


"Is San Diu a Cantonese variety, or is it something else?"

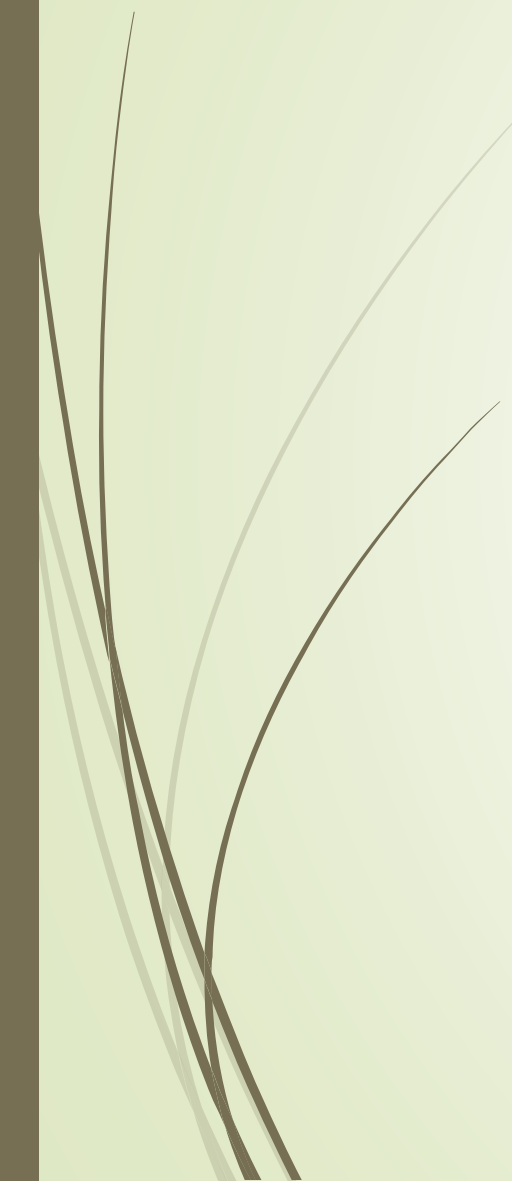
*A Historical Phonological analysis of the Sinitic Words in Sán Dìu*



Matthew Sung  
University of Edinburgh  
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# Plan of the talk

- Introduction of San Diu
  - Phonology of San Diu
  - Shared Innovations
  - Using Shared Innovations of Chinese dialects to classify San Diu
  - Results
  - Discussion
- 



# What is San Diu?

- ▶ San Diu is a language spoken by the San Diu ethnic group, which is one of the 54 ethnic groups in Vietnam
- ▶ It is spoken mainly in the mountain areas in Northern Vietnam, in Quang Ninh, Bac Giang, Phu Tho, Thai Ngyuen and Tuyeng Quang provinces
- ▶ No proper classification has been done for San Diu. There are some claims that San Diu is some kind of a Chinese variety:
  - ▶ “An archaic form of Cantonese”, suspected to be related to Pinghua varieties spoken in Modene Guangxi (Edmondson and Gregerson 2007: 744)
  - ▶ By comparing the vocabulary with Guangzhou Yue, Meixian Hakka and Teochew Min, it is found that San Diu is closely related to Hakka (Nguyen (2013))

# Some claims of San Diu from the internet

## San Diu people

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*Find sources:* "San Diu people" – news · newspapers · books · scholar · JSTOR (help) · [template message](#)

The **Sán Diu** (also known as **San Deo**, **Trai**, **Trai Dat** and **Man Quan Coc**; **Chinese**: 山由族; **pinyin**: *Shān yóu zú*; **Jyutping**: *saan1 jau4 zuk6*; **Cantonese Yale**: *Sanyau Juk*; **Chữ nôm**: 𪗇山由; **Vietnamese alphabet**: Người Sán Diù) is a **Yao ethnic group** in northern **Vietnam** who speak **Yue Chinese (Cantonese)**, a Chinese language. Although the Vietnamese government classifies San Diu as an independent group, San Diu people are originally a part of Chinese people in Vietnam. They are believed to have migrated from **Guangdong**, China around 1600.

