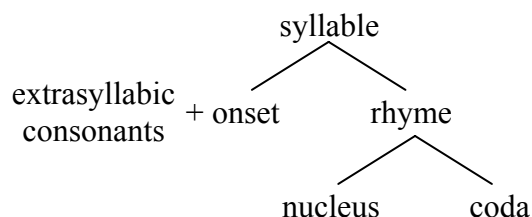# ༣ Vowels and Suffixes
ཡི་གེའི་སྒྲར་བ་ལས་དབྱངས་དང་རྗེས་འཇུག་གི་སྐོར།

❖ **3.1 The Rhyme**

In Lesson 2 we introduced and analyzed all the Amdo Tibetan consonants that can appear in the initial position of a syllable. The structure of a syllable is repeated below:

```
                    syllable
                   /        \
extrasyllabic  + onset      rhyme
consonants                 /     \
                      nucleus    coda
```

In this lesson, we will analyze the other branch of an Amdo syllable, the constituent called rhyme. The rhyme consists of two elements: In the center of a syllable is the nucleus, a single vowel. At the right-end, following the vowel, is the coda, a single consonant. As we mentioned earlier, Amdo Tibetan has a four-vowel system after the merging of the two high vowels [i] and [u] to [ə]. This is the case only when the coda position is empty. When the coda is filled with a consonant, it may change the pronunciation of the vowel, creating three new vowels in the system. They are [i, u, ɨ]. (Note that [i] and [u] are reintroduced into the system.) Taking these changes into consideration, Amdo Tibetan actually has a vowel system that can be represented by the following: (Some minor phonetic variations are disregarded. The seven vowels are of a distinctive/contrastive nature to native speakers.)

```
        i        ɨ        u
           e     ə     o
                 a
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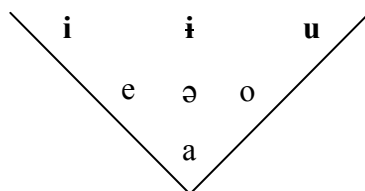
In addition to the four simple vowels [a, e, ə, o], three high vowels appear in the diagram. The [i] and [u] are close to the English vowels in *feed* and *food*. Recall that the mid vowels འགྱང་

འབྲིང་བུ [e] and ན་རོ [o] can be pronounced at a range from [e] to [i] and from [o] to [u], respectively. It is important to know that they (འབྲིང་བུ and ན་རོ) are underlyingly [e] and [o] sounds in the native speaker's mind (i.e., the mental representation of these sounds conforms to the orthography and not to the actual pronunciation.) Amdo speakers consciously distinguish the underlying mid vowels [e] and [o] from the reintroduced high vowels [i] and [u].

The central high vowel, represented here by a barred i [ɨ], is the same vowel as the Mandarin Chinese sound spelled in Pinyin Romanization as *i* that follows a sibilant such as in *si* 'four', *zi* 'word', etc. The vowel [ɨ] is created when the coda of a syllable contains certain consonant, namely, the velar ག. For example: ལུག [lɨx] *sheep*.

Sometimes an open syllable, i.e. a syllable without a filled coda, takes another vowel (a genitive marker, འི, for example) into the syllable. Since Amdo Tibetan does not normally tolerate diphthongs, the result may be one of those three high vowels. For example: སུ [sə] *who*, སུའི [sɨ] *whose*; ཁྱོ [cho] *you*, ཁྱོའི [chu] *your*.

The following sections are devoted to analyzing the constituent "rhyme" in Amdo Tibetan by looking at the suffixes in the coda and how it affects the vowel.

❖ 3.2 Suffixes རྗེས་འཇུག

A consonant in the coda position is called a suffix (རྗེས་འཇུག) in traditional Tibetan orthographic terms. It is written to the right of the root letter. Only ten letters can serve as a suffix. They are ག་ང་ད་ན་བ་མ་འ་ར་ལ and ས. We will discuss the pronunciation of the rhyme by dividing these suffixes into several groups.

3.2.1 ག and ང

A velar consonant, ག is "high" in nature. It tends to raise the vowel that precedes it to a higher position, causing the changes described below.

