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Verbs or Adverbs in Thao

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1. Introduction

- Many adverbial concepts in Chinese and English are often expressed by verbs in Formosan languages.
- These words include manner, scope and time words.
- The form of an adverb is usually invariable and its position in a sentence is relatively free, while the form of a verb varies and its position in the sentence is usually fixed.
- Are there any genuine adverbs in these languages?

2. Verbs or adverbs in Thao

- Adverbs of manner in English are realized as main verbs in Thao:

(1) *numawan* *sa* *ɰilitun* *maʔu* *k<m>ari*
therefore DET pygmy AF.hard dig<AF>

sa *pruq.* (31-25)
DET earth

‘Therefore, the pygmies dug the ground very hard.’

(2) *kit-na-na-haɰif-an* *θiθu* *m-armuɰ* *s<m>uqum*
KIT-RED-to-far-LF he AF-dive check<AF>

pun-tuɰa-an. (32-20)
catch-eel-LF

‘He dived to check bamboo pipes for eels very far.’

(3) *ma-θuaw* *maftay* *ma-kariskif* *ma-ła-łuyđa*
STA-very AF.all STA-work.hard AF-RED-plant

sa *numa-numa.* (34-9)

DET RED-thing

‘All people worked very hard planting all sorts of things.’

(4) *maftay* *sa* *parhaway* *mi-raw-riuq* *t<un>mađa.*
AF.all DET young MI-RAW-quiet listen<AF>

‘All the young men listened quietly.’ (34-20)

- Adverbs of scope are also expressed by verbs in Thao:

(5)

- a. *iǎáy* *ayuǎi* *masa* *ayuǎi* *a* *aǎaǎak* *m-u-ǎkiǎ*
 that man and man LIG child AF-go-all
mu-súy *pakamumu* *maqa* *a-tif-an.* (39-38)
 go-there family.name for IRR-wipe-LF

‘All men and boys had to go to the Pakamumu family to get wiped there.’

b. *numa-numa pu-~~t~~kið-in pu-sáy pakamumu*
 RED-thing CAUS-all-PF CAUS-there family.name

a danfiqan, a-tif-an i-ðáy
 DET courtyard IRR-wipe-LF LOC-there

pakamumu a t<m>a-ti-tif. (39-65)
 family.name DET Ca<AF>RED-wipe

‘All sorts of things should all be left in the courtyard of the Pakamumus in order to be wiped by the one in charge of wiping.’

c. *numa-numa pu-~~t~~kið-in pu-yutu a-maqa*
 RED-thing CAUS-all-PF CAUS-there IRR-because

day a-ma-bahi. (39-67)
 IRR-AF-bless

‘Various sorts of objects were placed there so that it would be a fruitful hunting.’

(6)

- a. *maftay* mu-sún k<m>an s<in>apuk
AF.all go-together eat<AF> catch<PFV>
ʃnawluman a ʃkaribuʃ. (32-10)
name LIG wild.animal

‘All people gathered together to eat (the meat of) the wild animals caught by ʃnawluman.’

- b. *sa* *ma-ʃi-tan-tuqaf* *m-ǰay*, “*paftay*
DET STA-SI-TAN-elder AF-say all.IMP
k<m>an *sa* *rusaw!*” (4-84)
eat<AF> DET fish

‘The old man said, “All (of you) eat fish!”’

- c. *pafta-an* *iǰáy* *ka-faǰaq-in* a *pruq*
all-LF that KA-know-PF LIG land
a ʃanaǰ *piʃ-taqu.* (39-74)
LIG name PIS-chant

‘All known place names should be chanted.’

(7)

a. *aǎʔaǎ-iǎa* ʔka-na-náy a ʈaw. (31-42)
all-ALR live-to-here LIG Thao
'All people who lived here were Thao.'

b. *qabiǎay* ʃawna-tusi kariawan *aǎʔaǎ* tu
place get-there Puli all DET
ʈaw a *pruq.* (36-20)
Thao LIG land
'All the lands from Qabiǎay to Puli belonged to the
Thao people.'

c. *aǎʔaǎ* kalawa-n ʈiʈu *pun-tuǎa-an.* (32-13)
all make-PF he catch-eel-LF
'All bamboo pipes to catch eels were made by him.'

- The English concepts ‘only, just’, ‘often, frequently’ and ‘nothing but’ are expressed by main verbs in Thao:

(8)

a. *antu* *θaw* *ma-dadú* *s* *tuali*, *m-uqay*
 not Thao STA-like DET money AF-only

pa-kaθu-an *p<in>anfa.* (36-33)
 CAUS-bring-LF gift<PFV>

‘Thao people did not care for money, and they accepted only gifts.’

b. *uqay* *maniun* *k<m>an* *takiθ* *a*
 only you.PL eat<AF> muntjac LIG

bunlaǎ. (34-64)
 meat

‘You(pl) eat only the meat of muntjac!’

c. *uqay* *pya-qitan* *m-aɫinuna*, *ata* *tu*
 only make-nice AF-speak don't DET
pasha-tuzus-i, *a-mim-buqnur*. (Blust 2003:629)
 PASHA-point-IMP IRR-get-angry
 ‘Just speak nicely, don't point (at them) or (they) will
 get angry.’

(9) *m-yaqay* *sa* *parhaway*
 AF-always DET young
k<m>it-na-qua-quaɫ *sa* *ɫkaribuf* *a*
 KIT<AF>to-RED-near DET wild.animal LIG
qnuan. (34-38)
 deer
 ‘The young men were always following closely behind
 the deer.’

(10) *miŋ-ka-kurað* *na* *bu-but* *day*

INCH-RED-bruised DET RED-body

m-yarain *maʔus.* (32-54)

AF-do.but AF.sleep

‘He had bruises all over his body, and could do nothing but sleep.’

