSWSB 1984: 40-42), Longjia seems to be related to Luren (about 58% lexical parallels out of 140 items) and, somewhat more distantly, to Caijia (about 36% out of 800). The study was mostly impressionistic in nature, however,

¹ Due to typographic errors, the same list printed in GMSWSB (1982: 10) is unreliable. But the Chinese transcription for the exonym used by the Miao is more plausibly written *silie* 斯劣, which is pronounced with an [-n-].

and failed to establish regular sound correspondences. The three languages are usually thought to be part of Sino-Tibetan but not mentioned in a current survey of the family (Thurgood & LaPolla 2017). Recent classifications of the languages are restricted to Caijia that was compared to Bai in Yunnan, Waxiang Chinese in Hunan, and Sinitic languages in general (e.g., Wu & Shen 2010; Zhengzhang 2010; Sagart 2011). Luo (2017: 251), citing a version of Bo (2004), claims that Caijia is a Kra-Dai language, but does not present any evidence. Future studies should include all three languages, establish regular sound laws, and differentiate more clearly between inherited and borrowed material. If Sagart (2011) is correct that Caijia, and consequently Longjia and Luren, belong to the oldest branch of Sinitic, the three languages are of utmost importance for the study of Chinese and the prehistory of East Asia. A complicating factor seems to be, as in the case of Bai, the existence of additional lexical layers borrowed from different stages of Chinese.

Luren is only recorded in brief wordlists (see Hölzl 2021) but Caijia is a relatively well-described language (e.g., GMSWSB 1982: 110-125; LPSZ 2003: 184f.; Bo 2004; Hsiu 2018; Lü 2020). A brief field trip to the Manchus of Qianxi and Jinsha in 2019 identified no speakers of Luren, all of whom have shifted to Southwestern Mandarin (Hölzl & Hölzl 2019, see Figures 5, 6). But Caijia is alive and fieldwork is still possible. Based on the characteristic words for ‘two’ and ‘pig’, Hölzl (2021) suggests the name ‘Ta-Li languages’ as a cover term for Caijia (Hezhang variety *ta*⁵⁵, *li*²¹), Luren (Qianxi *ta*³¹, *li*³¹), and Longjia (*ta*³¹, *le*⁵⁵ in Pojiao and Huaxi). GMSWSB (1982: 43) proposes the name ‘Cai-Long branch’ (蔡龙语支), which has the disadvantage of excluding Luren.

4. Traditional classification

There is a large amount of historical information on different Longjia groups that cannot all be summarized here (e.g., GMSWSB 1982; You 1989: 57-77; GDBW 2002: 680-732; Zhao 2011: 88-109). The bilingual *Zhigongtu* mentions two groups (Zhuang 1989: 576-579), the Longjia Miao 龙家苗 in Guangshun 广顺 (including modern Ziyun 紫云) and Dading 大定 (modern Dafang 大方), and the Madeng (‘stirrup’) Longjia Miao 马镫龙家苗 in Puding 普定 and Yongning 永宁 (modern Guanling 关岭). Miao was a general term for several non-Han groups in the area (Manchu *miyoodz*). The brief description of the first group in Manchu is the following (cf. Norman 2013). Names are rendered into Chinese Pinyin.

The Longjia Miao in Guangshun, Dading, etc.

In Song times, the Longjia Miao were called [were subject to the] Wusa 乌撒 tribe. The ones located in Guangshun, after (the system of) native Pacifying

