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#### **Himalayan Linguistics**

Tibetan trisyllabic light verb construction recognition

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#### ABSTRACT

The Tibetan trisyllabic light verb construction is a type of widely used verb phrase that is composed of a disyllabic noun or adjective and a light verb. A large number of Tibetan trisyllabic light verb constructions are widely found in Tibetan. Successfully recognizing this type of phrase greatly contributes to Tibetan information processing, however, thorough and systematic academic research in this field has not yet been launched. Therefore, we propose a model for the recognition of Tibetan trisyllabic light verb constructions based on an integrated strategy in this paper. Firstly, we extract all trisyllabic light verb construction candidates from a Tibetan corpus. In this step, light verbs are used as retrieval marks. Secondly, we filter candidates using a statistics-based model, rule-based model, and integrated model separately. Experimental linguistic features contribute a lot to the automatic recognition of Tibetan trisyllabic light verb constructions by computers.

#### **KEYWORDS**

Tibetan, NLP, light verbs

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# *Tibetan trisyllabic light verb construction recognition*

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#### 1 Introduction

Already in Old Tibetan, trisyllabic light verb constructions (hereafter referred to as TTLVCs) are to be found in historical documents, however, in small quantity. As economy and culture develop day by day in Tibetan society, TTLVCs are widely distributed in modern Tibetan texts (Jiang 2005). TTLVCs consist of two parts: one is a disyllabic noun or adjective, the other is a light verb. TTLVCs recognition plays an important role in fields including text segmentation, chunking, and parsing for Tibetan. Until now, there is no effective strategy to recognize and extract TTLVCs from Tibetan due to their particular distinguishing features including openness, productivity, quantitative uncertainty, and structural instability. Therefore, it is worthy to explore a practical and effective method to recognize TTLVCs.

Many studies have been conducted in collocation extraction, chunking, and multi-word expression identification. All these research achievements provide a valuable foundation for TTLVC recognition. Sun (2002) employs four different methods including mutual information, t-test, Chi-squared test, and likelihood ratio in collocation extraction and compares their performance. Church and Hanks (1990) extracts English collocations from a corpus by calculating their mutual information. Wang (2005) proposes a Chinese verb-object phrase recognition algorithm that combines mutual information with entropy. Sun (1997) builds up a quantitative evaluation system with three dimensions to systematically analyze Chinese phrases that consist of the specific word " $\hbar$  (ability)". Qu (2004) extracts Chinese collocation candidates from a large corpus with a statistical method, and then filters correct collocations from candidates according to language rules. Jiang (2007) focuses on chunking in Chinese using a combination of statistic-based and rule-based methods, introducing a rule bank to his algorithm.

Current studies in TTLVCs mainly take a morphological perspective. A few researchers have studied TTLVC extraction based on their linguistic knowledge. Jiang (2005) analyzes the composition, structure, and syntactic function of TTLVCs. Hu (2005), Wang (1994), Gesang (1987), and Hu (1994) study the classification and structure of TTLVCs. According to these linguistic studies in Tibetan, Long (2007) proposes an algorithm to recognize TTLVCs that consists of three particular light verbs. In this paper, we propose an integrated model to extract TTLVCs from

unprocessed Tibetan corpora. Our model adopts a rule-based strategy and a statistic-based strategy including mutual information and maximum entropy methods.

#### 2 Features of Tibetan trisyllabic light verb constructions

From a structural point of view, TTLVCs contain two parts a disyllabic word (hereafter referred to as Dw) and a light verb (hereafter referred to as Lv). It is worth noticing that some elements are inserted into TTLVCs in some circumstances. These inserted elements (hereafter referred to as Ie) include adverbs, classifier and so on. As a whole, a TTLVC can be expressed as formula 1.

$$TTLVC = Dw + Ie + Lv \tag{1}$$

In most cases, a Dw is a disyllabic noun or an adjective, and a Lv is a monosyllabic light verb. The meaning of a TTLVC is largely determined by the Dw.

#### 2.1 Monosyllabic light verbs

According to their syllable length, Tibetan verbal phrases<sup>1</sup> can be classified into three categories: monosyllabic verb, trisyllabic verb phrase, and multisyllabic verb phrase. In Tibetan, the majority of verbs are monosyllabic, which has long history and high frequency. Lexical meanings of several monosyllabic verbs have slowly evolved, so these verbs are referred to as monosyllabic light verbs. To be specific, Lv only retains its general meaning as an action such as meanings of do, make, commit, or conduct.