The group's estimated population as of 2000 was 117,500; a 2009 estimate put the number at 146,821.<sup>[1]</sup> They speak a variant of Cantonese, and it is suggested that some still speak **Lu Mien**.<sup>[citation needed]</sup> The major religions are **Mahayana Buddhism** and **Taoism**, with elements of **animism** and **veneration of the dead**. About 400 are adherents of the **Catholic Church**; a few are **evangelical Protestants**. This ethnic group is mainly concentrated in **Quảng Ninh Province**.

54 ETHNIC GROUPS - LIST OF ETHNIC GROUPS - SAN DIU

### SAN DIU ETHNIC GROUP



Proper name: San Diu  
Other name: Trai, Trai Dat, Man Quan coc, Man vay xe...  
Population: 146.821 people (General Statistic Office in 2009)  
Language and writing: They speak a Guangdong language (Han-Tang language family). San Diu people do not have writing; but some people know Chinese writing.  
Early history: San Diu people settled to Vietnam 300 years ago.  
Place of residence: They live in the midland such as Quang Ninh, Bac Giang, Phu Tho, Thai Nguyen and Tuyen Quang.  
Economic characteristics: San Diu people make wet rice; but they mainly cultivate in dry fields. Besides there are many types of tree in some regions such as rice, corn, potato, manioc and etc.  
Habits and customs:  
Eating: They mostly eat ordinary rice with potato and manioc. After meals, they always drink thin rice gruel as Nung people.  
Housing: They live in the house with cottage roof. The houses are gathered into small village and covered by bamboo trees.  
Means of transportation: They use rattan, especially buffalo cart suitable

### Sán Diù people

山由族

Người Sán Diù (𪗇山由)

#### Total population

146,821<sup>[1]</sup>

#### Regions with significant populations

Northern Vietnam

#### Languages

Yue Chinese, Vietnamese, Pinghua

# Consonant inventory of San Diu

	Labial	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive	p b	t d	c	k	
Aspirated Plosive		t <sup>h</sup>			
Fricative	f v	s z		x ɣ	h
Affricate		ts dz			
Nasal	m	n	ɲ	ŋ	
Lateral		l			

# Vowel inventory of San Diu

	Front		Central		Back
	Unrounded	Rounded	Short	Long	Rounded
Close	i	y		ɯ	u
Close mid	e		ɿ	ʏ	o
Open mid	ɛ				ɔ
Open			ɑ̃	ɑ	

# Syllable structure of San Diu

➤ (C) (M) V (V/ C) + T

➤ C = Consonant

➤ M= Medial

➤ V = Vowels

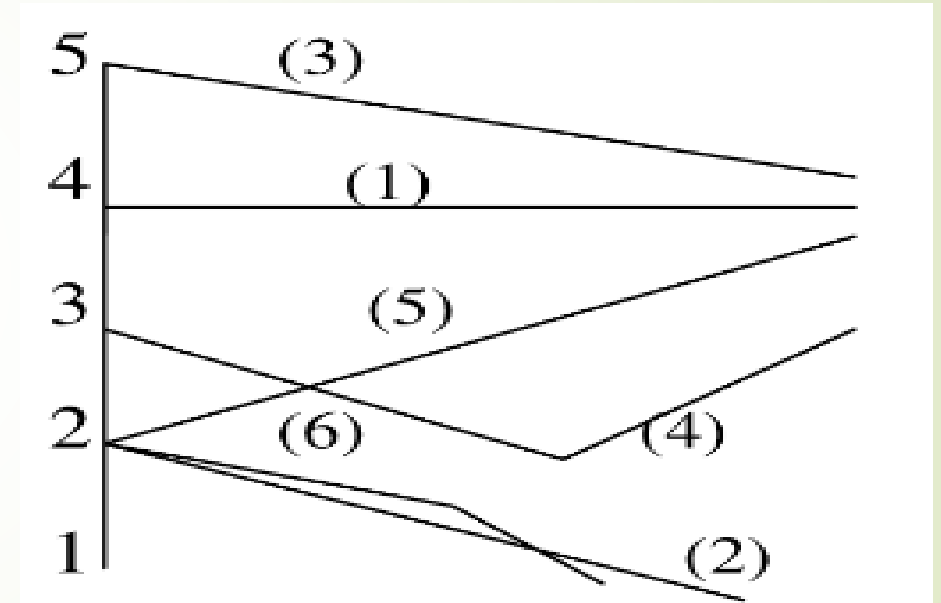
➤ T = Tone

➤ For the consonants, only /p, t, c, k/ and /m, n, ɲ, ŋ/ are allowed in both the initial and the coda position of a syllable. Otherwise, all the consonants will only be allowed in the onset.



