

## Typological Perspective of Kinnauri Language

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**Introduction:** Kinnauri is the language of the West-Himalayish (WH) sub group of the Tibeto-Burman language family. It is used as a label term to represent languages spoken in the Kinnaur district, a rugged mountainous region in the northeastern side of Himachal Pradesh. The languages in Kinnaur region have been scarcely documented. Sharma (1988) reports five varieties of Kinnauri spoken in this region. He has included *Kinnauringskad*, *Thebarskad*, *Nyamskad*, *Chitkuli*, and an *Indo-Aryan* variety of Kinnauri. These varieties are spoken in the region with varying intelligibility. Few unreported varieties of Kinnauri are-*Domangskad*, *Kunnucharangskad*, *Nesangskad*, *Riskulangskad*, *Rupiskad* and *Sunnamskad*. Fig.1 given below presents the classification of the West-Himalayish languages. Benedict (1972) postulated Tibeto-Kinnauri to be a separate branch of Tibeto-Burman family and Nishi (1990) has given the classification of West-Himalayish. According to the 2011 census, the population of the region is 84,298. It is a region inhabited by descendants of mixed ethnicity.

The present paper aims to present the typological characteristics of Kinnauri language in the light of the Greenberg's principles of language universals. Kinnauri, like most of the Tibeto-Burman languages, has a SOV word-order structure i.e. according to the relative order of the grammatical subject (S), the verb (V) and the object (O), the basic word order SOV is attested in Kinnauri. The analysis of its structure reveals that Kinnauri exhibits all the characteristics of SOV language, with few exceptions. Data analyzed in this paper is from the standard Kinnauri variety that is spoken by the majority in the region.

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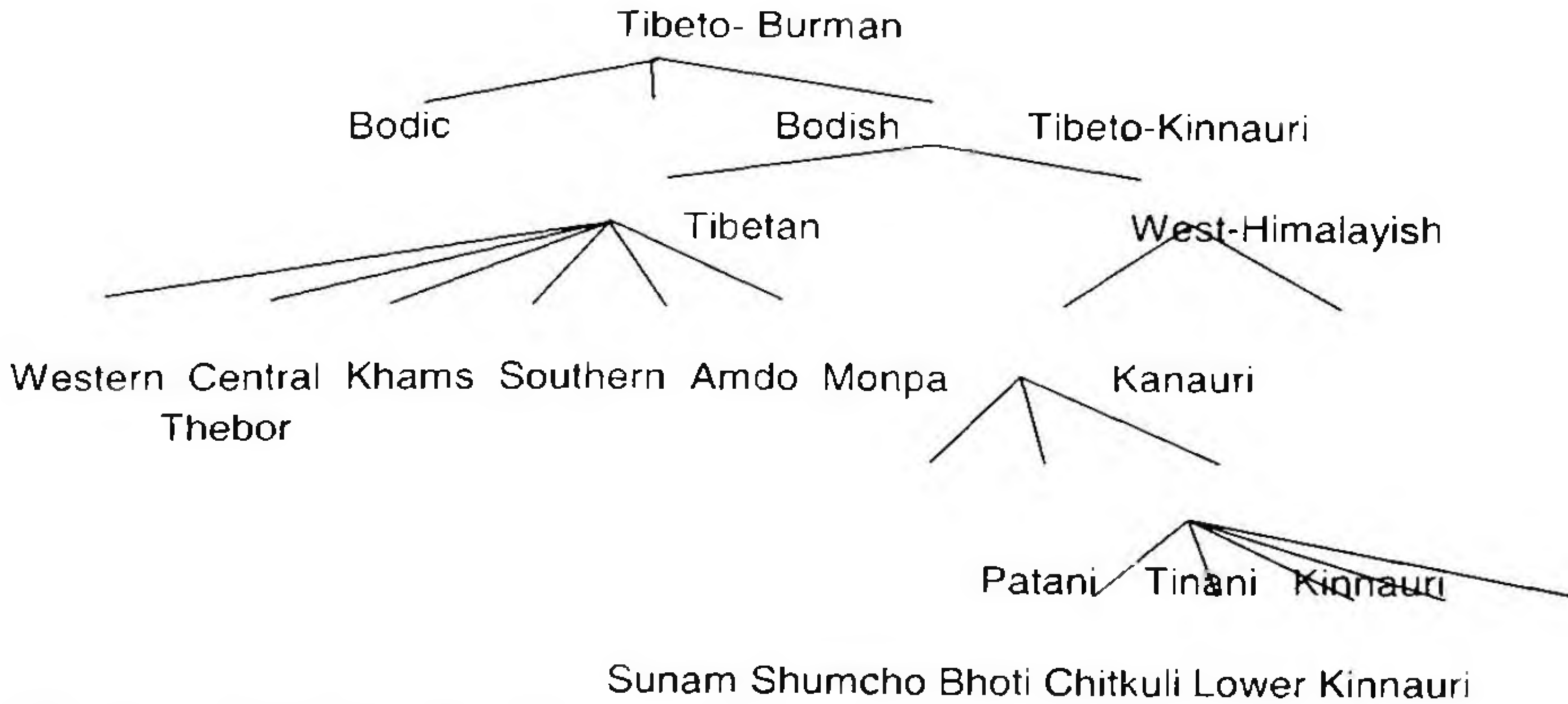