Based on origin, monosyllabic light verbs can be divided into four categories.

(1) Light verbs that evolve from volitional verbs.

Some widely used light verbs such as april and an originate in volitional verbs and form TTLVCs like article and form to denounce) or anational (to reclaim).

(2) Light verbs that evolve from nonvolitional verbs.

Light verbs such as  $a_{\text{TV}}$ ,  $a_{\text{T}}$ ,  $a_{\text{T}$ 

(4) Aside from the aforementioned Lv, light verbs that originate from humilific morphemes like also can form TTLVCs, for instance surface (to help).

Tibetan light verbs exhibit stem alternation according to tense<sup>2</sup>, which persists when they are used as part of TTLVCs. For instance, আবং দ্র্রুমান্ত্রন্য (to reclaim) have three forms that are আবং দ্রুঁরাজ্য, আবন্য দ্রুঁরাজ্য, and আবং দ্রুঁরাজ্য, These changes of tense of TTLVC are taken into consideration in our recognition model.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In the current context we use 'verb phrase' as a more simply worded equivalent of 'verbal syntagma'; we do not intend 'verb phrase' in the generative sense.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Tibetan verb stems are capable of distinguishing up to four forms: present (*lda da ba*), past (*'das pa*), future (*ma 'ongs pa*), and imperative (*skul tshig*). Terminological comfort might dictate that we refer to the imperative as a 'mood', but from the perspective of Tibetan morphology there is no reason to do so.

#### 2.2 Disyllabic words

Hu (2002) analyzes the composition and structure of disyllabic words that form TTLVCs. He proposes a nine category morpheme pattern of disyllabic words that are V+V, N+V, D+V, A+V, V+N, R+V, N+N, N+A, A+A. V represents a light verb, N represents a noun morpheme, D presents an adverb morpheme, and A presents an adjective morpheme. The pattern V+V means that the disyllabic word is composed by two light verbs. For instance, in a TTLVC adart (to develop), adart and the both light verbs.

#### 2.3 Inserted elements

The structure of TTLVCs are unstable because it is possible for some elements to be inserted between *Dw* and *Lv*. Inserted elements can be adverbs, adjectives, case-auxiliary words, enumerating auxiliary words, imperative auxiliary words, and so on. For instance, artiges and a matter of a ma

Aside from the discontinuous TTLVCs discussed immediately above, there is another type of discontinuous TTLVC, namely one that is composed of more than one disyllabic word and one light verb. For instance, the TTLVC  $\arg_{\neg \neg \neg \neg \neg} \approx \arg_{\neg \neg \neg \neg} \approx 10^{-10}$  (to learn and study) is composed of two nouns  $\arg_{\neg \neg} \approx 10^{-10}$  (study), in the middle of these two nouns is a conjunction  $\neg_{\neg}$  (and), and a light verb  $\exists_{\neg \neg}$  (to do).

#### **3** TTLVC candidates extraction

In this section, we introduce how to extract TTLVC candidates from raw Tibetan corpora according to the linguistic features of TTLVC discussed above. We start with building up a light verb list. A Tibetan and Chinese bilingual Lhasa Spoken Language Dictionary (Yu 1983) contains a number of TTLVCs. We extract light verb constructions from this dictionary, and integrate the results with light verb constructions listed in other works (viz. Jiang 2005; Wang 1994; Hu 1994; Zhou 2003). As result, we acquire a light verb list with 875 entries.

Our light verb list includes as information the light verbs themselves and the number of occurrences of each light verb. A few examples are shown in Table1, and please see Appendix 1 at the end of this paper for a complete light verb list adopted in this work.

ID	Light Verb	Occurrence Number		Light Verb	Occurrence Number	
1	କ୍ତିମ	1027		D D	569	
3	୍ଗ	134		দ্ব	111	
5	٩	109	6	5.951	84	
7	شعر	70	8	तमा	61	
9	র্মুয	49	10		46	

Table 1. Examples of Light verbs

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According to the light verb list, we extract TTLVC candidates from a corpus. With regard to the inserted elements in TTLVCs, we work out TTLVC candidates using an extraction algorithm, the main procedures of which are listed in Tabel2.