- English words, such as ‘again’ and ‘enough’, and words that have to do with the concepts of quantity, such as numerals, cardinals, and times are often expressed by verbs in Thao:

(11) *simaq-ið̃a* *m-uqð̃a* *sa* *atu* *q<m>aqutiʔ*

next-ALR AF-again DET dog chase<AF>

a *ʔkaribuʃ* *a* *qnuan.* (34-29)

LIG wild.animal LIG deer

‘The next day the dog resumed chasing the deer.’

(12) *m-ya-hala* *mu-sáy* *tata* *wa* *yanan*
 AF-do-first go-there one LIG bedroom
m-ya-kbit *maʎus.* (38-12)
 AF-do-separate AF.sleep
 ‘(He) should go to bed in a separate room first.’

(13)

a. *ʃdu-yǎa* *rusaw.*
 enough-ALR fish
 ‘The fish is enough.’

b. *ʃdu-an* *rusaw,* *antu* *pafani.*
 enough-LF fish not greasy
 ‘The fish is (fine) enough, it's not greasy.’

- The intensifier *ma-θuaw* ‘very, excessive’ behaves like the main verb in the following sentences:

(14) *a-ma-θuaw* *yaku* *ma-qaran*,
 IRR-STA-very I STA-happy
a-ma-daydað *aðaðak*. (35-7)
 IRR-AF-love child
 ‘I’ll be very happy and love my baby.’

- Another intensifier *dadu* ‘really’ also behaves like the main verb in the sentence below:

(15) *dadu-yðā* *sa* *θaw* *maftay* *ʃ<m>i-qaliw*
 real-ALR DET Thao AF.all PAST<AF>roast
sa *fafuy* *a* *a-ktala*. (34-110)
 DET pig LIG IRR-eat.with
 ‘It is true that all the Thao people roasted pigs in order to eat (pork on the way).’

- Interestingly, even time words such as *simaq* ‘tomorrow, the next day’ may behave like a verb by taking the Patient-focus marker *-in*, as below, or the aspect marker *-iđa* ‘already’, as in (11).

(16) *a-kuna sa simaq-in a m-ufa.*
 IRR-until DET tomorrow-PF LIG AF-leave
 ‘The leaving will be put off until tomorrow
 = (We) shall leave tomorrow’ (Blust 2003:870)

- Similarly, the time word *fafanu* ‘morning’ may take the irrealis marker *a-* and aspect marker *-iđa* at the same time, as in:

(17) *a-fafanu-yđa patin-humhum kił-ʔa-kan-in.*
 IRR-morning-ALR PATIN-dark seek-IRR-eat-PF
 ‘Search for food early in the morning (before
 daybreak)!’ (35-42)

- I have found only one example for the word *tiḷa* ‘yesterday’ in the texts, as given below, but it is not clear whether it can be derived for different foci and if its occurrence in the sentence is relatively free.

(18) *m-ya-kuḍa ihu tiḷa k<m-in>an*
 AF-YA-how you yesterday eat<AF-PFV>
sa rusaw a bunḷaḍ? (34-82)
 DET fish LIG meat

‘How have you been since you ate fish yesterday?’

- The time word *isisua* ‘at that time’ not only usually appears in the clause-initial position, but also takes the aspect marker *-yḍa* ‘already,’ as in (19) below.

(19) *isisua-yḍa myaqay sa ḷilitun*
 that.time-ALR often DET pygmy
mu-náy ḍintun. (31-10)
 come-here Sun-Moon.Lake

‘The pygmies often came here to Sun-Moon Lake.’

- The main problem of analyzing all these words as verbs is that not all of them can appear as the only verb in each sentence. They may require co-occurrence with another verb and serve as adverbial adjuncts.
- Are there any genuine adverbs at all in Thao? There must be at least a few. For example, the word *mani* ‘also’ is always invariable and its occurrence in the sentence seems to be relatively free:

(20) *atu mani fulful-in p-yutu-n mani*
 dog also lead-PF CAUS-there-PF also
maqa a-tif-an mani. (39-68)
 because IRR-wipe-LF also

‘Dogs also had to be taken there because they also had to be wiped.’

- Similarly, the form of the word *mafna* ‘even’ is invariable and it usually occurs before a noun or the subject of the sentence, as in:

(21) *mafna* *tana-tuqaf*, *mafna* *a-ʔaḏaḏak*
 even TANA-old even RED-child
ma-θuaw *ma-qaran* *ya* *m-riqaḏ*
 STA-very STA-happy when AF-see
ʃnawluman. (32-8)

name

‘Even old people and children are very happy to see
ʃnawluman.’

- The lexical form *la* ‘quite, too’ is also invariable in form, and it precedes and modifies a stative verb in a negative construction, as in:

(22) *antu la ma-ʔalahʔa θiθu.*
 not quite STA-happy he
 ‘He is not quite happy.’

(23) *niða tu la m-u-na-nay θiθu*
 not DET quite AF-go-to-here he
 ‘He does not often come here any more.’

3. Summary and conclusion

- Many adverbial concepts in English are expressed by verbs in Formosan languages, such as Thao. Are they verbs or adverbs? This is an interesting issue.
- These forms manifest different foci and take aspect markers, and they may also attract bound personal pronouns, just like ordinary verbs.
- The main problem of analyzing all these words as verbs is that not all of them can appear as the only verb in a sentence. They may require co-occurrence with another verb and thus serve as adverbial adjuncts in function.

- Are there any genuine adverbs in Thao? There must be at least a few. For example, the words *mani* 'also', *majna* 'even' and *la* 'quite' are always invariable in form, and their position in a sentence is relatively free. They have typical features of an adverb.