Commissioners (literally ‘native solidifying and pacifying officials’, 土司安抚使) was established at the beginning of Ming dynasty, were put under control. Later, the Guangshun district was established at that place. Of those in Dading and Pingyuan, during the time of the Yuan and Ming dynasties, all their leaders were made native Pacifying Commissioners (literally ‘native promulgating and pacifying officials’, 土司宣慰使). In our (Qing) dynasty, in the third year of Kangxi (1664), the native officials were exchanged for civil officials (with limited tenure). The Dading prefecture and the Pingyuan district were established. The (tax-paying imperial) subjects and the (Longjia) Miao are alike in paying taxes according to the (size) of the fields. The men put up their hair in a bun and wear no hats. The women wrap their (hair) into a pointed bun. The upper part is like the ears of a dog, which is why they are also called Gou’er 狗耳 (‘dog-eared’). On their clothes (they) sew pearls of five colors that can (also) be used as medicine. Poor families sew Job’s tears on (their clothes instead). In spring they erect a pole in the wilderness. Going around (it), boys and girls select a mate. This (ritual) is called Tiaoguigan 跳鬼竿 (literally ‘spirit-pole dance’). After a girl finds a person she likes, (she) follows (him). Only after the girl’s family’s relatives and clan (members) present cattle and horses to redeem and bring (her) back, a matchmaker is engaged. When getting in the water, they are experts at catching fish just like otters. (my translation)²

² The Manchu version: “guwang šün. da ding ni jergi ba i lung giya miyoodz. lung giya miyoodz be. sung gurun i fonde. ‘u sa’ aiman sembi. guwang šün de bisirengge be ming gurun i tuktan fonde. ‘aiman i toktobure bilure hafan’ ilibufi kadalabumbihe. amala tubade guwang šün jeo ilibuha da ding ping yuwan de bisirengge be yuwan gurun ming gurun i fonde. gemu tesei data be ‘aiman i selgyere tohorombure hafan’ obuha. musei gurun. elhe taifin i ilaci aniya de [1664]. ‘aiman i hafan’ be halafi. ‘irgen i hafan’ obume. da ding fu ping yuwan jeo ilibuha. irgen miyoodz emu adali usin bodome caliyān afabumbi. hahasi oci. funiyehe be šošombi. mahala eturakū. hehesi oci šošon be šulihun obume halgimbi. dergi dube indahūn šan i adali ofi. gebu be inu ‘geo el’ sembi. etuku de sunja hacin i boco okto acabure nicuhe hadambi. yadahūn boo oci. holimpa hadambi. niyengniyeri erin bigan i bade darhūwan ilibufi. haha jui sargan jui darhūwan be šurdeme holbon sonjombi. erebe ‘tiyoo gui g’an’ sembi. sargan jui beye cihalara niyalma baha manggi. uthai dahame genembi. dancan i niyaman hūncihin mukūn hala ihan morin bume amasi joolime gajifi teni jala yabubumbi. muke de dosifi nimaha jafara mangga uthai hailun i adali:” The Chinese version:

“广顺大定等处龙家苗。龙家苗宋时为乌撒部。在广顺者，明初设安抚司以辖之，后于其地置广顺州。在大定、平远者，元明俱授其酋为宣慰使。本朝康熙三年[1664]改土归流，置大定、平远二府州，民苗一体计田输赋。男束髮不冠。女螺髻上指若狗耳状，故亦有“狗耳”之名。衣缀五色药珠，贫则以薏苡代之。春日立竿于野，男女绕竿择配，谓之“跳鬼竿”。女得所悦则奔之，其亲党以牛马赎回，始通媒妁。善入水捕鱼，如獭然。”



Figure 2: *The Gou'er Longjia in a Miao album at Harvard University (QMTS: 14)*

In so-called ‘Miao albums’, this group corresponds to the Gou’er (‘dog-eared’) Longjia 狗耳龙家 (Manchu *indahūn šan* ‘dog ear’), see Figure 2. In local records, the Gou’er Longjia are also referred to as Xiaotou (‘small-headed’) Longjia 小头龙家 (e.g., GMSWSB 1982: 14). These traditional descriptions of the Longjia mention several characteristics, such as the ‘spirit-poles’ above. Another cultural trait that some Longjia shared with the Luren is the ritualistic washing of the bones of deceased ancestors and second burials (e.g., You 1989: 77f.).

Local records and Miao albums usually contain more fine-grained classifications than the *Zhigongtu* but differ from each other in several details. Only a few examples can be discussed here. An album investigated by Deal & Hostetler (2006) distinguishes five different groups (see Table 2).

