CHAPTER 3

SOME GRAMMATICAL FEATURES OF IU-MIENH

3.0 Introduction

Chapter 3 lays a grammatical foundation for chapters 4 and 5. Court (1986) describes Iu-Mienh syntax from noun phrases to simple clauses, as well as including a basic phonology, based on Purnell (1965). Building upon the foundation laid by Court, this chapter will recapitulate basic clause types, serial verb constructions, tense-aspect-modality and topic chains.

As opposed to languages that have morphosyntactic coding with respect to tense and aspect, Iu-Mienh does not depend on such features to identify the storyline since it does not have any morphological marking on verbs. The main purpose of this chapter is not an exhaustive description, but a presentation of verb and clause types sufficient for identifying a distinction between storyline and non-storyline materials.

3.1 Basic Clause Types

The basic word order in Iu-Mienh is SVO. The verb in (1) is intransitive and the subject is an Agent.

(1)
Mbopv	*tiux*
squirrel	run

'A squirrel ran.'

The prototypical transitive clause has the subject as an Agent and the object as a Patient as in (2).

(2) (CI .034)

Mbopv	*ngaatc*	*yie*
Squirrel	bite	1sg

'A squirrel bit me.'

An adverbial clause often precedes the main clause as in (3).

(3) (3PG.003)

Cl.Adv   Cl.Main

Dorh   *ninh*   *nyei*   *buo*   *dauh dom hlo deix*   *ninh mbuox neiz*[42] *dom*
raise   3sg   POSS   three CLF cub big some   3sg tell her cub

'(When she) brought up three cubs (to) big enough, she told them' (followed by a direct speech).

Adverbial clauses are often marked with the topic marker *aeqv* 'as for' (sometimes *nor aeqv*), an independent clause marker *gau* 'after which,' 'as,' or 'while' or an aspectual verb *liuz* 'after finishing.' The *aeqv* stands at the end of the adverbial clause (4); *gau* and *liuz* come immediately after the verb in the clause as in (5).

(4) (CI.023)

Mbopv   *maiv_lamh*   *yiem*   **aeqv**
squirrel   lack_a_place_for   live   TOP

cingx_daaih   *la'guaih*   *cuotv*   *mingh*
therefore   aimlessly go_out go

'Because the squirrel did not have place to live, therefore (he) just came out aimlessly.'

(5) (BS.122)

Yie   *zouv*   **gau**   *hnaangx,*   *douz*   *jaamh*   *nzengc*   *mi'aqv*
1sg   cook   DPCL   rice   fire   singe   consumed   RSLT

'As I cooked rice, the fire singed all my hair.'

An adverbial clause marked by *hnangv* 'like, as' often comes after the main clause as in (6).

(6) (AS.090)

Nqa'haav   *aengx*   *deic-bung*   *aengx*   *faanv*
Later   again   country   again   unsettled

hnangv   *ih_zanc*   *naaiv*   *mborqv jaax*
like   now   here   hit   REC.ACT

'Later, the country became unsettled again; just as people here fight each other nowadays.'

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[42] *neiz* is a contraction of *ninh nyei* 'his/her' (3sg + POSS).

3.2 Serial Verb Constructions (SVC)

Iu-Mienh uses serial verb constructions and multiclausal constructions extensively, and sentences are often juxtaposed without conjunctions, resulting in a long string of verbs. In such a situation, it is important to identify which component in an SVC encodes an event and an action that are on the storyline and which do not.

A serial verb construction (SVC) is defined by Aikhenvald as follows:

> A serial verb construction is a sequence of verbs which act together as a single predicate, without any overt marker of coordination, subordination or syntactic dependency of any other sort. Serial verbs describe what can be conceptualized as a single event. They are monoclausal; their intonational properties are those of a monoverbal clause, and they have just one tense, aspect and polarity value. Serial verbs may also share arguments and obliques. (Aikhenvald 2005)[43]

Thus, six defining factors of SVC are 1) serial verb as a single predicate, 2) monoclausality, 3) no intonation breaking between components, 4) shared tense, aspect, mood, modality and polarity value, 5) serial verb as one event, 6) prototypical serial verb sharing at least one argument.

As such, each SVC is expected to be on the storyline. However, some SVCs exhibit a complex internal structure; hence, the following examples should be of help in recognizing the head of the construction.

Starting from a simple SVC, *gorngv mbuox* 'speak tell,' *gorngv heuc* 'speak call/order,' *gorngv naaic* 'speak ask' are frequently used both in a conversation and narrative discourse. The relationship between two verbs in all of these SVCs seem to be that V_1 provides a general meaning followed by V_2 with specific information about how the general meaning of speaking is performed. (7) is from a narrative.

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[43] The citation of Aikhenvald 2005 is from the pre-publication draft.