In the coda position, the suffix ག itself is weakened to a velar fricative [ɣ] or even a voiceless [x]. The rhyme ཨག [ax] is pronounced as [əx], with [a] being raised to become [ə]; similarly,

the schwa [ə] in ཨིག [əx] and ཨུག [əx] are also raised to become [ɨ]. More examples: ཟིག [zɨx] *some, a certain*, ནག [nəx] *black*, ཡག [jəx] *pretty*. ཨེ [e] is also changed to [ə] before the suffix ག. For example: ཐེག, ཚེག, ཡེག [tʰəx, tsʰəx, yəx]. Note that, even though this change is highly noticeable to foreign ears, native speakers tend to think that they are pronouncing the ཨ and ཨི, ཨུ and ཨེ as the usual [a], [ə], and [e]. A brief summary:

ཨག	ཨེག	ཨིག	ཨུག	ཨོག
[əx]		[ɨx]		[ox]

The velar nasal ང triggers the same raising on the vowel [a]. For example: ཟ་ཁང *restaurant* is pronounced [sakʰəng]. ང causes changes on other vowels too: [e] and [i] become [a] before ང; [o] and [u] merge to [o] before ང. Below is a summary of the rhyme vowel + ང. The merging of ཨིང and ཨེང into one sound, [ang], and that of ཨུང and ཨོང into [ong] is a change conscious to native speakers. The three rhymes ཨང, ཨེང and ཨིང then may further rise from [ang] to sound like [əng].

ཨང	ཨེང	ཨིང	ཨུང	ཨོང
[əng]	[ang] ([əng])		[ong]	

Note that the optional (and subconscious) raising of [e] and [o] to [i] and [u] only happens in open syllables. With ག filling the coda, ཨོག and ཨེག must be pronounced as [ox] and [ex] and not [ux] and [ix]. For example: ཚོག *to be all right* is always pronounced [cʰox], never *[cʰux]. (Compare with བདེ་མོ, of which both syllables are open, with the pronunciation ranging from [demo] to [dimu])

3.2.2 ད, ན, and ལ

What the three suffixes ད་ན and ལ have in common is that they are all alveolar sounds. Alveolar sounds are considered "front" in nature, which explains why the low vowel [a] is "fronted" a little bit towards the sound [e]. (In fact, [a] becomes [ɛ] in front of these three

suffixes. Since there is no contrast between [e] and [ɛ], we represent the change by the existing vowel [e].) For example, སྐད་ [kel] *spoken language*, ཉན་ [nyen] *listen*, and བལ་ [wel] *wool*.

Note that the ད and the ལ in the coda are both pronounced as [l], although some regions (mostly nomadic) may maintain a difference between the two by pronouncing ད as [t] and ལ as [l]. If not completely dropped, both ད and ལ are articulated very lightly, most likely to be a mere suggestion of an unreleased [l].

The three suffixes have a minimal effect on the other four vowels, the only noticeable change being the rhyme ཨོན་, which in most cases is pronounced as [wən] and not the expected *[on]. For example: མཚོ་སྔོན་ [tsʰo.ngwən] *Qinghai*, not *[tsʰo.ngon]. Here is a brief summary of the vowel changes in this alveolar group of suffixes.

(1) [a] becomes [e] before a suffix ད་ན་ or ལ

(2) [o] becomes [wə] before the suffix ན

3.2.3 བ, མ, and ར

The three suffixes བ་མ and ར are presented in a group because they do not trigger the type of vowel change caused by the previous two groups: velars ག and ང, and alveolars ད, ན, and ལ. Basically, all vowels that precede བ་མ, and ར keep their original sound quality with only one notable exception: In most cases, the rhyme ཨར [ar] can be heard as [ər], e.g ཁ་པར *telephone* [kʰapər], མར [mər] *butter*. However, this vowel change is not always predictable, e.g. དར་དམར *flag* [dar mər].

The suffix བ is pronounced as an unreleased bilabial [b] in some regions or as a voiced labio-dental [v] in others. The difference is only of a dialectal significance.

3.2.4 ས

The suffix ས is not pronounced itself, but affects the vowel that precedes it. The rhyme that contains a ས as its suffix is pronounced as [i] for the four vowels ཨི, ཨུ, ཨེ, and ཨོ. For the default vowel ཨ [a], the combination ཨས becomes [e], which in turn may rise to a higher position and sound like [i]. The reason that the authors do not believe that all five underlying

vowels merge to one [i] when taking ས as suffix is that although the four rhymes ཨིས, ཨུས, ཨེས, and ཨོས are clearly pronounced as [i], ཨལས has the range from [e] to [i], a subconscious vowel raising phenomenon linked only to the vowel [e].