Table 2: Longjia groups mentioned in a Miao album (Deal & Hostetler 2006: 18-25, 132-133)

Name	Location
Cengzhu Longjia 曾竹龙家	Anshun Prefecture 安顺府
Gou’er Longjia 狗耳龙家	Guangshun District 广顺州, Kangzuo Sub-District 康佐司 (Ziyun 紫云)
Madeng Longjia 马镫龙家	Zhenning District 镇宁州
Datou Longjia 大头龙家	Zhenning District 镇宁州, Puding 普定
Bai Longjia 白龙家	Dading 大定 (Dafang 大方), Pingyuan 平远 (Zhijin 织金)

A Miao album in Kyōto includes the Madeng group and the rarely encountered Hei (‘black’) Longjia 黑龙家 located in Pingyuan (Zhijin) (Figure 3). An album in Taiwan also lists the Hei Nongjia 黑獐[依]家 (equated with the Datou Longjia), along with the Bai (‘white’) Nongjia 白獐家, the Fangjin (‘square cloth’) Nongjia 方巾獐家 (also simply called Longjia), and the Gou’er Long/Nongjia 狗耳龙/獐家 (Liu 2015: 486-493). Most of these names refer to specific details of the headgear. Cengzhu (or perhaps Zengzhu) is a place name (modern Machang 马场 in Pingba 平坝). Black and white could refer to the color of the clothes, but more likely indicate a higher and a lower caste, respectively, which can also be observed among many other peoples of the area. The white and black Longjia apparently did not intermarry (GMSWSB 1982: 7). The distinction between the Shanglu 上路 and the Xialu 下路 Longjia that is reported in GMSWSB (1982: 6) seems to refer to the same distinction of a higher (Chinese *shang* 上 ‘upper’) and a lower social class (*xia* 下 ‘lower’).



Figure 3: *The Hei Longjia* in a Miao album at Kyōto University (JMT)

5. Number and location

In the 1980s, a more detailed investigation was conducted. Table 3 shows the approximate numbers and locations of the Longjia in 1982. A few Longjia were also found in other places, such as Guiyang city, where no exact numbers were recorded.

Table 3: Number and distribution of Longjia in 1982 according to GMSGL

Location	Number
Dafang 大方	24,790
Qianxi 黔西	13,268
Bijie 毕节 (Qixingguan 七星关)	12,847
Zhijin 织金	11,570(?) ³
Nayong 纳雍	3,942
Qingzhen 清镇	3,185
Jinsha 金沙	3,007
Shuicheng tequ 水城特区 (Shuicheng 水城)	2,936
Hezhang 赫章	7,352(?) ⁴
Anshun 安顺 (Xixiu 西秀)	2,680
Puding 普定	857
Weining 威宁	492
Pingba 平坝	489
Renhuai 仁怀	148
Guanling 关岭	110
Zhenxiong 镇雄 (Zhaotong 昭通, Yunnan)	105
Xifeng 息烽	23
Total	82,801(?)

³ GMSWSB (1982: 8f.) presents the same numbers for Dafang, Qianxi, and Bijie, but, confusingly, the number 4,859 for Zhijin and 75,563 for all Longjia in 1982.

⁴ If the number is a typo for 2,352, the total number turns out correct, but one would expect it to be listed below Anshun.

In Figure 4, all areas in Guizhou where the Longjia were located according to the traditional and modern sources mentioned above are indicated in grey. Longjia data were recorded in areas marked yellow (see Section 7). Luren data have been collected in Qianxi and Jinsha (Hözl 2021), Caijia data in Weining (e.g., Hsiu 2018), Hezhang (e.g., Lü 2020), and Shuicheng (LPSZ 2003: 184f.).



Figure 4: Location of the Longjia in Western Guizhou⁵

In 1986, the number of Longjia rose to over 100,000 (GMSGL). The current number of the Longjia that are officially classified as Bai minority (*baizu* 白族) is unknown. In 1990, there were 37,536 (or 4.57%) Bai (probably mostly Longjia) in Dafang (Yang 1996: 150). In the year 2019, there were altogether 179,500 Bai in Guizhou that made up 0.52% of the total population. In comparison, 64.30% were Han Chinese (Wang et al. 2019: 44).