(7) (CI.008)

Loz-hnoi   *norqc_guv_long*   **gorngv**   **mbuox**   *jung*
old-day   owl   speak   tell   barking_deer

"Maqv_gorkv_biouvzuoqc   *aqv*
olive_fruit ripe   PFT

'Once upon a time, an owl told a barking-deer, "The olives are ripe."'

Switch-subject SVCs (Aikhenvald 2005) are exemplified in (8), where the object of *haeqv* 'frighten' *hieh_juv* 'black wolf' is the subject of the verb *gamh_nziex* 'fear.'

(8) (3PG.056)

Haeqv   *nc*   *dauh*   *hieh_juv_jieqv*   *gamh_nziex*   *haic*
frighten that CLF wolf_black   fear   very

'(A piglet) frightened the black wolf into being very afraid.'

An example of a switch-subject cause-effect SVCs, where V_1 causes an effect on the object, which in turn becomes a subject of V_2 expressing the effect, is shown below in (9):

(9) (3PG.069)

douz-sioux   *congx*   *zuqc*   *ninh*   *m'zing*   *sui*
smoke   zap   GOAL   3sg   eye   sour

'Smoke zapped his eyes making them sore.'

In (10) Cl_2 which is a monoclausal SVC is embedded in Cl_1. This is explained by Aikhenvald (2005) as the switch-subject SVC used for complement clause serialization. The complement clause is in brackets.

(10) (3PG.067)

Cl_1 Cl_2
Dungz-dorn   *buatc*   [*hieh_juv_jieqv*   *nyomg*   *jienv*   *faaux*]
Piglet   see   wolf_black   creep   SML.ACT   ascend

'The piglet saw the black wolf creeping up.'

The next four SVCs include adverbial information. The location adverbial SVC is shown in (11), where the adverbial component precedes the head of the construction.

(11) (FA.083)

    ninh   *yiem*   *horgc_domgh*   *doqc_sou*
    3sg   be_there school   study_book[44]

    'He studied at school.'

An associative adverbial SVC uses *caux* 'accompany' or 'to be with' as in (12):

(12) (BS.167)

    Njang_hnoi   *meih* *caux*   *yie*   *mingh*
    tomorrow   2sg   be_with   1sg   go

    'Tomorrow, you will go with me.'

Manner adverbial SVCs have two different constructions. One type has the same constituent order as (11) and (12); the other uses *duqv* 'get, aquire, attain.' The former type is illustrated in (13), the latter in (14).

(13) (3PG.033)

    Dauh *dungz-dorn* *njiec*   *qaqv*   *jatv* *ninh*
    CLF   piglet   let_go_down   strength laugh 3sg

    'That piglet laughed at him very hard.'

(14) (Lombard and Purnell 1968:72)

    Meih *dorngx*   *jauv*   **duqv**   *go* *haic* *ni* *aa!*
    2sg do_wrong road attain far very part.f

    'Goodness! You missed the trail a long way back!' (Translation by Lombard and Purnell)
    (or 'You're WAY off the path!')

This usage of *duqv* in (14) is referred to as "attainment aspect marker" by Li (1991:32). Though he does not consider this kind of sentence as an SVC, his analysis of Hmong examples are labeled "simplex sentences," thus, fitting the definition of SVCs by Aikhenvald.

Temporal adverbial SVCs also use *duqv* 'get, aquire, attain' as in (15).

(15) (FA.044)

    Yie   *njaaux* *mh*[45]*_mbuo* **duqv**   *i* *buo*   *hnyangx* *aqv*
    1sg   teach   2_PL   attain two three year   PFT

    'I have been teaching you for two or three years already.'

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[44] *Doqc_sou* literally means 'read book' (at school). That gives the gloss 'study.' See (25) below for 'read.'

[45] The second person *mh* is a contraction form of *meih*.

In directional SVCs, the construction ends with *mingh* 'go,' *daaih* 'come,' *faaux* 'ascend,' and *njiec* 'descend.' They indicate movement of a participant. In (16) *mingh* is a directional verb describing the action taking palce.

(16) (BS.190)

Ninh	*auv*	*zorqv*	*pietv*	*guangc*	***mingh***
3sg	wife	take	sprinkle	throw	go

'His wife took (the meat) and threw (it) away.'

Lastly in this section, a brief mention on a quasi-serial verb construction should be made. In this, a verb follows a head noun or NP to modify it, as in English 'food to eat'. A similar translation for the noun phrase which contains a verb in (17) is possible, i.e. 'wings to fly with.'

(17) (FG.011)

gaeng-kiev	*maaih*	*douz*	*yaac*	*maaih*	*ndaatv*	***ndaix***
fire_fly	have	light	and	have	wing	fly

'The fire fly had a light and wings to fly with.'

In the identification of a storyline clause, any verb that modifies a head noun should be demoted to a lower band.

3.3 Tense, Aspect and Modality

A strong connection between the verbal morphology and the narrative storyline can be seen in Longacre's statement: "each surface structure type has characteristic tense/aspect/voice features in the verbs that occur on its mainline in discourse in a particular language" (1996:12). The crux of the matter seems to be that it is the verbal tense/aspect/voice that indicates whether a particular verb is or is not a storyline verb. However, this does not work in Iu-Mienh since its system for tense-aspect-modality (TAM) has more complex features.