3.2.5 འ

The suffix འ, strictly speaking, is not a suffix at all.   It is required by Tibetan orthography as a spelling convention for readers to identify the root letter of the syllable. The raison d'être of འ rests in a situation when two letters, say A and B, are horizontally adjacent to each other. Theoretically, if A is a potential prefix for B and at the same time B is a potential suffix for A, then the combination AB is ambiguous. One might take A as the prefix and B the root letter, or A as the root letter and B the suffix. The addition of འ to the string AB effectively removes this ambiguity.   In a string such as A-B-འ, the only possibility is that B is the root letter.   For example, མད together presents the ambiguity problem just discussed.   It would be equally possible to read it either as [ᵐda], taking མ as prefix or as [mel] taking ད as suffix. To deal with this problem, Tibetan orthographic rules stipulate that:

(1) A syllable of the shape AB, without any marking by the vowel diacritics, the first letter (i.e. A) is the root letter.

(2) In case when a root letter B is prefixed by A and it does not have a suffix, འ must be added.

Given the above orthographic rules, the syllable མད becomes unambiguous. It must be read as [mel]. If ད were to serve as the root letter, the syllable would need to be spelled as མདའ [da] *arrow*. Note that there is no phonetic value of the suffix འ, which is different from the prefix འ, a true nasal consonant (even though extrasyllabic).

This analysis explains the fact that when a vowel diacritic is placed on top (or beneath) the root letter B in a horizontal AB sequence, the suffix འ is never there. This is because the vowel diacritic already identifies the root letter, making it redundant to add འ. For example: དར has the shape of AB, ད is a potential prefix and ར is a potential suffix, but according to the rules of

orthography, the syllable is unambiguously read as [dar], with the first letter interpreted as the root letter. ད�孴, on the other hand, treats the second letter as the root letter simply because it has the vowel diacritic འགྲེང་བུ above it. It reads as [hwe] and no suffix འ is needed (nor, in fact, allowed.)

Sometimes a single vowel morpheme is attached to an open syllable, for example, genitive case markers such as [i] or [u]. This situation also calls for the help of འ, in which case, འ serves as a carrier for the vowel diacritic. Compare the pronunciation of མོ [mo] *she*, ཆོ [cho] *you*, and མོའུ [mu] *her*, ཆུའུ [chu] *your*.

3.2.6 Post-suffixes ས and ད

In modern written Tibetan, there is only one post-suffix ས. Historically, there used to be two post-suffixes: ས and ད. The two were really two variants of the same morpheme attached to verbs. ད appeared after alveolar suffixes such as ནརལ, while ས appeared elsewhere. A spelling reform took place in the early ninth century, at which time the suffix ད had probably been dropped from speech. So it was dropped from the written form as well. ས, on the other hand, was kept, becoming the sole member in the category of post-suffix.

The post-suffix ས has no effect on the pronunciation of the vowel, unlike when ས serves as a regular suffix. This is expected, however, because, being a post-suffix, ས is not even adjacent to the vowel. Whatever suffix that comes before it would have done the job on the vowel already.

3.2.7 Summary

3.2.7.1 Pronunciation of all rhymes: vowel changes are indicated with shading. (The suffixes are arranged according to their effect on the vowel, different from the traditional alphabetical order.)

coda / vowel	ག	ང	ད	ན	ལ	བ	མ	ར	ས	འ
ཨ [a]	[əx]	[əng]	[el]	[en]	[el]	[ap]	[am]	[ər]	[e]	[a]
ཨེ [e]	[əx]	[əng]	[el]	[en]	[el]	[ep]	[em]	[er]	[i]	__
ཨི [ə]	[ɨx]	[əng]	[əl]	[ən]	[əl]	[əp]	[əm]	[ər]	[i]	__

| ཨུ [ə] | [ɨx] | [ong] | [əl] | [ən] | [əl] | [əp] | [əm] | [ər] | [i] | __ |
| ཨོ [o] | [ox] | [ong] | [ol] | [wən] | [ol] | [op] | [om] | [or] | [i] | __ |

3.2.7.2 Orthography: distribution of the alphabet

Literate Tibetan speakers consciously know which letters of the alphabet go into which positions in syllabic writing. They learn to memorize the distribution of letters in first grade. The following chart shows this distribution.