⁵ Map with approximate scale created by the author with QGIS, Creative Commons (BY-SA). Based on a map in <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guizhou> (accessed 2021-02-06). Labels added after Di (2009).



Figure 5: Landscape in Jinsha county (©2019 Andreas Hölzl)

6. Linguistic ecology

Guizhou exhibits a high but dwindling degree of linguistic diversity that includes dozens of Sino-Tibetan (e.g., Laba Miao Chinese, Southwestern Mandarin, Tunbu/Tunbao Chinese, Yi 彝, formerly also Bo/Bai, Chuanqing Chinese, Tujia), Hmong-Mien (e.g., Hmong, Xong, Yao), and Kra-Dai languages (e.g., Buyi/Bouyei, Dong/Kam, Gelao, Sui/Shui, formerly also Mulao, Yi 羿). The linguistic diversity increases considerably towards Yunnan in the Southwest and drops sharply towards the Northeast.

Western Guizhou is a mountainous region characterized by humid subtropical highland climate in the northern periphery of the Mainland Southeast Asian area. Longjia shares many features with the languages of this area (e.g., a tone system: Pojiao ⁵⁵, ³³, ¹³, ³¹), although its typology and areal connections have yet to be explored. GMSWSB (1982: 37-42, 119-122) showed that Longjia has some lexical parallels with varieties of Miao (Hmong-Mien), Gelao (Kra-Dai), and Yi (Sino-Tibetan), which indicates a certain amount of language contact and lexical diffusion. An example is a word for ‘corn’ (of Chinese origin) as attested in:

- (1) *zi*⁵⁵*mie*³³ *i*⁵⁵ *lau*³³
 corn one CLF
 ‘A row of corn.’ (一行包谷) (Zhang & Ji 1982: 94, 97)

This word was recorded as *zi*⁵⁵*mie*³³ (GMSWSB 1982: 37) or *zie*⁵⁵*mie*³³ (Luo 2006 [1995]: 136) in Dafang Yi 彝 but is not attested in Luren or Caijia. In the

1980s, a part of the Datou and Madeng Longjia is said to have also spoken a form of broken Yi (GMSWSB 1982: 5). In both cases, ‘Yi’ probably refers to, in Chen’s (2010: 32) terminology, the Nipu 尼普 subdialect of the Nasu 纳苏 dialect. Today, Southwestern Mandarin and Standard Mandarin are the dominant languages of the area, leading to widespread bilingualism and subsequently the replacement of many local languages, including Caijia, Longjia, and Luren.



Figure 6: Landscape and corn field in Jinsha county (© 2019 Andreas Hölzl)

7. Available data

The only description of Longjia is found in GMSWSB (1982: 22-43), and a slightly different handwritten version in GMSGL. It is a mere 22 printed or 46 handwritten pages long and often unreliable. It contains grammatical and lexical information as well as a preliminary comparison of the lexicon with several surrounding languages. GMSWSB (1982: 22) mentions 11 lexical items from three varieties in Pojiao 坡脚 (Dafang), Huaxi 花溪 (Qianxi), and Jiangyi 讲义 (Puding) that are said to differ only in minor details (GMSWSB 1982: 22). Of these, the former two seem to be more closely related. GMSGL lists two additional items from Pojiao and Jiangyi (*nuy*³¹, *k'uai*⁵³ ‘girl’ and *nan*⁵³, *ntsaj*⁵⁵ ‘alcohol’, but see below). The rest of the description is based on the Dafang variety. Some lexical items from Dafang were also published in GMSWSB (1982: 122-124).