3.3.1 Tense

Tense is defined as "the grammaticalisation of location in time" (Comrie 1985:1). A comment such as "Chinese [is] an example of a language which lacks tense entirely" (Trask 1993:276) is possible when one adopts a definition as follows:

> *Tense* Fundamental grammatical (morphological) category of the verb which expresses the temporal relation between a speech act (S) and the state of affairs or event (E) described in the utterance, i.e. which places the event spoken of in relation to the temporal perspective of the speaker. (Bussmann 1996:478)

Though Iu-Mienh does not have a "morphological category of the verbs to express the temporal relation," it has tense and a way to express it. Whaley discusses different strategies in different languages which have "no special tense morphology" (1997:206-9). He cites an example of Burmese, in which "time adverbials are used in conjunction with modal affixes" (Whaley 1997:206) to express tense.

Iu-Mienh also uses temporal adverbs to indicate time reference. For example, *am'hnoi* 'yesterday,' *wuov norm leiz-baaix* 'last week,' *wuov zanc* 'then, that time' etc. for past; *ih zanc* 'now,' *ih hnoi* 'today,' *jangc jangc* 'just now' etc. for present; and *aav hitv deix* 'in a minute,' *njang hnoi* 'tomorrow,' *dieh norm leiz-baaix* 'next week' etc. for future. The word order is : Adv.tmp + SV as in (18).

(18)   (FA.005)
    Wuov_zanc   *hnoi* *m'sieqv_dom mv* *haih*   *doqc_sou*
    that_time   day girl   NEG be_possible study_book

    'In those days, women could not study.'

In narrative[46] discourse the following temporal adverbs used to refer to past tense are listed in Table 4.

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[46] These are found in the narrative corpus for this study. Other temporal adverbs in conversations or other situations include: *hitv deix dangh* 'in a minute,' *a'hitv deix* 'later,' *aav deix dangh* 'shortly,' *dieh hnoi (dih hnoi)* 'some other day,' *zinh ndaungc* 'in the past, previously,' *nqa'haav* 'later, in the future,' *nqa'haav hingv* 'in the future,' V + *jiex* 'have experienced V,' *jiex daaih wuov norm leiz-baaix* 'last week,' *jiex daaih buo hnyangx* 'in the past three years,' *zanc-zanc* 'always,' *manc-manc* 'gradually,' etc.

a	*loz-hnoi*	in the old days, once upon a time
b	*wuov hnoi*	that day
c	*wuov zanc*	that time, then
d	*wuov zanc hnoi*	in those days
e	*da'nyeic hnoi*	the following day (lit. the second day)
f	*da'faam hnoi*	another day (lit. the third day)
g	*da'nyeic ndorm*	the following morning (lit. the second morning)
h	*njang ndorm*	the following morning (lit. tomorrow morning)
i	*njang hnoi*	the following day (lit. tomorrow)
j	*wuov nzunc hnoi*	this[47] time, another occasion
k	*wuov nzunc hnoi aeqv*	as for this time, another occasion
l	*mv nzunc hnoi aeqv*	as for this time, another occasion

Table 4. Temporal adverbs for narrative discourse

The items (k) and (l) employ a topic marker *aeqv* 'as for' forming a full length construction; the whole phrase meaning 'talking about this time,' or 'as for this time of event'.

The expressions (h) *njang ndorm* 'tomorrow morning' and (i) *njang hnoi* 'tomorrow' refer to the future in a direct speech or an actual conversation. However, in a narrative discourse, they refer to the future from the perspective of discourse participant, which is the past from the perspective of audience. Therefore, in (19) the verb *mingh* 'go' refers to past time reference even though *njang hnoi* 'tomorrow' is used. By the inherent narrative perspective of telling a story about something that happened in the past, or an initial temporal setting indicator that provides the past setting, *njang hnoi* 'tomorrow' means 'the next day.'

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[47] Direct translation of *wuov* is 'that' and 'that time' in English refers to what had already happened prior to the time of narration. However, in narrative discourse, the construction *wuov nzunc hnoi* means 'another occasion' referring to an event that takes place after a previous one. Therefore, the translation for j and k are 'this time' and 'as for this time.'

(19) (FA.090)

> **Njang_hnoi** neiz maa   mbuo za'gengh mingh lorz
> tomorrow his mother PL   really go   look_for
>
> 'The next day (or 'the following day'), his mother and others [i.e. parents] indeed went to look for (her).'

Some Iu-Mienh native speakers refer to *njang_hnoi* 'tomorrow' of this situation "tomorrow of the past day," as opposed to "tomorrow of now." This is a kind of relative future tense in Comrie's sense (1985:56, 124).