letter	suffix	prefix	superjoined	subjoined	post-suffix
ག ད བ མ འ	✓	✓	-	-	-
ན ང	✓	-	-	-	-
ར ལ	✓	-	✓	✓	-
ས	✓	-	✓	-	✓
ཡ ྭ	-	-	-	✓	-

Alternatively, the information can be translated into the diagrams below, which should be able to help the learner visualize this bit of linguistic knowledge about the orthography. The letters listed in each number have the distribution in the shaded positions. Note that all thirty letters can appear in the position of the root letter.

(1) ག ད བ མ འ

(2) ན ང

(3) ར ལ

(4) ས

(5) ཡ ྭ
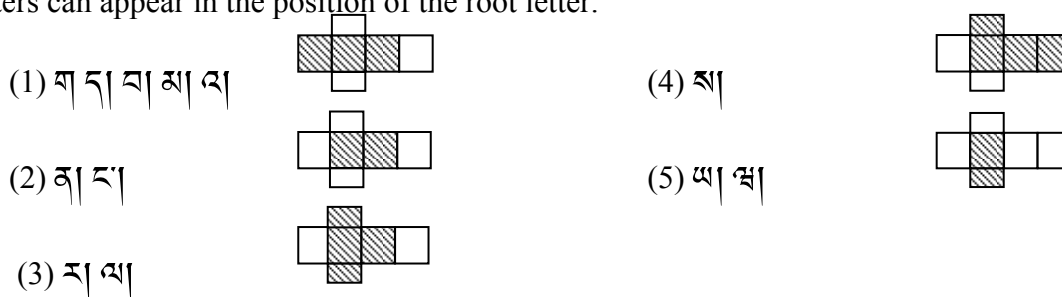
❖ 3.3 Oral Spelling (III): Syllables with Suffix

In the oral spelling section of Lesson 2, we learned the word བཏགས [təx], which signifies a vertical "hanging" relation of two letters. In this lesson, we now learn the other crucial word in oral spelling, བཞག *put* [zhəx], which indicates the attachment of a suffix letter. For example: ནག *black* [nəx] is spelled out as [na ka zhəx nəx]; ངས spells [nga s'a zhəx nge].

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Recall that for folded letters, one has to repeat the word བཏགས [təx] twice to indicate the vertical relation of A over B over C. It is different for the case of a root letter followed by a suffix and then the post-suffix ས. One only needs to spell the two suffixes English-fashion before using the word བཞག, for example, གངས *snow* [kəng] spells [ka <u>nga s'a</u> <u>zhəx</u> gəng].

Tibetan oral spelling, as we mentioned earlier, is "progressively-staged'. One spells from the prefix to the superjoined letter, to the root letter, to the subjoined letter, to the vowel, then on to the suffix and post suffix. This means that by the time the spell-out reaches the suffix, one may have already accumulated quite a long utterance. For the learner to do the oral spelling naturally, it helps to know how an Amdo speaker breaks down the long string of oral spelling into several prosodic units. The spelling of the following syllables or words are marked with "|" to indicate a pause a native speaker employs to create a natural rhythm. Note that the nasal quality of the prefix འ is overtly pronounced as [an] in oral spell-out; མ, likewise, is spelled as [man] in a prefix position.