# Tones in San Diu

- There are 6 tones in total in San Diu



- There are also Sandhi processes in San Diu





# Shared Innovations



- ▶ Shared innovation is a well-accepted criterion for language subgrouping (Campbell 2013: 175).
- ▶ Shared innovations can indicate a group of varieties which underwent the same kind of change
- ▶ Shared retentions cannot do that: any language can retain features from the proto-language. Relying on shared retentions may indicate distant linguistic relationship, but it cannot help us to further subgroup varieties



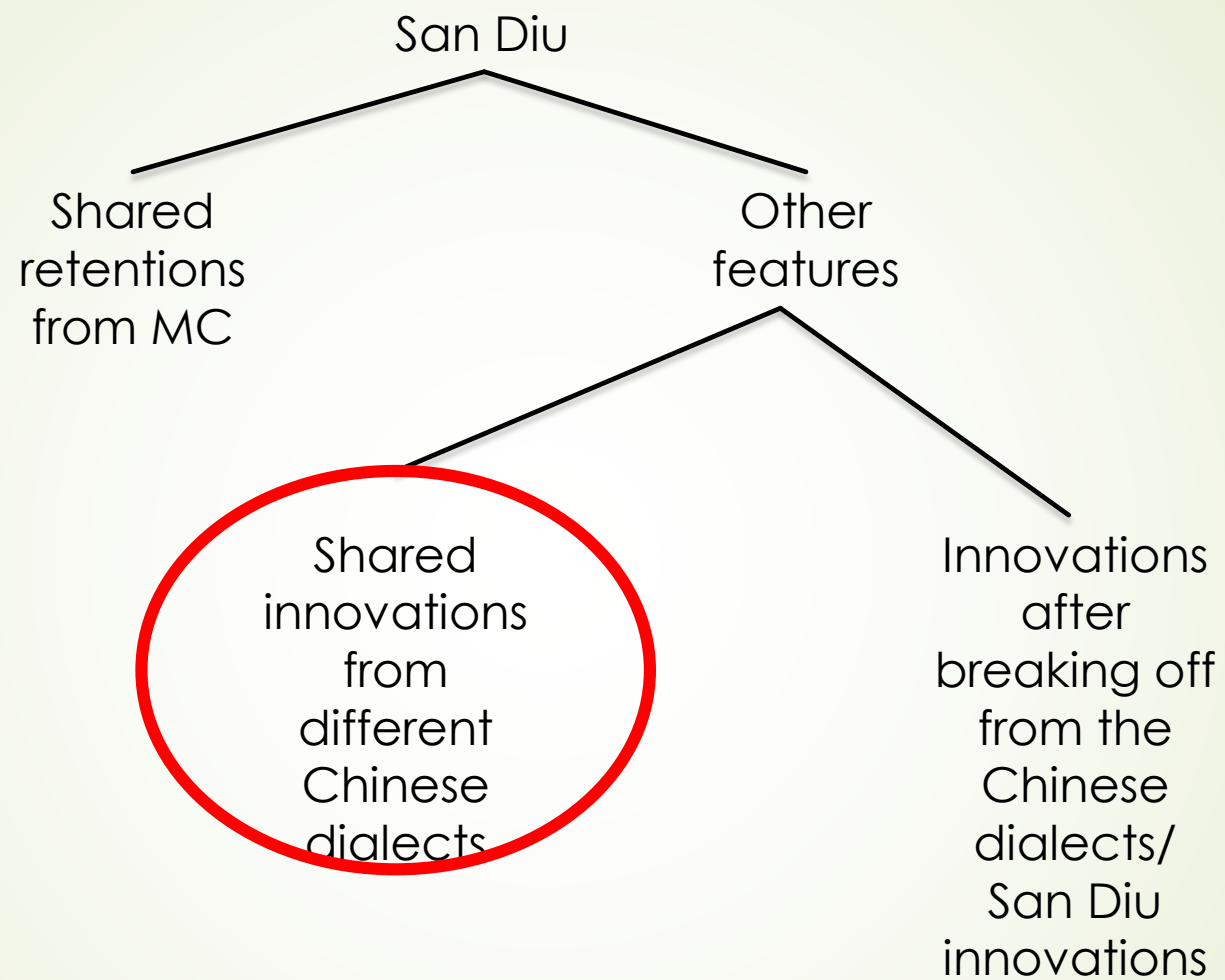
# An example

- ▶ Old English: thuma
- ▶ OHG: thumo
- ▶ Latin: tumere
- ▶ Lithuanian: tumeti
- ▶ Ancient Greek: tumbos
- ▶ Avestan: tuma
- ▶ Sanskrit: tumra



# Using Shared Innovations to Classify San Diu

- ▶ Method:
  - ▶ In Traditional dialectology, dialects are often compared to Middle Chinese as the reference points. They look at retentions and innovations that are found in the dialect in order to classify them.
- ▶ In this presentation, I will only focus on the Shared Innovations.
- ▶ Which dialect to consider?
  - ▶ Varieties that are geographically relatively close to Northern Vietnam
  - ▶ Varieties that have been mentioned in the previous literature
- ▶ Therefore, that will be Yue, Hakka, Pinghua and Hainan Min







# Shared Innovations found in different Chinese dialects

Dialect group:	Features:
-	a) MC voiced stop merger patterns
Yue	b) Presence of an /a : e/ distinction
Yue	c) the loss of *-i- medial
Yue	d) Having a lateral fricative for MC *s-
Hakka	e) Having [v-] (from MC *ŋ-, *ʔu-, *Ø-)
Hainan Min	f) Presence of [ʔb] and [ʔd]
Hainan Min	g) MC coronal affricates and sibilants realized as [t-]
Hainan Min	h) Absence of aspirated stops