3.3.2 Aspect

Comrie offers following definition: "aspects are different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation" (1976:3). In Iu-Mienh aspects are expressed by serial verb constructions and sentence final particles.

Similar to the directional serial verb constructions discussed in 3.2, perfective aspects can be expressed by *mingh* 'go' and *daaih* 'come.' In (20) *mingh* is not involved in a locomotion in space but indicates that the action has just taken place. This is different from mingh in (19) which indicates movement in space.

(20) (FG.033)

> *ninh_mbuo zorqv caah_laauh_pomgc nyei zaux wuotv ngau* **mingh**
> 3_PL   take grasshopper   POSS leg bend bent go
>
> 'They took the srasshopper's legs (and) bent them.'

(21) (OH.010)

> *Mbenc*   **daaih** *bun ninh nyei die   nyanc*
> prepare PFT   let 3sg POSS father eat
>
> '(She) has prepared (food) (and) let her father eat.'

In both (20) and (21) *mingh* and *daaih* can be replaced with *ziangx* 'finish.' In addition, one cannot answer such questions as *Ninh mbuo mingh haaix?* 'Where did they go?' concerning (20); *Ninh yiem haaix daaih?* 'Where did she come from?' with respect to (21).

The following five examples contain posthead aspectual verbs: (22) V + *ziangx* 'finish V-ing,' (23) V + *liuz* 'finish/done V-ing,' (24) V + *baac* 'finish V-ing,'

(25) V + *dorng* 'completed a process of V-ing,' (26) V + *nzengc* 'consume V-ing, completely V-ed.'

(22)   (BS.226)

Mbenc	*ziangx*	*kuv*	*lai*	*kuv*	*hnaangx*
prepare	finish	delicious	vegetable	delicious	rice

'(the old woman) finished preparing delicious vegetables and delicious rice.' (i.e. finished preparing a delicious meal or a feast).

(23)   (CI.061)

Laapc	*liuz*	*cingx_daaih*	*ih_zanc*	*nguaiv*	*nguaiv*	*wuov*	*nor*	*aex*
put	finish	therefore	now	big-eyed	big-eyed	that	as	I_mean_it

'(They) finished pouring (ginger juice into the owl's eyes); therefore, now the eyes of owls are as big as saucers; I mean it.'

(24)   (Lombard and Purnell 1968:22)

doqc	*baac*	*sou*
read	finish	book

'to have finished reading the book; to have finished studying'

(25)

Ninh	*doqc*	*dorng*	*sou*
3sg	read	complete_a_process	book

'He has graduated (from school).'

(26)   (FA.054)

Yiem	*wuov*	*haaix_nyungc*	*waac*	*yaac*	*gorngv*	*nzengc*
be_in	there	what	word	TOP	speak	consumed

'There (they) talked about all kinds of thing.' (in a sense that "what ever words were consumed")

The constructions are summarized in Table 5.

	Construction	Semantic value	Description
1	V-*liuz*	Past TR marker:	'finished V-ing': Simple past
2	V-*baac*	Past TR marker:	'finished V-ing': Simple past, similar to *liuz*
3	V-*ziangx*	Perfective Aspectual Verb	'completed V-ing': the perfective sense is stronger than the simple past *liuz* and *baac*.
4	V-*nzengc*	Completive Aspectual Verb	'have V-ed all': Expresses consumption, an exhaustive or universal plural, some emphasis or surprise.
5	V-*dorng*	Completed Aspectual Verb	'have completed V-ing throughout'

Table 5. Aspectual auxiliary verbs

V-*liuz* and V-*baac* are almost interchangeable in most contexts. As will be seen in chapter 4 (and example (23)), they are often used in an adverbial clause preceding a main or independent clause: 'after finishing V-ing, S + main Cl.' When used in an independent clause, they require the aspectual sentence final particles *aqv* or *mi'aqv* to ground the whole clause in a usage event as in (27):

(27)　(BS.104)

Ninh	nziez	ziouc	maeqv	zoi	njiec	bun	**liuz**	**aqv**
3sg	younger_sister	then	peel	throw	descend	give	finish	PFT

'Her younger sister then finished taking off (the bracelet and silver neckpiece and) throwing down (and) finished giving (them).'

V-*ziangx* indicates completion of a process or action. Its difference from *liuz* and *baac* is in line with Bybee's definition of perfective aspect:

> Perfective also designates a temporal notion, but not one that is reckoned deictically in relation to the moment of speech, but rather one that is determined by the viewpoint taken on the situation. That is, perfective presents the situation described by the clause as having temporal boundaries, as being a single, unified, discrete situation. (Bybee et al. 1994:83)

The completive *nzengc* originally comes from a sense that a quantity of something is consumed. Bybee's elaboration of completive into three semantic nuances fits *nzengc* well:

1. The object of the action is totally affected, consumed, or destroyed by the action. To repeat, 'to end up' is a good example.
2. The action involves a plural subject of intransitive verbs or object of transitive verbs, especially an exhaustive or universal plural, such as 'everyone died' or 'he took all the stones'.
3. The action is reported with some emphasis or surprise value. (1994:57)

Durative aspect and simultaneous action are expressed by an extended use of the stative verb *jienv* 'to be stable, firm.'[48] Example (28) is in a construction V + *jienv* 'keep in a state of V,' and (29) in V_1 + *jienv* + V_2 'V_2 while/at the same time V_1-ing.'