Figure 1. Classification of the West-Himalayish sub group (Saxena 1992).

**2. Basic Word Order:** The word order of Kinnauri is SOV. It is predominantly a verb final language i.e. the verb occurs in the final position of the sentence.

**2a. Intransitive Verb: S V**

- |    |            |         |            |
|----|------------|---------|------------|
| 1. | gi         | yəqč    | duk        |
|    | I-Nom      | Sleep   | bc-1S-pres |
|    | 'I sleep.' |         |            |
|    |            |         |            |
| 2. | do         | şid     |            |
|    | I-Nom      | die-pst |            |
|    | 'He died.' |         |            |

**2b. Transitive Verb: S O V**

- |    |                         |           |       |            |
|----|-------------------------|-----------|-------|------------|
| 3. | lətu                    | kəgli     | Huşid | Du         |
|    | boy-Nom                 | paper-Acc | read  | bc-3S-pres |
|    | 'The boy reads a book.' |           |       |            |

4.	gi	ti	Tuŋo	Duk
	I-Nom	water-Acc	drink-prog	be-1 S-pres
	'I am drinking water.'			

**2c. Ditransitive Verb: S IO DO V**

5.	gi	gopal-u	kət <sup>h</sup> u	lot	duk
	I-Nom	gopal-Dat	story-Acc	tell	be-1 S-pres
	'I tell a story to Gopal.'				

6.	əŋu	koləŋ	tə	əŋ	Kəməŋ
	I-Dat	remember	be-pres	I-Gen	work
	'I remember my work.'				

The constructions above are in accordance with the Greenberg's universals 1 and 4. **Greenberg's Universal No. 1;** *'In declarative sentences with nominal subject and object, the dominated order is almost always in which the subject precedes the object.'* **Greenberg's Universal No. 4;** *'If in a language the verb follows both the nominal subject and nominal object as the dominant order, the language almost always has a case system.'*

**3. Word Order in Different Sentence Types:**

**3a. Declarative sentence:** The word order in declarative sentences is SOV

7	gi	səo	jak	duk
	I	apple	eat-perf	be-1 S-pres
	'I eat apple.'			

**3b. Imperative sentence:** The word order in imperative sentence is SOV:

8.	əŋu	səo	kəo
	me-Dat	apple-Nom	give-pres
	‘Give me apple.’		

**3c. Interrogative Sentences:** Word order in interrogative sentences is SOV. In question sentences, *wh-* words remain *in situ*, i.e. there is no obligatory *wh-* movement but scrambling of question word is allowed.

**Questioning the subject: Wh OV**

9.	hə-is	čorəs-u	čuma
	who-Erg	thief-Acc	catch-pst
	‘Who caught the thief?’		

**Questioning the Direct Object: S Wh V**

10.	do-s	thid	riŋa
	he-Erg	what	say-pst
	‘What did he say?’		

**Questioning the Indirect-Object: S DO Wh V**

11.	ki-s	ju	shəl	həmč	zog-zog
	you-Erg	this	medicine- Acc	from where	buy-pst
	‘From where did you buy this medicine?’				

**4. Word Order in ‘yes-no’ Questions:** ‘yes-no’ questions follow SOV word order. Question morpheme ‘-a’ is suffixed at the end of the verb. ‘yes-no’ question is marked by the rise in pitch in the last syllable of the sentence.