(1) Split a Tibetan sentence by *tsheg* punctuation mark into syllables.

- (3) If a Lv is found go to step 4, otherwise go back to step 1.
- (4) If the syllable on the left of the Lv is an inserted element, extract two syllables on the left of the inserted element. These two syllables and the Lv compose one TTLVC candidate.
- (5) If the syllable on the left of the Lv is not an inserted element, extract two syllables on the left of the Lv. These two syllables and the Lv compose one TTLVC candidate.
- (6) If the Lv is at the end of a sentence go back to step 1, otherwise go back to step 2.

#### 4 Statistic-based TTLVC recognition model

TTLVCs have two features: (1) although a TTLVC might be split by an inserted element, the elements of a TTLVC have a higher than average co-occurrence in corpus; (2) there is a clear boundary between the TTLVC and its context. Therefore, we propose two measures to grade a candidate. One is an internal measure and the other is an external measure. Several statistical methods are used to grade TTLVC candidates (Jiang 2007).

#### 4.1 Internal Measure

From a statistical perspective, if the three syllables of a TTLVC candidate have a high cooccurrence frequency, they possess a strong degree of internal connectivity. Based on this theory, the higher the co-occurrence frequency the more likely they are to be a word or phrase, i.e. a true TTLVC. Mutual Information is usually applied to evaluate the level of co-occurrence probability of two words. The higher the mutual information of the two words is, the stronger internal connectivity they have. In this paper, we propose an internal measure formula based on the mutual information definition shown in forumal2.

$$InMeasure(W) = \log_2 \frac{P_{XY}}{P_X P_Y}$$
(2)

 $P_{XY}$  presents the co-occurrence probability of Dw and Lv.  $P_X$  means the occurrence probability of Dw and  $P_Y$  is the occurrence probability of Lv.

#### 4.2 External measure

Normally, we can identify the external boundary of a TTLVC by observing its context. In our work, a maximum entropy model is chosen to measure the external independence of a TTLVC. We use the model to evaluate the left and right boundary of a candidate separately. According to information entropy theory, a TTLVC candidate with higher information entropy is free to occur in various contexts. If a candidate stably appears in a variety of context, it has a higher probability of being a TTLVC.

<sup>(2)</sup> To scan syllables obtained in step 1.

Table 2. TTLVC candidates extraction procedures

In this paper, Le(W) and Re(W) are proposed to evaluate the external measure of a TTLVC, as shown in formula 3 and formula 4.

$$Le(W) = -\sum_{\forall a \in A} P(aW|W) \times \log_2 P(aW|W)$$
(3)

$$\operatorname{R}e(W) = -\sum_{\forall b \in B} P(Wb|W) \times \log_2 P(Wb|W)$$
(4)

In formula 3, W is a TTLVC candidate, Le is the left boundary entropy; Re is the right boundary entropy; and A is a collection of syllables that appear on the left of candidates; a is a specific syllable on the left of the candidate; B is a collection of syllables that appear on the right of our candidates; b is a specific syllable on the right of the candidate.

We can combine formula 3 and formula 4, to yield a more general external measure as in formula 5.

$$ExMeasure(W) = \sqrt{(1 - Le(W))(1 - \operatorname{Re}(W))}$$
(5)

#### 4.3 Integrated algorithm based on internal measure and external measure

To improve precision and accuracy of a single statistic-based approach employing both the internal and external measures discussed so far, we propose a comprehensive formula (formula 6) that integrates internal measure and external measure. Additionally, a candidate has a higher probability of being a TTLVC, if it has a relatively high frequency in corpus. Therefore the frequency of the syllable sequence in question F(W) has been introduced into our algorithm.

$$UniMeasure(W) = (1 - 1/F(W)) \times InMeasure(W) \times ExMeasure(W)$$
(6)