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[48] Another meaning is 'to be important, urgent, pressing' (Lombard and Purnell 1968:95), but it is not known yet if the two different meanings are polysemous or they are homophonous.

(28)   (BS.209)

Ninh *ziouc*   *dorh*   *mingh*
3sg   so_then   take   go

dapv   *jienv* *kapv*   *gu'nyuoz*   *aqv*
put_into   DUR   four-sided_woven_basket_with_a_lid   inside   PFT

'Then she (the old woman) took (the wife and) kept (the wife) in a woven basket.'

(29)   (BS.077)

Aengx   *jiez_sin*   *daaih*   *gan*   *jienv*   *naang*   *mingh*
further   get_up   come   follow   SML.ACT   snake   go

'Then again (she) got up (and) went following the snake.'

The following seven examples discuss aspect as expressed by the sentence final particle *aqv* 'change-of-state.' Though *aqv* is often used in a perfective sense, there are other situations where the perfective meaning does not fit, such as a case of referring to a future time reference. The interpretation of *aqv* depends on context largely.

Court analyzes the sentence final particle *aqv* as a "change-of-state particle" (CH-O-ST) (1986:248). A contrast between (30a) and (30b) shows that the "change-of-state" has a perfective sense.

(30a)   (Court 1986:24)

Yie   *mv*   *mingh*
1sg   not   go

'I will not go.'[49]

(30b)   (Court 1986:25)

Yie   *mv*   *mingh*   **aqv**
1sg   not   go   CH-O-ST

'I am not going any more.' < 'I have changed my mind from going farther.'

"Change-of-state" as being a generic meaning of the particle *aqv* can be interpreted in two ways: 1) perfective aspect and 2) inchoative aspect. (30b) shows that the change of the speaker's mind is from the past (i.e. 'I was thinking of going before.') to the present (i.e. 'Now I have changed my mind not to go' or 'I've made up my mind, and I'm not going to go,' or 'I've decided not to go.')

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[49] If the speaker means 'I did not go,' *yie maiv duqv mingh* is usually used.

Another example of this perfective sense is (31), in which the change can be interpreted as from the fruit's growth in the past to the present state of ripeness.

(31)   (CI.008)

Maqv_gorkv_biouv	zuoqc	**aqv**
olive_fruit	ripe	PFT

'The olives are ripe.'

On the other hand, the extention of the generic meaning "change-of-state" to the inchoative aspect is indicated in the right-hand tree of Figure 15.
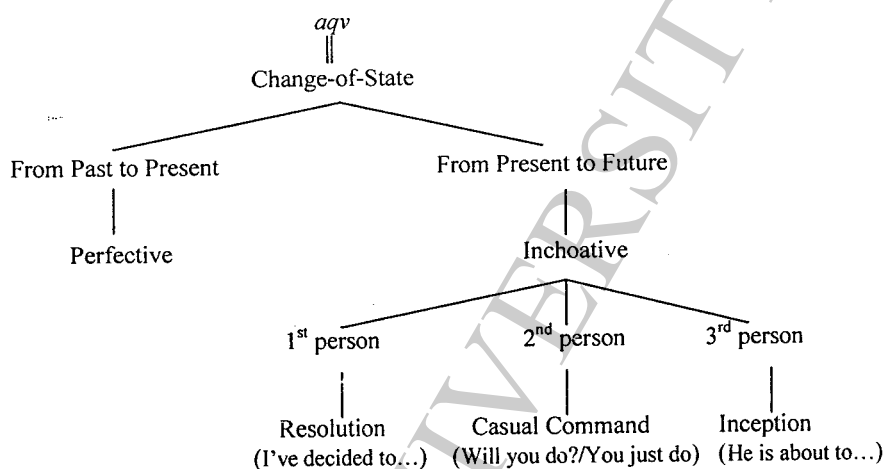

Figure 15. Polysemous relation within the change-of-state aspectual particle *aqv*

In the inchoative sense, there are three possibilities as in (32)-(35). They are all used in the present and future time references. Since the subjects are all animate and can have volition, they correlate with modality. When a speaker is in the first person, it means, "I have changed my mind from what I have been doing" or a resolution (32) in a sense that "I have decided to do a new thing."

(32)   (AS.022)

Aa,	yie	in'sieqv_dom,	yie	maiv	nongc	mengh	**aqv**
Ah	1sg	woman	1sg	NEG	want	fame	I_am_sure

'Ah, I am a woman; I'm sure I don't want an honor.'

When used to address the second person, it means, "You should change your present situation," that is COMMAND but casual (33).