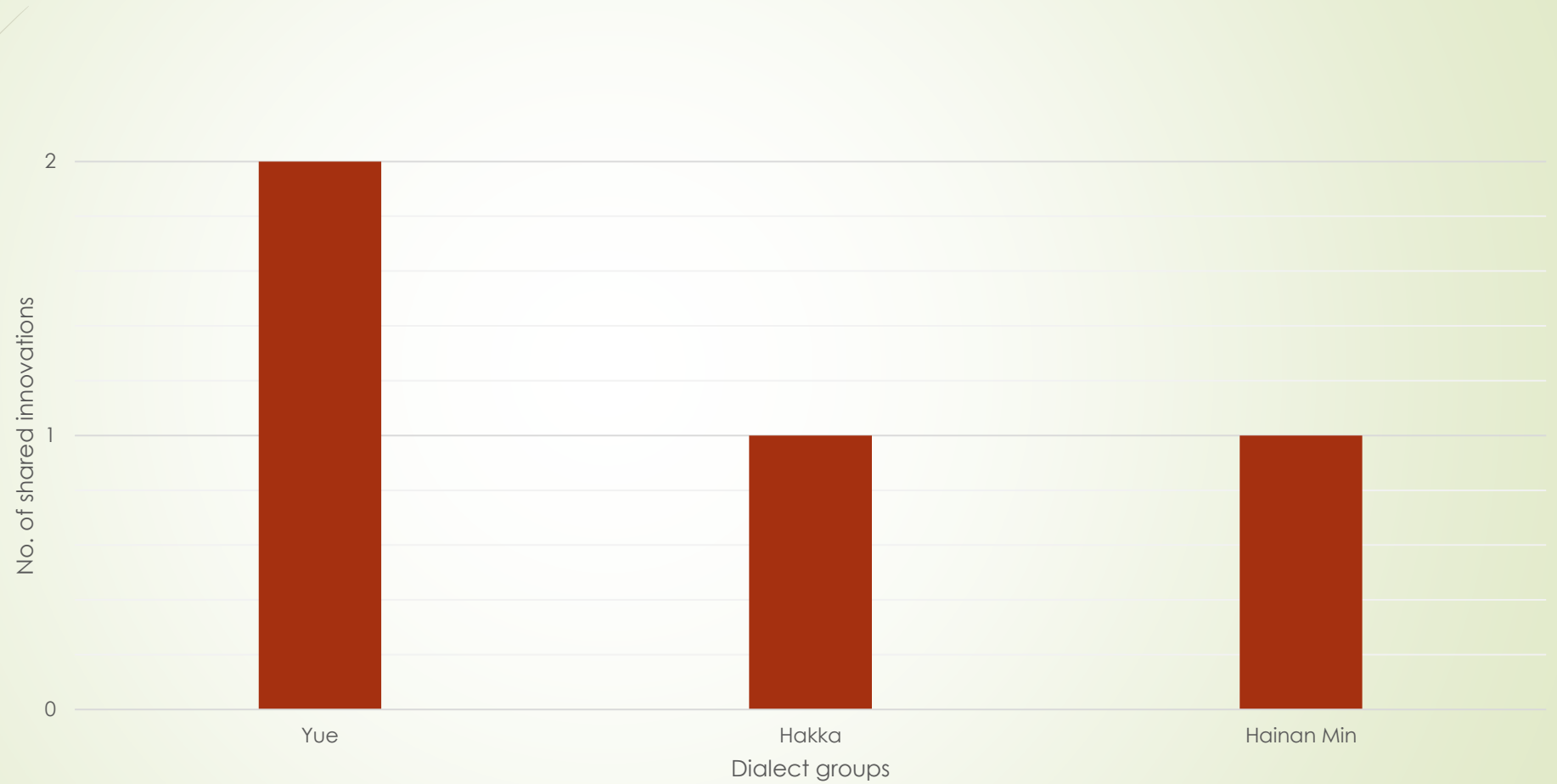
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Hainan Min	g) [t-] as the reflex of MC coronal affricates and sibilants
Hainan Min	h) Absence of aspirated stops

# Results

Dialect group:	Shared innovations:	San Diu features:
-	a) MC voiced stop merger patterns	Same as Hakka, Gan, Wu-Hua Yue or Some Qin-lian Yue dialects
Yue	b) Presence of an /a : e/ distinction	✓
Yue	c) the loss of *-i- medial	✗
Yue	d) Having a lateral fricative for MC *s-	✗
Hakka	e) Having [v-] (reflexes of MC *m-, *ʔu-, *Ø-)	✗
Hainan Min	f) Presence of [ʔb] and [ʔd]	✗
Hainan Min	g) [t-] as the reflex of MC coronal affricates and sibilants	✗
Hainan Min	h) Absence of aspirated stops	✓

# Summary of the results





# Discussion

- ▶ While the stop merger patterns suggests possibilities of San Diu being a Yue, Hakka or a Gan, the presence of an /a : e/ distinction suggests a stronger possibility that San Diu has a Yue origin
- ▶ **BUT**: It also possesses a Hainan Min features
- ▶ Explanation: It is likely to be an areal features