#### 5 Rule-based TTLVC recognition model

Observing the Tibetan corpus, we find that a high frequency sequence of syllables may not be a TTLVC. Take the syllable sequence  $\tan \vec{x} \in \vec{x} = a$  as an example. In our corpus,  $\operatorname{cax} \in \vec{x} = a$  appears in various contexts, for instance, it is often used in  $\operatorname{cax} \in \vec{x} = a$  as an example. In our corpus,  $\operatorname{cax} \in \vec{x} = a$  appears and oppose retrogression!) Due to its high frequency, it is identified as a TTLVC by our statistic-based model. Actually, it is just a sequence of three syllables, not even respecting word boundaries, not to mention being a TTLVC. In fact, it is quite easy to rule out the possibility of  $\operatorname{cax} \in \vec{x} = a$  being a TTLVC according to linguistic knowledge. The structure of  $\operatorname{cax} \in \vec{x} = a$  (nominalization marker)  $+ \frac{1}{2} = \frac{1}{2} \operatorname{case} a$  model does not perform very well in such cases; however, rule-based approach can deal with them effectively. As a result, we build up a linguistic knowledge rule bank to make up for the deficiency.

We make a rule to exclude the candidates such as  $\operatorname{det}(\widetilde{\mathfrak{f}}_{[n]})$ . For instance, if a Dw contains a case marker or a nominalizations marker, then the candidate should be removed. According to

Tibetan grammar, Dw are often nouns. If case markers appear in a Dw, there is a low chance the syllable sequence is a TTLVC. The rules are relative rather than absolute, thus the rule bank can be added, deleted, and modified according to needs. Several rules of our rule bank are listed in Table 3.

- If a candidate meets one of the following rules, remove it from candidate list.
- (1) The first syllable of a TTLVC candidate is a case marker, a nominalizations marker, an adjective suffix, or a negative adverb.
- (2) The second syllable of a TTLVC candidate is a case marker.

Table 3. TTLVC filter rule sample

#### 6 Experiments and Analysis

### 6.1 Experiments and Results

We test our TTLVC recognition model proposed in this paper using a corpus that composed of Tibetan publications. Our corpus contains fifty thousand sentences, whose genre includes government documents, news reports, legal texts, and so on. Based on the same corpus, we conduct three groups of experiments that adopt different methods shown as follow.

· Statistic-based Method 1: Mutual Information

· Statistic-based Method 2: Statistic-based Method1 + Left/Right Entropy

· Integrated Method: Statistic-based Method2 + Rule Bank

Considering the importance of light verbs, we build up a couple of light verb lists according to their number of occurrences (F). To choose an optimal light verb list, we conduct several experiments based on different lists, and the precision (P) of experiments are shown in Table 4.

P	Statistic-based	Statistic-based	Integrated	Average
F	Method1	Method2	Method	Precision
>100	0.791	0.858	0.918	0.855
>50	0.787	0.819	0.906	0.837
>10	0.758	0.803	0.879	0.813
>0	0.700	0.717	0.865	0.760

Table 4. Results of TTLVC recognition experiments based on different light verb lists

The results of the experiments suggest that the scope of the light verb list plays a significant role in TTLVC recognition. When we employ a relatively small light verb list, we acquire the best precision 91.8% in the TTLVC extraction experiment. In this experiment we only employ the light verbs whose number of occurrence is greater than 100. But a large number of TTLVC candidates have been discarded because of the smaller light verb list. Thus we choose light verbs whose frequency is more than ten to build up a more thorough list of light verbs. In addition, all tenses of these light verbs are also added into our list. Our final list contains 210 entries.

Based on the final list, 65,764 TTLVC candidates have been extracted from the corpus. By morphological analysis and removing candidates whose occurrence frequency is lower than three, we retain 11,243 candidates.

According to the experimental results, the precision of Method1 is 75.8%, and it reaches 80.3% by introducing Left/Right Entropy. When the integrated method is adopt, the precision increases 7.6% and reaches 87.9%. These results prove that the integrated method performs the best in the TTLVC task. TTLVC samples recognized by our model are listed in Table 5.