(33)   (FG.005)

Gaeng-kiev gomgv heuc, "Nzuonx   aqv"
n   vi   vt   return   CAS.CMD

'The firefly called saying, "Go home!"'

In the second person but in a inclusive sense, it means INVITATION, "Let's do…"(34).

(34)   (OH.011)

Mbuox ninh   nyei   die,   "Nyanc hnaangx   aqv."
tell   3sg   POSS   father   eat   rice   CAS.CMD

'(She) said to her father, "Come eat!"' [If she were speaking to her peers/friends, it would be 'Let's eat!']

When the subject is in the third person, it means "he is about to…," or "he is on the verge of doing…" (35).

(35)   (BS.173)

Ninh   daix   yie   aqv
3sg   kill   1sg   INCHOAT

'Otherwise, he is about to kill me.'

Thus, glossing of *aqv* varies depending on its context, whether the sentence occurs in the past (i.e. realis) modality or in the future (i.e. irrealis) modality.

Resultative aspect is "a state that was brought about by some action in the past" (Bybee et al. 1994:63), and this is expressed by *mi'aqv.* In the previous paragraph, it was mentioned that the second person with inclusive sense under the inchoative usage of the CH-O-ST aspectual marker *aqv* has the meaning of casual command or invitation. This is exemplified in Panh (1995:250) where *mi'aqv* is given a translation "let's go" with his note that the expression is a "contraction of *mingh aqv*." Compare this with (36).

(36)   (Panh 1995:255)

mingh   mi'aqv
go   go-CH-O-ST

'gone already'

The seeming duplication of "go + go" is not a problem in a native speaker's mind due to a well-entrenched contraction of *mi'aqv* as an inseparable unit.[50] It means that *mi'aqv* is an independent construction by itself.

Formed in this way *mi'aqv* is a resultative aspectual marker. This concurs with Bybee's comment that "resultative constructions may be lexically restricted, or a more generally used construction may have a resultative use only with change-of-state verbs" (Bybee et al. 1994:65-6). The combination of the aspectual verb and the aspectual particle is shown in Figure 16.

Aspectual Verb
mingh

Perfective Aspectual Particle
aqv

Composition Entrenched

Resultative Aspectual Marker
mi'aqv
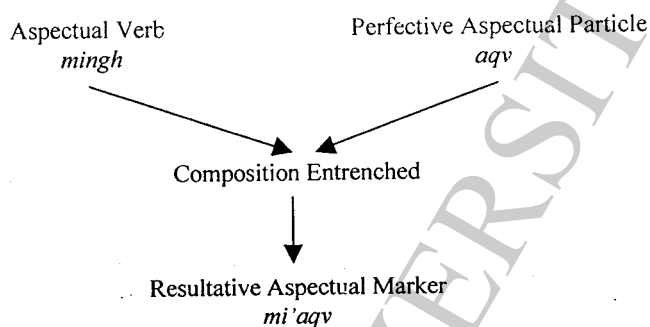
Figure 16. Composition of the resultative aspectual

marker *mi'aqv*

In contrast to the subtle modal senses of *aqv*, the listener/hearer of a narrative can be sure that an event is over and there is a definite result of it whenever *mi'aqv* is uttered (except when addressed to the second person).

3.3.3 Modality

Modals include *oix* 'want, like, will' (37) and *oix zuqc* 'must' (lit. want + passive or want + forced) (38). The latter construction sometimes varies to *aqv zuqc* in a rapid speech. Both *oix zuqc* and *aqv zuqc* are commands when addressed to the second person.

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[50] Some incidents of elicitation turned out that most native speakers of Iu-Mienh cannot identify the etymological break down of *mi'aqv*; some can guess this might have come from the two words *mingh* + *aqv*. Panh (1995) is a native Iu-Mienh.

(37) (3PG.009)

Yie	oix	bieqc	meih	nyei	biauv
1sg	want	enter	2sg	POSS	house

'I want to come into your house.'

(38) (FA.011)

Mingh	aeqv,	aqv_zuqc	faix_fim
go	TOP	must	careful

'When you go, you must take care .'

Not all modal uses of *oix* are desiderative, while a non-desiderative use has an irrealis sense. An inanimate subject can take this modal verb as in (39).[51]

(39)

Biauv	oix	mbaang
house	will	collapse

'The house is about to collapse.'

Example (40) is a consecutive speech consisting of two sentences, where the first *oix* is non-desiderative (i.e. near future without volition) while the second is desiderative.

(40)

Ninh	se	gox	oix	daic	haic	niaa
3sg	TOP	old	is_about_to_die	very	I_wonder

'He is so old that he is about to die.'

Aengx	oix	mauv	haaix_nhungc	camv?
further	want	desire	what	much

What else (what other things) does he want/desire?'