These descriptions are based on handwritten field notes that are unavailable to the public. The original booklet on Dafang Longjia written in 1982 by Zhang Jimin 张济民 & Li Juewei 李珺伟 was acquired in 2020 by the current author in an antiquarian book shop in Guiyang. Whether similar booklets for other Longjia varieties ever existed is unclear. But the fact that the available description is based on Dafang Longjia indicates that this might

have been the best described variety. The investigation in 1982 is also mentioned in Yang (1996: 160). Zhang Jimin is well-known for his work on languages in Southwest China (e.g., Zhang 1993 on Gelao) and has published with Li Juewei (e.g., Zhang et al. 1983 on Yao). The data are more extensive (about 175 pages) and more reliable than the available descriptions. For instance, ‘girl’ and ‘alcohol’ have the forms $a^{55}nuj^{31}$ (corrected to $a^{55}nuj^{33}$) and naj^{33} , illustrating several mistakes in GMSGL. The interviewee was the 83-year-old Xie Yongxiu 谢永秀 ($eau^{31}lu^{55}$ in Longjia) from a village called Changfeng 长丰 in Pojiao 坡脚 (modern Dingxin 鼎新) in Dafang.⁶ She was also interviewed by a research team from Peking in 1951 but whether any materials remain is uncertain. Her two elder brothers Xie Yongsong 谢永松 and Xie Wenxuan 谢文宣 also spoke Longjia but were already deceased in the 1980s. The use of these materials requires the painstaking interpretation of the handwriting and the corrections thereof (Figure 7):

- (2) ηu^{31} a^{55} zi^{33} $la^{55}\eta i^{55}$, ηu^{31} $s\eta^{33}$ $sun^{55}\eta i^{55}$
 1SG NEG COP Han 1SG COP Longjia
 ‘I am not a Han, I am a Longjia.’ (我不是汉族(客家), 我是龙家。)

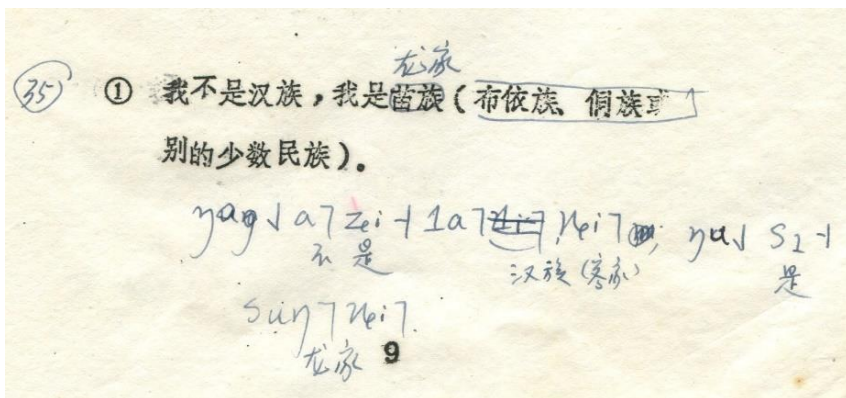


Figure 7: Example for a sentence recorded in Zhang & Ji (1982: 9 (part 2))

⁶ The name “Xie Yongfen” in GDBW (2002: 692) is wrong.

Careful analysis of the materials allows the extraction of the phonology (e.g., prenasalization: *mpiaŋ*⁵⁵ ‘wind’, *ntau*⁵⁵ ‘bean’, *nŋu*⁵⁵ ‘tree’, *nkui*⁵⁵ ‘skirt’, unknown in Caijia and Luren), the grammar (e.g., the pronominal system: *ŋu*³¹ or *ŋo*³¹ ‘1SG’, *ŋu*³¹*nɛ*³¹ ‘1PL’, *nuu*³¹ ‘2SG’, *nuu*³¹*nɛ*³¹ ‘2PL’, *mo*⁵⁵ ‘3SG’, *mo*⁵⁵*nɛ*³¹ ‘3PL’), and hundreds of lexical items, such as the numerals (Table 4). The numerals contain what appears to be a referentializer or classifier *ku*³³ that was glossed with the Chinese general classifier *ge* 个 and is absent if used with other classifiers (*zu*⁵⁵*ŋi*⁵⁵ ‘ten persons’) or similar elements (e.g., *zu*⁵⁵*ŋue*³³ ‘October, tenth month’). Qianxi Luren animal terms, such as <ke|gu-|> ‘dog’, seem to contain a suffix <gu-|> [ku³³] that might be cognate with this (Hölzl 2021). The system contains slight irregularities marked with boldface. In the name of the twelfth month or December, both irregular *zu*⁵⁵*ɽ*⁵⁵*ŋue*³³ and regular *zu*⁵⁵*ta*³¹*ŋue*³³ are attested (Zhang & Ji 1982: 76). The frontmatter of the materials is shown in Figure 8, the first page in Figure 9.