Examples	Meaning	Number of Occurrence			
हॅर्नेलचेन to resist		1,490			
अव्याधेव्ययाहेन्ता to stimulate		240			
ঝ৾ঝঝ'প্রব্য'যার্উদ্য	to determine	240 199 561 138 79			
तसेना मुला तर्षे to make progress		561			
त्रयेत्य: क्रुरु: य) में - 'I	to develop	138			
<u> </u>	to distinguish	79			
तुषण्य पर्देत्।	to play a part in	351			
র্বিসানেদ্রেন্দার্বিসা	to make a mistake	48			
हार्येष 'तहला to repay a debt		10			

Table 5. TTLVC examples

#### 6.2 Error analysis

In general, our integrated algorithm performs well in TTLVC recognition as shown in table 4. Table 5 lists actual TTLVC identified by our system. However, our algorithm makes some mistakes, most of which fall into three categories.

1. Misidentifying multi-syllabic verb phrases as TTLVCs. Aside from TTLVCs, there exist a large number of multi-syllabic verbal phrases such as four syllabic or five syllabic verbal phrases. Our algorithm falsely extracts the last three syllables of these phrases as TTLVCs. For instance, and a garages (the situation has been changed) is a four syllable verbal phrase, and our algorithm extracts garages and take it as a TTLVC. Because these multi-syllabic verbal phrases have a high frequency in our corpus, and they conform with linguistic rules related to TTLVC, it is very difficult to correct this type of error for our model.

2. Misidentifying some multi-word expressions as TTLVCs. There are many tri-syllabic multi-word expressions with high occurrence frequency in Tibetan, but which are not TTLVCs. For instance, and it occurs 19 times in our corpus.

3. Misidentifying an adjective or adverb and a light verb as TTLVCs.

It is possible that TTLVCs are separated by inserted elements such as an adjective or an adverb. In some circumstances, our algorithm incorrectly recognizes inserted element and the light verb behind them as TTLVCs. The reason why our algorithm makes this kind of mistake is inserted elements probably co-occur with light verbs in corpus several times. Therefore, their co-occurrence makes our statistically based algorithm unable to get rid of these mistakes.

For instance, المحاسلة المحاسلة المحاسلة (to intensively concentrate on) consists of a TTLVC المحاسلة المحاسلة (to concentrate on) and an adverb المحاسلة (intensively). Our algorithm, however, misidentifies محاسلة المحاسلة المح

#### 7 Conclusion

In this paper, we propose an integrated approach to identify Tibetan trisyllabic light verb constructions from a raw corpus. Experimental results show that a statistics-based strategy that combines mutual information and entropy performs well in TTLVC recognition. Accuracy and precession of our model have been largely improved when a rule-based method is introduced into our algorithm. The result proves that a multi-pronged strategy is more effective than a unitary strategy. In the future, we plan to apply our algorithm to other types of Tibetan phrase structure extraction problems such as the identification of noun phrases.

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#### Acknowledgements

ID	Light Verb	Number of Occurrence	ID	Light Verb	Number of Occurrence	ID	Light Verb	Number of Occurrence
1	୬ିମ	1027	71	أحا	12	141	ঝন্বা	6
2	1) 1)	569	72	यार्देखा	12	142	عل	6
3	୍ରା	134	73	ন্যহ্য	11	143	শ্ব	6
4	দ্ব	111	74	קקלא	11	144	ଟମ୍ବା	6
5	فليل	109	75	739a	11	145	ন্তব্য	6
6	545	84	76		11	146	5RA	6
7	न्येम्	70	77	K Any	11	147	ন্বর্মাযা	6
8	শেল	61	78	গ্রন্থ	11	148	RT R	6
9	র্ম্নয	49	79	2 <u>1</u> 27	11	149		6
10	শৰ্শ	46	80	দ্রদ্রহ্য	11	150	मुग	6
11	দ্রিমন্দ্র	43	81	5.8ª	11	151	দ্রিন্	6
12	मित्र द्वित	41	82	π	10	152	নদ্র্যুদেশ	6
13	শর্ইন্	40	83	ব্যসাযা	10	153	বেহ্যবা	6
14	क्याय्श	39	84	নতগ	10	154	त्र्य	6
15	নৰ্ভগ্ৰম্থা	39	85	ষ্ট্রিয	10	155	দেট্রীন্য	6
16	ন্দ	36	86	त्रवित्य	10	156	<u>40</u>	6
17	ইন্থিৰ	33	87	حقالها	10	157	য়৾৾ঀ৾য়৾	6
18	শ্বিদা	32	88	য়ঢ়য়	10	158	য়ঢ়ৄ৾৴	6
19	ঈঁৰা	30	89	RAN	10	159	محكم	6
20	୯ଟିଜ୍ୟା	29	90	त्रयेन्ग	10	160	95J	6
21	নন্ত্র্ব্বাম্য	28	91	ইর্ঘ	10	161	C Bu	6
22	ন্দিন	27	92	मेषा	10	162	বর্ষনথা	6
23	ন্দ্র্রা	26	93	तथर्म	9	163	<b>E</b> ril	6
24	त्रवेष	25	94	5 thay	9	164	هزا	6
25	র্ব্যয	25	95	بلو الم	9	165	मलेन्या	6
26	तन्त्रण	24	96	ମ୍ୟୁତ୍ୟ	9	166	শর্ঝিবাব্দা	6