12	kinu	əkha	du-a
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you-Nom	pain	bc-2S-pres-Q
‘Do you have pain?’		

13. kaku	nəsom	buto-a
kaku-Nom	tomorrow	come-fut-Q
‘Will Kaku come tomorrow?’		

Above constructions are in accordance with the **Greenberg’s Universal**

**No. 8;** *‘When a yes-no question is differentiated from the corresponding assertion by an intonation pattern, the distinctive intonation features of these patterns are reckoned from the end of the sentence rather than from the beginning.’*

**5. Causative Sentences:** The language does not favor causative constructions. Causatives are represented by distinctive verb roots. Such verb roots occur after the main verb.

**5a. Periphrastic Causatives:**

14. do-s	əŋu	kəməŋ-o	sheče
he-Erg	me-Acc	work	make-Caus-pst
‘He send me to work.’			

**5b. Lexical Causatives:**

15. do-s	chəŋa-nu	rəl	Pənnu	rəna
he-Erg	child	rice	cook	give-Caus-pst

‘He made the child cook the rice.’

Periphrastic causative ‘*sheče*’ in (5a), follows the main verb and lexical causative ‘*rən*’ in (5b), comes at the verb position.

**6. Negative Sentences:** Negative Particle occurs pre-verbally i.e. it precedes the verb. In the sentence, negative particle ‘*ma*’ occurs before verb ‘*ja-ja*’

16.	choti-s	khəu	ma ja-ja
	choti-Erg	food-Acc	Neg eat-pst

‘Choti did not eat food.’

In case of emphatic sentences, the particle can occur after the verb, depending on the context of the usage of sentence. In the sentence below ‘*bim-hi*’ is stressed.

17.	gi	kin	kimo	bim-hi	ma-bi
	I	your	house- Gen	go-pst-emp	Neg-go-pst

‘I did not go to your house.’

Emphatic marker can occur after any word which has to be stressed.

18.	gi-shi	ma lən	kin	kəmən
	I-Erg-Emp	Neg do	your	work-Gen

‘Only I did not do your work.’

**6.1 Agreement Pattern:** Verbs in the language show agreement in person and number features but not in gender. e.g., inflection of verb ‘*jač*’

19.	gi	jač	Duk
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	I	cat	be-1S-pres
	'I eat.'		
20.	kəs <sup>h</sup> ɔŋɑ	jač	toč
	we	eat	be-3P-pres
	'We eat.'		
21.	ka	jač	Dun
	you	Eat	be-2S-pres
	'You eat.'		
22.	kɪnɑ	jač	toč
	you	eat	be-2P-pres
	'You (Pl) eat.'		
23.	do	jač	Du
	he	eat	be-3S-pres
	'He eats.'		
24.	dogɑ	jač	Du
	they	eat	be-3P-pres
	'They eat.'		

**7. Verb:** Verb root can be classified as simple and complex, based on their structure. A root is obtained by dropping an infinitive or verbal noun marker. There is very little scope of derived word in this language. Most of the simple roots are monosyllabic or polysyllabic.

### 7a. Simple Roots

- |     |       |       |
|-----|-------|-------|
| 25. | /br/  | -go   |
| 26. | /s'i/ | -die  |
| 27. | /pəi/ | -come |

28. /sərši/ -rise  
 29. /somčən/ -think  
 30. /šurin/ -move around

### 7b. Derived Roots

31. /ləgmik/ -to burn  
 32. /pramig/ -to spread  
 33. /čimig/ - to clean

**8. Auxiliary Verb:** The use of Auxiliary Verb is obligatory in locative predicative and tense. *AUX* always follows the main verb, as in many verb-final languages. The main verb *'bi-/ hačis'* precedes the auxiliary verb *'duk/ du.'* In example (36), auxiliary is used in locative predicate.

34.	gi	bəjar-o	bi-o	duk
	I	market-Loc	go-prog	be-1 S-Aux-pres
	'I am going to the market.'			

35.	bela	təta	hačis	du
	time	what-Q	have-perf	be-Aux-pres
	'What is the time?'			

36.	gi	kim-o	Duk
	I	market-Loc	be-1 S-Aux-pres
	'I am at home.'		

The constructions above are in accordance with the **Greenberg's universals No. 16**; *'In languages with dominant order SOV, an inflected auxiliary always follow the main verb.'*



**9. Adjective:** Adjectives precede the head in a noun phrase. Structurally, they can be simple and derived, and based on inflection they can be variable or non-variable. These are inflected for number and gender.