  - ▶ It is also found in Red Tai (Ferlus), which is spoken in the Hoa Binh province (where SD is also spoken)
  - ▶ Proto-Tai \*ph, \*phr > f
  - ▶ Therefore, we can argue that this feature is possibly not an innovation that is shared with Hainan Min





# Discussion

- ▶ The table from the previous slide is not showing the full picture!!
- ▶ The correspondences of San Diu and Middle Chinese are much more complicated than just a tick or cross in a table.
- ▶ There is a huge unexplained variation in the reflexes of MC in this paper

# Obstruent stops of modern San Diu in MC categories based on the places of articulation


Middle Chinese Categories	[-voi, -sg]	[-voi, +sg]	[+voi, -sg]
Labial	b (14/16) h (2/15)	f (1/1)	f (8/10) v (1/10) h (1/10)
Alveolar	t (16/17) d (1/17)	t <sup>h</sup> (10/11) t (1/11)	t <sup>h</sup> (25/ 28) t (2/28) d (1/28)
All 4 series of affricates	ts/c (42/46) s (1/46) z (1/46) dz (1/46) t (1/46)	s (11/12) ts (1/12)	s (20/27) c (2/27) dz (2/27) ts (1/27) z (1/27) t (1/27)
Velar	k (48/52) h (4/52)	h (13/18) x (3/18) v(2/18)	x (7/8) k (1/8)