(1) བཀར spells [wa ka ra zhəx kar]

(2) འགོན spells [an ga naro go | na zhəx gwən] (not *[a ga…])

(3) མངགས spells [man nga ka s'a zhəx ngəx] (not *[ma nga…])

(4) འཕོངས spells [an pʰa naro pʰo | nga s'a zhəx pʰong]

(5) འབར་ཤན spells [an ba ra zhəx bar | sha kəkə shə | na zhəx shən | bar shən]

Here are some cases with superjoined and subjoined letters:

(6) གྲུང [ka ra təx tra | shamcə trə | nga zhəx trong]

(7) བསླབས [wa s'a la təx lʰa | drəng.e lʰe | wa s'a zhəx lʰep]

(8) སྐྱགས [s'a ga təx ga | ya təx ja | naro jo | ka s'a zhəx jox]

(9) སྐྱང [s'a wa təx ba | ya təx ja | nga zhəx jang]

The last one, སྐྱང, a bilabial with ཡ་བཏགས presents one of the most challenging cases in oral spelling for foreign learners. We shall have a few more for practice:

(10) ཕྱགས [pʰa ya təx sha | naro sho | ka s'a zhəx shox]

(11) དབྱབས [da wa ya təx ya | kəkə yə | wa s'a zhəx yəx]

(12) དཔྱངས [da pa ya təx sha | nga s'a zhəx shəng]

(13) འཕྱགས [an pʰa ya təx cʰa | shamcə cʰə | ka sʰa zhəx cʰɨx]

To conclude the oral spelling exercise, shall we try the "full-house" syllable བསྒྲིགས [drɨx] shown in Lesson 2? It spells:

 (14) [wa s'a ga təx ga | ra dəx dra | kəkə drə | ga s'a zhəx drɨx] or བ་ས་ག་བཏགས་བསྒྲ་ར་བཏགས་ བསྒྲ་གི་གུ་བསྒྲི་ག་ས་བཞག་བསྒྲིགས།

❖ 3.4 Finding the Root

Finding the root letter is very simple. The first and foremost principle is to spot a letter X that carries a vowel diacritic or is joined (i.e. superjoined or subjoined) by another letter. If such a letter exists in the syllable, it is the root letter. The root letter (plus the subjoined letter if any) is the onset of the syllable.

Tibetan makes no diacritic marking for the vowel [a]. This design in writing, although following the principle of economy, in fact creates a little complication for learners to find the root letter when the vowel is [a]. Again, if the root letter is superjoined or subjoined by another letter, the root letter becomes easy to spot, as we just mentioned. However, if there is no sub- or superjoiners to help out, how does one identify the root letter from a completely linear sequence? Here is a simple set of rules to remember:

(1) If the sequence is AB, A is the root letter.

(2) If the sequence is ABCD, B is the root letter.

(3) If the sequence is ABC, B is the root letter, unless C is the post-suffix ས and B is one of the four letters: ག་ང་བ and མ, in which case, A is the root letter.

We have discussed rule (1) in section 3.2.5 about the function of འ as a suffix. Rule (2) simply derives from the fact that there is only one element ས that can follow a suffix, so ABCD must have the shape: prefix-root-suffix-ས. Rule (3) recognizes the two possibilities that either (i) C is a regular suffix, in which case, B is the root; or (ii) C is the post-suffix ས, indicated by the four compatible suffixes with ས, in which case A is the root. Take གཟའ་པ་སངས *Friday,* for

example. The syllable སངས is of the form ABC. There are in fact two ways to tell that it is pronounced [səng] and not [nge] with the first ས (and not ང) being the root letter. First, the rightmost ས follows one of the four suffixes, ག་ང་བ and མ, described in Rule (3), so it is the post suffix. Second, the first ས is not one of the possible prefixes, so it has to be the root. Either way, the orthography leaves no ambiguity.

Do we need to say anything about spotting the root letter in a simple syllable like ཀ and ཁ?

❖ 3.5 Foreign Loan Words and Inverted Letters

Traveling in any part of the Tibetan-speaking world, one will undoubtedly see the six-syllable prayer ༀ་མ་ཎི་པདྨེ་ཧཱུྃ། *om mani pad me hom* carved, painted, or written everywhere. In this ubiquitous mantra are some unusual elements that we have not covered so far. These irregular elements in writing are of little practical value in our studies of the modern spoken language, as they are intended as mechanisms to transcribe ancient Sanskrit religious text into Tibetan. We will discuss them very briefly here.

Six "new" letters, ཊ་ཋ་ཌ་ཎ་ཥ and ཀྵ, are created by inverting the corresponding regular letters. These are intended to mark the so-called cerebral consonants (mostly retroflexive alveolars) in Sanskrit. Some Sanskrit long vowels are represented in literary Tibetan by using a small འ beneath a root letter like ཀཱ to denote the increased length of the vowel. For [ee] and [oo], simply double the vowel diacritics to ཀཻ and ཀཽ. The syllable final [m] in Sanskrit is represented by a small circle on top of the root letter. This is the circle we see in the first syllable of the six-syllable mantra: ༀ.