Table 4: The Pojiao Longjia numeral system (Zhang & Ji 1982: 92-93)

Numeral	Longjia	Numeral	Longjia
1	i ⁵⁵ ku ³³	11 (10 + 1)	zu ⁵⁵ ŋi ⁵⁵ ku ³³
2	ta ³¹ ku ³³	12 (10 + 2)	zu ⁵⁵ ɽ ⁵⁵ ku ³³
3	sa ⁵⁵ ku ³³	13	zu ⁵⁵ sa ⁵⁵ ku ³³
4	sɿ ⁵⁵ ku ³³	14	zu ⁵⁵ sɿ ⁵⁵ ku ³³
5	ŋo ³¹ ku ³³	15	zu ⁵⁵ ŋo ³¹ ku ³³
6	so ⁵⁵ ku ³³	16	zu ⁵⁵ so ⁵⁵ ku ³³
7	te [‘] ³³ ku ³³	17	zu ⁵⁵ te [‘] ³³ ku ³³
8	pu ³³ ku ³³	18	zu ⁵⁵ pu ³³ ku ³³
9	kau ³¹ ku ³³	19	zu ⁵⁵ kau ³¹ ku ³³
10	zu ⁵⁵ ku ³³	20 (2 x 10)	ŋe ³¹ tei ³¹
30 (3 x 10)	sa ⁵⁵ tsɿ ³¹	1000	i ⁵⁵ te [‘] e ⁵⁵
100	i ⁵⁵ pe ⁵⁵	10000	i ⁵⁵ wan ⁵⁵ /van ⁵⁵

调查 语言	自称	(Səŋŋiɿpəŋ) Səŋŋiɿmpəŋ			
	汉称	龙家 南京人			
发 音	姓名	本族名	gauɿlu	汉名	谢永秀
	籍贯	本族名		汉名	
	年龄	83岁	性别	女	职业
合	民族	自称			
	名称	汉称			
作 人 情 况	会说其他方言 或他族语言	会讲汉语, 粗听懂一点苗语.			
	父母会说其他方 言或他族语言				
	自己语言是否受 其他方言的影响				
本语言使用的地区					
调查人		张济民 李珏伟			
调查记音点		大方县坡脚区鼎新公社.			
调查时间		1982年8月			
备 注	大哥谢永松, 二哥谢文宣在世时, 都会讲本民族语 儿子赵佳培(南京), 大队付支书。 大方县坡脚区长冲公社长丰大队老屋基生产队。 1951年中央访问团来时, 曾找她讲龙家话三天。 得三元钱, 买算盘一个作纪念, 保存至今。				

Figure 8: The frontmatter of the unpublished field notes taken by Zhang & Ji (1982)⁷

⁷ The handwritten parts in Chinese are: 龙家, 南京人; 谢永秀; 83岁, 女, 农; 会讲汉语, 粗听懂一点苗语; 张济民, 李珏伟; 大方县坡脚区鼎新公社; 1982年8月; 大哥谢永松、二哥谢文宣原在世时, 都会讲本民族语, 儿子赵佳培(南京)大队付[副]支书。大方县坡脚区, 长冲公社长丰大队[长丰村]老屋基生产队; 1951年中央访问团来时, 曾找她讲龙家话三天, 得三元钱, 买算盘一个作为纪念, 保存至今。