27	র্শন	24	97	নেধীন্য	9	167	য়৾৾য়৾৾ঀ	6
28	শৰ্	24	98	त्या दिवन	9	168	বশ্বদৰ্শ	6
29		23	99	নস্তৃয	9	169	위지	5
30	(TR)	23	100	457	9	170	নন্বাধ্য	5
31	এইব্য	23	101	ঈশ্বা	9	171	597	5
32	कय	22	102	দেইন্	9	172		5
33	CE ST	22	103	€€	9	173		5
34		22	104	ধীন্য	9	174	র্ষ্টনা	5
35	عالم	22	105	REA	8	175	40 1 2 6	5
36	त्तू (यस)	21	106	বদ্রহা	8	176	7 <u>4</u> 7	5
37		21	107	त्यायाया	8	177	শ্ব	5
38	了 (石)	19	108	ৰ্শ্বাৰা	8	178	ঘর্ষুখা	5
39	নিধ্য	19	109	র্বান্য	8	179	ঘৰ্ষীয	5
40		18	110	শ্বী	8	180	95	5
41	त्र्वीय	18	111	ares-	8	181	र्व्हण	5
42	(F)	18	112	ইন্	8	182	র্না	5
43	বট্টিম	17	113	নের্নুযাম্যা	8	183	<u>ক</u> ্টনা	5
44	বষ্ণুৰা	17	114	R	8	184	고랑지	5
45		17	115	ন্দ্র	8	185	মন্ত্ৰৰা	5
46	ঘার্ম্যা	17	116	নন্তন্	8	186	এইশ	5
47	RT RT	16	117	5	8	187	হন্য	5
48		15	118	म् त्रि	8	188	지독지	5
49	هَر	15	119	afai	8	189	र्देष	5
50	ন্দ্বন্	14	120	مهم	8	190	র্ন্য	5
51	£5	14	121	ধান্য	7	191	য়৾ঀ৾ঀ	5
52	নৰ্তম্য	14	122	শ্ব	7	192	শ্রন্দ্র	5
53	ইন	14	123	ৰ্তম	7	193	ইন্থি	5
54	এইন	14	124	নেথান্য	7	194	নধ্বন্	5
55	বল্ল	14	125	নকাবা	7	195	র্ষন	5

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56	শৰিশ	14	126	5	7	196	নের্রুয	5
57	শ্বন্	14	127		7	197	নদ্রদ্র	5
58	ମ୍ବହ୍ୟ	13	128	NA N	7	198	12	5
59	هحرا	13	129	التاسيع	7	199	สา	5
60	ন্ফার্দি	13	130	শইিবা	7	200	त् <u>व</u> ्	5
61	শ্রীর্মা	13	131		7	201	and K	5
62	র্মান্যা	13	132	ধ্য	7	202	المع	5
63	ন্ট্রা	13	133	57	7	203	নেইইমন্য	5
64	ন্দ্রিৰা	13	134	त्रयेम्	7	204		5
65	নম্নন্	13	135	K Varaj	7	205	শ্বিশ্বশ্ব	5
66	শ্বশ	13	136	مَنْعَم	7	206	যার্থিন্যা	5
67	র্ন্তব্যম্থ	13	137	নিশা	7	207		5
68	ন্দ্র্যম্য	12	138	নন্তম	6	208	5	5
69	REAL	12	139	529991	6	209	মার্মিন্যা	5
70	ৰ্ননা	12	140	aig	6	210	শ্বিদ্যম	5