Sanskrit has aspirated voiced consonants (mostly stops) such as *gh, dh, bh, jh, drh*, etc. These are conveniently represented in Tibetan by using ྷ as the subjoined letter, creating combined letters such as གྷ, དྷ, བྷ, ཛྷ, ཌྷ, etc. These words of Sanskrit origin do not really concern the learner unless he or she plans to go on and study religious texts in Tibetan Buddhism. However, it might be worthwhile to learn to discern these irregular written forms from the regular ones.

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Non-religious modern foreign loan words are represented by the available 30 letters. As we have mentioned, the consonant [f] does not exist in Tibetan. Therefore, a new combination ཧྥ has been created to stand for [f]. Since speakers of Amdo Tibetan have already changed their pronunciation of ཨི [i] and ཨུ [u] to schwa [ə], a new writing convention for the long vowels [i] and [u] has become necessary. As usual, the suffix འ serves as a vowel carrier, for example: ཐོའ མུའ *Tom* [tomu] and སུའ Sue [su]. The འ suffix for *Tom* needs some explanation. Recall that the mid vowels [e] and [o] are underlyingly as [e] and [o] even though in speech they may be pronounced (raised) as [i] and [u]. The underlying form represents what the speaker *thinks* he is pronouncing. To guarantee that the sound [o] is not altered to [u], one uses the འ to denote the sound [o] and prevent any alteration. The same applies to སུའ [su]. In our lessons, there are a number of instances where this kind of writing convention is used.

❖ **3.6 Punctuation**

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Tibetan has its own set of punctuation marks. There is no marking of word boundaries in Tibetan writing. The smallest unit for punctuation is the syllable. To separate syllables (usually one syllable corresponds to one morpheme, the smallest meaningful unit in the language), a dot called ཚེག is marked by the right shoulder of the last letter of the syllable. Neither is there a strict definition of a sentence. Clausal units that resemble a complete sentence or a subordinate clause can be marked by a single vertical line called ཚེག་ཤད. There is no distinction among declarative, interrogative, or exclamatory sentences. For all three types, for which we in English would employ a period, a question mark, and an interjection mark, the same ཚེག་ཤད is used. Examples:

(1) ཁྱོ་བདེ་མོ་ཡིན་ན། How are you?

(2) ང་སློབ་མ་ཡིན། I am a student.

(3) ཨ་གི་རེ་ཁོ་རེ། What a shame!

When one uses ཚེག་ཤད at the end of a clause, one normally does not need to use the ཚེག to finish marking the last syllable. There are two exceptions. First, when the last letter of the last syllable is ང, one has to dot the ང before writing the vertical ཚེག་ཤད. This is to prevent ང from sitting too close to the vertical line and being misread as བ. Second, when the last letter of the sentence is ག or ཤ, without a vocalic diacritic, then the long vertical stroke of the letter itself is considered to represent the ཚེག་ཤད. There is no need for an additional dot or vertical line.

(4) ཟས་བཏུང་ང་། I already ate. (ཚེག and then ཚེག་ཤད After the final ང)

(5) གནངས་ཀ་མཇུག See you tomorrow. (no vertical mark ཚེག་ཤད)

A special editorial rule stipulates that, when ག or ཤ serves as the root letter without a suffix and is marked by a vocalic diacritic, the vertical ཚེག་ཤད is still used. This rule applies in this textbook:

(6) ཁྱོས་ཆེ་ཟིག་ཡེ་གོ། What are you doing?

To end a paragraph, two vertical lines ༎ (ཉིས་ཤད) can be used instead of ཚེག་ཤད. At the end of a larger section of an essay, one may double up the ཉིས་ཤད by using four vertical lines ༎༎ (བཞི་ཤད།) to end the entire section of the text. The beginning of a text is marked with ༄ (དབུ

དཱ); ༈ (སྐུལ་ཤད།) starts chapters or sections; and ༄ (རིན་ཆེན་སྤུངས་ཤད།) starts a new line that contains only one syllable so that it does not look dangling.

Although there are quite a few calligraphic styles in Tibetan writing, there are no equivalents to the capital and lower case letters of the western alphabet. As a result, there is no way to distinguish common nouns from proper names. To make reading Tibetan text even more difficult for foreign learners, as we mentioned earlier, there are no word boundaries to help the reader decide where a word begins and where it ends, for the punctuation mark ཚེག is only used to separate syllables. In this regard, diligence seems to be the only solution.