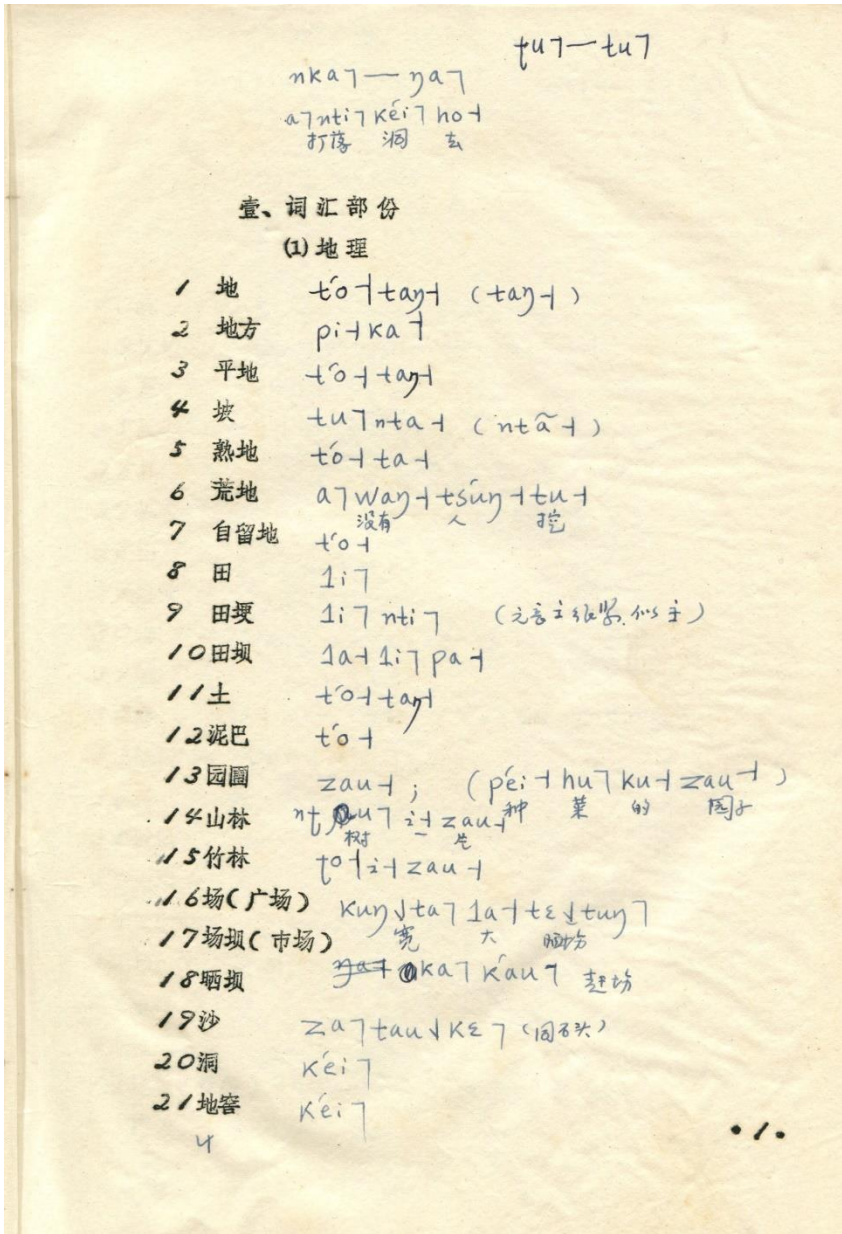


Figure 9: The first page of the unpublished field notes taken by Zhang & Ji (1982)

Almost no materials have become available after the original description in the 1980s. Data from an otherwise unknown variety in Caiguan 蔡官 in Xixiu, referred to as Bai, was published in 2004 (CGZZ 2004). The description is three pages long and limited to a brief presentation of the phonology, a couple of lexical items, and a few expressions (e.g., *no*⁴² ‘2SG’). The data contain many typographic problems and should not be taken at face value. But at least some words can be compared, e.g. *ts’wn*⁴² ‘person’ (Poijiao *ts’uj*³³) or *t’o*⁵⁵ ‘coal’ (Poijiao *t’o*³³ ‘coal, mud, etc.’). The description seems to be based on a handwritten manuscript. A handwritten *l* was misinterpreted as a special character and written similar to an *L*. For instance, the word for ‘earth’ is *Li*⁵⁵ (also written *Lo*⁵⁵) and seems to correspond to the Poijiao word *li*⁵⁵ ‘field’. Some features suggest a connection to the nearby variety in Puding, e.g. *to*³³ ‘two’ (Jiangyi *to*³³, cf. Poijiao *ta*³¹) or *ntei*⁴² ‘meat’ (Jiangyi, *ntei*³¹, *ni*³¹, cf. Poijiao *ni*³¹).