**9a. Simple Adjectives:** mono-syllabic, non-variable: /*teg*/ elder, large, /*dəm*/ good, /*məri*/ bad, /*lis*/ cold, /*ləs*/ wet, /*gato*/ small, /*muluk*/ more, /*ñuk*/ new, /*rək*/ black, /*tʰək*/ white.

**9b. Derived Adjectives:** root+ suffixes, variable: /*həd-sya*/ which one (masc.), /*həd-sye*/ which one (fem.), /*jašid*/ ate, /*gasa rəŋ*/ with clothes, /*gatosya čəŋ*/ younger child (masc.), /*gatosye čəŋ*/ younger child (fem.), /*təŋšid*/ fought, /*bišid*/ went.

**10. Postpositions:** Kinnauri is a postpositional language and the postposition follows head noun. Postposition in the language has the same purpose as that of the case suffix. In example (37), post position ‘-o’ follows the head noun ‘*šiša*.’ In examples (38-39), post position ‘-da’ follow the respective head nouns and in example (40), post position ‘-u’ follows head noun ‘*əŋ*’. Such sentence constructions are in accordance with the **Greenberg’s Universal N0. 4**; ‘*languages with normal SOV order are postpositional.*’

37.	gi-s	ənu	šiša-o	Khyak
	I-Erg	self	mirror-Loc	see-1S-pst
	‘I saw myself in the mirror.’			

38.	əŋ-da	muluk	ze	To
	I-Dat	many	sheep	be-pres
	‘I have many sheep.’			

39.	kin-da	təta	ze	To
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I-Dat                      how                      sheep                      be-pres  
 'How many sheep you have?'

40.    əŋ-u                      səo                      kən  
       I-Dat                      apple                      give  
 'Give apple to me.'

**11. Genitive:** Genitive follows the governing noun. In example below, genitive marker '-u' follows the governing noun '*dəgəs/dəshəŋ*.'

41.    dəgəs-u                      kələm                      wali                      dəm                      du  
       his-Gen                      pen                      very                      good-Adj                      be-3S-pres  
 'His pen is very good.'

42.    dəshəŋ-u                      mi  
       village-Gen                      man  
 'Village's man.'

Such sentence constructions are in contrast to the **Greenberg's Universal**

**No. 2:** '*In languages with prepositions, the genitive almost follows the governing noun, while in languages with postpositions it almost always precedes.*'

**12. Adverb:** Adverb precedes the verb, as in other SOV languages. In the example below, adverb '*tərə*' precedes the verb '*təŋək*.'

43.    gi-s                      tərə                      sita- pəŋ                      təŋək  
       I-Erg                      today                      sita-Acc                      see-1S-pst  
 'I saw Sita today.'

Time adverbial precedes the place adverbials. In example (44), '*ai golo*' time adverb, precedes '*dilli*' place adverbial.

44	gi	kinu	ai	golo	Dilli-o	c <sup>h</sup> ok-s <sup>h</sup> ok
	I	you-2S-Acc	nex t	Month	delhi- Loc	meet-fut.

'I will meet you in Delhi next month.'

This construction agrees with the **Greenberg's Universal No. 7**; '*In a language with dominant SOV order, all adverbial modifiers of the verb precedes the verb.*'

**13. Modifiers:** Adjectives, demonstratives and numerals precede the head noun in an unmarked sequence. In the example below, adjective '*dəm*' precedes the head noun '*gəsa*'

45.	jiŋ	dəm	gəsa	pəryəč	du
	here-Loc	good	clothes	get	be-pres.

'Here good clothes are available.'

In (46), demonstrative '*do*' precedes the head noun '*bot<sup>h</sup>əŋ*'.

46.	Do	bot <sup>h</sup> əŋ	ləməs	du
	That	tree	tall	be-pres.

'That tree is tall.'

Numeral '*id*' is preceding head noun '*mi*'

47.	id	mi
	One	man

'One man.'

The language does not have articles. Referential determiners are found in this language. The constructions above are in accordance with the **Greenberg's Universal No. 18**; *'When the descriptive adjective precedes the noun, the demonstrative and the numerals do likewise.'* In the ordering of adjectives and noun, the language show **exception to the Greenberg's Universal No. 5**; *'If a language has dominant SOV order and the genitive follows the governing noun, then the adjective likewise follows the noun.'* But in Kinnauri, genitive follows the governing noun and adjective precedes the noun.