❖ 3.7 Exercises

3.7.1 Pronunciation Drill (I): Repeat each word after the recording. Pay attention to the rhyme.

(1) ཡིན།   (11) འཛར་ཕན།   (21) བདུན་ཅུ།   (31) བསོད་ནམས།

(2) ཁྱིང་།   (12) རྒྱ་གར།   (22) རེབ་གོང་།   (32) ཚེ་རིང་རྒྱལ།

(3) མིན།   (13) འཛར་མན།   (23) ཡུལ་སྐོར།   (33) འདུ་པར་ལེན།

(4) ལ་དོན།   (14) ཞིང་པ།   (24) རིན་ཆེན།   (34) ཚགས་པར།

(5) ཕུན་ཚོགས།   (15) རྒྱ་ནག   (25) དུས་དེབ།   (35) ལས་ཁུངས།

(6) དོན་གྲུབ།   (16) བོད་ཡིག   (26) ཁྲིས་རིག   (36) དཀར་ཡོལ།

(7) སློབ་མ།   (17) སློབ་དེབ།   (27) དུས་ཚོད།   (37) རིན་གོང་།

(8) སངས་རྒྱས།   (18) རྒྱབ་ཀྱུག   (28) ཏག་ཏག   (38) ངས་བསླབ་ན།

(9) གྱུང་གོ།   (19) འདུ་པར།   (29) བོད་ཟས།   (39) སློན་མེད་ཀྱི།

(10) གྲོགས་པོ།   (20) ཆུང་ཆུང་།   (30) ཐག་རིང་།   (40) གཟའ་མིག་དམར།

3.7.2 Pronunciation Drill (II): Repeat each word after the recording. Pay attention to the rhyme and the instances when a prefix or superjoined letter is overtly pronounced.

(1) སློབ་མ།   (11) བཅུ་གཅིག   (21) སློབ་ཁྲིད།   (31) ཁྲིམ་སྟོང་ལས་བྱ།

(2) སྐལ་བཟང་།   (12) བཅོ་བརྒྱད།   (22) རྒྱ་སྐད།   (32) མཁའ་འགྲོ།

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(3) སྐྲན་པ།   (13) སྲིང་མོ།   (23) ཕྱུ་ཆང་།   (33) དུག་ཅུ་རེ་བདུན།

(4) སློབ་གྲོགས།   (14) སྐྱེས་པ།   (24) སྟེན་པ།   (34) བདུན་ཅུ་དོན་བཅུད།

(5) བློ་བཟང་།   (15) བཅུ་བདུན།   (25) འབབ་ཚོགས།   (35) ང་བསྐྱབས་མ།

(6) ཚིག་མཛོད།   (16) བརྐྱེན་འཕྲིན།   (26) མེ་འབོར།   (36) གཟའ་པ་སངས།

(7) སྐུམ་སྐྱུག   (17) འགྲོག་པ།   (27) གྲོང་བརྡལ།   (37) བླ་འདིའི་ནང་ང་།

(8) སྒྲོག་ཀྲུད།   (18) རྟོག་འཚོ།   (28) ཅེ་གི།   (38) བགྲ་ཤིས་བདེ་ལེགས།

(9) སྙེའུ་ཁྲུང་།   (19) སྒྲོག་བརྐྱན།   (29) ཀུ་ཀྲུ།   (39) གཟའ་འཁོར་སྟོན་མ།

(10) གླུ་བཟང་།   (20) བགྲ་ཤིས།   (30) རྟོ་མོ།   (40) ཨ་མེ་རི་ཁ།

3.7.3 Pronunciation Drill (III): Repeat each word after the recording. Pay attention to difficult rhymes and the irregular pronunciation of some combinations.