Additional fieldwork was conducted by Hsiu (2013), who found no speakers but discovered 23 Longjia words or expressions that were written with the help of Chinese characters in a genealogical book in Jiangyi (see Section 2). He also recorded claims about additional materials having been recorded by locals. Lü Shanshan (p.c. 2020) encountered a person claiming that an elderly relative remembered some Longjia words. Among the data from Jiangyi are numerals, such as *dabu* 打补 [tapu] ‘2’, that contain a classifier or referentializer different from Poijiao *ku*³³. Niujiuojing Caijia *ta*⁵⁵*pu*⁵⁵ (Hsiu 2018) and Qianxi Luren <da|bu> [tapu] (Hölzl 2021) exhibit a similar form.

There is limited diachronic information on Longjia, but nine words from a language referred to as Nongjiazi [l-] 侗架子 were recorded in Dading (modern Dafang) with the help of Chinese characters in the 1920s (Zhao et al. 1985 [1926]: 362f.). At least some of them are comparable to more recent data. For example, the expression *wa bo* 瓦波 ‘(to eat) dinner’ (Poijiao *wa*⁵⁵*po*⁵⁵, Jiangyi *wa bo* 娃波) contains the verb *wa* 瓦 ‘to eat’, which is attested in all varieties: Poijiao *wa*³¹, Huaxi *wa*³¹, Jiangyi *wa*³¹ or *wa* 娃, Caiguan *wa*³¹.

8. Conclusion

A major obstacle for future investigations is the official classification that was conducted in the 1980s (referred to as *minzu shibie* 民族识别 in Chinese). The Longjia were classified as Bai, most of whom live in Yunnan. But for largely unknown reasons, the closest linguistic relatives of the Longjia were classified as Manchus, a Tungusic minority who originate in Northeast China. Today, the Luren apparently have accepted this classification. Some of the available word lists of Luren also mistakenly claim to represent the Manchu language (Hölzl & Hölzl 2019, Hölzl 2021). If the Luren were in fact Manchus, they would not have been included in the *Zhigongtu*, where they are referred to as *luezi* 六额子, pronounced [luŋɛtsɿ] (Zhuang 1989: 624f.). The *Zhigongtu* only lists groups that are not Han, Manchu, or Mongolian These

classifications, justified or not, have led to the somewhat bizarre situation that the already heavily assimilated society of the former Luren now is overlaid with a thin cultural layer of the Manchus. The Fuyuan 附源 village in Qianxi county, for example, now has a museum dedicated to Manchu culture, inscriptions in written Manchu, and many newly introduced cultural symbols (Figure 10). Fuyuan is located less than 60 km to the east of Changfeng as the crow flies. Through these developments, traditional cultural elements and similarities to the Longjia have become more difficult to find.

Longjia seems to have vanished during the 1980s. Fieldwork could still produce important information, but in the absence of fluent speakers, the amount of available data will probably not rise considerably. Most likely, further linguistic evidence will be restricted to toponyms or personal names in genealogies and on tombstones. It is, therefore, all the more important to make use of the hitherto unknown field notes that are currently being prepared for publication. With Luren being extinct and even less well documented than Longjia, the only possibility to gather more information on the ‘Ta-Li’ (or ‘Cai-Long’) languages is fieldwork among the remaining speech communities of Caijia.



Figure 10: The entrance gate to Fuyuan, ‘the first Manchu village’ (manzu diyi cun 满族第一村 in Chinese, manju uksura i uju tokso in Manchu), Qianxi (© 2019 Andreas Hölzl)

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