**14. Quantifier:** Quantifiers precede the head noun in unmarked position. In examples (48-49), quantifiers *'čəi/ ədəŋ'* precedes the head nouns *'miga/ gəsa.'*

48.	čəi	miga	jurias <sup>h</sup> s	du
	all-Nom	people-Nom	agree	be-pres
	'All people have agreed.'			

49.	do-s	ədəŋ	gəsa	zəg-zəg
	he-Erg	almost all	clothes	buy-pst
	'He bought almost all clothes.'			

**15. Order of Determiner, Quantifier and Noun:** Determiner, Quantifier and Noun follow the following order: D-Q-N. In (50-51), the determiner *'ju/ do'* precedes quantifier *'sai/ nish'* which precedes the head noun *'kima/ chəŋa.'* In such ordering, adjectives can follow the head noun.

50	ju	sai	kima	dəm	du
	these-Det	ten-Quant	house	good	be-pres
	'These ten houses are good.'				

51	do	nish	chəŋa	əkhas	du
----	----	------	-------	-------	----

those-Det	two-Quant	child	ill	be-pres
'Those two children are ill.'				

**16. Marker of Comparison:** The marker of comparison follows the standard of comparison.

**16a. Comparative Construction:** In the examples below, comparative marker *'-ka'* follows the marker of comparison *'mohən.'*

52.	sita	mohən-ka	ləməs	du
	sita-Nom	mohan-Comp	tall	be-3S-pres
'Sita is taller than Mohan.'				

**16b. Superlative construction:** Superlative marker *'-ku'* comes together with quantifier, after the head noun and change in the position of comparative marker is not allowed.

53.	bittu	čəi-ku	tɛg	du
	bittu-Nom	all-comp	elder	be-3S-pres
'Bittu is the eldest.'				

54.	ju	čəi-ku	yuk	du
	this-Nom	all-comp	new	be-pres
'This is the newest.'				

**17. Negative Polarity Item:** The negative polarity items can appear only in negative environment in a sentence and are always licensed by negation. In sentences below, negative polarity items *'muluk/ həti-nəŋ'* are licensed by negative *'ma-'*

55	gi	də-vəriŋ	muluk	ma-neč	duk
	I	about him	much	Neg-do	be-1S-pres

'I don't know much about him.'

56	do	həti-nəŋ	bətəŋ	ma-lənč	du
	he	anyone	talk	Neg-do	be-3S- pres

'He does not talk to anyone.'

**18. Tense:** Kinnauri show three way tense distinction: marker for past and future is suffixed to the verb and present tense is attested lexically. There is distinction of person, number and honorificity in the inflection of the verb that marks tense while there is none for gender.

**18a. Present Tense:**

57.	gi	dəm	lətu	duk
	I	good	boy	be-pres
	'I am a good boy.'			

**18b. Past Tense:**

58.	gi	dəm	lətu	dwək
	I-Nom	good	boy	be-1S-pst
	'I was a good boy.'			

59.	ki	dəm	lətu	dwən
	you	good	boy	be-2S-pst
	'You were a good.'			

60.	doi	dəm	lətu	dwɛ'
	he	good	boy	be-3S-pst
	'He was a good boy.'			

**18c. Future tense:**

61.	gi	dəm	lɔtu	hɔčok
	I	good	boy	be-1S-fut
	'I will become a good boy.'			

**19. Aspect:** Aspect shows three way distinctions; perfective, imperfective and progressive, with markers suffixed to the main verb.

**19a. Perfective Aspect:** The suffix '-s' function as perfective aspect marker.

62.	nu-s	khəu	ja-ja	du
	he-Erg	food	eat-perf	be-3S-pres
	'He has eaten the food.'			

**19b. Imperfective Aspect:** The imperfective marker '-id' is suffixed to verb base.

63	anita	ju	skul-o	hus <sup>h</sup> id	du
	anita-Nom	this	school-Loc	study-Imper	be-3S-pr
	'Anita studies in this school.'				

**19c. Progressive Aspect Marker:** the marker is 'o' suffixed to verb. In the examples below, '-o' is suffixed to verb 'kuč/yoč.'