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- 
- It is unclear why there is such a variation in the reflexes
  - A possible explanation for this is language contact in the formation of SD and at least 2 lexical strata were established.
  - But if that is true, then we have more questions to ask. Which varieties are these strata from? When were they formed? Was there creolisation involved? Etc.
  - This suggests the origin of San Diu is much more complicated than what people have previously thought.





## Discussion (cont.)

- ▶ Ideally, we want as many innovations to work with as we can
  - ▶ More work has to be done with the shared innovations for each Chinese dialect
  - ▶ More data should be collected on San Diu
  - ▶ We also should look at other parts of grammar (we know nothing about the syntax, for example)
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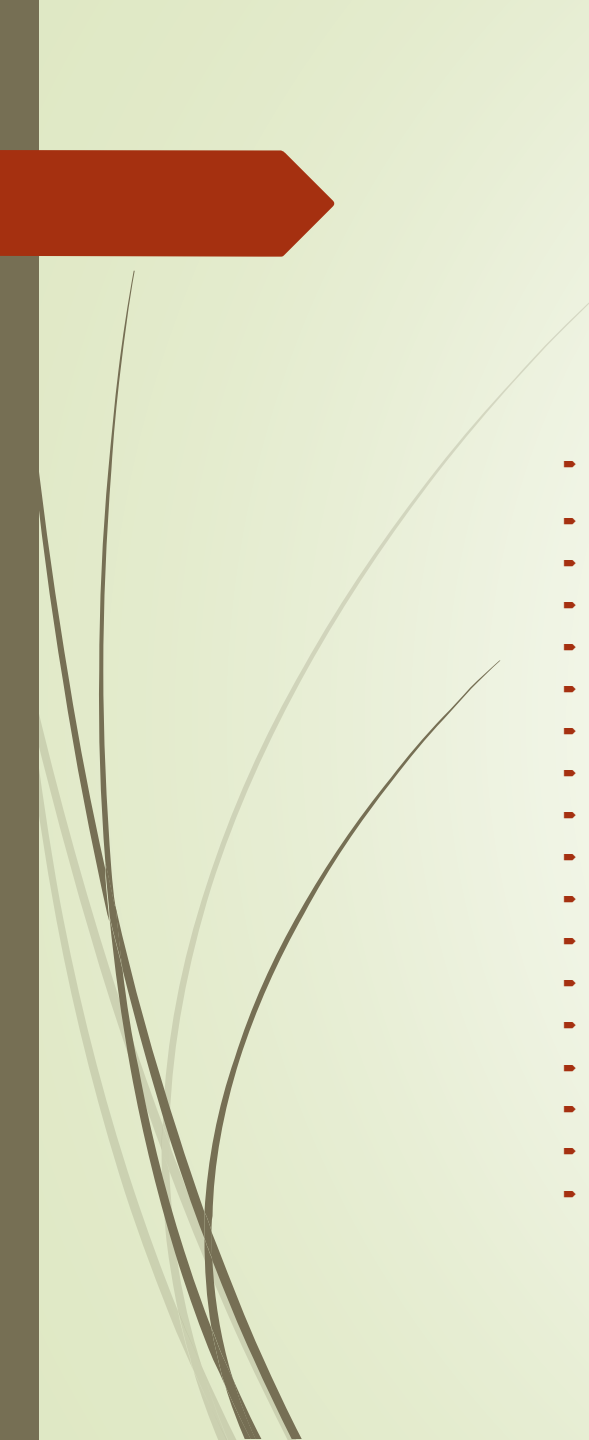
# Conclusion



- The shared innovations found in San Diu resemble Yue
- It is not as simple as that though
- There might be more than 1 lexical stratum
- Probably complex language contact in the past
- Further research needed

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Questions?





Thank you!