The non-desiderative use of *oix* correlates with futurity as a derivation from a modal use. That is, it only refers to the future in a secondary sense after the primary sense that an Agent wants to do something, which means that the thing to be done lies ahead time-wise. This correlation between the future time reference and the modality of the verb *oix* is represented in Langacker's "basic epistemic model" (1991c:242-44) (Figure 17).

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[51] Purnell (2006, personal communication) mentions that "*oix* can be treated as a future time marker". Also Burgess (personal communication).
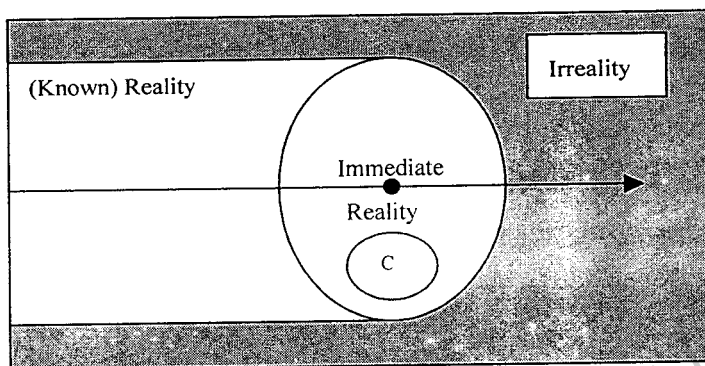
(C = Conceptualizer or the speaker)

Figure 17. Basic Epistemic Model (Langacker 1991c:242)

What is wanted/willed has not come true yet; it is irrealis, and thus, naturally belongs to a domain yet to come to the conceptualizer, i.e. future time reference.

Another case of cross-category interaction is the relationship between the aspectual use and modal use of *mingh* 'go' and *daaih* 'come.' Court contends:

> The verbs *mingh* and *daaih* [are] used as aspectual/evaluative/diectics components. These indicate a change of state, and by the choice of *mingh* one can indicate that the change is not desirable, or neutral, while *daaih* marks it as desirable. (Court 1986:248).

Since these senses of "desirable" and "not desirable" are determined in relation to a conceptualizer or the speaker, it is suggested to refer to them as modal verbs. A context of (41) is at the occasion of the arrival of a newborn child, hence *daaih* is used with a desirable sense.

(41)   (BS.091)

Longc	*jienv*	*buo*	*hnyangx,*	*yungz*	*duqv*	*dauh*	*dorn*	*daaih.*
Marry	DUR	three	years,	bear	get	CLF	son	come

'Having been married for three years, (she) has given birth and got (happily) a baby son.'

In contrast to the "desirable" sense of 'come,' (42a) shows an undesirable situation with the aspectual verb *mingh* 'go.'

(42a) (Court 1986:248)[52]

> *Duqv*   *mi(ngh)*   *aqv*
> Get   go   PFT
>
> 'He's (gone and) taken it off (when he shouldn't have)' (translation by Court)

The contrastive sense will become clearer when compared with (42b):

(42b) (Court 1986:248)

> *Duqv*   **daac**   *aqv*   (*daac* = a variant of *daaih*)
> get   come   PFT
>
> 'He's taken it off (as he hoped he would)' (translation by Court)

Another form with a range of meaning is *duqv* 'to get, acquire, attain, be able to, can.' That is, its lexical meaning has extended to an aspectual use. Clark reported on *tau* 'get/acquire' in Hmong, in which she recognizes a perfective aspect (1989:217). Furthermore, Li (1991) advanced the argument that *tau* is an "attainment aspect marker."[53] *Duqv* in Iu-Mienh has a similar aspect shown in (43a-b).

(43a) (AS.138)

> *Za'gengh!*   *ninh*   *yaac*   **duqv**   *zoux*   *hlo*
> Really   3sg   also   get   be   big
>
> 'Really he also has become big.' (i.e. 'He reached/gained an important position.')

That is, he attained the event of becoming an important person. Besides the original sense of 'to get,' the perfective meaning in the sense of accomplishment and achievement after some period is evident.

The verb *duqv* in (43b) does not take a verb as its complement but a noun phrase, and yet still has a perfective sense.

(43b) (FA.043)

> *Yie*   *njaaux*   *mh*   *mbuo*   **duqv**   *i*   *buo*   *hnyangx*   *aqv*
> 1sg   teach   2   PL   attain   two   three   years   PFT
>
> 'I have been teaching you both for two or three years.'

---

[52] Though Court's example lacks the context, I assume that he has drawn his conclusion from sufficient examples.

[53] Recently, Enfield (2001) has referred to this kind of polyfunctional construction as AQUIRE, "a marker of complex descriptive complement constructions such as resultative, adverbial, and potential expressions" (Enfield 2001:268).

The object of attainment by the verb *duqv* is the event of "two or three years." The result of attaining the event is naturally interpreted with the perfective aspectual sense. It seems to be more suitable to adopt Li's "attainment aspect" to designate the Iu-Mienh equivalent *duqv*.

3.4 Topic Chains

Topic chains are "chains of clauses which share a common topical participant" (Van Valin 2005:103). The primary topical participant in a clause is also termed "topic subject" (Somsonge 2002:142). Once a topic subject is established in the first clause, it will be realized by a pronoun or zero anaphora (Van Valin 2005:104). Since zero anaphora can be used frequently in topic chains in discourse, the chains appear to be juxtaposed clauses, and it is sometimes difficult to distinguish them from sequenced serial verb constructions. Aikhenvald (2005:42), referring to such constructions as "sequence of actions," distinguishes them as follows: 1) In a sequence of actions, "A pause or an intonation break indicating a clause boundary can appear between the verbs" (vs. SVCs cannot), 2) a topic chain or a sequence of actions is compositional (vs. SVC as a single predicate), 3) a topic chain encodes "several events in sequence which may be conceptualized as connected to each other" (vs. SVC as one event), 4) it is "chains of clauses" (Van Valin 2005) (vs. SVC as monoclausal).

In (44) the subject topic is in bold face; established by a pronoun in clause 1, then carried over by zero anaphora in clauses 2 and 3 (the subject being a piglet running away from a wolf in the story).

(44) (3PG.046)

Cl₁

Ninh *youc* *bangc* **wuov** *norm* *zanc*
3sg also depend_on that CLF period

Cl₂

Ø *nqongh* *deix* *njiec* *daaih*
it hurry some descend come

Cl₃

Ø *biaux* *nzuonx* *mingh*
it flee return go

'As for (the piglet), it used that occasion, came down quickly (from a tree), fled (and) went home.' (i.e. '...it took the opportunity to quickly come down and run off/away home.')

Each component may have its composite internal construction. Cl₂ in (44) is an adverbial SVC with a directional verb (i.e. [[*nqongh deix*]$_{ADV.PH}$ [*njiec*]$_{V.MAIN}$ *daaih*$_{V.DR}$), and Cl₃ is a directional SVC.

An even more complex structure can be found in (45). The serial verb components within the clauses are in brackets. The topic subject of this sentence is *caah laauh porngc* 'grasshopper' established in the preceding sentence (FG.018), hence, (45) begins with the zero anaphora. The whole thing is a multiclausal construction, consisting of topic chains. However the internal structure is as follows: Cl₁ is an adverbial clause marked by *aeqv* the topic marker and an intonation break. Cl₁ is dependent on Cl₂. Cl₂ is a switch-subject cause-effect SVC followed by a short pause. Cl₃ is another adverbial clause marked by a topic marker and a pause, and is dependent on Cl₄. Cl₄ cannot be broken by a pause; thus it is a switch-subject SVC.

(45) (FG.019)

Cl₁

Ø	bueix	gau	aeqv	[Pause]
it	sleep	DPCL	TOP	

Cl₂

[ndiangx-kou	nauv]	[haeqv	caah_laauh_porngc]	[Ø	nyie	]	[Short Pause]
dead_tree	snap	frighten	grasshopper	it	wake_up		

Cl₃

Ø	mv	jangx	zuqc	aeqv	[Pause
it	NEG	remember	GOAL	TOP	

Cl₄

[Ø	sung	ninh	nyei	zaux]	[Ø	ndamc	zuqc	norqc_meix	nyei	beuh	]
it	stretch	3sg	POSS	leg	it	stamp	GOAL	sparrow	POSS	goiter	

[mbienv	faaux	jaang-ngunz	mingh]
overturn	go_up	nape	go

[1]After (they) had been asleep for awhile, [2]a dead tree snapped down (and) frightened (and) woke the grasshopper up, [3]because (it) did not remember (keeping its legs bent), [4](it) stretched out its legs (and) kicked the sparrow's goiter hard (and the goiter) turned up to his nape.

An overall structure of this topic chain is that a sentence comprising Cl₁ and Cl₂ provides a setting for the succeeding sentence comprising Cl₃ and Cl₄. Thus Cl₂ and Cl₄ carry the story forward.

3.5 Summary of the Chapter

In chapter 3 we have surveyed the basic clause types, serial verb constructions, tense-aspect-modality (TAM) and topic chains. A semantic extension is obvious in a certain class of verbs (e.g. *mingh* 'go,' *daaih* 'come,' *faaux* 'ascend,' *njiec* 'descend,' *duqv* 'get, attain, aquire, can,' *oix* 'like, want, will' or 'be about to,' *liuz* 'finish,' *baac* 'finish,' *ziangx* 'finish,' *nzengc* 'be consumed,' *jienv* 'be stable'). They extend their original meanings to adverbs of direction and TAM. All these verbs can be strung together into SVCs, multiclausal constructions and topic chains. The sentence final particles, *aqv* (change of state) and *mi'aqv* (resultative) provide additional aspectual and modal meanings. Thus the interaction between TAM through verbs is frequent with no morphological inflection, implying a need for a non-TAM based storyline theory. The SVCs and main clauses in topic chains advance the narrative forward.