64.	do	əŋu	kuč-o	dwe
	he	me	call-prog	be-3S-pst
	'He was calling me'			
65.	sita	yoč-o	du	
	sita	play-prog	be-3S-pres	

'Sita is playing.'

**20. Infinitive:** Infinitive is realized as *'-mu'* which is suffixed to the bare verb roots. In the examples below, *'-mu'* is suffixed to the ending roots of the verb.

66.	gi	yəg-mu	gyao	duk
	I	sleep-INF	wish	be-1S-pres
	'I want to sleep.'			

67.	do	yəg-mu	gyao	du
	he	sleep-INF	wish	be-3S-pres
	'He wish to sleep.'			

68.	do	ənu	čukshu-mu	gyao
	he	me	Meet-INF	wish
	'He wants to meet me.'			

**21. Anaphor:** Anaphor follows the antecedent. Anaphor is co-indexed with the NP, which c-commands it. The language has only nominal anaphor.

**21a. Order in Reflexive Anaphors:**

69.	kt-s	ənu	zali	lən-lən
	you-Erg	self	lie	make-pst
	'You lied to yourself.'			

70.	gi	ənu	zali	lən-lən
	I-Erg	self	lie	make-pst
	'I lied to myself.'			



**21b. Order in Reciprocal Anaphors:**

71. dogɑ-s                      i-nis<sup>h</sup>u                      kul-kul  
 they-Erg                      each other                      beat-pst  
 ‘They beat each other.’

72. kəshɑŋɑ                      i-nis<sup>h</sup>u                      koləŋ                      tamig  
 we-Nom                      each other                      remember                      be-pres  
 ‘We should remember each other.’

**22. Order in Reduplication:** Nouns, adjectives as well as adverbs can be reduplicated.

**22a. Nominal Reduplication:** In the sentence below ‘*kim*’ is reduplicated.

73. dogɑ                      kimo-kimo                      biyo  
 they-Nom                      door-to-door                      go-pst  
 ‘They went door to door.’

74. dogɑ                      id-id                      bida  
 they-Nom                      one by one                      come-pst  
 ‘They came one by one.’

**22b. Adjectival Reduplication:** In the sentence below, adjective ‘*ləməs*’ is reduplicated.

75. ləməs-ləməs                      mi-gɑ  
 Tall                      man-3Pl  
 ‘Tall men.’

**22c. Adverbial reduplication:** Here adverb ‘*mesəŋ*’ is reduplicated.

76. Do                      mesəŋ-                      yunč                      du  
    mesəŋ  
 he-Nom                      slowly                      walk                      be-3S-pres

‘He walks slowly.’

Verbal reduplication is absent in Kinnauri. When the verb is reduplicated, it functions as adverb. In (77), verb ‘čas<sup>h</sup>o’ is reduplicated but after reduplication it functions as adverb.

77.	Do	čas <sup>h</sup> o-čas <sup>h</sup> o	s <sup>h</sup> id
	he-Nom	dance	die-pst

‘He died while dancing.’

**23. Relative Clause:** In Kinnauri, relative clause is formed by means of participles in which the relative clauses occur at the periphery of the main clause. In such constructions, main clause precedes the subordinate clause. Word order in RC constructions in Kinnauri, is SOV.

78.	gi-s	hōlek	kui	kak	do	rək	du
	I-Erg	Rel	dog- Acc	bring-pst	that-Co-rel	black	be-pre

‘The dog that I brought is black.’

79.	həm	əŋ	kim	du	do	zoga	ropa	du
	rel	my-IS- Gen	hous e	be-pres	that-Co- rel	plac e	ropa	be- pres

‘Ropa is the place where my house is situated.’

**24. Conditional Clause:** There is no obligatory conditional marker for conditional clauses.

80.	ki	bi-ma	gi-li	butək
	you- Nom	go-con cl	me- too	come-fut

‘(If)You go I will also come.’



Co. rel.- Correlational relative  
Comp.- Complementizer  
Dat.- Dative  
Dem.- Demonstrative  
Det.- Determiner  
Erg.-Ergative  
• Fem.- Feminine  
Fut.- Future Tense  
Gen.- Genitive

Pres.- Present Tense  
Prog.- Progressive  
Pst.- Past Tense  
Q- Question  
Quant.-Quantifier  
S,P- Singular, Plural  
SVO- Subject, Verb, Object

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