(1) དབང་མོ།   (11) འབྲིད་སྐུད།   (21) རོ་སྦྱོང་ཡོད།   (31) སློབ་གྲྭ་ཆེན་མོ།

(2) དབྱིན་ཇི།   (12) སྟོན་ཁ།   (22) བྱང་ཕྱོགས།   (32) དཔེ་མཛོད་ཁང་།

(3) གྲུ་དབྱངས།   (13) བཅུད་པ།   (23) ཕྱོ་ཕྱོགས།   (33) བགའ་དྲིན་ཆེ་མི་དགོ།

(4) སློབ་སྦྱོང་ཡེ།   (14) སྨུན་མོ།   (24) སི་ཁྲོན།   (34) འགྱོན་འདོད་གི།

(5) བག་དབང་།   (15) རྩུ་བང་།   (25) སྐྱང་གཏུམ།   (35) སྐྲགས་ཟམ་ཁང་།

(6) རྐུན་འཕྲུམ།   (16) སྐུར།   (26) ཕི་ཀྲལ་གི་སྨི།   (36) གཡོན་ཕྱོགས།

(7) ཉིན་རྐྱུན།   (17) སི་ལ་ཏོག   (27) ང་མང་མོ།   (37) གཡས་ཕྱོགས།

(8) ཕྱིར་ར།   (18) རང་དགོ།   (28) འུར་སྒྲགས།   (38) སྲབ་མཐུག

(9) དཀྱལ་ཁང་།   (19) སྐྱངས་བ།   (29) རྩམ་པ།   (39) མགྱོན་ཇིས་ཆེ།

(10) དཔེ་ཁང་།   (20) སྟོན་པོ།   (30) དབྱར་ལྭ།   (40) སྐྱིར་ཡིན་ན།

3.7.4 Sound Discrimination: Listen to the recording and circle the syllable you hear.

(1) a. ཆན   b. ཕུན   c. ཕྱུན

(2) a. བཞི   b. གཞུ   c. རྗེ

(3) a. མཁྱུག   b. ཚོལ   c. རྐྱུལ

(4) a. གཉིས   b. ཕྱོགས   c. ནགས

(5) a. དགོན   b. ཁྲོང   c. ཀྲོང

(6) a. ཉང   b. མྱོང   c. ནོན

(7) a. དབྱར   b. ཡགས   c. ཁྱེར

(8) a. ཆུང   b. འཕྱོང   c. འབྱུང

(9) a. བསླབ   b. རྣབས   c. རྣོ

(10) a. དབང   b. ཉང   c. ངང

3.7.5 Rhyme Discrimination: Select the syllable that has a different rhyme from that of the others.

(1) a. ཆང   b. ཆུང   c. ཆོང

(2) a. རྒྱལ   b. རྒྱད   c. རྒྱག

(3) a. ཟྲིག   b. རྲུག   c. ཟྲག

(4) a. དོས   b. དས   c. དུས

(5) a རིང   b. རང   c. རོང

Write down the phonetic symbol of the vowel of the rhyme that you select for each question.

(1) [ ]   (2) [ ]   (3) [ ]   (4) [ ]   (5) [ ]

3.7.6 Transcription: Transcribe the following syllables into Tibetan.

(1) dgon _____   (11) dbugs _____

(2) yongs _____   (12) bsil _____

(3) mchog _____   (13) 'aphyar _____

(4) dmyal _____   (14) bzhi _____

(5) 'abyung _____   (15) rnon _____

(6) khrung _____   (16) ldogs _____

(7) bzlas _____   (17) smon _____

(8) mgyogs _____   (18) sgyid _____

(9) rnyan _____   (19) brgyal _____

(10) rtsabs _____   (20) bklub _____

3.7.7 Find the Root Letter: Identify the root letter of the following syllables.

(1) སྐད	(6) རས	(11) གང	(16) ནས
(2) གཟུགས	(7) གདན	(12) དབྱངས	(17) བརྟངས
(3) དཀའ	(8) གཤག	(13) ལྷགས	(18) ནགས
(4) མགོན	(9) ཤགས	(14) མདའ	(19) ཁལ
(5) ཐར	(10) འགར	(15) ཀྱུས	(20) དབུའ

3.7.8 Oral Spelling: e.g. བསྐྱགས [wa s'a ga tǝx ga | ra tǝx dra | naro dro | ka s'a zhǝx drox]

(1) འཇའ 'rainbow' spells:

(2) ཚེམས་འཁོར 'sewing machine' spells:

(3) འབྲུག 'dragon' spells:

(4) བསིལ་གདུགས 'umbrella' spells:

(5) རྒུན་འབྲུམ 'grape' spells:

(6) ལྷགས་རྟ 'bicycle' spells:

(7) སྨན་པ 'doctor' spells:

(8) སྤྱང་ཀི 'wolf' spells:

(9) རྒྱ་ཚང 'street' spells:

(10) སློབ་གྲྭ 'school' spells: